2000

'Queerscapes': Lesbian women's experience of bias in Supervised Pastoral Education (SPE) in the Canadian Association for Pastoral Practice and Education (CAPPE)

Margaret Arlene Eby
Wilfrid Laurier University

INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

Bell & Howell Information and Learning
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
800-521-0600

"Queerscapes": Lesbian Women's Experience of Bias in Supervised Pastoral Education (SPE) in the Canadian Association for Pastoral Practice and Education (CAPPE)

by

Margaret Arlene Eby

B.A., Trent University, 1976

M. Div., McMaster University, 1979

THESIS

submitted to the Faculty of Waterloo Lutheran Seminary

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Theology in Pastoral Counselling

June 2000

Abstract

Five women members of The Canadian Association for Pastoral Practice and Education (CAPPE) who self-identified as lesbian were interviewed concerning their experiences of bias based on sexual orientation in supervised pastoral education programs and its perceived impact on the development of personal and professional identity. Inductive content analysis indicated that these women experienced less overt bias in the form of homophobia in CAPPE than they did heterosexism. Data obtained suggests the presence of negative effects of heterosexism on collegial relationships, pastoral care/counselor education, theological understanding and the process of professional development.

Covert bias in the form of homophobia was experienced in the dynamics of group process, the curriculum content, and the supervisory process within SPE, as it was within organizations affiliated with CAPPE such as the institutional church or individual SPE sites. The impact of various forms of bias, such as homophobia and heterosexism on the development of personal and professional identity was identified in terms of potential risks to ordination status; authentic relationship to self, others and God; and the students' emotional integrity and safety. Women indicated the need for CAPPE to be pro-active to insure, through Standards and policy-making in SPE program sites, a positive and affirming environment for lesbian and gay pastoral caregivers/counsellors.

Table of Contents Page

. Preface

The Canadian Association for Pastoral Practice and Education (CAPPE) has been an integral part of my ministry development and process towards ordination for over a decade, although not all of my experiences within supervised pastoral education have been affirming of my lesbian identity or respectful of my process. During periods of my training, first as a chaplain then later as a pastoral counselor and Supervisor, I also moved through the labyrinth of certification balancing delicately on my accreditation with the Baptist Convention of Ontario and Quebec as a closeted member of the lesbian community, always in fear that my exposure would destroy the mandate I held within that denomination, and thus any further progress in CAPPE as a ministry Specialist. My twenty year long ordination process in the BCOQ came to an abrupt and painful halt as the result of threats of exposure of my sexual orientation. At that time, I gradually sought out a faith community which would recognise the justice issues implicit in the struggle for sexual minorities to find a place within the Church where gifts for ministry might be received and affirmed.

Due to the fact that I have now found that faith community, and have a renewed mandate to continue the journey, I am able to offer with integrity, the results of this research, and my own motivations for it, aware that openness towards my work may still bear a cost I am willing to pay for the sake of those sisters and brothers walking with me.

This is the case for many of my lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered colleagues in CAPPE. For them the process is extremely complex because of the need to remain closeted. Ordination and endorsement for certification in

CAPPE can be for them a denial of self in the most intimate way. To be "in the closet" can be a violation of one's integrity and would hardly constitute an option if other choices were or had been available. To be "in ministry" and to be "in the closet" is to live a split existence without a real choice to do so. There is enormous psychological and emotional cost in keeping these worlds apart . To "come out" is to risk the possibility of loss of ordination status and, therefore, of one's profession in ministry. This oppression is a form of violence, to which this study is a response. It is a response to a felt need to use my "privileged" position as a CAPPE Supervisor within a progressive ministry context to expose, in some small way, the impact of bias and prejudice on a minority population by having members of that population tell their stories of their experiences in CAPPE.

Researchers who study the process of overcoming prejudice, negative bias and stereotyping all acknowledge the importance of personally knowing such persons as a first step toward the development of awareness and healthy change. This experience of knowing offers an opportunity to meet lesbian women and gay men, "queers and queens, faggots and dykes" as human beings, rather than as "homosexual" abstractions "flaunting" their sexuality. For this reason, it is important for the stories to be both told and heard. It is critical that we see our experience mirrored back as part of our identity development, so that internalised experiences of shame might be exorcised, and new narratives formed. The voices of these women are not intended to convey knowledge about forms of bias such as heterosexism, but rather to tell the reader about lived experience and perception which empower a view of the world currently shrouded in silence.

As I have limited this study to the experience of lesbian women, I would like to affirm other sexual minorities within CAPPE who have not yet been given voice, as beyond my present scope.

I would also like to acknowledge and express my appreciation of the following people for their assistance in the research and preparation of this thesis: Professor Tom O'Connor as my Advisor; Professor Don Gillies, Victoria University, my reader and the Rev. Dr. Peter VanKatwyck, also a reader.

I would like to thank those who agreed to participate in this research. I appreciated their courage and honesty in the search for wholeness and integrity. Finally, I would like to offer my gratitude and love to the one person who has lived through this whole process with me and whose attention to detail has saved me from many nights of sleeplessness reworking my writing - my partner, Meg.

Introduction: Singing the Lord's Song in a Strange Land

As noted in the preface, the idea for this research project has been fermenting for several years as the result of my own journey through Supervised Pastoral Education in The Canadian Association for Pastoral Practice and Education. As a self-identified member of that generally invisible sexual minority, I have experienced both the privilege and the struggle of being lesbian within this institutional and religious context. In my assessment, this context continues to reflect the heterosexist and homophobic dominant discourse of its surrounding culture.

Despite the inclusion of an anti-discrimination clause in the Code of Ethics for CAPPE practitioners and educators - one which names sexual orientation in its list of cultural, ethnic and gender diversities - I suspect that often lesbian and gay development and identity are not taken into consideration in the design, implementation and supervision of pastoral education programs. I also suspect that bias based on sexual orientation exists in the relational and structural context of CAPPE education.

My project, therefore, is aimed at two primary audiences: membership of CAPPE and the wider faith/educational community of which CAPPE is a part; whether they be students and teachers, certified practitioners and/or supervisors who hold an allegiance to The Association's Code of Ethics and Standards of Practice. I am not attempting to address specifically those experiences of gay, bisexual or transgendered persons which would also be a valuable source of information relating to bias, but are beyond the scope of this project.

My purpose in conducting this research is to empower some in "the silent ranks" by discovering what this particular population's experience of bias is in the context of SPE and what effect this experience has for them as persons engaged in pastoral care and counselling within a religious setting or role.

The research question I wish to ask is this:

" How do lesbian women experience bias based on sexual orientation in the context of CAPPE SPE programs?"

In "Empowerment: An Emerging Mental Health Technology", Swift and Levin identify four steps which translate empowerment into action. First, specific *empowerment deficits* of people who have diminished control over their lives in important domains must be identified. For lesbians and gay men, this involves documentation of the various forms of bias based on sexual orientation that they have experienced.

Second, *empowerment awareness* must be promoted by bringing the nature of the disenfranchisement to the group's attention in order to alter their understanding of their oppression. The dissemination of information and dialogue around the issues presented becomes a primary staging ground for the next step which involves *mobilisation of economic, social, and political power.* Forming social networks and political coalitions aimed at providing representation and voice for the group is an important part of this stage. There already exists, within CAPPE structure, a loosely formed gay/lesbian caucus whose mandate could be designed to be a catalyst for implementation of the final step: *the removal of institutional barriers to empowerment.*

It is therefore the purpose of this research to provide a first step towards empowerment of this socio-erotic minority by documenting, through a qualitative research design, the experiences of this group within the specific parameters of SPE.

The Historical and Structural Context of SPE in CAPPE:

A brief overview of the supervised pastoral education process in CAPPE will help to orient the reader to the institutional context in which this research is being conducted.

The Association for Clinical Pastoral Education (ACPE), was founded by three men, the Reverend Anton T. Boisen, William S. Keller, M.D. and Richard C. Cabot, M.D. (Hunter ed., 1990:178). The goal of supervised pastoral education (SPE) is to provide "...professional education for ministry which brings theological students, ordained clergy, members of religious orders, and qualified lay persons into supervised encounter with living human documents in order to develop their pastoral identity, interpersonal competence, and spirituality..." (Hunter ed.,1990:177-178). The sister organization, CCSPE, was originally formed in the early 1950's in Canada. It was dedicated to the adjunct training of seminarians in the art of pastoral ministry by immersing them in "the living human document" of client, patient and parishioner. The teaching method was experiential, and also based on a mentorship/supervision model where students developed significant supervisory relationships within their institutional context - be it hospital, jail, seniors home or counselling centre.

The Association has become national in scope, and has expanded its mandate to the certification of Specialists as well as Supervisors in Clinical Pastoral Education and Pastoral Counselling. The institution itself has grown in its active membership to 1997 statistics of approx. 1200; with four National Commissions, a Board of Directors and a National Executive office to oversee its affairs.

Students are normally processed through a minimum of two basic units or equivalent course stream work before application to advanced education is made. Students may choose which stream of specialisation they wish to follow, or may combine CPE and PCE education for certification as Specialist. There is also a further educational process available leading to certification for Supervisory status in the Association which allows individuals to design and implement educational programs accredited by the Association. In total, it may take up to ten years (or even more) to become fully certified as a clinical Teaching Supervisor in Pastoral Counselling, depending on advancement through the review process and accessibility to training opportunities in the relevant educational stream. There is substantial history and documentation of the CAPPE model in The Handbook of Standards for Practice, Certification and Accreditation; as well as a documented appeal process for violations of the Ethical Code.

Pastoral care and counselling, as a specialized ministry, has evolved over the past forty years, as a reflection of the larger church. Despite the fact that pastoral counselling was a movement outside the church, CAPPE and its membership largely reflected the dominant culture of the larger church. Members of CAPPE were generally white, middle-class male clergy

within mainline Christian theological worldviews. Women and men of colour were a minority, and lesbians and gay men most likely a "closeted" presence.

Given this context for education and training in pastoral ministry, documenting the experiences of the lesbian population is particularly needful within an institutional and cultural context which is specifically religious in affiliation - though it encompasses a diversity of faith traditions, the primary emphasis remains Judeo-Christian. In recent years, CAPPE has diversified its membership to become more inclusive. However, as a result of a variety of risk factors, there are relatively few sexual minority pastoral caregivers who are openly visible within the membership of CAPPE.

Thus, any discussion of the experience of lesbian persons must take into consideration the systemic, historical and theological roots of anti-homosexual bias which permeate Christian tradition, (see Boswell, 1980). Despite current documentation of recent changes in some denominational structures to be more open to lesbian and gay affirming "lifestyles", the weight of religious tradition continues to emphasize the moral bankruptcy and social unacceptability of homosexual orientation. "Legally, homosexuals are stigmatised as 'criminals', religiously as 'sinners', and psychologically as 'mentally ill'" (Woods, 1990, 2). Biblical and theological material has been especially used to justify this oppression and has been essential to the development of intolerance of and discrimination toward sexual minorities in the larger western culture (Boswell,1980).

To be Christian and lesbian is viewed within the traditional church as a contradiction is a considerable spiritual struggle. Since lesbians are excluded

from the full and open expression of their faith and ministry in the Church, many seek the few options open to them and participate in alternative, quasi-religious or para-church structures or cease to participate in any traditional religious institution. Those who seek positions of leadership have often encountered rejection and prejudice. In a 1974 survey, the majority of respondents were reluctant to give homosexuals the right to have private homosexual relationships among consenting adults affirmed, or to work in positions of power such as clergy (Klassen & Levitt, 1974).

The mainstream Protestant and Catholic Churches essentially support this point of view. In 1978 the General Assembly of the United Presbyterian Church in the USA voted to exclude "practising" homosexuals from ordained ministry. The same thing occurred in 1984 with the United Methodist Church, where openly lesbian and gay ministers were publicly "defrocked". This has been repeated over and again in denominations within Canada, (note the recent Anglican decision) with the notable exception of the United Church (1988), the Unitarian Church and the United Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches. With the exception of the few extraordinary ordinations openly performed by these denominations, ordination of homosexuals is prohibited within the Episcopal, Anglican, American/Southern Baptist, Pentecostal, Lutheran, Methodist and Presbyterian denominations, among others.

Although it is not my purpose here to outline in detail the roots and shoots of this religious and cultural heritage, I support the assertion that the social realities of homophobia (what Herek terms psychological heterosexism) and cultural heterosexism are the primary ideological systems undergirding

religious bias against lesbians and gay men. Nowhere is this more keenly felt than in relationships and institutions designed for pastoral ministry.

Heterosexism is defined here as a form of multicultural bias: an ideological system that denies, denigrates and stigmatises any non-heterosexual form of behaviour, identity, relationship, or community. It operates principally by rendering homosexuality invisible, and, when this fails, by trivialising, repressing or stigmatising it. Heterosexism is manifested both in societal customs and institutions such as CAPPE, as a cultural phenomenon, and in individual attitudes and behaviours as "psychological heterosexism" and homophobia.

An article in the American Association of Pastoral Counsellors (Graham,1984) suggests that many lesbian and gay members of that organization (AAPC) are afraid to be open about their sexual orientation for fear of repercussions within their denomination; negative backlash from supervisors and center managers; threats to their endorsement status and diminished employment opportunities. For numerous reasons then, concealment being one, lesbians are denied full participation in AAPC since the points of view and experiences as marginalized persons are unavailable to the larger membership and largely absent from the political and theological discussions of the organization. D'Augelli, in "Empowering lesbian and gay communities: A Call for collaboration with community psychology...Empowering the silent ranks", outlines the four steps to empowerment that lesbian/gay communities have historically used to overcome the social and institutional experience of cultural heterosexism. Three problem areas are detailed as particularly problematic for this cultural group: stresses related to visibility/marginalization; heterosexism,

and difficulties identifying with a community. All of these factors play a significant role for the gay/lesbian community found within CAPPE and provide a paradigm for looking at what changes and recommendations need to be made as a result of this research.

This is very similar to the experience of lesbian women in the current study. To self-disclose or to assess the degree of self-disclosure is an ongoing issue and has many implications for their clinical work and collegial relationships. These issues are critically under addressed within CAPPE.

Thus, the research interview questions were designed to investigate *how* heterosexism is transmitted through cultural institutions and individual experience as a systemic and ideological bias. As such, heterosexism is a form of multicultural bias, with many and various components.

Erving Goffman's classic work "Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity" (1974) captures the complex realities of stigmatised living. In his introduction, Goffman identifies the dehumanising quality of stigmatization when he writes," the normal and the stigmatised are not persons but rather perspectives". Yet, " we lean on these expectations, categories and attributes, transforming them into normative expectations, into regularly presented demands" (Goffman,1974, 2). Deviating from these norms comes at an enormous price of loss of respect and esteem from others. Having learned of the consequences in possessing such a stigma, the person arranges life and disclosive information in order to avoid further pain or loss. (Goffman, 1974, 8-9 ff.) Goffman intricately details the destructive effects of

the ongoing practice of deception and the vast amount of energy that it entails to manage one's identity this way. He identifies the strategy of "passing": the management of undisclosed, discrediting information about self (Goffman, 1974, 42); and the psychological and emotional effects of the internalisation of oppression - the contempt for self and others like self that this silence may produce.

This research exposes perceptions and narratives of lesbian experience in SPE which coincide with and are congruent with existing literature identifying similar specific patterns of both social and individual forms of bias based on sexual orientation, existing in other mental health care fields, such as psychology and marriage and family therapy. It attempts to identify these same qualities as characteristic of negative forms of bias such as homophobia and heterosexism. The stories of these five women reveal what the study identifies as the personal and professional damage to lesbians when blocked from living an integrated existence because of institutional and ecclesiastical discrimination - the more overt form of negative bias.

Chapter 1

Review of Literature: Landmarks

"Women's perspectives on our own experiences provide important empirical and theoretical resources for feminist research" (Harding,1989, 28).

For several decades prior to 1980, research in the social sciences has primarily reflected the concerns of white-male academicians and not those of women and other minorities (Cox,1976). The experiences of women, and in particular lesbian women in pastoral ministry, have not been a major concern of researchers.

The literature which produced the most relevant results in my area of study tied three categories together: gay or lesbian; supervised pastoral education or clinical pastoral education; bias or discrimination or heterosexism. **Out of one hundred and thirty-five articles in clinical pastoral education and supervision, only two had any direct relevance to my study;** "Overflowing Souls: CPE and the Spiritual Formation of Gay and Lesbian People" by Kirsten Peachey, and "Supervising Gay and Lesbian Students in CPE" by James Corrigan and David C. Myler Jr.

"Overflowing Souls" is a theological reflection on the experience of three students in a CPE program context who were self-identified as lesbian or gay. The thrust of the article is its emphasis on personal integration and the specific journey towards wholeness that lesbian/gay students experience as they confront internalised homophobia (shame), enter cultural exile (loss) and reclaim the self (elation). Peachey concludes that Clinical Pastoral Education as a context for this process of "coming out to self" and others, is ambivalent.

There were both positive and affirming experiences, as well as negative ones. All students felt that the supervisor's role-modeling was extremely important to their process. Peachey suggests that faith traditions can also be a source of healing and growth for this "community of souls". The material did little to specifically identify what was unique to the lesbian experience, although specific recommendations were offered regarding program enhancement that attempted to respond to the needs of this particular population.

"Supervising Gay and Lesbian Students in CPE" is an anecdotal and less than scholarly approach to the experience of gay and lesbian students. Although the article addresses many of the common myths and pervasive misunderstandings about this specific population, it does so without direct reference to previous research in the field, and as such is written as an experiential process. As with the previous literature, the coming out process is highlighted in the program context, as well as the problems associated with a lack of role models, invisibility, and the negative impact of the evaluative nature of clinical education on a marginalized group. As well, this article makes an effort to note the more positive and affirming aspects of identifying as gay or lesbian within a group context. Finally, issues related to being gay supervisors with non-gay students are explored, specifically the issue of self-disclosure. I found the content of this article to be the most relevant to my subject focus. It nicely complemented the previous research in terms of identifying those ideologies of bias known as cultural heterosexism and homophobia which gay and lesbian students appear to experience in the CPE contexts studied.

These ideologies of bias are presented in all the literature with a variety of concepts, paradigms and categories, although all the materials reviewed for this paper identify some common themes in gay/lesbian experience of cultural and individual bias. These are:

1. The experience of psychic dissonance as a common denominator for sexual minorities.
2. The twin themes of denial and stigmatization in dynamic relationship to one another.
3. Invisibility and silencing.
4. Ignorance of sexual minority history, cultural norms and practices.
5. Discriminatory behaviour in the form of outright rejection, stereotyping, insensitivity and physical violence.

