Jewish Gay Men's Accounts of Negotiating Cultural, Religious, and Sexual Identity: A Qualitative Study

Adrian Coyle, PhD, and Deborah Rafalin, PsychD

Adrian Coyle is a Senior Lecturer and Joint Course Director of the Practitioner Doctorate Program in Psychotherapeutic and Counselling Psychology at the University of Surrey in the UK.

Deborah Rafalin, a Counselling Psychologist, is a Lecturer and Research Supervisor on the Masters Programs in the School of Counselling and Psychotherapy at the Whittington Hospital in London, UK.

Correspondence should be addressed to Dr Deborah Rafalin, School of Counselling and Psychotherapy, c/o Women's and Children's Services, St Mary's Wing, Whittington Hospital, Highgate Hill, London N19 5NF, United Kingdom, and Dr Adrian Coyle, Department of Psychology, University of Surrey, Guildford, Surrey GU2 7XH, United Kingdom. E-mail: drafalin@io.clara.net; A.Coyle@surrey.ac.uk

Jewish Gay Men's Accounts of Negotiating Cultural, Religious, and Sexual Identity: A Qualitative Study

ABSTRACT. Research on the construction of lesbian and gay identity has represented this process as carrying considerable potential for intrapsychic and interpersonal stress and conflict. This process may be rendered even more psychologically challenging for those whose identities feature salient components that are not easily reconciled with a lesbian or gay identity. An example of this is the simultaneous holding of Jewish and gay identities. This paper reports findings from a qualitative study of 21 Jewish gay men in Britain. Participants were interviewed about the development of their gay identity, the relationship between their gay identity and their Jewish identity, the psychological and social implications of holding these identities, and strategies for managing any difficulties associated with this. Data were subjected to interpretative phenomenological analysis. All but one of the men reported experiences of identity conflict, arising mainly from the perceived incompatibility of Jewish and gay identities. This was said to have impacted negatively upon their psychological well-being. Those who had received negative reactions to the disclosure of sexual identity within Jewish contexts often attributed this to an anti-gay stance within Judaism and a concern with ensuring the continuation of the Jewish people. Various strategies were said to have been used to manage identity threat, including compartmentalizing Jewish and gay identity and revising the content or salience of Jewish identity. Recommendations are offered for

psychological interventions which could help Jewish gay men manage identity conflict.

Jewish Gay Men's Accounts of Negotiating Cultural, Religious,

and Sexual Identity: A Qualitative Study

Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, much of the research undertaken within lesbian and gay psychology was concerned with charting the stages and processes involved in the construction of lesbian and gay identities and the implications this may hold for psychological well-being (e.g., Cass, 1979, 1984; Coleman, 1982; Dank, 1971; Lewis, 1984; Minton & McDonald, 1984; Troiden, 1979, 1989; Weinberg, 1983). In more recent years, there has been a recognition that the construction of lesbian and gay identity is influenced by the social and cultural contexts in which this process occurs and that lesbian and gay identity intersects in important ways with other aspects of identity, such as cultural and ethnic identity (Cox & Gallois, 1996; Eliason, 1996). This has led to research - mostly in the USA - which considers the development of lesbian and gay identity within particular cultural and ethnic contexts (e.g., Chan, 1995; Greene, 1997, 1998). The present study adds to this literature by investigating accounts of constructing gay identity within Jewish contexts in Britain. Note that in this study, gay identity is referred to as a "sexual identity" largely because this is a standard term for denoting a personal and social identity centred around sexual orientation, although it is acknowledged that "sexual identity" can also refer to factors such as biological sex and gender.

In Britain, Judaism consists of two main branches, i.e., Orthodox and Progressive. The Progressive branch can be further subdivided, chiefly into the Reform and Liberal movements, while Orthodoxy also covers a variety of traditions, ranging from

the Orthodox mainstream of the United Synagogue through to the ultra-Orthodoxy of the various Hasidic groups. Orthodoxy represents the major form of Judaism in numerical terms in Britain. The different branches of Judaism can be differentiated in terms of their belief in the theological status of Torah, the Jewish scriptures (Cohn-Sherbok, 1996) (although the Reform movement in Britain began for practical rather than theological reasons: see Romain, 1990). Orthodox Judaism holds to a doctrine of Torah min ha-shamayim or "Torah from heaven", which signifies a belief that the precepts of Torah have been divinely revealed and are therefore immutable (Goldberg & Rayner, 1989). Broadly speaking, Progressive Judaism views Torah as divinely-inspired but with some elements open to revision in the light of modern scholarship and thinking.