In "Working with lesbians, gays, and bisexuals: Addressing heterosexism in supervision" Janie Long (1996) discusses heterosexism as a form of multicultural bias that has the potential to harm both clients and supervisees. The author challenges supervisors to examine their own belief systems in regards to providing a safe environment in which supervisees can address their cultural and personal heterosexism. Four categories of bias are discussed (discrimination, lack of knowledge, stereotyping, and insensitivity) in terms of how they might operate in the supervisory process. As well, Long identifies the "coming out" process as a specific characteristic of gay/lesbian identity formation which is commonly ignored in educational models, as are the heterosexist foundations of many theories of therapy...both psychodynamic and systems. This article is useful in identifying specific manifestations of bias which may arise in the supervision relationship as a result of the four categories discussed and are applicable to pastoral care

and counselling training programs. It brought into focus for me the research question of what (in a culture with widespread antipathy toward lesbian and gay relationships) the messages of silence, "neutrality", and omission of lesbian and gay family topics in SPE programs convey to students in our classes, workshops and supervision groups? Beverly Green states,

> Heterosexist bias in training programs may make it unsafe for lesbian and gay students to divulge their sexual orientation before their formal training is completed. To do so they risk a form of discrimination that may be subtle but nonetheless can adversely affect their training status within their programs. The requirement to manage the heterosexism of supervisors and fellow students can leave gay and lesbian students with an additional burden that is neither appropriate nor shared by their heterosexual counterparts. It also deprives them of the opportunity to explore authentically their own feelings, ideas and appropriate use of self as a clinical instrument.... (Greene & Herek, 1994, 19).

A search of The Journal of Marital and Family Therapy produced a recent literature review in Volume 23, Number 3, entitled "Twenty Years and Still in the Dark?" which documents the trend in marriage and family therapy literature towards emphasising relational dynamics in affirmative focus in a movement away from the pathologizing of homosexuality. Although this was a sign of improvement, "The results indicate that, thus far, relatively few articles pertaining to issues of sexual orientation have appeared (1975-1995),

substantially less than 1% (77 out of 13,217) of the total articles published" (pg. 247).

Of the seventy-seven articles published, none was specifically addressing the presence of bias, or lesbian/gay experiences of heterosexism in an educational-training environment for mental health professionals. However, a strong argument was put forward that the lack of skills, knowledge base and personal experience with this community was a severe detriment to the quality of care that could be offered by professional therapists and was reflected in the literature as a heterosexist bias. It makes (non)sense then that no articles pertaining to bias appeared (Morin 1977, Watters 1986, Clark & Serovich 1997).

The search for such scholarly work in the Psychlit, Religion and SocLit CD ROM catalogues produced even fewer results. I did, however, use the bibliography sections to track down related articles of relevance to the subject focus of bias, but not specifically related to the pastoral education context. There were only six articles of related interest to my research topic between 1991-1997 in the PsychLit database, which I have briefly reviewed as representative of the related fields of psychology and marriage and family therapy.

Clinical knowledge about the psychology and culture of lesbians (and other sexual minorities) is virtually non-existent among colleagues and in training curricula. More important, heterosexual assumptions are at the core of the life of the organization and in the clinical work we do with our clients.

Hochstein's study (1986) of attitudes toward lesbian and gay clients revealed that, "pastoral counsellors do not rate gay male and lesbian clients as significantly different from heterosexual male and female clients" (pg. 158). However, the fact that pastoral counsellors responded in this fashion, I believe, reflects tolerance, but not radical awareness of cultural difference and of the distinctiveness of working clinically with lesbians and other sexual minorities.

This conclusion is supported by Hochstein's finding of the continued predominance of sex-role stereotyping operative in the attitudes of pastoral counsellors surveyed. If over the years male pastoral counsellors have not become sensitive to the particularities of the psychology of women, it is unlikely that they are aware of this population's specific needs. To date (1995), however, there is no study to measure the attitudes of pastoral counsellors to lesbian and gay male colleagues, although the stories of the women in this current research does reflect their experience of this dynamic.

More recent research has addressed issues of sex bias and gender issues in the workplace and in doing so is raising public consciousness about the conditions which create and support inequality in the workplace (Congdon, 1990; Herek , 1990; Heilman, 1983; Schneider, 1982; Bower, 1995). Herek's article, "The context of anti-gay violence: Notes on cultural and psychological heterosexism" in The Journal of Interpersonal Violence, is a significant article in terms of its articulation and deconstruction of the ideologies of sex and gender from which cultural bias derives its symbolic power. It identifies key components of this dynamic in terms of the dichotomy between public and private; the denial and stigmatization of sexual non-conformity; and the

linkage of heterosexuality to gender-role conformity. Cultural and systemic bias fosters individual prejudice by providing a meaning and value system which supports it. It also serves various psychological functions in enabling such expressions of bias.

Less is known about the experiences and challenges lesbians face in the workplace and in their professional life. What we do know is that the secret of identity plays a major role in lesbian career development and work behaviour (Morgan&Brown,1991; Fassinger 1996). In "Notes from the margins: Integrating lesbian experience into the vocational psychology of women" Ruth Fassinger explores internal and external barriers to women's career choices, implementation and adjustment, with speculation about how such barriers function in the vocational experiences of lesbians. She also looks at workplace discrimination and its impact on identity management... Although at first glance, this may not appear to be relevant to SPE, I found the concepts Fassinger was using to be very relevant to the experience of lesbian women working in a hostile training environment with a view to a career choice in pastoral ministry.

Fear of discriminatory bias in the work environment is not unfounded. A 1990 study of university aged students of both heterosexual and homosexual orientation found that "homosexuals exhibit greater anxiety about making career choices because they would have to consider factors related to their sexual orientation and the implication of its potential public disclosure" (Etringer & Hillerbrand, 1990,105). In another survey completed by Levine & Leonard, in 1984, " 31% of the lesbians surveyed anticipated employment discrimination because of bias based on sexual orientation, and 13% actually

experienced it; 8% of the women had lost their jobs because they were lesbian. In order to avoid discrimination 72% remained at least partly closeted in the work environment (p. 708). Given the documentation regarding denominational censorship and the potential for collegial disapproval, it is no surprise that the lesbian women in CAPPE represented by this study were expressing concern regarding self-disclosure.

In addition, lesbians share with all women gender-based bias and experience additional layers of disenfranchisement due to gender and orientation, not to mention other factors such as ethnicity. Since 91% of lesbian women work outside of the home and earn substantially less for their level of education and work experience (Morgan & Brown, 1991, 276), developing a vocational base is a matter of survival.

As a result of this process of personal, interpersonal, institutional and cultural bias, Levine & Leonard (1984) suggest that lesbians use three basic strategies for survival: a) self-employment, b) job-ghettos, and c) distancing. Perceived threats to personal security and safety may have a detrimental effect on mental health and pose a real threat to one's sense of identity (Kuhnert & Palmer, 1989, 178). " Conceptualising professional competence as an intrinsic characteristic directly ties the construct to individuals' feelings of self-worth...what is at stake when a job (or level of competence) is threatened is not only the loss of a specific activity and income but the loss of a fundamental part of our identity (p.188).

Woods and Harbeck identify as well three strategies employed by lesbian physical educators to manage their identity : passing; self-distancing, or

becoming totally closeted (1992, 152-153). "Passing" involved accepting a pseudo-heterosexual identity by using language specific to the culture, falsifying selective information about self or divulging misleading information, allowing others to draw erroneous conclusions without corrective response; " an unpleasant reality of the circumstances." Self-distancing was a more active form of avoiding interactions with colleagues, superiors and students that would call for more intimate disclosure. In this way, women attempted to avoid situations where a deeper form of dishonesty would be required. By engaging in this form of self-protection, "many of the participants felt misunderstood, isolated and dishonest. They were aware that there was potential harm to their relationships...important to them both personally and professionally" (p.152). Removing themselves from the situation altogether was an alternative response when confronted directly or indirectly with the issue of sexual orientation.

> Even at an individual level, there are remarkably few of even the most openly lesbian people who are not deliberately in the closet with someone personally or economically or institutionally important to them. Furthermore, the deadly elasticity of heterosexist bias and presumption means that, like Wendy in Peter Pan, people find new walls springing up around them even as they drowse: every encounter with a new class full of students, to say nothing of a new boss, social worker, loan officer, landlord, doctor etc., erects new closets whose fraught and characteristic laws of optics and physics exact from gay people new surveys, new calculations, new draughts and requisitions of secrecy or disclosure....*for many gay*

> *people it (the closet) is still the fundamental feature of social life; and there can be few gay people, however courageous and forthright by habit, however fortunate in the support of their immediate communities, in whose lives the closet is not still a shaping presence* (Sedgwick, 1990, 68).

What "shaping presence" may be discerned, and of what material is the closet constructed? Of what forms of bias do they speak?

The state of being lesbian or gay which distinguishes it from other "oppressed" conditions, is that one can hide one's minority group status by concealing information about one's real social identity. Being stigmatised and living in two worlds as a result of heterosexism or homophobia has psychological and emotional consequences. "Personal identity, like social identity, divides up the individual's world of others...between the knowing and the unknowing" (Goffman,1974, 66). There are both personal and intrapsychic consequences to the awareness of stigmatization, including feelings of self-doubt and disapproval, and changes in self-conception and affiliative patterns.

Nuehring (1981) states "the stigmatised person learns quickly of their status and that...social life cannot continue as before...considering new dilemmas of how to 'pass', how to disclose, and how to interact...as one's basic construction of social reality is called into question." This quality of both inner/outer, public/private domains as strategies of response to cultural and institutional bias has implications for education as well. Alschuler (1992, 10) explores the psychodynamics of oppression by attempting to understand both the 'inner' and 'outer' aspects. He examines Paulo Freire's concept of the

division of consciousness Freire calls "duality of the oppressed". "This duality is found in the oppressed who 'house' the oppressor whose shadow they 'project' in two parts: they are both themselves and the other" (Freire,1973, 40) Alschuler claims that much of the pedagogy of the oppressed is aimed at exorcising the internalised oppressor and integrating the consciousness by examining how oppressed consciousness is created, maintained and ultimately transformed into critical consciousness. This "renewing of the mind" is an integrative 'educational' process that has both personal and political implications. It is a type of process, I believe, that needs to take place in the training and experiential education of CAPPE students.

A review of the literature indicates that bias based on sexual orientation as a concept is framed almost entirely in its negative aspect, as homophobia and heterosexism. These categories emerge in every writing relevant to the topic as the defining paradigms for discussion; little focus is paid to positive aspects of bias such as affirmative action, social critical analysis and advocacy strategies which have been developed in response to oppression.
Perhaps this is because advocates of the sexual minority community see these defining paradigms as essentially systemic and enduring, and without resolution. Relevant to this study of lesbian pastoral caregivers, heterosexism - an assumption that heterosexuality is the normative expectation for personal and social intercourse - denies lesbian women their own sexuality by:

> "the closing of archives and destruction of documents relating to lesbian existence." It "closes access to the means of the institutions of marriage and motherhood as unpaid production; enforces the horizontal segregation of women in paid accountable employment;

offers the decoy of the upwardly mobile token woman; colludes with sexual harassment and rape as violence; supports a hierarchy of cultural values which embody male subjectivity to the exclusion of women...and the discrimination of women in the professions" (Rich,1980, 37-38).

This is not merely a generalised opinion within our culture, but rather an expectation that is made compulsory through the social, political, economic, religious and educational structures of our society and that results in the disempowerment, social discrimination and oppression of lesbian women, and other sexual minorities.

Homophobia is the affective aspect of bias rooted in a heterosexist cultural value system. Weinberg (1972) popularised the term as "the dread of being in close quarters with homosexuals". Hudson & Ricketts (1980, 365-366) expanded the definition to include "the personal affective responses of disgust, anxiety. aversion, discomfort, fear and anger" in relation to homosexual persons. Homophobia operates in relation to at least four interdependent systemic domains: the personal, interpersonal, institutional and cultural.

Osterman (1987) states that homophobic bias may express itself as:

a) a passive and covert form of bias expressed in a personal belief system- a prejudice that lesbians are sick, immoral, psychologically unstable manhaters, genetically defective, unnatural and spiritually bankrupt,

b) prejudice in its active and more overt form as discrimination- the interpersonal dynamic which may include verbal or physical harassment, rejection/abandonment by peers/family/friends, denial of access to public and

private services, subtle blocks to progress and advancement in employment/education,

c) homophobia on a social-systemic scale when institutions systematically discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation in their laws, codes, policies - or,

d) cultural homophobia which refers to norms, values, codes of behaviour, unspoken group expectations which legitimise stigmatization or support negative stereotypical images of lesbians/gays.

Many researchers (Osterman, 1987; Herek, G. M., 1985; Boswell, 1980; Spong,1980) assert that homophobia exists on all these levels within the Church, and has a detrimental effect at a systemic level on sexual minorities represented there. I assume this would include pastoral caregivers mandated by the Church for ministry as is the case with the five women represented in my research. Beyond personal and interpersonal homophobia, "prejudice is enforced and reinforced by the corporate wisdom of the community in which it is upheld, until it is thought to be God's self-evident truth" (Spong,1990, 80).

As was discussed earlier, institutional bias has resulted in the consistent failure of religious communities to accept genuinely or actively and openly affirm the relationships and identities of sexual minorities, either professionally, pastorally, liturgically, or doctrinally. Boswell argues that this has not always been the case, and that there is ample evidence throughout history of a varied degree of social acceptance until the latter half of the twelfth century when intolerance and hostilities emerged that eventually had an impact on theological circles (Boswell,1980, 333-334).

> "Gay clergy have occupied every position in every ecclesiastical hierarchy...have assisted in the fashioning of the doctrine, discipline, worship and ecclesiastical dress of the church. If gay people were excised from the ordained ministry throughout the church's history, enormous gaps would appear, perhaps as much as 80% in certain periods of history" (Spong,1990, 86-87).

However, institutionalised religion has continued to function to oppress lesbians and gays by preventing equal participation in association and bestowal of equal benefits by those associations within the Church. CAPPE, as a parallel Church structure, is systemically affected by the Church's stance, as its economic viability is fairly dependent on its affiliation with religious institutions. So what is a just response by CAPPE to those whom the Church has turned away due to sexual orientation?

For the lesbian woman who chooses to seek professional vocation within CAPPE and the Church, these issues have particular significance. Many struggle to have integrity around their identity as professionals within a ministry context. Campbell (1983) writes about the impact that our preoccupation with professionalism has in ordained or mandated ministry. The emphasis on growth and competency need not overshadow the equally important role that ordination plays as a sacramental act of the Christian Church in which the ordained person is "set apart" as a representative figure accountable to the faith community.

Commitment of one's life to public ministry suggests that congruence between one's private and public identity is expected. "The issue is the authenticity of the total life" (Campbell,1983, 27-28). Bugental states, "A person is authentic in that degree to which his being in the world is unqualifiedly in accord with the givenness of his own nature and of the world" (Bugental, 1974, 31-32). Webster defines authentic as "worthy of acceptance or belief as conforming to fact or reality", which applied to personhood would imply being true to oneself and one's world.

Virginia Satir, the grandmother of feminist family therapy, defines this authenticity in terms of congruence between three domains: self, other and context. This congruence is characterized by an appreciation of the uniqueness of self; a free flow of personal and interpersonal energy; a claiming of personhood; a willingness to trust oneself and others; a willingness to take risks and to be vulnerable; resourcefulness and openness to intimacy (Satir, 1991, 65).

The issue for those in professional ministry is that the force that pressures lesbians to hide their true nature is the same force that hinders these individuals from the process of self-expression, exploration, critical consciousness and a deeper awareness of self and, therefore, from personal and professional growth. Carter Heyward, a lesbian feminist Episcopal theologian writes,

> "the greatest 'sin' of an oppressed and marginalized people, particularly as women, has always been our failure to take ourselves seriously as strong, powerful, autonomous and creative persons....our fear of our strength may be our undoing. And our

learning to stand and speak up for ourselves may well be our salvation" (Heyward, 1984, 3).

Summary

The struggle for integrity in the face of both covert and overt forms of socio-cultural bias, is ultimately a spiritual task, and one to which we will turn in the theological reflection chapter of this paper. Suffice it to say at this point that the experience of lesbians as pastoral caregivers and as members of CAPPE is reflected in the previous discussion. A review of the literature indicates that much work on the issue of sexual orientation has been accomplished over the past thirty years or so. However, much of the focus has been on the psychological and sociological implications for mental health service professionals, and very little material focuses on the implications for pastoral caregivers. Even less has been accomplished in the area of clinical education process and structure, particularly in a religious or faith community context. The literature review points us towards the idea that social transformation will require "shaking the foundations" of our cultural and religious belief systems, and that there is no better place to start than with those who carry symbolic power in this society - the healers and shamans.

Chapter 2

Research Design and Method: Making The Map

Participants

The participants of this study were five pastoral caregivers and members (past or current) of The Canadian Association for Pastoral Practice and Education who identified themselves as lesbian. Originally, the study included males self-identified as gay; however, since only one male responded to the invitation, it was decided to limit the research to female respondents. Also, only five women responded within the time frame alloted, and fit the parameters of the study. Participants ranged in age from 30-50 years; all were white; they came from a variety of socio-economic and denominational backgrounds, including United Church, Roman Catholic, Presbyterian and Anglican. In terms of CAPPE education, both CPE and PCE were represented, with a minimum requirement of one 400hr. unit completed within the last 10 years (1987-1997). Three were student members of the organization; one was a certified member and one is a current student member.

Data Collection

The sample was identified through:

1. an advertisement for research participants in the CAPPE national newsletter, and on the CAPPE website, and
2. contact with persons who have made themselves known, directly or indirectly through colleagues, to the researcher, and who represented the select population.

There were some significant risks to these participants regarding the maintenance of privacy and confidentiality. Those interviewed were not publicly known to be lesbian. I was approached privately, and when consent was given for contact, each woman was contacted by phone and an interview was arranged. In most cases, their concerns were similar. They were interested in knowing if the researcher was lesbian; for whom was the research being done and for what purpose would information obtained be used. I travelled in most instances to their location for the interviews and mailed a cover letter with written consent form ahead of the interview time. Participants were informed that they could withdraw from the interview at any time and for any reason.

Interview questions may be found in the Appendix. Five Interviews were audiotaped and the tapes transcribed for analysis. The one interview with a male respondent was not included in the research.

All participants were concerned about the potential for harm if there was public disclosure. Of concern was the possibility of social/professional injury, economic loss, negative psychological impact and loss of trust within systems of which they are a part.

Interview Process

All participants were expected to reflect critically on the emotional, theological and socio-political implications of being lesbian and a member of a professional organization with its identity rooted in traditional Christianity. The purpose of qualitative research was to enable lesbian members of CAPPE to construct and articulate their particular experiences of bias based on sexual

orientation and its impact on personal and professional identity. It needs to also be recognized that other interpersonal dynamics, besides heterosexism and homophobia may factor into the interviewees' experience in their programs. In analysing the data, a feminist methodology and orientation to the subject matter was used which begins with the experience of women as a subordinated group, and seeks to grant women voice and the right to be heard as distinct . Although gender was not a primary focus in this research, an acknowledge of its primary importance would indicate the need for furthur study of the interplay between sexual orientation and gender in relation to this subject matter of bias. There is also an acknowledgement that the researcher's own bias assists in the creation of the reality being constructed; the research is not value neutral.

A semi-standardized interview was used to facilitate the dialogue, and ranged in length from 70 to 90 minutes.

Eight open-ended questions were asked in total and participants' responses were followed up with further inquiry in order to clarify the responses or to elicit elaboration of the initial comments. When asked to offer comment on their experience of the interview, all participants expressed a positive reaction to the experience of telling their story to someone whom they felt was genuinely able to be present with them, despite some initial hesitation regarding disclosure.

Analysis of Data

Interviews were transcribed and analysed to identify similarities and differences among respondents' experiences of SPE, specifically as lesbian. These responses were coded according to basic themes related to the research questions and the overall purpose of the study. The researcher

attempted to identify repetitive themes that emerged from the material which appeared to be in creative dialogue with the concept of sexual orientation as identity - a lens through which the experiences of the participants were viewed. The experience of bias (in both covert and overt forms) based on orientation is a central dynamic for understanding participants' self-perception and perception of others. The purpose of the investigation has been to clarify the conditions that encourage or undermine personal and professional identity integration in CAPPE for this population, and to make limited generalised conclusions regarding this information.

Validity of Research and Ethical Considerations

This study represents the experiences of five lesbian pastoral caregivers in supervised pastoral education. The generalisations that can be made from a small sample are limited in scope. Qualitative methodology employed in the absence of quantitative data restricts the researcher in making supportive claims for certain theories. However, some generalisation is justified by the research and can be supported by the integrity of the interviewing process, by the attempts made to acknowledge and intentionally work with the researcher's own bias and experience. The primary ethical consideration raised by the research is a question regarding the psychological/emotional effect of participation on the participants, given the implicit risk of unwanted disclosure. Following up the interview process with an inquiry regarding its impact assisted in providing some reflective distance and safety.

Chapter 3

Findings and Sightings: By the Rivers of Babylon

In this chapter the reader will find numerous and long quotes from the transcripts of the participant interviews. The findings cited below are intended to be descriptive of these women's experiences of bias based on sexual orientation within a supervised pastoral education context. My interest here is to allow the 'the silent ranks' to be heard as fully as possible, thereby creating a forum for discussion and dialogue. Analysis of these findings can be found in Chapter Four: New Horizons.

The results of the research will be grouped into **four principle sections**, each with sub-categories relevant to the section. There is a final section on Images of Hope and Visions for the Future.

The first section will report findings related to the dynamics of heterosexism and homophobia in the personal, interpersonal, institutional and cultural domains of the participant's experience:

Section 1 : Heterosexism and Homophobia

Personal and Interpersonal Impact:
1. Double-Standards and Double-Binds
2. Dynamics of Internalisation
3. Gender/Sexism

Cultural and Institutional Impact
4. The Church and CAPPE
5. Collegial Relationships

The second section will deal with the topic of identity information management strategies, particularly related to individual "coming out" processes. The impact of bias on identity formation and social interaction patterns are in specific focus here, particularly in terms of their relationship to SPE programs:

Section 2 : Identity Information Management Strategies

6. Coming Out Process
7. Passing
8. Process of Selection
9. Implicit and Explicit Rules
10. Criteria for 'Safe Space'
11. Compartmentalisation and the Public/Private Dichotomy
12. Group Process and Communication

The third section looks at the process, structure and content aspects of supervised pastoral education programs vis a vis the experience of bias based on sexual orientation. Of particular interest is the impact of these issues on personal and professional integration:

Section 3 : Supervised Pastoral Education Programs

13. Curriculum/Resources
14. Supervisory Relationships
15. Selection Process
16. Evaluative Component
17. Lesbian Positive Space/Safety
18. Impact with Clients/Patients
19. Parallel Minority Experience
20. Social Context
21. Peer Group Process
22. Personal and Professional Integration

Section 4 : Images of Hope and Visions for the Future

Section 1

Heterosexism and Homophobia:

Personal and Interpersonal Impact :

There were several instances where participants reflected upon their own internal process in relation to experiences they named as bias based on their sexual orientation. Often the intersection of various systems or layers of social interaction played themselves out in these contexts and resulted in what I have termed double-standards and double-binds.

1. Double Standards and Double-Binds In their effect on the subject, there is little difference noted between the experience of a double-standard and a double-bind. I have separated the two concepts in order to emphasize both the overt social and the covert personal level on which heterosexism affects the subject. Although, in the scenarios described, no obvious or direct reference is made regarding alternative sexual orientations, the implicit standard or norm is asserted by omission, and is accompanied by an implicit requirement on the lesbian woman which places her in conflict with the systems of which she is a part. *A double-standard implies that there are one set of standards for one group, and another set of standards for another group. A double-bind is the application of this principle with one group, in a way which results in inextricable conflict.*

> E : " I remember being conflicted, incongruent within myself, when asked to choose a picture of the person I'd like to spend my life with. The bias was that I'd choose the picture of a man from the magazines. I knew the bias yet also knew I expected myself to keep boundaries - vis a vis some/most of my peers/instructors-

about my sexuality. At the time, I 'simply' *accepted the double standard* : carry my own conflicted feelings about being lesbian. It's the gay person's responsibility, not the heterosexual majority, to enlighten others about homosexuality. This is the bias coming up. A: "Minorities are expected to struggle for equality: it isn't given."

One woman expressed the double-standard in terms of group process:

C: "One of the women in the group got engaged to a man a couple of weeks into the group. I know more about him, more about the engagement, everyone was all 'oohy' and 'ahhhy', went over, looked at the ring the whole nine yards. No one has expressed any interest in learning about my ex-girlfriend, about a date I went on the other day, about this cute chick I saw at the movies. The gay male is in relationship, no one has any interest ... expressed any interest or desire in knowing anything about their relationship. But everyone is very keen on knowing about the new bride to be, and the straight male... wife, two kids, you know lots about the fact that they home-school, and you know lots about their family life ... Sex is not natural when it's between the same gender and that stuff feels blatant to me, but it's very subversive."

A: "No explicit bias was shown to/against me. Yet it is implicit in our society that homosexuals/lesbians must take the initiative to demand/acquire equality: it isn't a given. The unspoken bias is that I was heterosexual- apart from those I chose to tell ... the bias is that I was expected to initiate other people's awareness - educate

them - into my being lesbian. *A double-bind: it's problematic being lesbian and it's a lesbian person's responsibility to inform others of their sexual orientation.....*

Do heterosexuals feel obligated to inform others of their sexual orientation? They don't need to. It is a gay/lesbian problem, not a heterosexual problem ... so the conflicting feelings are probably not reducible to everyone knowing I'm lesbian ... everyone probably has conflicted feelings around sexuality; but lesbians/gays carry a great deal of social bias about sex."

Several participants interviewed identified the difficulty they found in constantly being placed in the position of 'educator' around issues of sexual orientation, and questioned the degree to which they felt the initiative was left with them to introduce alternate narratives of understanding and experience :

D: "As long as I was prepared to sit in the middle of the continuum not too far in either direction, then I was welcomed and accepted and a part of that group ... anytime that I would push beyond that there some tolerance but it was limited tolerance and there was little or no engagement of that ... certainly pro-active was not it, neutrality might even be too strong ... if I named something as 'oh well, I wonder how a queer feminist would respond to that ... oh well let me tell you! '... but it was always self-initiated if there was to be any conversation or dialogue or illustration around gay or lesbian issues, it was always self-initiated by the only person who identified themselves as queer ... yah."

2. The Dynamics of Internalisation :

Participants reported the impact of bias on a personal and interpersonal level also in terms of specific patterns of behaviour which have been identified in the literature as processes of internalization. By internalization, I mean the process whereby minority populations manage the perceptions, attitudes and behaviors of the dominant cultural group. This 'internalizing' results in the minority group colluding with this alternate construction of reality, which in effect, repudiates their own lived experience. Further to this, internalization also may result in the display of behaviors and attitudes in the minority group which reflect or re-enact patterns of interaction in the dominant culture. This is the function of stereotyping. This process of internalization was found to be at least operative in these descriptions of the impact of bias:

> C: "Yeah, well the one (peer) told me, she says, "You don't look like it." I says, "Well what does it look like?"
>
> *Well that's a social myth.*
>
> Right, it just came back to me. And I says, "Well okay maybe I don't."
>
> *Well what does it look like? Did he or she have a response to that?*
>
> Well just, you know they think the way we dress, the way our hair is. You look more like I am effeminate. I am more feminine than another one who would look like she said, "Well it looks like a dyke." And I said, "Well they're not all ... you know, I mean we're human ... we're people." And I look at this lady, she's married, she's got kids and she's you know. But you don't know. We can look just any...
>
> *Did you say this to her?*

Yeah."

One woman stated it this way:

D: "Well one thing I know is, right when we start talking about gays and lesbians, right away they think sex. Right away. That is like, hey, that ... that is what it is if you're gay or lesbian, it's sex right away. I says, "I don't think so.. Like, where is your mind, you know, and that's not what it is. That's what I mean by they need to get educated."

The experience of stereotyping was expressed in terms of social myths -the cultural and institutional form of bias.

B: " In my peer group there were social myths like homosexuality introduces an unnecessary complication into the already complicated sphere of sex or sexuality. That was one I distinctly remember coming across. Another one, was that homosexuals are a different species of being and therefore, some people feel they can't relate to that species ... like we are aliens ... the person expressing it didn't realize I was lesbian as far as I know. But they were expressing, "Oh, I couldn't work with gays, you know." .. So I'm assuming they see them as a different species and there's a wall which they can't get through so to speak."

Homophobia, as the psychological form of heterosexist bias earlier identified, was evident in this woman's story of her peer group interaction; set in the context of the Church's failure to include gays:

B: "I was using it as an illustration of the type of homophobic comments that I wanted him (peer) to stop using in my presence. Get this...what gets the Bishop upset... "What gets the Bishop upset?" and then he started listing all of these really funny things like "priests who sleep in on Sundays" and we both laughed at that and "priests who don't iron their vestments" and we both laughed at that. Then his voice got really slow and really sombre and angry and he said, "You know what really makes the Bishop upset? Priests who are homosexual." And there was no laughter at that at all. And then he went on to say, "Jim Ferry took five years off the Bishop's life." And that was the joke. That's a poor name for what it is, eh? But it started out to be a joke.

And in that scene when you were there listening to that, do you recall what your response was or how you felt?

My inner response was that the Bishop has taken many more years off Jim Ferry's life. and the lives of other people. I didn't ... I don't think that I said that out loud. I doubt that I said that out loud. I probably didn't say anything."

Several women mentioned the experience of being made to feel invisible in their interactions with others in the program. This experience of invisibility is often managed by internalization of the silence that they feel is perpetuated by the implicit bias. Feminist literature often speaks of the silencing of 'women's voice' and experience as a destructive psychological dynamic which blocks women's awareness of self and ability to integrate experience with self-knowing :

A: "It's not fair ... It's like dampening down the life spirits.

Dampening down the life spirits?

Yeah, your spontaneous natural urges to say who you are.

And it felt unfair?

Oh yes, unfair.

How did this experience affect you at the time?

I felt a definite ... what's the word ... I felt uncomfortable - a certain sense of uncomfortableness, a certain sense of having to sacrifice something ... A certain sense of displeasure or frustration like that. A conflict, a tension that isn't necessary or shouldn't be necessary ... it made me invisible, that's the word. "

One of the dynamics clearly identified by all subjects was the experience of feeling silenced. By this term, I understand them to mean that there was no room for an alternate discourse than the definitive norm, and that this process was active in both implicit and explicit ways in their estimation. As well, silencing could be other-imposed or self-imposed as a response to their environment.

D: "You might say it was a bias because it wasn't more explicitly open to gay and lesbian people. Many people say that's a bias ... was it an explicit bias in terms of saying "no" to us? I didn't pick that up in the educational unit. No. But I guess you could say there's implicit bias in the fact that lesbian/gay identity wasn't made explicit...

Do you have a metaphor or image that describes your experience of how that bias works?

Do you have a metaphor for silence.

A metaphor for silence?

I mean that wasn't very explicit at all. That gays and lesbians are here, that they may be among us. Or some explicit ... so the metaphor of silence or the word might be similar to silence, but it's like very cautious. Cautiousness. Silence for cautiousness about the whole issue."

This woman expressed this silencing as both an external and internal process in which her self-concept was altered by the power of the dominant groups' voice:

"Were you discouraged from discussing issues that you felt were relevant to your identity as lesbian?

B: Yes, because I never felt like I was heard. And when I tried to, a comment was always made, 'It's not what you're saying, it's the way you're saying it. Until you learn to say it right, we don't have to listen.' And that was made at any time that I was doing anything about issues of me speaking.

How did you make sense of that comment?

I just kept on trying. I thought there was something wrong with me, so I just kept on trying. And they'd say, 'No, no, you can't say it this way, you have to be like this.' And so the next time I would try to do it that way and then they'd say, 'No, no... no, no, you're still not right, you can't do it that way, you gotta do it this way.' And then I'd try that. I spent 11 to 13 weeks doing that ... Well in the end I figured out that they just didn't want me to speak."

3. Gender/Sexism

Several of the women related long stories of the impact of heterosexist bias not only in terms of their sexual orientation but also in terms of their gender. Although it is not my intent to provide an in-depth analysis of gender constructs and their relationship to issues of orientation, it felt appropriate to mention that in several program contexts women experienced bias both in terms of orientation and gender. In all stories shared, the women reported that their lesbianism was used as an excuse to express sexist sentiments towards them related to gender. This connection appears to underline the theoretical assertion that heterosexism is the ideological basis for homophobia (Herek).

B: "Okay, the supervisor... I think that she was under the impression that all lesbians hate men because this was put down to a man thing, that I had a real problem with men. I did have a problem with most of those men.

But for the reason that they were men?

No, no. I had no problem with one of the men, he was a follower. a nice little follower who didn't want to think, but on his own he was fine. He would side with the others and totally ignore me with the group, but that was the influence of the others. So, no, I don't think that that's a fair statement, but that did come across in the letter she wrote to me afterwards.

So she wrote you a letter afterwards and then she came across to you that one of the social myths is that you have a problem ... that lesbians have a problem with men and that you as a lesbian have a problem with men.

Well, she put that I have a problem with men that I should be dealing with that. And I think she got that idea because I'm lesbian, I didn't hear her say that to the other woman in the group, even though the other woman challenged sexism more than I did."

Another woman reflects,

A: This is good for me to reflect on it, a process because I have done less with those layers because of my bias of being queer has been so predominant that that's been in my face all the time. So the other layers, I feel I have less access to them. Now that I start to think about it, my experience as a woman, and I'll relate it to predominately the first unit. And I think some of that is because I have had a whole unit. This one still feels fairly immature in its development. Lots of stereotypical roles have been played out with issues like anger. In one scenario, one guy ripped me up, spit me out, chewed me up like a dog and I sat there flabbergasted at this anger, like literally blown away by this anger which felt pretty horrific just in terms of the content of stuff that was coming out. .... What was much harder for me to experience was the fact then that the group immediately went to him, male, very strong predominant male energy, and affirmed him for his use of anger because it got in touch with his feelings which had been emotionally unavailable to us all year, and so this was such a great thing. So again, that feeling of isolation ... I'm sitting there going 'what the hell is going on? I just got attacked, I just got abused, and you guys are affirming the abuser for being in touch with his feelings, excuse me,

I experience that as being inappropriate behaviour.' And this went on for the full hour and finally I knew it was like 5 to 5:00 and we were leaving in like five minutes and I said, 'Anybody even care that I'm in the room?' And I remember stating that really clearly because I had been completely left out of this whole process. Obviously I'm not affirming his anger, I'm as mad as hell at him. And I walked out of that room spitting angry because it just felt ... I just felt really violated ....

A: My expectation was that this was a safe circle and that we were going to be intentional about working through what had happened. Instead, what happened was the woman was left and the man who had all of this energy because he had just spit up all his testosterone, was affirmed for those qualities. And, know that you're getting me going on this, I can think of lots of things. I wrote about this extensively in my reflection the following week and my response back from my supervisor was that oftentimes the people who we find most difficult to be in a relationship with are the ones that we have the most to learn from. I'm not gonna deal with your issues of vulnerability and feeling violated. Those are girl's issues that you can deal with ... probably in therapy. What I'm going to say to you is, 'You have a lot to learn from this man who ... and it's his right to explode in your face when he feels darn well ready to.' That is a similar experience to the second unit in that, and it's not around explosive energy, but around male power. One person in our group of four is attempting for this to be an advanced unit. He's the white,

heterosexual male. The power imbalance that is evident within our structure is huge. He has tons of privilege that is given to him by the supervisors and by some members of the group because of his status."

One woman reported how she would tell the difference in her IPR group between bias slanted towards gender and bias directed at her sexual orientation :

"If you have experienced anti gay/lesbian behaviors or situations, have any of these experiences also been related to your gender?
C: I experienced many many difficulties around gender in that group ... so the way that I know for myself that it's slanted towards my sexual orientation, is that there was one other woman in the group ... so I look at where we came together, and then at where I was voicing something different but yeah ... this was not a healthy group...

So there was that layer of bias as well?

Yes...yes...very clear."

One woman reported her experience of gender bias in terms of how the group failed to contract around gender sensitive language :

B: "Language and gender for me go together.

Can you say more about that?

The other woman in the group mentioned that she had much difficulty with the word father for God ... the response was, 'we hear you (we were taught to say that) but we choose to use the term

father for God every time we refer to God' ... and that came quite early in the unit.

So the inclusivity of the language was an issue?...

Yes."

Cultural and Institutional Impact:

An aspect of heterosexism and its sytemic expression of homophobia is seen through the lens of cultural and institutional contexts these women have experienced being reflected in CAPPE programs:

4. CAPPE and the Church:

"Would you identify then that there is a bias that is present in the SPE process by virtue of our culture?

D: Yeah, I would say yes. There's a bias there. It's probably thought of very little. It's not thought of enough. It's assumed. But it's a bias ... the program didn't go out of the way to ... to what?... to affirm gays and lesbians. It didn't go out of its way. you know. Yeah, it reflected the culture."

One woman identified that the program context paralleled the dominant culture:

D: "In SPE, my being lesbian does make a difference - because of bias, prejudice. Not surprisingly, I discovered a few instances of feeling distinctly 'outside' the majority assumptions of heterosexuality. As in the larger social field, assumptions of heterosexuality dominated. "

Another participant told me a story of how the lesbian culture was not represented in the program curriculum, and how she experienced this cultural bias as "an invisible pressure":

> D: "We were making a collage ... we had to choose a fantasy picture of the person we wanted to spend the rest of life with ... I was not going to put a picture of a woman ... you know, I mean, I didn't have a picture of a friend with me or anything good to take from the mags, right, something that represented a male object ... There were no lesbian mags there, that wasn't an option ... so maybe that's another word - options. The options weren't there. Yeah that comes to mind. There was a cautiousness there. That was a loud ... for me ...I loud reminder that yeah, there's a certain amount of bias ... you just can't be as explicit as heterosexuals can be ...
>
> I made my own lesbianism invisible by not choosing to put the picture of a woman. And then when the ball returns, that's because the pressure was there for me not to put a picture ... the invisible pressure. "

This was again reiterated by two other women in terms of how things are 'named' in our culture:

> C: "The original question not be asked or the original request ... It shouldn't have been asked because it made me avoid giving an honest answer... so I'm assuming the person who asked the request was assuming we were all heterosexuals ... maybe if the person who asked said, 'Okay, I realize that some people may be

here who are lesbian or gay, so please be honest. Be yourself,' that might have helped.

Okay, so if there had been some naming ... of the fact that people might have different identities ...

they didn't ... no one went out of their way. It'd be fair to say that generally speaking people don't go out of their way to include lesbians/gays etc. ... it's a subtle form of bias. "

and

A: "I would say that there was a consistent, stable, systemic discrimination. It wasn't named, it wasn't ever blatant and there were hum public attempts to name otherwise, you know ... for example the day I came out, there was 'oh yah yah that's great' ... that kind of thing ... but the systemic, the stable reality was that hum, I guess, the bias comes in the un-naming, the bias in the un-defining, the bias comes in the unwillingness to engage in the very essence of who I offered ... to them ... who I said I want to be in relationship with you, and they said no, I don't want to be in relationship with that part of you ... so that's what felt like the bias - I'll be in relationship with any other part of you that is familiar to me but I don't know this part of myself or you and so that felt like ... and it felt really consistent ... throughout ... it didn't feel like one person or one supervisor was more discriminatory than others, it felt consistent throughout the group. Which I would say is probably an accurate sampling of church congregational life ..."

In this last case, the participant felt strongly that there was a similar or parallel process of cultural and institutional heterosexism and homophobia present in the Church which was also reflected in the SPE program.

> C: "... that's part of the issue though for gay and lesbians in CAPPE perhaps is that they don't know who the others are ... just like in the Church. It parallels the experience in the Church."

Several of the participants also made mention of the relationship they experienced as lesbian within the Christian Church that they served. It was common for the women to draw parallels of their experience of bias in the Church with their experience of bias within their supervised pastoral education contexts with CAPPE, and to draw the conclusion that personal and vocational safety was a primary concern.

> D: "In the community that I was in, the religious community that I was in, I would have never ever said a word because I'm sure I would have been kicked out that door - that I was positive. They already liked me. I didn't want them to hate me. But my friend, she's in a religious community and she's out. She's not out to the whole community but she's out in the hierarchy and a few of them, sure they accept her. Of course because she's celibate. And as long as that you know keeps up, that's fine. So there's nothing wrong with that. You're still faithful to your vows and stuff like that. But just the word in the community I was in, just the word lesbian, just the word homosexual, I mean they're so homophobic it's unbelievable. It's sad. No I would have never, never, ever mentioned anything for my protection."

Others responded to the suggestion that there may be a conflict for CAPPE vis a vis the institutional Church by describing their strategies for survival:

> *"Do you see any conflict between CAPPE as an organization and the denomination, _____? In terms of the fact that you're lesbian, does that create a dilemma in any way?...Well, I'm thinking that for instance, CAPPE requires a mandate for ministry from your church in order to be certified in CAPPE. Okay, so there's an intersection point between an institution which so far you've experienced as lesbian affirming space and an institution that is not lesbian affirming space. So do you have a sense of what it would be like to go through that kind of a process where those two institutions have, at least in your experience, very different takes on your orientation?*
>
> C: They would have to be aware of my orientation first of all.
>
> *So are you telling me that it would force you to remain in the closet?*
>
> Probably. Probably it would. I've heard and I've read too much about some people in that sense, like coming out that way and being really, really hurt and I said, "I don't need that."
>
> *Now are you saying really, really hurt by the ____?*
>
> Yes."

5. Peer relationships

One student who was openly lesbian within her unit described how institutional and cultural bias impacted her process in the peer group:

B: "If you go to an interview board and they hum decline your offer of ministry based on the fact that you are homophobic, that's the end of the process ... I had no idea that when I disclosed the first day to the first person, that he had twice been before the interview board in his denomination and twice they had declined his offer of ministry because he was homophobic ... and he had a bishop who cancelled that whole process and let him in anyways ... so I had no idea that there would be people coming there from denominations where the denomination would say no, we don't accept this attitude here - and yet, he would be on the road to ministry. So that was a surprise yeah...

Do you think that affected the group dynamics at all for you?

Yes, because he was extremely outspoken, and he was carrying around a lot of homophobia, and I was the person who was lesbian ... and it didn't help that we were paired up for absolutely everything ... we were always together ... so he couldn't get away from me any more than I could get away from him ... during group time ... hum ... when I went to the supervisor of the supervisor and said and spoke to him about this, he did say that if the supervisor's denomination didn't include gays and lesbians, then the supervisor really didn't have an obligation to be supportive of gays or lesbians either ... that the supervisor is allowed to hold the values of their particular denomination and so whether that's a piece in the puzzle or not, I certainly didn't feel supported ...

So is it fair to say, then, that there was a religious bias playing itself out in the group?

Yes ... yeah ... because the one man said he had the support of the Church, even though he didn't, and he felt he had the support of the Bible in how he was going to treat me and think about me ..."

Stories such as these also demonstrate in quite intense ways for the subject, the negative impact of bias on collegial relationships in CAPPE :

E: "but also he spoke as the keynote one evening (Svend Robinson) and hearing chatter about that afterwards and some people leaving because he was there.

Because he was gay?

Because he was gay, so I just shook my head. I couldn't figure it .... I guess that's where I feel angry when I think about that but also sad and I don't feel terribly safe talking to that person who just walked out the door you know. I'm getting a little discouraged and back away instead of having a conversation with that person...

So it doesn't aid in the development of collegial relationships?

No!. No. "

and , "The experience from Hell" :

"How would you describe your peer experience in terms of bias based on sexual orientation?

B: The word "hell" comes to mind, but I don't think that's what you want ... I felt like Jonah who was being thrown overboard. That was about half way through the unit.

So was Jonah thrown into hell?

I don't think so. That's not the story ... I feel stupid over that one ... was thrown into hell. Jonah was thrown into space where he didn't know what was happening and why it was happening. It was just totally confusing, the feeling of drowning and the disorientation and all of that. Whereas hell is something that I would never like to go back into. Jonah eventually, you know, would be there again, hell. .. hell didn't feel very good. And then the night, that Friday night when the unit ended, the dream that I had was of being resurrected. So some good came out of it and I didn't stay in hell, but on thinking back on it, it was just ... it was a crazy making experience because I always thought if I just did it right I'd be accepted. Until ... until the day before the end of the program, after they'd stood there ... they stood there and yelled at me and said some really nasty things in their evaluation of me, and read them to my face ...

Section 2

Identity Information Management Strategies:

A significant focus that emerged from the interviews related to the way in which these women were able to creatively sustain and protect their identities in response to the various forms of bias they experienced. The pervasive assumptive world view described in the previous section makes it hard to see overt homophobia. This study suggests that, with the notable exception of one woman's experience, bias based on sexual orientation took primarily covert forms based as it was in the normative values of heterosexuality.

An additional factor that was suggested as an obstacle to identifying homophobia is a politically "liberal tolerance" attitude of colleagues who "wouldn't dare say they don't understand". It is ironic, though, that the pressure to be politically correct and to maintain one's liberalism may, in fact, reinforce homophobia by limiting the experiences that would make conscious the underlying personal biases that do exist.

The inability to live authentically disturbs each one as well. In all cases, participants have relied on a variety of strategies to manage information about their identity. Even when one is "'out" to others, there is always an additional encounter where one is placed in the situation of having to inform someone new. Being lesbian places a woman in the position of always being assumed to be heterosexual unless and until she is able to disclose her true sexual identity. This dynamic is the basis of the strategy of "passing". Those who

cannot "pass" with integrity must name who they are and take the risk that the person to be told will be accepting or hostile or merely dismissive. This is how a lesbian woman is always placed in the position of being "other" to the dominant culture of her society.

Management strategies, therefore, are a source of conflict and psychic pain, but are indispensable. This was true to varying degrees for all participants of the study. Whether one passes because "I can't be bothered anymore with trying to explain myself", or intentionally never lives in the same area as she works; whether one limits selectively who will become part of her social network or uses psychological defences such as denial and repression to compartmentalise her experience, all participants identify use of multiple strategies to manage information about their identities.

All women in the study were 'closeted' in the sense that none of them lived out their existence as lesbian totally in the open at each level of relational discourse. All expressed feelings of ambivalence, sadness and frustration in this regard. "And that's the response of isolation: if I'm denying the need to get to know this part of me then I'm denying the need to get to know me .. it doesn't feel full of honesty and integrity, it feels like its full of ... a liberal jacket thrown on ... my voice and my actions aren't congruent."

6. Coming Out Processes:

It should be noted that while no participant offered excuses or apologies for their need to protect themselves by "closeting", each was also able to identify the positive effects of successfully managing to "come out". *"Coming out" is defined here as the ongoing developmental process of congruence between*

the personal and social world of the subject. One woman expressed it this way:

E: "More affirming, more ... I was more at ease with the people that I would meet because knowing who I am and accepting who I am. And my self-esteem shot up more and I wasn't afraid anymore. The fear just went out the window. So yeah, in that sense ... of course there were ... I was anxious sometimes and stuff because that's only natural, but most of the time, I was very, very comfortable with myself knowing that finally, I know who I am.
I don't care what other people think. I know who I am. And it was ... I can't say easier ... easier than before, but I was more open ..."

7. On Passing:

"Passing" is a term used to describe the identity information management process whereby a lesbian or gay person might remain closeted by allowing assumptions (behavioural, cultural) regarding their sexual orientation to remain unchallenged.

E: "... many times I'm at the point where I just don't bother because I'm fed up with ... you know ... like with my disability ... I've gotten to the point where long ago, I'm tired of saying to people that I have a loss because it doesn't seem to make a difference you know...

... *another of what sounds like could be common or familiar to you in just living in the world.*

Yeah. Another way of accommodating to the status quo you could say. Which happens to people other than gays and lesbians, so it's

not as if that's the only issue that brings forward that kind of frustration, disappointment, whatever.

So how has that experience affected you since then?

Well, it just reinforces the fact that the status quo is like that. "

There is a certain passivity which accompanies "passing" as a management strategy :

A: "If the majority will be explicit about sexual needs/relationships - honest social discourse - without targeting a minority, then I'd feel freer to identify with the majority. I'm part of a targeted group; I feel targeted. It's implicit in experiences like SPE; I'm not free to open myself under such assumed circumstances; not because specific others will accept, but because others won't. it's the majority who won't, not the minority who will."

E: " Okay, maybe it'd be fair to say in the second unit, I was not prepared in any depth to discuss my being lesbian ... not that I would hide it or avoid it, but to introduce it, it seemed to me it would probably take me in a direction I didn't want to go. So I let people think what they want. And I was quite prepared to tell individual people on a one to one but not fully in a group."

8. The Process of Selection:

Individuals typically selected those whom they would trust with this precious information about themselves. The criteria for this selection process repeatedly revolved around issues of emotional safety; that is, the risks

involved in relational acceptance, belonging, respect and trust that privacy would be respected.

The process of selection involved such factors as whether the context was an individual or group situation. Levels of safety were determined by such factors as the length of time a person had been a member of the group; whether the process of coming out had already taken place with other important groups within the person's safety net ; what degree of choice was important to the subject in regards to such personal information, or who was specifically involved in the disclosure.

A: "maybe a good third of the first unit I wasn't out to the first unit ... so it felt really incongruent with how I was trying to be present in the group, hum ... but it was also a process where I wasn't out to my
family ... I was out in my women's community and close friendships but not, not in the unit ..."

E: "If someone had said to me bluntly, "Are you lesbian?, I would have said "Yes."... but I wouldn't have brought it forward to the group ....

Are you saying that you were selective?

Yes. I think much of it has to do with knowing a person and I shared with those who I came to know, I didn't share with those I didn't come to know very well. Because I didn't talk to them, I didn't seem to have a rapport, I'm probably the only student who wasn't

drawn to some people, to others I was. It's a very personal kind of thing."

C: "I'm more aware now - continue to be so - that I choose to keep self-respect by deciding who knows I'm lesbian. I'm not aware that straights feel obliged to tell others that they are straight ... My obligation is to those I choose to tell, not to open myself to possible problematic situations."

C: " I don't think I ever experienced anything hostile or too, too blatant. I think a couple ... well yeah, a few times in that residency year, this one fellow, he might have been gay I don't know, but his mother was lesbian. And he was quite angry about that and so he would be fairly ... I guess he was fairly open about how he felt about that. So that affected my thinking too I guess. It made me also feel I couldn't say anything, that that would be dangerous because he might equate me with his mother and her lover. That was about as blatant as it got I think. I think there was an underlying sense of sadness for me especially in the first few ... first few units. I mean, it was better as I went along and I came out to a few people and to my supervisor, but underneath there was a real sense of sadness in ... what's the word ... discouragement ... that I couldn't for whatever reason. And I'm not perfect. As I said, I have enough history behind me to be secretive but wishing that that part of me that I'd come to discover, which was so beautiful in a sense, wasn't ... I couldn't talk about it. So it was very discouraging and sad for me. And then I struggled with that because in my family I

kept it a secret for a long, long time. And that didn't ... that didn't feel good. And yet I didn't feel that necessarily the SPE place was the time and place to do it, not at all ... it wasn't safe."

9. Implicit/Explicit Rules:

Participants often gauged their response to how they observed their peers in the program functioning according to implicit, systemic "rules" :

E: "Well, there was a discouragement in the sense of it wasn't explicitly encouraged, but I never came across an explicit 'don't talk about lesbianism or homosexuality' ... not blatant, one might say it's in the atmosphere. Because it's not openly said, one could say that's a discouragement. You are not being invited to 'come in' you know .....

Do you think that made a difference to you in terms of whether or not you wanted to be open in the unit?

I think, did I hold back because it wasn't more explicit? I don't know. It makes sense to think if it was very explicit, I would be saying, 'Yes, yes, I want to be'... and I didn't say 'Yes, yes, I'm lesbian' possibly because it wasn't explicit .... It makes sense to me if more people were saying' I'm lesbian', then I would be saying, 'I'm lesbian too'."

A: "in that initial hour long IPR session it was well that's fine ... that's fine that you're lesbian ... that's perfectly acceptable and fine ... now let's deal with your anger with ____ who was the supervisor ... and then basically from that point on it was never mentioned

again ... so what felt like this HUGE hurdle for me, that I came blundering over in a fit of rage and tears and tons of emotion ... and kind of sat there naked in front of my peers was then not an issue ... for anyone ... so much not an issue that we're not going to talk about it ever again ... and instead of it feeling like an acceptance or an appreciation or an understanding or 'hum you know I have a high level of acknowledgment so I don't need to name it all the time with you' you can feel like that - it felt like 'I don't really know what to do with that ... I have some cranial acceptance of that because if I don't I'm going to be accused of discrimination ..."

E: "If the experience had been more explicitly inclusive of lesbians/gays I'm assuming I could have participated a little more explicitly as a lesbian woman; but I'm not sure. If sexuality per se was an issue open for discussion - its place in SPE/ministry/ counselling - then I'd probably be more explicitly involved. But making homosexuality responsible for its own problematic - like putting blacks and Jews into marginalized spaces - puts the bias in the wrong place. The problem is sexuality, not homosexuality ... but of course, homosexuality is made the problem!!"

10. On The Criteria For "Safe Space":

There are also rules, both implicit and explicit, which determine what criteria is being used as a basis for disclosure. This was often identified by the phrase "safe space"; which implied that observations as to how others were treated offered generalised information as to the level of emotional safety in the group.

B: "If it's safe space, then I can be myself. If it's not safe space then I wouldn't even try.

So could you clarify what safe space is for you?

Safe space is where there is respect for differences.

And how would you know that in concrete terms? Whether there's respect or not.

I'd judge peoples' comments, and how they treated each other in the process ... I thought during the initial interview, I felt like it would be safe space. I don't know if it was named as safe space, but I thought that my supervisor was open to people being themselves, and her supervisor as well.

Were there any obvious signs that the environment or program that you were going into was lesbian positive?

No. (laugh) I went over all the walls, over all the little sayings."

11. Compartmentalisation and the Dichotomy of Public/Private:

More subtle to define, the strategy of making psychic distance around issues which are threatening to one's security were expressed. Often, the process of the interview itself would spark new awareness of having created these mental compartments for survival :

E: "I didn't see myself participating as a lesbian woman. I didn't put the two together ... learning what I learned and being lesbian didn't connect. That's the word. There's no causal relation for me ... I wasn't concerned about being recognised as being gay. It wasn't an issue for me so to speak. And I don't remember any instances

where I felt I had to in any sense retreat from my being lesbian. It just ... in a sense it just ... it was like my nationality, I didn't figure. "

Psychic distancing was also accomplished by defining the boundaries of the public and private domains. This 'splitting' occurred on different levels of the women's experience as well :

D: "SPE was not a problem for me as a lesbian woman. I didn't expect to be granted any special status; I received "public" acceptance as a woman and "private" acceptance as a lesbian woman. This is a norm in our society, about sexuality, and SPE reflected it."

A: "At the time, it paralleled my own experience, it paralleled my feelings of ... hum this is my world, this was my circular world, and there were parts of it that I was really free and open in myself in, in my women's community, in my chorus, in experiences in the queer community, where that was really comfortable ... my other reality was there was a whole block of family I wasn't out to and that that felt impenetrable... there was a whole block of Church and work that didn't feel that I had a lot of personal integrity because there was so much that was fragmented and I was hum really isolated in my own world ... an image that's there is that of the medicine wheel and that it's circular and somewhat bound ... I'm not sure if that's the word ... but yes bound together but there's distinctive intentionally ... and that's what group felt like and in some ways continues to feel like ... we were bound together by some

commonalties, by some commitment to be there, but there was a lot of boundaries within that circle, and a lot of commitment to go into some areas and not to go into other areas ... and it felt very distinctive, and hum and cross-sectioned and that it wasn't a free flow within that circle."

12. Group Process And Communication:

One subject offered a general critique of S.P.E. when discussing what communication factors were helpful or unhelpful to the process of coming out in group. This often determined the level of safety - a primary requisite for identity management.

E: "But I found a model of communication, intimate sharing of communication to be very helpful and in that process a huge amount of accountability. So people needed to, and were called to accountability for the words that they voiced. What I find unhelpful about that is we set this up in a model in SPE and we do little, or my experience is in my groups, we've done little to take that out into the community or into other relationships. So we formulate a language and a style of communication in this group that isn't transportable anywhere else."

Section 3

Supervised Pastoral Education Programs

The third area on which this study focuses, relates to the ways in which lesbian women experience bias being 'transported' into the structure, process and content of supervised pastoral education programs. Professional/ vocational choices, relationships with colleagues and with supervising authorities, as well as with clients and the Church population in general, are routinely evaluated and re-evaluated in terms of their risk potential and are an ongoing source of insecurity, uncertainty and stress. Several of the women were able to identify *the isomorphic process* existing between different systems in which they were engaged vocationally; for example, the clinical training program, the Church, and their workplace.

Four of the five women were already either ordained, seminary students or functioning within the structures of the professional leadership of the Church, when they became aware of their sexual orientation. One "came out" to herself alone during the process of SPE. The fifth participant stated that her orientation was directly related to her vocational choice not to pursue a religious/pastoral vocation. This person chose to work in a secular setting. Despite the psychological and emotional pressures of living precariously, it is interesting to note that three participants held strong convictions about, and prophetic expectations of, their role in the Church.

> D: "So yeah, I agree with you around the prophetic and yet I don't feel terribly bold about that quite yet, but I think I'm moving and what I was gonna say before was that within the SPE process and as I go along, that I'm becoming stronger in expressing who I am

because now I have a vision that when I am in relationship (to the Church) again, I want to openly say and be safe about it (my sexual orientation) as much as possible."

A: "The learning process in the second unit was not compartmentalised, but structured. I can't think of another word. The distinction is now for me, once I've kind of gone through some of those structures, gone through some of the compartments; I don't find them helpful anymore. And I find that the place I'm in now, I couldn't use that same process for the next stage of my journey. I can't choose to use that structure, compartmentalised model anymore. I think there were advantages for the place that I was at then. The disadvantage for me was the ability to separate all of these feelings, put them in the little slots and all of the experiences, and when I was in CAPPE, it was fine to pull those feelings out and examine them, but that's where they remained. It wasn't a process of integration to say how am I going to experience this in my relationships in my family, in my relationships at work. It was all very much isolated to this particular CAPPE experience. And the learning very quickly was you can pull those little slips out and see what they're like, then you need to remain, keep those isolated within yourself within this unit, within this group."

D: "I guess it keeps them quiet at least, or quieter. It doesn't affirm who they are. Or even ... what's the word ... acknowledged that they're a part of CAPPE, the CAPPE life. So I guess in that sense,

not shunned, but not openly accepted. If you parallel that with the Church, I go to a Church that is an affirming congregation because I can't ... I don't feel accepted or at home in any ____Church that I've ever been in and lots of ____ as well, but so I went and sought that out myself because it's not addressed in many, many Churches. So the same with SPE."

13. Curriculum/Resources:

One of the primary areas where participants were able to identify bias, related to the accessibility of resources on sexual orientation issues. This was interpreted as a covert form of heterosexism and a 'sin of omission' on the part of those responsible for program curriculum and content.

Did you have any trouble finding resources directly related to sexual orientation available in the program curriculum ?

E: "I wouldn't say I had trouble. They weren't blatantly obvious ... There were very little, but there were some. Very little though. What I did was ask my friend if she had any. She has a library full. So I could get more from her than the library.

Do you think it would be beneficial to the program context to have more resources?

Well for their education too. So they would know more .... more about gays and lesbians and I don't know if they would access it or not, you know, I don't think they would go and get themselves some ... But I think that it would be very, very, very good and I think it would be very good too that they would have topics on that too."

A: "Yes, and in specific ... an experience today, we got today our reading list, our optional reading list to do our book review, so the first thing I do is scan over it to see where the lesbian issues are in the suggested reading list. Nothing! Notta! Zilch! Again, sin by omission that it's just not prevalent.

And what message does that give you?

Not important, read this one. Read Minister as Diagnostician because to be able to diagnose is really important. To be lesbian, ahhh ... not so important. The lesbian as diagnostician!"

B: "I would have preferred that my issues were treated with the same respect that everyone else's were ... around curriculum that queer issues were a reality whether they were in verbatim or theological reflections or in IPR sessions, that it wasn't something that I exclusively had to name all of the time. I would have felt a great deal of support if someone else had brought up some gay/lesbian issues, as well as to be intentional about naming do we as a group have an area that we need to gain some knowledge in.."

C: "I don't recall there ever being any resources at all on gay/lesbian issues.

So in the physical context of the program or in the curriculum context of the program?

Unless I introduced it, it wasn't there."

14. Impact of Supervisory Relationship:

Each participant stressed the importance of the supervisory role, and the supervisor's relationship to them as a primary and significant aspect of their experience of bias based on sexual orientation. In most cases, the experience was reported as negative, dismissive or destructive of the participant's process of integration, with one exception. One woman reported that her supervisor(s) were very affirming towards her in "coming out" to them, and in navigating the process of self-disclosure within the peer group. However, this did not negate the fact that in other respects, bias still presented itself in the program context in other ways, specifically in terms of the cultural and institutional aspects.

> B: "I think the supervisor plays a large role in changing the way things are in that in my first unit it was everyone's first experience ... So the process was new to everyone, and the supervisor had a high amount of power in the group. So if he/she named that we need to have a learning session on queer theology, or gay/lesbian issues in the Church, I mean, it would have happened unquestioned."

> E: "I didn't feel excluded ... or I didn't feel ... I didn't feel I necessarily had to avoid the issue."

> A: "... And so I was naming in there some of the power imbalance that I felt and it could have been word for word, the response back that I got from my supervisor was exactly the same as that of last

year's supervisor. That this is the person that you have the most to learn from. There's obviously some wisdom in here somewhere. But I'm not quite sure what it is. But it strikes me that I get the same response back year after year.

And what's the message in that for you?

That they're right and you need to learn from them."

A: " I came out to my supervisor in one of my written reflections and I fretted all weekend about how this would be received, what would happen next time I saw him ... very unsure as to what his reactions would be like ... and so had supervision the following week when I was in ... I was really distraught and really angry by his response which was that of '_____, this is not therapy, this is not a therapeutic group, and I suggest you take this to your therapist' ... I felt really left out by him, abandoned by him, that he was no longer prepared to engage with me as the individual ... that this felt like an issue? this was a queer issue for therapy? rather than a recognition of a part of my personality, part of me, a part of my identity.

So what was the message you got from that?

It was 'I'm not going to deal with this your sexuality.. I feel too uncomfortable with it, I don't know what to do with it ... and it's not welcome here ... Go cure yourself and fix yourself in therapy ...'

I would have preferred that he be honest and say 'this frightens the hell out of me' if that was his experience or to say ' I don't know anything about this, but I'll journey with you and I'll name my fears, I'll be honest and engage with you.'"

D: "I guess I first of all should say within that first unit, my supervisor was ... was bisexual and it was in that ... in that group where he talked fairly openly about himself that I began to feel some strength and did actually, I did confide in him later on, I think after the unit was done, not before. But he was quite instrumental in ... I don't know ... changing my ... or helping me process my theology and sexuality. The integration of that ... was quite ... he had quite a profound way I think of widening my understanding of who I was.

So are you saying that in a way the role the supervisory relationship, when it was affirming in a vulnerable way, made the space safer for your own growth and development?

I admired the fact that he did come out part way through, but at the same time it really caused a lot of pain and difficulty for some of the people who were very conservative or fundamentalists or whatever. And I think spoiled that relationship because they couldn't, they couldn't deal with it or they didn't believe in sexual orientation or that there was anything different from heterosexuality. So I mean he was okay with it but I think it really ... even though he became vulnerable and that he in a sense wrecked some of the relationships with his students. And I guess that proved the fear in me too, that I thought oh what if I had come out in the group, that I think I would have ... I don't know what would have happened, but it wouldn't have been handled very positively and I wouldn't have been sure that it wouldn't have been sure that it wouldn't have been talked about. Also there was a fellow ____ in that group. He was very conservative and I think I trusted him, but I wouldn't have for

whatever reasons, I didn't want him to know about it."

B: "At this point, at this point because I'm at a different place as far as understanding groups and understanding group dynamics I would say that a facilitator, a supervisor, has a large part to play in that and I saw my supervisor as being very passive, watching the dynamics but not entering into a ... to encourage them in one way or another but making note of them and uhmmm I think we could have all learned if we'd all been open to that and it would take a lot of skill at facilitating to do that ... to have a really open process, we didn't have an open process ... we had the loudest one creates the process ..."

"I was off thinking about if the supervisor hadn't said, several times, that she was worried because she only had three units to do and she was being reviewed and she would have to be able to talk about some conflict, and in her first unit there was absolutely no conflict whatsoever. (In her first unit) people sat her down and said, "We don't want to have conflict. We just want to have the unit, we're all friends". And they partied afterwards together, you know had picnics together as a group. And she was worried that the second unit would be the same way. That she wouldn't ever have a situation with conflict and that was fairly important. I'm just wondering how much that played into me confronting the person who kept giving me the jabs in the third or fourth week ... I was just wondering how much that had to do with me confronting him in the group and not just letting it all slide.

So, if I understand what you're thinking right, because you knew the supervisor was looking for a conflict you were going to provide her with one.

A real good one. Yeah ... yeah, I can accommodate at times. I might have been accommodating. I can remember thinking about it, should I or shouldn't I ... well it would be good for the unit."

"I had one supervisor tell me that I couldn't possibly be lesbian, because, after all, he was attracted to me! "

15. Selection Process:

Participants offered a variety of responses to how their orientation impacted their experience of the selection process:

D: "It didn't really make any difference to me ... I wasn't out to myself then ..."

E: " ... I don't recall ever thinking about putting the two together, my orientation and my acceptability for the program .. I don't recall feeling nervous about that or anything ..."

".....what informs the selection process?

A: It has a reputation of being hard to get into because it is only one day a week. And so that was for me a conscious decision to not come out to them in the interview process because I did not want that to negatively affect my chances of getting into the group. And it was a conscious decision. I hate the fact that that's true, but it is. I don't know them from a hole in the wall. It's a _____.

... all I know is their Church history and their historic and current realities on women being ordained and lesbians being ordained having predominant positions in the Church."

16. Evaluative Component:

There was a similar response to the question regarding evaluations:

E: "Some people would refrain from saying, ' I'm gay,' because, yes, they're concerned about the power and the use of that to possibly discriminate.

Is that something that you were concerned of for yourself?

I'm not sure, I don't think so. I never consciously said to myself I'm withholding this information because they might use it against me. But I was in a program with an openly affirming supervisor."

B: "Well, hell in that I felt really alone and unsupported, and I'm misunderstood ... Hell is in there being no real relationship with me as a person.

So your image has moved from safe space to hell?...And it sounds like in both cases, what you're mentioning is the lack of respect and the way that you were treated. Is that a fair statement?

Well it was their impression of me in the unit and they each had to give one. And they felt that the benign guy was just benign, the woman was supportive in that she said that I made her question things that she hadn't questioned before and shine some light on some things, but the rest of them were very negative. I don't remember phrases either. Just really negative, really hard for me to

sit there and then realize that I hadn't said anything about any of them that couldn't have been printed on paper. So ... and then realising after that that I would never be part of the group. And I couldn't do things right. So I guess I was taking a lot of that on as my own ... as my inability to relate to the group, but I don't think that was it really.

So, did you have any experiences in other groups that could tell you that you can function in groups? That you could relate in groups?

Yes, I've never had a group like that ... never had ... I've never been ... I'm usually the nice person in the group, kind of supportive, and we all kind of go along together. So this was very, very different.

I think we're back at the image of hell.

Yeah."

17. Gay/Lesbian Positive Space/Safety:

Conversations with these women reverted again and again to the issue of safety, and finding safe space in CAPPE programs. There was a definite sense that the majority of these women did not feel that SPE programs provided sufficient safety for open personal and professional integration processes.

" I hear you saying that if there had been more openly lesbian or gay peers in your unit, that you might have been an encouragement to you to be more open about your own identity in a group...

C: I don't think I would want to be in an exclusively gay positive space ... okay, I have friends, fellow students who are not gay or lesbian and I would not want to be cut off from them if going into a mixed school simply because of being lesbian means that ... That's why I would like to have their presence because of their input and camaraderie ... I don't want a ghetto."

D: "I think that gay and lesbian people and particularly gay and lesbians in the Church or some kind of Church or faith context, and I don't necessary mean Church, institutional Church, we're craving for some kind of environment that is safe but more than safe. That is affirming, that is desiring to look at identifying issues that are in the gay and lesbian community; bisexual, transgendered community."

"Could you say a little bit more about safe space and how you understand safe space and what wouldn't be safe space?
B: Well, like I guess as part of my coming out process too, I was ... had a great fear of ... fear that what I said wouldn't be confidential and that stemmed from my own history I guess about not talking to my parents about that or about my siblings that only within a psychotherapy analysis group or one on one did I feel that that was safe. I was safe there but I don't think within my Church or in my SPE group, or many of my friends, I don't t think that I felt safe. There was only one or two friends that I confided in and in therapy. So that's what I would call safe space.

And what made it safe: when it was safe, what made it safe?

I think a complete trust in that person, the therapist or my two closest friends. I trusted that they wouldn't spread that any further. And I don't think I felt safe in my SPE group in that way as I went through the years too, but I can tell you about that later."

18. Impact with Clients/Patients:

Some women interviewed offered insights regarding the impact of their experiences as lesbian with clients/patients. This was offered both in terms of their choice as to how much information about themselves they would disclose and what perceived impact this had with their clients; and the reverse - when a client disclosed to them. Much more study in this area would be helpful to clinicians concerned with the impact of therapist self-disclosure.

"I wonder if they would know, you know, if that person in front of me would know that I am lesbian. I wonder how they would be if they would still feel at ease or comfortable like they did or ... I always ask myself that question while I was with a client.

And how do you think that that affected you in terms of your role?

It affected me in a positive way because I know I was doing a good job, and I said, "What difference would that make to myself?" you know, and I said "It wouldn't change how I am" even if they did know or not. It doesn't matter.

And if they knew and they had a negative reaction?

Well, that would be their stuff, it wouldn't be mine. Like I wouldn't ... wouldn't get upset all over it. Because I know that person wouldn't ... doesn't understand or they would need time to think about it.

So you might be able to use that knowledge in a positive way for their growth if given the chance?

Yup."

"I only had one instance where the client was explicitly saying he was gay. The access to resources for this client were helpful theoretically, but as I say there was only one instance. So practically, no. Practically no, theoretically yes."

19. Parallel Experiences with Other Minorities:

Participants were asked to express how or whether they saw any parallels between their experience of bias based on their orientation, and experiences of marginalization due to other factors, such as gender or disability. The purpose of this inquiry was to help assess if there were situations in which other factors besides sexual orientation played a role in their perception of bias. Respondents were able to identify layers of bias, and handled this by using *a values priority system* in determining how to respond in any given situation.

E: "My invisible disability and my invisible sexual orientation, I don't see them as linked although it is a good analogy ... I don't consider the one a disability though ... my sexuality doesn't necessarily have to be part of the process for me.

Your disability does?

No. Although probably more so, yeah I think so ... I mean ... as I understand anyway, there are many instances where your sexuality is irrelevant. And some I guess when your disability is irrelevant. Can I be me without being openly lesbian? I think so because I don't identify me solely with being lesbian ... yeah, I need to _____more often than I need to be acknowledged as lesbian"

A: "So I'm white, that gives me power, that gives me privilege, that gets me into CAPPE. That's where for me the bias comes in. And the positive comes from a very negative process, for the selection. And that's because my experience of CAPPE has been exclusively white. I mean we live in the most multicultural center of the world, and they've been exclusively white. Even though both units started out with a full six candidates and that still remained white even though one ended up being four, still when we were a full six, I was still always white Canadian ... so that tells me something my experience of CAPPE and my experience of my supervisors selecting the groups they have ... So they've been very selective in putting this particular group of people intentionally. "

"You asked them some questions around reflecting on racism, sexism and homophobia?

B: Yeah ... on all of the "isms"... and where they might be. And there was total silence. And I just didn't jump in because I asked the question. And I decided I could meditate if they were going to do that, I would meditate. So I did that for a while and then I gave a sheet with illustrations, and there was only one illustration on the

whole sheet that had to do with heterosexism and it was the comment about teen suicide being so prevalent among kids who are questioning their sexual orientation. And one of the people, one of the men in the group, said that he didn't believe that statistic, that I was just making that up. And then the other woman said, "It's a statistic, for crying out loud, a statistic. She's not turning this into something. It's a statistic." So in that instance I think that's the only ... the only time I can remember right now, where we concretely were talking in group about anything to do with sexual orientation."

20. Social Context of Bias:

Interviews documented the need in CAPPE for the inclusion of gay and lesbian issues in training programs and to confront the lack of awareness of, and sensitivity to, the culture of lesbians and gays due to the dominance of heterosexist bias:

.....in response to question regarding openness of program to partners/family of lesbian/gay people:

E: "'Let's just assume that everybody is straight.'

Was it assumed that you were either heterosexual or single?

I guess, I would guess that it was ... it was assumed that nobody was gay or lesbian in the group.

Is that a form of bias?

Yup, I would say so. I mean, my heart aches sometimes when it doesn't have to be just in SPE although its quite evident there, but even the Church Christmas dinner that's coming up ... I don't think

people automatically think of you as being lesbian and you might have someone that you might want to bring ... it certainly wasn't my experience in CAPPE."

..... *to go out to a gay positive space for a social evening:*

A: "I attempted that in my first unit and it went over like an absolute lead balloon. And I said that we were going out to celebrate the end of the year, we were going to a pub, have lunch, have a few drinks and so I said, 'why don't we go down to _____, I know this great spot.' And the terror in the room was visible.

D: And this was after nine months of being with these people, being in relationship with these people. And the unwillingness to even venture into a new space ... it's disappointing to feel that you can't come into my natural comfort zone to experience my reality as well ... the isolation "

B: "The three men that were married talked about their wives a lot. I can go on and on about each of their wives. I don't recall anybody else talking about a significant other in group. No one else, the supervisor wasn't married, the benign boy wasn't married, the other woman wasn't married, I wasn't married. The three men that I considered to be really homophobic were all married. I don't know that anyone else would have had somebody at a party like that. I don't know.

In the context of that SPE unit, was that named? Was there an invitation to their people's friends, partners, significant others to be part of those conversations?

No."

21. Group Process:

Again, the need for education, sensitivity, awareness of bias was stated by the participants in terms of their experience of the peer group process :

"So I'm asking you in the process of the group was there some sort of implicit barrier that had to do with sex, sexuality?

D: I think there was. Yes. I think there was. Because their thinking is warped When the ... when we mention gay or lesbian ... it's not their fault ... if only they knew that ... I think it would be a surprise to them to see that we're human just like them.

What was that experience like for you, and is there a word or a metaphor or image that captures that?

It's like a little china doll that they don't want to touch in case they break her. They don't want to go there, go into that space. Maybe because I didn't invite them, I don't know ... I think it's a way for them to say they're not discriminating ...'there's no discrimination here. You can be who you want to be, you can do what you want, but that's it, ... but we don't want to be part of it.'

And the china doll, so in a way your orientation was a barrier to having a more intimate connection with the group as a whole.

Yup, they were afraid to give me a hug or anything like that. It's really strange eh?

So what sense do you make of that?

I feel sorry for them, because if they would be more educated it would make so much more unity you know.

So what would they need to be more educated about specifically for that greater unity to happen?

That we're not aliens. "

D: "I guess with this particular supervisor, I became more out within myself, if that's a way of putting it, but not to anyone else other than the supervisor. But then as I went along, I guess I did a year extended unit, and that ... people that happened to be in that group, I just did not feel comfortable with. I was becoming more secure in my own feelings and wanting ... I think at that point even being in a relationship with someone, you know, for a short while. But it wasn't a place that I felt safe. And I'm not sure if it was the supervisor so much as the group; the students. And as I look back on that unit I think there might have even been someone there who would have .. who was gay or lesbian. And I could sort of sense that but I found it frustrating because they didn't really ... didn't talk about it."

B: "It was isolating in that they didn't understand enough about power dynamics and sexual orientation to be able to say, 'Well maybe I find her really annoying because she's lesbian or because she keeps saying things that we don't want ... she doesn't want to

listen to this stuff'. Rather than what they were doing was just saying, 'it's just her, I'm annoyed with her.' So when they would ... when I would establish eye contact ... I did this several times ... twice this happened with two different people. I would establish eye contact and we would be talking and they would be saying something and I would be saying something and they would just turn and walk out of the room. In what I considered to be the middle of the conversation. They would say, well, that they just didn't want to have much to do with me and 'it was just me', but sometimes I thought it was me because it was more than my personality."

22. Personal and Professional Integration:

Throughout the interviews variations on the theme of living in two worlds, and the constant stress and pain of managing one's professional life in the context of "a culture of secrecy" were continually revealed. The extent to which each of the women has experienced, and continues to experience, tremendous hurt, loss and stress managing heterosexism and homophobia was one of the most significant findings of the study. Participants were cautious in affirming colleagues in CAPPE programs as "safe space" for them. They all stressed the need for CAPPE to move toward greater autonomy from the institutional Church and its bias in order to be both a safe space and, also, a prophetic and just community.

C: "In the first unit it felt more like I was saying, 'I'm lesbian, is that O.K. with you?' whereas in this one I'm saying, 'I'm a lesbian, I don't really care whether that's O.K. with you or not.' And I'm gonna be

the namer of how my issues as a lesbian are active and predominant in the world, and in ministry.

So that's a fairly significant shift.

I'm so proud of myself."

"What would more naturally help a lesbian or gay student to integrate their identity within the context of the SPE process?

A: I feel very strongly that women's experience, lesbian experience, gay male experience, need constantly and continuously to be used as examples in learning models ... the content of the curriculum needs to be very visible ... so I don't know that a lecture method or an experiential method or a interpersonal model or a didactic model if one of those would be preferable to lesbians over straight women ... but I feel strongly about the content. "

B: "I guess it helped in a sense of, I think it broadened my understanding of inclusivity. That became a really major theme in my life and I did that through my ... in that particular unit, the first one through my liturgy which people really I think enjoyed. And I was very, very intentional about that. And I think I grew to understand that perhaps that was one influence of why I went into chaplaincy as opposed to parish ministry. There were many reasons for that, but one of them was ... I don't know ... a strong sense of ministry being inclusive of all people and orientation, colour or whatever. And I became quite vocal about that at times within the group, but began hiding behind that, not saying anything about myself. And some of the group were fine with that and others

weren't. But that theme has continued throughout all the units I think."

"Yeah, I guess one of the main ways is that it's affected me is that now I realize that there's a price to pay for coming out. I don't disclose lightly, I don't assume that I'm in safe space as quickly as I did. I check things out, groups out, a lot more carefully than I did then. To the point that I've probably swung the other way ... You know, umm so on an internship I won't trust, I just won't trust. I don't care if it's thirteen weeks or eight months, I'm not going to trust. I might have if I hadn't had this experience.

Did it have an effect on you in terms of your pastoral identity?

... If anything, it might have, because of that switch in the last few days, might have helped me to realize that it's O.K. for me to be me, and it's O.K. to try to meet people where they are, but that I don't have to bend over backwards to help people understand me. Maybe I'm a little ... maybe it's easier for me to let go of needing people to accept me into a group, to the same extend. I don't know, I haven't been in that intense a group since.

O.K. So you've mentioned something that's helpful... Is there something that's been unhelpful to your ministry?

I guess I'm really aware that if I disclose something that's really personal, and something that can be triggering like sexual orientation, that I live with the consequences and that they can't always be righted with another person or persons. So it's just made me more aware that I have to be cautious.

And so that's.. what's unhelpful?...that you have to be cautious?

What's unhelpful is that I've got to shut down. And that's how I do it then, I do it by turning myself off. By becoming a puppet ... and that's unhelpful because I'm not me then.

And ... we need you, to do more ministry.

That's right. (laugh) It sure helps to be in touch with one's self."

"How did your experience of bias contribute to your development as a lesbian pastoral minister in an SPE context?

D: It very much helped me to understand that, I can be as nice as I can be and it's not good enough. I think that's clear enough in my unit. That if I disclose my sexual orientation, I can't backtrack and I have to deal with that and I'm dealing with a lot of stuff that's unnamed, and unconscious, and can be very hurtful.

So no matter who else you are, if you are identified as lesbian, the rest of you is....?

The walls are put up, it's like...rejection. Yeah."

Images Of Hope And Visions For The Future:

In addition to questions pertaining to experiences of bias in CAPPE and among peers, participants were asked to rewrite their story in a way which describes their hope for change. The final statements in this chapter express the women's sometimes painful, sometimes enthusiastic, responses to that question:

D: " that they would educate themselves and talk about it more, like because it feels ... I feel ... I've felt sometimes that you know, well I'm alone. And I'm not alone. Why should I be pushing all the time? Why can't we help each other out in that sense? If they want to ask questions, come on ask me. If you want to get educated, look there's a book there, there's resources here, tapes or whatever. Listen to them. Are they interested in the first place? That's the thing. Are they really interested?"

"Do you have an image for 'that hurts me'?

A: This is a strong statement, but it feels abusive ... not through action but inaction .. through omission, yeah, it's not I'm beating you, but I'm withholding essentials in order for you to thrive in life. That is, in my experience, lesbian reality in everyday life and in CAPPE, my experience in CAPPE.

.....and your image?

My image is of a young child, naked and it's bare, and it's gray, I don't know if it's cement or dirt, but it's gray and there seems to be some light there. But it's being withheld, food, water, love, touch, essentials for this individual to thrive ... What hurts me is that they don't recognize ... I have some expectations that my existence will be recognised, that my pain will be held. And that's not happening."

C: "I don't feel that CAPPE has failed me professionally because I didn't get to the professional level. I think I had as much to do with that as CAPPE did. And I recognise that it's a process of years of evolution ... I can think of some really concrete things I have goals

for, that the little sticker on pride day says, "this is a gay and lesbian safe space." I still have fears around self-declaration in the institution I'm in, but at least I'll be able to create my office as safe space and naming that for others ... so that I am visible as who I am."

A: " And they (CAPPE) can make a difference for gay and lesbian students which affects not only their process of pastoral identity in their first IPR session of a CAPPE unit, but affects their pastoral ministry in congregations across the country. And that's HUGE. And if CAPPE has the strength or the ability to stand up and say, "This is something that we believe in. This is something that we name in our Code of Ethics as important and a value for us and say, 'we're gonna act on this?' "

Chapter 4

Discussion: New Horizons

The purpose of this research was to identify the perceptions of bias experienced by lesbian women in CAPPE supervised pastoral education programs. The research question was :

"How do lesbian women experience bias based on sexual orientation in the context of CAPPE SPE programs? "

This chapter is a summary statement and discussion of the results from this question. A primary goal was to provide a forum for the telling of stories by lesbian pastoral caregivers of the inner experience of pain and oppression produced by various forms of bias based on sexual orientation. To be lesbian and a member of CAPPE is to be part of a community that, by virtue of its affiliation with the denominational Church and by its heterosexist nature, oppresses those who fall outside the perimeters of the social norm. It was hoped that the articulation of these experiences might provide some catalyst to begin envisioning policy and educational changes within CAPPE that are more inclusive of lesbians and other sexual minorities.

Two important findings in this study will be explored in depth: the prevalence of heterosexism as well as homophobia as a bias, and the need for the creation of a more intentional community within CAPPE that addresses the needs of lesbian women in their personal and professional development.

Heterosexism and Homophobia

One important finding revealed by the responses of all participants suggests

that overt forms of bias such as homophobia were present in lesser degree within SPE programs than was heterosexism. Heterosexism as a political institution at work in our culture demands heterosexuality . "In the tradition of the social sciences it asserts primary love between the sexes is 'normal'; that women need men as social and economic protectors; for adult sexuality, and for psychological completion; that the heterosexual family unit is the basic social unit..." (Rich, 1980, 63-64).

A much more in-depth analysis of heterosexuality as a compulsory institution would reveal the many structures within society and within dominant institutions such as the traditional Christian Church, that create policies and structures that insure the silencing of lesbian experience. However, for the purpose of this study, it is sufficient to note that CAPPE inherits this potential for injustice by allowing certain conditions to exist within its structures which are conducive to oppression. Heterosexism is one such structure. Among its many manifestations is the invisibility of lesbians as evidenced in this study. The supposition that heterosexuality is the only 'normal' sexual orientation and the fear to reveal one's orientation as lesbian under such circumstances creates the illusion that these women do not exist. It creates a dominant consciousness and, therefore, community cultures that are heterocentric. The strategies of identity management employed adequately document this phenomenon.

As such, SPE, by virtue of omission in a large part, and commission to a lesser extent, creates communities where the norm is upheld - and experienced as "other", as "pressure", as "hell", and so on. In such a cultural climate of bias,

> " the lie (read bias) keeps numberless women psychologically trapped, trying to fit mind, spirit, and sexuality into a prescribed script because they cannot look beyond the parameters of the acceptable. It pulls on the energy of such women even as it draws the energy of 'closeted' lesbians - the energy exhausted in the double life. The lesbian trapped in the 'closet', the woman imprisoned in prescriptive ideas of the 'normal', share the pain of blocked options, broken connections, lost access to self-definition freely and powerfully assumed" (Rich, 1980, 64).

The effects of heterosexism and homophobia in its psychological overt form of bias, as described by these women, impact on peer relationships, the training process and vocational aspirations of pastoral caregivers, and on relationships with other systems such as the church workplace.

Impact of Bias on Peer Relationships:

The findings in this study indicate that relationships with colleagues were predicated on concerns for safety - meaning that, emotional risk-taking may be possible if the response of peers was not perceived as rejecting, dismissive, or permeated by heterosexist bias. Unfortunately, with the exception of a few instances, the participants perceived their peer relationships to be detrimental to their personal development and integration. Only one out of the five women raised an objection to having a CAPPE program designed specifically for sexual minority persons; the others responded with tears of relief and enthusiastic approval. The objection was that peers of other sexual orientations needed to be part of the process as well.

Furthermore, it appears that concerns range from the possibility of rejection by colleagues, to fear that peers are unaware of the potential risks to livelihood that disclosure to those active in religious institutions brings: these were seen as sources of liability, not asset. Heterosexist bias in the group context was the primary destructive context of experience for all women interviewed. One participant stated in response to her frustration with all the fuss made over new romances in the peer group, to the omission of lesbian/gay celebrations: "acceptance, love, you know, all the biggies. And they get it. It's their right to get it because they've married ... in a heterosexual relationship ... the bias is through avoidance and non-recognition. "

> " I would have preferred if we could have had mutual sharing and mutual respect ... when we're doing things like IPR, that there are some ground rules that we've named, and I guess we named them on the first day but we just didn't need to live by them after that. If we had been held accountable to the ground rules we set ... because when I would call things the response would generally be, 'I hear you, but I choose to do what I want to do', and put me down for it. "

How can reasonable trust be generated within SPE programs?

The findings in this study suggest several ways within the structure of the program to generate greater inclusivity and trust for sexual minorities. The importance of the supervisor's role in the program was emphasised repeatedly by the women interviewed. Every participant noted that the initiative of the supervisor was required in order to overcome and address the subtle but dominant message of heterosexism - both in terms of curriculum

design and content, ethical awareness, library resources, the oversight of group dynamics, the selection process, accessibility to lesbian/gay-positive theological literature and in personal supervisory relationships. The other primary arena, besides the peer group and supervision, was CAPPE itself. The findings in this study suggest that one more radical way in which safety is created and trust nurtured is through the initiatives of CAPPE to provide, a) lesbian/gay positive units advertised as such, and b) offering a waiver of denominational mandate for certification purposes, seeking an alternative form of endorsement such as our American counterparts have.

Seeking more autonomy from ecclesiastical endorsement/hierarchy is possible while preserving positive relationships with local congregations. Through some similar structure as the practice of alternative endorsement, the differential power imbalance that exists for sexual minorities in CAPPE can be significantly decreased. That is, lesbian pastors are not forced into hiding and postponing certification processes for fear of loss of mandate or ordination status (three out of five participants). There is an ethical, and human rights issue here if the loss of one's ability to practice one's profession is lost due to self-disclosure, and the discriminatory practices of the Church.

However, findings also suggest that the ethical code of non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation lacks clout if it cannot be used to insure relative safety at the level of the local education site where the student is training. In one instance reported, the woman involved considered an appeal to the National Ethics Committee regarding her treatment in the program, but was advised by a local supervisor and agency authority not to bother, since the Code of Ethics is vague enough to allow individual supervisors the latitude to

be discriminatory if they so choose; based on their denominational affiliation! The woman in question reports that the trauma of her experience continues to resurface years later. Such lack of safety could be addressed through a CAPPE Standards initiative requiring that all affiliated programs and centres establish and enforce a non-discriminatory policy as well, and that pains be taken to educate staff, supervisors and peers of the pervasive presence of bias in the system.

It is also true that the threat of reprisal from denominations exists for education sites as well, particularly those supported by heterosexist and homophobic faith traditions. The fact that an agency hires lesbian or gay pastoral counsellors may negatively effect funding and referrals. One participant acknowledged that this was a reason why the particular center she was training in refused to allow her to advertise a therapeutic support group for lesbian women in their course brochure, even though this would have been an appropriate therapeutic learning context for her. Homophobic bias that exists among peers, supervisors, Board members, and the larger Church community requires change on all levels, not merely legislative. As several participants noted, the real issue is rooted in a set of rigid beliefs and deep-seated negative feelings about human sexuality per se, not simply homosexuality.

Bias and Pastoral Care/ Counselling Education:

Findings from this study indicate the need to incorporate lesbian and gay issues into training programs and to establish opportunities for continuing education to facilitate both professional and personal growth. Bermudez in "Experiential Tasks and Therapist Bias Awareness" states,

" Family therapists need to learn how to assess their own biases in order to be clinically effective, especially when working with people who are culturally different. This is especially important to prevent pathologizing a client who has a different world view and value system ... their values, biases, and assumptions about what is normative is communicated through their words, body language, interactions, and other behaviors ... the greater extent to which therapists know the symbols, meanings and messages of the clients' culture, the better they will be able to understand a cross-cultural identity. By transposing ourselves into those unique worlds, the therapists' own enlightening experience in this process will also serve as resources for their clients" (Bermudez, 254).

Buhrke (1991, 77-80) suggests some of the following strategies be incorporated into educational programs to be used to supplement the coursework of clinical interns :

- include discussions of lesbian and gay men, as well as other sexual minorities when presenting client population overviews
- identify the heterosexist bias in traditional clinical and therapeutic theories
- present information on the development of lesbian and gay identity and on the coming out process
- discuss lesbian/gay issues in teaching material addressing marriage, family and couples counselling
- include opportunities for peers to discuss vocational choices and the impact of homophobia and heterosexism on professional development

- have a 'gay pride day' wherein the history, culture and politics of sexual minorities are encountered
- critique heterosexist bias in clinical interviews, case studies and policies of the professional associations to which you belong

Further to this, CAPPE education programs for clinical graduate students should also provide educational content on:

- lesbian/gay community resource networks, including referrals
- combating heterosexism and homophobia in related systems - i.e. Church
- development of appropriate skills to assist lesbian and gays with identity related issues such as self-esteem, integration, personal safety, identity management strategies and overcoming the effects of stigmatization and trauma
- the introduction of culturally sensitive material to non-sexual minority students, including dialogue around sexuality and sexual behaviour with different groups
- establishment and enforcement of explicit ground rules of group behaviour and guidance in maintaining boundaries between educational and therapeutic dynamics in educational contexts.

The incorporation of sensitive materials and skilful supervision in gay-positive training environments would positively impact on the quality of care provided to clients, both lesbian/gay and heterosexual. There is some evidence to suggest that lesbian participants experienced some level of discomfort with their secrecy around orientation when there is little therapeutic basis for such concealment. Two women anticipated a negative response to their sexual

identity being disclosed; others were less anxious, yet did nothing to expose their identity to clients/patients, even some who were openly lesbian/gay themselves. Apart from personal discomfort, there is some basis to the belief that authenticity contributes to the positive quality of a helping relationship.

It may be that internalization of homophobia, the experience of damaged self-esteem as a result of negative stereotypes about homosexuality, can also compromise, make less effective, or do harm to the therapeutic or pastoral relationship.

Pastoral Caregiving as Vocation and The Search for Community:

L.Graham (1997, 163-172) suggests that the consequence of an ethic of care amongst pastoral caregivers, such as the one we might hope to find in CAPPE, would be the intentional building of a community in which "the participatory and transformative character of God's relationship to the world is embodied communally within a web of just, diverse, and creative relationships characterized by honest and loving communion."

It became apparent throughout my study that the central concern in care among lesbian persons had to do with the nature, quality and evaluation of same-sex relationality by a dominant heterosexist culture. Whether or not it can be argued that members of CAPPE seek personal and professional fulfillment in their relationships with each other, it can be hypothesised that existing to provide a faithful, pastoral and just community among the membership may be a congruent and essential element of the mandate of the Association. How would CAPPE change if it were to become committed not

only to the advancement of the profession of pastoral care/counselling, but also to the prophetic creation of community that witnessed and advocated for justice and liberation for marginalized groups outside of the societal norms? "By far the greater factor in the transmission of sin is our embeddedness within a ready-made social system. We draw our ideas, our moral standards, and our spiritual ideals from the social body into which we are born." (Suchocki, 1994, 114)

A central issue in care involves overcoming both internalised and external messages about being gay or lesbian and contending with social and theological constructions of the *Imago Dei* that pervasively insist that these people are inferior and evil. These messages ultimately derive from hierarchical thinking. Such thinking implies that to be in the image of God is to be superior to those who are not equally recognised as sharing the imago Dei or who are not considered to reflect its essential characteristics as others do. The participants in this research challenge this assumption by asserting that when mutuality and solidarity replace old norms of patriarchy, they are empowered to overcome alienation in their relationships to God, self and neighbour. Becoming more fully human is a theological and pastoral discourse of significance to lesbian experience of bias, and points to the way of personal and professional integration. Thus moving from an attitude of bias rooted in heterosexist and patriarchal assumptions to one of partnership and respect, is also critical to transformative, authentic pastoral relationships within CAPPE, and essential to CAPPE's impact on the wider world.

" I think it has to, CAPPE as an institution, CAPPE as a group has to identify and become aware of its own system of discrimination.

> Its own bias that is prevalent throughout the system. And I think through doing that, providing safe space ... CAPPE can then be a place where people can learn some skills around integrity, self-definition, communication, all of those things so that they can come out to themselves, come out to the group while they're still in the process of ministry. Because I know myself, even though I was out to myself, out to lots of friends, I was never out in the process of ministry because it was way too daunting. here was this church that had the right to say 'yes' I could be ordained or 'no' I couldn't be and I wasn't about to give them any reason to say 'no'. But if CAPPE was involved early enough in the process, we could start to evolve in that people could have a stronger sense of themselves to say 'guess what, I can be an individual in this process with some real resources and yeah, I can be accountable to myself and to my church while being honest and full of integrity at the same time.' "

Genuine empathy for the experience of these women entails the recognition of our common humanity, and requires us to view each human being as both an individual with a concrete history, identity and affective-emotional constitution; and, an interdependent subject whose welfare is intimately connected to our own. In assuming this standpoint, " We abstract from what constitutes our commonality. We seek to comprehend the needs of the other, his or her motivations ... Our relation to the other is governed by the norms of equality and complimentary reciprocity; each is entitled to expect and to assume from the other forms of behaviour through which the other feels recognised and affirmed....the corresponding moral feelings are those of love, care, sympathy and solidarity." (Gilligan, 1987, 87)

The search for this type of empathy and solidarity in community was expressed repeatedly by the women interviewed. The findings suggest that participants experience a lack of support from the predominantly heterosexual community of CAPPE in part because of concealment due to the risks of self-disclosure, and in part due to the biases that exist in terms of relational intimacy. One woman puts it this way:

> "I think there's still a myth around that if I, as a strong competent heterosexual individual, have an intimate friendship ... *and I think CAPPE is based around intimacy* ... and I think that's why my queer intimacy isn't welcomed or celebrated because it's beyond their realm.....It's like, this course demands of me to be intimate, expects me to be intimate. I don't know how to be intimate with someone of my same gender who identifies themselves as gay because does that mean they'll like me ... does that mean they'll want to have sex with me? ... those myths about sex ... like there's no boundaries, nothing about relationship, no respect, it's all about sex ... so that's enough of you that I need to know. I don't need to know that other part of you ... and yet for lesbian and gay people, their identity or sexuality is intimately connected with their spirituality and their faith development."

Community support can represent an initial attempt to express solidarity and care. Authentic pastoral care facilitates coping mechanisms to deal with crisis and adaptation to change, and allows for creative response to stress. A core need expressed was for the type of safety in this learning environment called SPE in which a movement from self-doubt and fear of rejection to self-acceptance and integrity of purpose and action is facilitated.

It is precisely the fear of loss, including risks of rejection and discrimination, that keeps lesbians in the closet. Coming out is a protest against social structures that are built on alienation and as such, are the most radical, deeply personal and politically conscious affirmations of the potential for justice-making community. Although coming out is a process which is without the benefit of rites of passage and culturally ritualized support, it is nevertheless essential to the process of professional integration. Discovering and constructing an authentic self-identity is the most appropriate means for the reclamation of their power to achieve their own liberation. If homosexuality were accepted as a perfectly natural characteristic on the human spectrum of sexuality, it would be expected that equal resources would be available to lesbians and gay men in their development as whole persons, including completeness as sexual beings. Lesbian culture would be integrated into the mainstream, valued and available to us all regardless of orientation.

The issue for these women in professional ministry is that the forces that pressure them to hide their true nature also obstruct their process of critical self-examination and exploration, driving a wedge into deepening awareness of self and, therefore, from opportunities for deepening personal and professional growth. Apart from the ability to grow freely, unchallenged by the oppressive structures of heterosexist culture, the denial of lesbian and gay experience negatively affects not only society in general, but the Church specifically.

Dorothee Soelle, feminist theologian, argues that the more a person develops their creativity, and delves into the project of liberation, the more God is God.

Integrity is a theological matter. God can only be God if our fullness as humans in our marvellous diversity is not thwarted, but allowed to grow. Forms of bias expressed in oppressive and subjugating ways, denies the realisation of this will to wholeness. The argument can be made that both the Church and society desperately need release from homophobia, and have enormous benefits to gain from lesbians and gay men. An inherent quality of the individuation process for lesbian women is the conviction that an independent action will act as a catalyst to an equivalent individuation. That is, efforts towards liberation by lesbian women and gay men will also liberate others.

Nelson argues that,

> "insofar as this occurs there will be release from dehumanising sex-role stereotypes and liberation from fears about the continuum of sexual feelings within the self. There will be more genuine self-acceptance and self-affirmation, and with this greater relational equality. There will be enriched possibilities for intimate friendships with fewer rehabilitating sexual fears between the sexes ... there will be more permission for each individual to develop her own human uniqueness. And the Churches will learn more of the heart of the Christian message, including the freedom, inclusiveness, and justice which comes from taking incarnate grace seriously" (Nelson, 1982, 173).

The participants of this study, and lesbian women like them, need to know how much others will benefit from the gains their own struggle for integrity and liberation produce. That the 'oppressed' should liberate the 'oppressor',

though understandably unpalatable to the participants of this study, is the inevitable result of our corporate redemption.

Chapter 5

Theological Reflection - Coming Out ; Coming Home

" The journey is home. " Nelle Morton

> "well I guess for my own history, I have a sense of that little inner child not feeling safe and feeling sad because I wasn't accepted, or I felt unacceptable. So from a personal point of view, feeling not accepted, but I sort of start thinking about a biblical image too and going back to a sense of call to be with those who are marginalized or different ; in my deep desire to have inclusivity within work or play or church or you know, anything. And so it's sort of two sides, feeling sad but also giving me the power or the strength to follow through on something I don't agree with and want to change desperately."

Again and again, the women in this study spoke of their grief and pain in not finding a place of belonging - a home - in CAPPE, in the Church; a place where they could find the cherished intimacy and safety and mutual respect so essential to their wholeness and well-being. The nature of that pain can only be partially described as a deep-felt sense of loss and grief for a life that cannot be openly lived and that continually requires censure. To encounter this pain was the most intensely moving aspect of this research. The need for a pastoral response to these women's' experience was increased by the realisation that each of them as they continued their journey would no doubt continue to encounter further discriminatory bias and the negative emotional and psychological effects previously described. They will go on in the struggle

for integrity, sometimes unrecognised for their courage and dignity, but not without comfort and hope.

This theological reflection is, in part, a response to these women in their search for inclusive community and for relational integrity. In part, it is a liturgical expression of the reality of lesbian experience, and an attempt to offer images of God which are reflective of the deep longings of the heart for place to be oneself without compromise. Lesbian processes of development are often navigated without rites of passage or rituals which inform and expand our consciousness of life becoming, and of journeying home together. Coming out and coming home happen together, in tandem and in dynamic relationship to one another. Living openly as lesbian is committing oneself to a process of repeated encounter and storytelling; it means " I am who I am, and I belong ... to myself, to God, and to my neighbour. "

> "I would say in the area of language, and worship and liturgy that kept expanding and still does today. And I felt fairly secure in doing kinds of liturgy that were I'm sure to some people not very traditional, but finding power in that and hopefully for some people increasing or feeling good about God as a more nurturing kind of image.
>
> *So that was a place in the liturgical process, where you could rework the images of God?*
>
> For sure, and as I did that more and more, and as I heard myself being affirmed about that, you know, that encouraged me.
>
> *And how did that impact you in term of being lesbian in the process?*

> That the image was inside myself and was like a same-sex relationship well...well not with God, but in the story of the person I was with; I think it's what women can experience together and....and that's obvious, but I think that gave me more power as a lesbian, to understand the closeness ...

What appears to be missing for many of these women relates to the way in which God is spoken of and symbolised. Women search for biblical images for God, and language about God which reflects their unique reality. The feminist theologian Elizabeth Johnston states that language functions as,

> "the primary symbol of the whole religious system, the ultimate point of reference for understanding experience, life and the world. Hence the way in which a faith community shapes language about God implicitly represents what it takes to be the highest good, the profoundest truth, the most appealing beauty. Such speaking, in turn, powerfully moulds the corporate identity of the community and directs its praxis." (Johnson 1993, 3-4)

Lesbian feminist theologians, such as Carter Heyward, sensitive to this criticism, assert that images of God are steeped in the traditional hierarchical language of heterosexual exclusion, where God is seen as a male benevolent patriarch; it logically follows that lesbian persons would see themselves as inherently flawed and alienated from the imago Dei. The result is that certain hierarchical and sexist languaging about God supports the way human relationships and communities are structured or ordered, despite the fact that God as Spirit is neither male nor female.

> "Feminist theological analysis makes clear that exclusive, literal patriarchal speech about God has a twofold negative effect. It fails both human beings and divine mystery. In stereotyping and then banning female reality as suitable metaphor for God, such speech justifies the dominance of men while denigrating the human dignity of women. Simultaneously this discourse so reduces divine mystery to the single, reified metaphor of the ruling man that the symbol itself loses its religious significance and ability to point to ultimate truth. It becomes, in a word, an idol. These two effects are inseparable for damage to the imago Dei in the creature and inevitable short-changes knowledge of the Creator in whose image she is made." (Johnson, 1993, 36)

In a heterosexist context, this model of domination over (and submission to) is not restricted to male female relations. The same structure is used theologically to support the view that heterosexuality is the superior, and 'natural' expression of the image of God in relationships, and entitles heterosexuals to acceptance and divine favour not extended to other sexual minorities. This use of exclusive and literalistic languaging about God, and the image of God in humankind, is at the basis of the Church's oppression of lesbian spirituality, and the resulting alienation of many lesbian women from the normative faith traditions of the Church. Moving from hierarchy to partnership is critical to transformative relationship which embodies a just social order and removes the barriers to solidarity and communion. Rosemary Radford Reuther states:

"(Feminist theology) understands God as the creator, sustainer, and renewer of the just relationality that can promote our redemptive fullness of being.

All our images of God are metaphors and projections from our human standpoint of an ultimate ground of being and new being that is beyond such images. The question is not whether there are some images that are not human projections, but rather what human projections promote just and loving relationality, and which projections promote injustice and diminished humanness. Our images of the God-self relation may be more than, but cannot be less than, that which promotes goodness in human relations". (Reuther, 1991, 103f.)

Understood in this manner, all human beings are capable of reflecting the imago Dei when their concrete everyday lives and relationships are congruent with the values that support and empower just and loving images of God. There is no 'double standard' for gay and straight, male and female, Jew or Greek; all are one in Christ; all are in the image of God! The image of God is fulfilled not in what we have, but in who we claim to be; what characterises our communities as God's way of being in and with and for humanity.

Thus the definition of 'lesbian' itself in some way must also characterise a new way of conceptualising relationality outside of patriarchal norms.

"A lesbian is not defined by her sexual partner ... This is to fall into the patriarchal trap of defining women according to sexuality, which

> only serves to divide us. What we need is to be united in order that our strength will free all of us. A lesbian is an outlaw in patriarchy. But she is the herald of the good news that patriarchy is in decline. A lesbian is a woman who in the face of heterosexist patriarchal messages not to love women - the others, the outsiders, the despised - indeed not to love herself as woman, in fact does both. She loves other women as friends...and by loving other women she comes to that authentic self-love which is metamorphosis ,,, To be lesbian is to take relationships with women radically seriously, seriously enough to explore the implications of integrating sexuality into women's friendships ..." (Hunt, 1994, 173)

In reclaiming the image of lesbian it is important that the term not be forced to carry the symbolic freight of sexuality for all women. Rather, 'lesbian' becomes paradigmatic of all types of intimate friendships without the corruption of heterosexist norms. Judith Plaskow has also addressed our sexuality in a prophetically similar fashion. The goal of our liberation as lesbian people must not be merely a "blanket permission" for us to act out our sexuality genitally; rather the goal of our liberation as lesbian sexual persons is more fundamental than that , more whole. A truly liberated sexuality is one that affirms the wholeness of our being as persons-in-relation "that is continually renewed in the actual rhythms of particular relationships ... Our sexuality is fundamentally about moving beyond ourselves. The communicative, connecting nature of sexuality is not something we can experience or look for only in narrowly prescribed sexual encounters, but in all real relationships in our lives". (Plaskow, in Nelson, 1994, 219)

Reconceptualizing our sexuality as the erotic energy that heals our lives, enables us to seek intimate friendship-in-mutual-relation. The call is to return home to community and to proclaim the good news of wholeness.
Audre Lorde, a black lesbian feminist poet and author, in "The Erotic as Power", discusses the uses of the erotic as a resource that lies within each woman on a deeply female and spiritual plane, a power which rises from our deepest and non-rational knowledge. Her social analysis asserts that in order to perpetuate itself, every oppression must corrupt or distort those various sources of power within the culture of the oppressed that can provide energy for change. The erotic is one such source of power.

> "When we live outside ourselves, and by that I mean on external directives only, rather than from our internal knowledge and needs, when we live away from those erotic guides from within our selves, then our lives are limited by external and alien forms, and we conform to the needs of a structure that is not based on human need ... But when we begin to live from within outward, in touch with the power of the erotic within ourselves, and allowing that power to inform and illuminate our actions upon the world around us, then we begin to be responsible to ourselves in the deepest sense. For as we begin to recognise our deepest feelings, we begin to give up, of necessity, being satisfied with suffering, and self-negation, and with the numbness which so often seems like our only alternative in society. Our acts against oppression become integral with self, motivated and empowered from within. In touch with the erotic, (we) I become less willing to accept powerlessness ... " (Lorde, 1984, 58.)

Carter Heyward goes on to assert that this form of erotic power is God - the power of relation through which we come home to ourselves, to God, to our sisters, to neighbour. Lesbian gift is 'our willingness to be wildly and outrageously ourselves' (Boyle,S.) It is not simply a justice issue; a political issue; it is an issue of being and integrity. And with that gift we invite the participation of God in our lives.

> "Our hands are God's hands in the world. Our hearts are God's heart in the world. God pulsating. God beating. God yearning and open and growing in history. Our suffering and our tears are God's pain and trauma in history. Our work and our commitments are God's activity in this world. Our sexualities, our expressions of sexuality, our lovemaking in this world, is God's own expressiveness, God's own lovemaking, in history. When a human being reaches out to comfort, to touch, to bridge the gap separating each of us from everyone else, God comes to life in that act of reaching, of touching, of bridging. The act is love and God is love. And when we love, we god. And I use the word god here intentionally as a verb. If we are as fully human as we are able to be, and Jesus suggested we are able to be, then we are godders, we god - human beings/created bodies bringing god to life again, and again". (Heyward, 1984, 140)

The most significant implication of a theology of embodiment- and embodied self - such as this, is the understanding that from a process point of view, God is constantly becoming. This becoming is dependent on the ability of each, in all of their uniqueness, to become all that they are capable of being. Violence

against the becoming of anyone is violence against God and violence against the potential of the divine-in-us. Thus creation is a process that takes place between God and the world, in a dance of infinite unfolding and movement. (Suchocki, 1994, 86)

The embodied self is the link. The discovery of ourselves as a moment of creation, affirms life in its fullness as the primordial experience and ever present moment of release from human bondage and oppression. The reality of embodiment affirms this experience as the felt embrace of life itself. This embrace is the experience of the infinite as a moment of one's life. In that moment we exceed the restrictions of oppressive expectations, repressive social definitions, and discriminatory political practices.

This source of experience is the healing waters of eternity ' a moment of eternity awash in us, a community awash in the powers of creation.'(Soelle)

We then know that our lives cannot be reduced to the sum of our socially constructed identities, for we are gods - beyond the sum of the whole, and unique in our particularity. This intersubjective theological position calls our experience of this infinite-moment-in-living, grace. It is the liberation of our embodied self from those unpardonable sins that result in a shut-down of our inner spaces. Integrity is that action of the self which speaks of right relationship - the terrain of our humanity where irreconcilable differences are embraced; where definitions that restrict our bodies and trap our minds lose their grip. In this space, this safe space, lesbian women are welcomed home.

"Woman dancing with hair
on fire, woman writhing in the
cone of orange snakes, flowering
into crackling lithe vines:
Woman
you are not the bound witch
at the stake, whose broiled alive

agonised screams
thrust from charred flesh
darkened Europe in the nine millions.
Woman
you are not the madonna impaled
whose sacrifice of self leaves her
empty and mad as wind,
or whore crucified
studded with nails.

Woman
you are the demon of a fountain of energy
rushing up from the coal hard
memories in the ancient spine,
flickering lights from the furnace in the solar
plexus, lush scents from the reptilian brain,
river that winds up the hypothalamus
with its fibroids of pleasure and pain
twisted and braided like rope, like the days of our living,
firing the lanterns of the forebrain till they glow blood red.

You are the fire sprite
that charges leaping thighs,
that whips the supple back on its arc
as deer leap through the ankles:
dance of a woman strong
in beauty that crouches
inside like a cougar in the belly
not in the eyes of others measuring.

You are the icon of woman sexual
in herself like a great forest tree
in flower, liriondendron bearing sweet tulips,
cups of joy and drunkenness.
You drink strength from your dark fierce roots
and you hang at the sun's own fiery breast
and with the green cities of your boughs
you shelter and celebrate
woman, with the cauldrons of your energies burning red, burning green.

Marge Piercy
from *The Twelve Spoked Wheel Flashing*, A. Knopf, Inc. 1978

Chapter 6

Conclusion: The Journey Has Just Begun

Strengths and Limitations

No research has been done, prior to this, on the experience of lesbian women in CAPPE. Little has been done on the experience of bias in supervised pastoral education programs in CAPPE, with the minor exceptions mentioned in the introduction. Although related materials have been drawn on, I consider this study to have strength in breaking new ground for sexual minority experience within a Canadian context of pastoral education.

The use of the qualitative method of research is congruent with the goal of this study to support the 'voicing' of lesbian womens' experience, by giving unqualified space for articulation. There are difficulties in attempting to generate a view of the inner and outer manifestations of bias. One is in locating subjects who are willing to trust the interview process. To some extent participation in the study is a coming out process itself, for both subjects and the researcher. As such, it is both an expression of integrity and one which may have negative consequences. To have a critical awareness and sensitivity to one's own oppression at multiple systemic levels is no easy task. It reflects years of energy used in personal reflection on the part of those who engaged in this study.

Although the sample was small, the variety of subjects was a strength. There was representation from both CPE and PCE streams in CAPPE, as well as different levels of advancement. Although four church denominations were represented, many had experience from several faith traditions.

Because the sample was small, and limited to white, lesbian women, it would be difficult to generalise these findings to the *experience of all* lesbian women in CAPPE. It is however, possible to generalize these findings to the theoretical foundations asserted in this paper. As well, it is also impossible to ascertain the level of lesbian identity development characteristic for each subject. Therefore, it is not possible to take into account the effects of variables in sexual identity development on the nature of the participants' responses. Whether different developmental stages of the coming out process would impact the nature of the perceptions of the women is difficult to determine and precludes the scope of this research.

As well, it may be considered a weakness that gay male and bisexual 'voices' were not heard in this study. It can be assumed that the experiences of gay men and bisexual people would demonstrate some varied and potentially significant differences. Unfortunately, the invitation for research did not result in sufficient response to justify inclusion in this specific study. However, this would be an obvious area for further investigation. Visible minorities were also not included in this study.

It is evident that this study is a very initial documentation of the presence and effects of bias based on sexual orientation in a specialized context. Positive experiences within CAPPE programs were given less focus by the subjects; due I assume, to the emphasis on the subject of bias which most saw as a negative phenomenon. More could have been done if it was possible to include the whole group/unit in the research, as in a case study format. I am aware that my own orientation and experience, my own narrative, becomes part of the interaction with the subject, and therefore part of the story. A

participant-observer dynamic precludes an absolute separation of object/subject.

Benefit of Research to Subjects

Finally, this two year research period has been my own professional coming out process as well. What I lack in articulation and theoretical background, I make up in lived experience. I was concerned that this research would ultimately benefit those who were the subject of my curiosity. Each woman was able to acknowledge how the process was beneficial, which I believe was summed up in this one comment :

> "It was helpful to experience your straightforwardness about your sexual orientation; to see, hear, be involved with a lesbian woman who is working in the field and trying to get some 'direction' about sexual bias and its possible effects. It gave validity to my own experience. Knowing others have similar experiences validates us."

Recommendations for Further Research

It is my belief that a far more extensive project which includes a larger and more diverse sample would lend validity to the work done here, and also perhaps a corrective lens. The inclusion of gay male subjects I think is essential for the dialogue. CAPPE is currently developing a process for determining mandate which can more sensitively address some of the issues raised here. It would be important to include that work in the discussion.

It also might be of significance to have further study done focusing on specific areas of competence in CAPPE such as a) the impact of heterosexism and homophobia on pastoral counselling treatment and intervention strategies, or b) the interplay of systemic bias as it relates to institutions such as hospitals, jails and church settings.

Finally, this study did not address several interesting questions, such as :

1. Are there differences of perception of bias in terms of "being out of the closet?" If so, are these based on stages of identity development or other factors?
2. How do heterosexual persons experience heterosexism and homophobia?
3. Are there different experiences of bias between orientations, and if so, are the differences based on orientation or other variables?
4. How do CAPPE members in general view their community? Is it seen as inclusive and just? How would they respond to this report?

Recommendations

In view of the fact that this study specifically focuses on the CAPPE context, I would like to put forward a few recommendations based on my experience in CAPPE and my research regarding making CAPPE a more inclusive community for sexual minority populations. I realize that many of these ideas are probably far from being implemented, or maybe never will be, but it doesn't hurt to dream.

On this basis, it is recommended that CAPPE :

1. Look at the possibility of a minimum standard for curriculum which includes bias awareness training in regards to racial, ethnic, cultural, disabled and

sexual minority groups; and provides continuing education opportunities for pastoral caregivers/counsellors that address the needs of lesbian and gay populations

2. Require as a condition of formal affiliation and/or certification with CAPPE, acceptance of a non-discriminatory policy towards sexual minorities, clearly identified in the Standards, and mandated on the level of unit/Center accreditation.

3. Support and encourage educational programs to include materials which recognise systemic oppression in the field of mental health and pastoral development and education. Make such material available to seminaries for anti-homophobia/diversity training.

4. Make all membership, certification and reporting/evaluation processes lesbian/gay sensitive by intentional and specific attention to issues of confidentiality, privacy, open representation on committees and structural means to address mandate issues such as alternative endorsement.

5. Clarify a sexual harassment policy for CAPPE members, and include harassment over the disclosure of sexual orientation as a grounds for grievance.

6. Improve the ability of lesbian/ gay positive educators and supervisors to offer units which are geared to minority experience through student bursary funding; improved access to resources and website advertisement; and financial support to the Lesbian/Gay Caucus in CAPPE.

7. Come Out! Connect with the Affirming Congregations Network and have a Gay Pride Day - CAPPE style - float in next year's parade or a same-sex dance at the next Conference! Get creative. Take risks. Cut our losses and look for ways to celebrate diversity.

I strongly encourage the CAPPE community to enter into dialogue with those at the margins, and to consider thoughtfully how we might address values of inclusivity in our dialogue with one another.

As a theological community, and as a community of believers who claim to be guided by a commitment of faith, let us take seriously the voices of those at the margins, for the issue reaches far beyond our own self-interest. The issue reaches towards the vision of a new community of the reign of God wherein God's purpose for all creation is expressed in the unity of the Spirit. "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight and the sin that clings so closely and let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfector of our faith..." (Hebs 12:1-2)

APPENDIXES

Semi-Standardized Interview Questions:

1. What expectations did you have regarding SPE in C.A.P.P.E. as a process in which you would participate as lesbian ?

2. How were your expectations different, or similar, to your actual experience?

3. How would you describe your experience in terms of bias based on sexual orientation? Please use phrases, metaphors, or a story common, or dissimilar to your experience as lesbian.

4. How did this experience described in question #3, affect you at the time? How has it affected you since then?

5. Was there any specific aspect of your experience which you have found helpful/unhelpful to your ministry?

6. If you could re-write the script of your story, or redefine the parameters of your experience, how would you have preferred the experience to have been for you?

7. Is there anything else you would like to mention?

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Allport G. (1954). *The Nature of Prejudice.* Cambridge, Mass.: Addison-Wesley.

Bermudez, Maria, (1997). Experiential Tasks and Therapist Bias Awareness, *Contemporary Family Therapy*, 19(2) June, Human Sciences Press, Inc.

Blumenfeld, W.J. (Ed.) (1992). *Homophobia: How We All Pay The Price.* Boston: Beacon Press.

Bohan, J. (1996). *Psychology and Sexual Orientation: Coming To Terms.* New York: Routledge.

Boswell, J. (1980). *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality: Gay People in Western Europe from the Beginning of the Christian Era to the Fourteenth Century.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Brooks, V. (1981). *Minority Stress and Lesbian Women.* Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books.

Browning, C., Reynolds, A. & Dworkin, S. (1991). Affirmative Psychotherapy for Lesbian Women. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 19 (2), 177-196.

Bugental, J. F. T. (1981). *The Search for Authenticity.* New York: Irvington Publishers.

Buhrke, R. & Douce, L. (1991). Training Issues for Counseling Psychologists in Working with Lesbian Women and Gay men the *Counseling Psychologist*, 19 (2), 216-234.

Buhrke, R.A. (1989). Incorporating Lesbian and Gay Issues Into Counselor Training : A Resource Guide. *Journal of Counseling & Development*, 68, 77-80.

Cady, L.E., (1997) Identity, Feminist Theory and Theology, In *Horizons in Feminist Theology: Identity, Tradition and Norms.* Chopp, R.S. & Davaney,S.G.(eds) Fortress Press, 17-32.

Campbell, D. M. (1983). The Ordained Ministry As A Profession : Theological Reflections on Identity. *Quarterly Review*, 21-29.

Chopp, R.S. (1995) Saving Work: Feminist Practices of Theological Education. John Knox Press, Kentucky

Clark, J. M.; Brown, J.C; & Hochstein, L. (1990). Institutional Religion and Gay/Lesbian Oppression. *Homosexuality and Family Relations*, Bozett & Sussman (Eds). New York: Haworth Press, 265-284.

Clark, W. & Serovich, J. (1997). Twenty Years and Still in the Dark? Content Analysis of Articles Pertaining to Gay, Lesbian, and Bisexual Issues in Marriage and Family Therapy Journals. *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*, 23(3), 239-253.

Coleman, E., (1982). Developmental Stages of the Coming Out process. *Homosexuality & Psychotherapy*, 31-43.

Comstock, G. (1991). *Violence Against Lesbians and Gay Men.* New York: Columbia University Press.

Congdon, D.C. (1990). Gender, Employment and Psychosocial Well-Being. *Journal of Sociology and Social Welfare*, 17 (3), 101-121.

Corrigan, J. & Myler, D. (1983). Supervising Gay and Lesbian Students in CPE. *Journal of Supervision and Training in Ministry*, 6, 187-204.

Cox, S. (1976). *Female Psychology : The Emerging Self.* Chicago: Research Associates

D'Augelli, A. & Patterson, C. (Eds.) (1995). *Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Identities Over the Lifespan: Psychological Perspectives.* New York: Oxford University Press.

D'Emilio, J. & Freedman, E. (1988). *Intimate Matters: A History of Sexuality in America.* New York: Harper & Row.

Diamant, L. & McAnulty (Eds.) (1995). *The Psychology of Sexual Orientation, Behavior, and Identity: A Handbook.* Westport, Conn.: Greenwood Press.

Dworkin, S. & Gutierrez, F. (Eds.) (1992). *Counseling Gay Men and Lesbians: Journey to the End of the Rainbow.* Alexandria, VA: American Association for Counseling and Development.

Dynes, W. & Donaldson, S. (Eds.) *Studies in Homosexuality. Vol. 7: Lesbianism.* New York: Garland.

Etringer, B.D., Hillerbrand, E. & Hetherington, C. (1990). The Influence of Sexual Orientation on Career Decision-Making: A Research Note. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 19 (4), 103-111

Epstein, D. (Ed.) (1994). *Challenging Lesbian and Gay Inequalities in Education.* Buckingham: Open University Press.

Fassinger, R. (1991). The Hidden Minority: Issues and Challenges in Working with Lesbian Women and Gay Men. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 19 (2), 157-176.

Fassinger, R. (1996). Notes from the Margins: Integrating Lesbian Experience into the Vocational Psychology of Women. *Journal of Vocational Behavior*, 48(2), 160-175.

Friere, P. *Education for Critical Consciousness*, New York: Seabury Press, 1973

Garnets, L. & D'Augelli, A. (1994). Empowering Lesbian and Gay Communities: A Call for Collaboration with Community Psychology... Empowering the Silent Ranks. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 122(4), 447-470.

Gelo, Florence (1997). Homophobia in the Profession of Pastoral Counseling. *The Journal of Pastoral Care*, 51(4), 437-446.

Gilligan, Carol (1982). *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*. Cambridge, Massachusetts : Harvard University Press.

Goffman, E. (1963). *Stigma: Notes on the Management of Spoiled Identity*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Graham, L.K. (1997). *Discovering Images of God: Narratives of Care Among Lesbians and Gays*. John Knox Press: Kentucky.

Graham, D.; Rawlings, E.; Halpern, H. & Hermes, J. (1984). Therapists' Needs for Training in Counseling Lesbians and Gay Men. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 15 (4), 482-496.

Green, R. (1996). Why Ask, Why Tell? Teaching and Learning about Lesbians and Gays in Family Therapy. *Family Process*, 35(3), 389-400.

Greene, B. (Ed.) (1997). *Psychological Perspectives on Lesbian and Gay Issues: Vol. 3. Ethnic and Cultural Diversity Among Lesbians and Gay Men*. Thousand Oaks, CA.: Sage.

Greene, B. & Herek, G. (Eds.) (1994). *Psychological Perspectives on Lesbian and Gay Issues: Vol. 1. Lesbian and Gay Psychology: Theory, Research, and Clinical Applications*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Greene, B. & Herek, G. (1994). Lesbian and Gay Sexual Orientations: Implications for Clinical Training, Practice and Research. *Lesbian and Gay Psychology*.

Harbeck, K.M. (ed) (1992). *Coming Out of the Classroom Closet: Gay and Lesbian Students, Teachers and Curricula*, Harrington Press: New York.

Harding, S. (1987). Is there a feminist method? in Tauana, N. (ed) *Feminism & Science*. Indiana University press. 17-32.

Herek, G.M. (1990). The Context of Anti-Gay Violence: Notes on Cultural and Psychological Heterosexism. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 5(3), 316-333.

Heyward, C. (1979). Coming Out: Journey Without Maps. *Christianity and Crisis*, June 11, 1979, 153-156.

Hochstein, L.M. (1986) Pastoral Counselors: Their Attitudes Toward Gay and Lesbian Clients. *The Journal of Pastoral Care*, 40 (2), 158-165.

Hudson, W. & Ricketts, W. (1980). A Strategy for the Measurement of Homophobia. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 5 (4), 357-372.

Hunter, Rodney J. ed. *Dictionary of Pastoral Care and Counseling*, Nashville: Abingdon Press. 1990

Jagose, A. (1996). *Queer Theory: An Introduction.* New York: New York University Press.

Kahn, M.J. (1991). Factors Affecting the Coming Out Process for Lesbians, *Journal of Homosexuality*, 21 (3), 47-70.

Katz, P. (Ed.) (1976). *Towards the Elimination of Racism.* New York: Pergamon.

Klassen, A. & Levitt. (1974). Public Attitudes Toward Homosexuality. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 1.

Lather, P. (1991*). Getting Smart :Feminist Research and Pedagogy with/in The Postmodern.* Routledge: New York.

Long, J. (1996). Working with Lesbians, Gays, and Bisexuals: Addressing Heterosexism in Supervision. *Family Process*, 35(3), 377-388.

Lorde, Audre, (1984). *Sister Outsider.* The Crossing Press: Freedom, CA 95019

Margolies, L., Becker, M., & Jackson-Brewer, K. (1987) Internalized Homophobia: Identifying and treating the oppressor within. In Boston Lesbian Psychologies Collective (eds)., *Lesbian Psychologies*, Urbana: University of Illinois, 229-274.

Marshall, Joretta L. (1997). *Counseling Lesbian Partners.* Westminster John Knox Press: Louisville Kentucky. 158pgs. (Pastoral Theology Series)

Martin, J. (1991). The Perils of "Process Talk" in Counseling and Counselor Education. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 19 (2), 260-272.

McNeil, J. (1988). *Taking a Chance on God: Liberating Theology for Gays, Lesbians, and their Lovers, Families, and Friends.* Boston: Beacon.

Morgan, K. & Brown, L. (1991). Lesbian Career Development, Work, Behavior, and Vocational Counseling. *The Counseling Psychologist*, 19 (2), 273-291.

Morin, S. (1977). Heterosexual Bias in Psychological Research on Lesbianism and Male Homosexuality. *American Psychologist*, 629-636.

Nelson, J.B. (1981-82). *Religious and Moral Issues In Working With Homosexual Clients. Journal of Homosexuality*, 7 (2-3), 163-175.

Nelson, J.B. & Longfellow, S.P., (1994) *Sexuality and the Sacred: Sources for Theological Reflection*, John Knox Press. Louisville, Kentucky.

Nuehring, E.M., & Fein, S.B. (1981) Intrapsychic Effects of Stigma: A Process of breakdown and Reconstruction of Social Reality. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 7 (1), 2-13.

Osterman, M.J. (1987). Homophobia is a Social Disease. Evanston: *Kinheart Program on Sexuality and Homophobia.*

Peachey, Kirsten (1994). Overflowing Souls: CPE and the Spiritual Formation of Gay and Lesbian People. *Journal of Supervision and Training in Ministry*, 15, 177-189.

Plummer, K. (1975). *Sexual Stigma: An Interactionist Account.* London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Repetti, R. (1987). Individual and Common Components of the Social Environment at Work and Psychological well-being. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology.* 52 (4), 710-720.

Rich, A. (1980). Compulsory heterosexuality and lesbian existence. *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 5, 631-660.

Ristock, J. & Taylor, C. (Eds.) (1998). *Inside the Academy and Out: Lesbian/Gay/ Queer Studies and Social Action.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Rothblum, E. (Ed.) (1997). *Classics in Lesbian Studies.* Binghamton, NY: Harrington Park Press.

Satir, V., ed., (1991) *The Satir Model: Family Therapy and Beyond.* Science and Behavior Books Inc. Palo Alto, California.

Soelle, D. (1984). *To Work and To Love: A Theology of Creation.* Philadelphia: Fortress Press.

Spong, J.S. (1990) *Living in Sin.* New York: Harper Collins

Stein, E. (Ed.) (1992). *Forms of Desire: Sexual Orientation and the Social Constructionist Controversy.* New York: Routledge.

Suchocki, M.H. (1989). *God Christ Church: A Practical Guide to Process Theology.* New York: Crossroads.

Suchocki, M.H. (1994). *The Fall to Violence: Original Sin in Relational Theology.* New York: Continuum.

Swift, C. & Levin, G. (1987). Empowerment: An emerging mental health technology. *Journal of Primary Prevention*, 8, 71-94.

Thompson, C.A. (1992). Lesbian Grief and Loss Issues in the Coming Out Process. *Women& Therapy*, 12 (1-2), 175-185.

Tierney, W.G. (1997). *Academic Outlaws: Queer Theory and Cultural Studies in the Academy.* Thousand Oaks, CA.: Sage.

Watters, A. (1986). Heterosexual Bias in Psychological Research on Lesbianism and Male Homosexuality (1979-1983). *Journal of Homosexuality*, 13(1), 35-58.

Weinberg, G. (1972). *Society and the Healthy Homosexual.* New York: St. Martin's Press.

Weiss, R.S. (1994). *Learning From Strangers: The Art and Method of Qualitative Interview Studies.* New York: The Free Press.

Woods, S.E. (1990). The Contextual realities of being a Lesbian Physical Educator: A Doctoral dissertation at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, Massachusetts. (Available from the author at : 1711 Rutland Drive #1323, Austin, Texas 78758).

Woods, S.E. & Harbeck (1992). Living in Two Worlds: The Identity Management Strategies Used by Lesbian Physical Educators. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 141-165.