The Torah seems to be clear in its prohibition of sexual activity between men and, by extension, male homosexuality. Leviticus 18:22 states "You shall not lie with a man as one lies with a woman, it is an abomination" (The Chumash [the Jewish Bible], 1993). It continues "A man who lies with a man as one lies with a woman, they have both done an abomination; they shall be put to death, their blood is upon themselves" (20:13). Although interpretations have been offered which represent these and other apparent injunctions in the Talmud (a literature amplifying Jewish Law) as irrelevant to the modern construction of lesbian and gay sexuality (Mariner, 1995), these are not part of mainstream understandings. The sinfulness attributed here to same-sex sexual activity appears to render it impossible to be both gay and an observant Orthodox Jew. As one commentator put it, to claim both identities

would be akin to claiming to be a Jewish lover of pork (Unterman, 1995). Even though sexual orientation features explicitly in the Liberal movement's declaration of its inclusiveness (Union of Liberal and Progressive Synagogues, undated), lesbian and gay sexuality also continues to be a deeply contentious issue and a matter of some debate within Progressive Judaism (e.g., see Seligman, 1996a, 1996b, 1997).

Despite the above focus on religious injunctions against same-sex sexual activity, it is important to note that Jewish identity is not just a religious identity but also an ethnic and cultural identity (but see Webber, 1997). Many Jews will have little or no contact with a synagogue but will still retain a Jewish cultural identity. The Jewish cultural context can be seen as based upon certain values and expectations such as the importance of the traditional family. For secular Jews, even though many of these values and expectations were originally formulated within religious contexts, they may still remain culturally important and salient.

In all branches of Judaism, the creation of one's own family through marriage and parenting is a clear cultural expectation (Solomon, 1995; Unterman, 1995). The traditional family is the core constitutive unit within Jewish communities. There is also considerable emphasis on the need to ensure the continuation of the Jewish people. This concern has its roots in the persecution of Jews through the ages and attempts to eradicate Jewish communities, culminating in the Shoah or Holocaust. It has therefore been suggested that in Jewish communities, the failure to marry and reproduce is seen as "akin to communal treason" (Unterman, 1995: 68), while

"sexuality that is not reproductive may be viewed by group members as instruments of genocide" (Greene, 1994: 244).

Given these viewpoints, values and expectations, it can be hypothesized that the holding of lesbian or gay identity and Jewish identity potentially places an individual in a situation of identity conflict and identity threat. Identity conflict arises when two (or more) identity components that are relevant to and are held by an individual (in this case, gayness and Jewishness) are experienced as being in some way incompatible. Such conflict (or, more specifically, the identity component - gayness - that demands assimiliation into the identity structure but which is incompatible with one or more existing identity components - Jewishness) may pose a threat to identity. In Breakwell's (1986, 1992, 1996) identity process theory, identity threat is defined as arising when at least some of the principles which define desirable end states for identity (the most common ones being self-esteem, continuity, positive distinctiveness and self-efficacy) are perceived to have been challenged.

Many writers have explored the potential conflicts between lesbian and gay identity and religious identity (e.g., Bouldrey, 1995; Gillman, 1988; Litzenberger, 1994; Perry & Lucas, 1987; Rosser, 1990; Saunders & Stanford, 1992; Sweasey, 1997), including Jewish identity (Balka & Rose, 1989; Dworkin, 1997; Lampert, 1995; Raphael, 1995; Solomon, 1995; Unterman, 1995; see also Corker's, 1996, case study of the interaction between Jewish, gay and deaf identities and Brown's, 1991, consideration of the potential complementarity of being lesbian and Jewish).

However, few of these writings have taken the form of empirical research. Moreover, the research that has been conducted has tended to be structured and quantitative, giving relatively little sense of the intricacies of people's lived experiences (with Sweasey's, 1997, work on lesbians' and gay men's experiences in spiritual and religious contexts being a notable exception).

The present study aimed to redress this imbalance and to explore whether identity conflict was reported to have been experienced by a group of Jewish gay men when constructing their gay identity; if so, to establish its nature and sources; to determine how such conflict was managed and resolved; and to identify the psychological implications of these processes. These questions were addressed qualitatively through an examination of the men's first-hand accounts of their experiences. The interpretation of the data was informed by - but did not seek to test - Breakwell's (1986) identity process theory and her work on coping with threatened identities (see Devine-Wright & Lyons, 1997, and Johnson & Robson, 1999, for other examples of empirical work which used this theory in the same way).

While some of the experiences which the present study recounts may also characterize the experiences of Jewish lesbians, there are undoubtedly significant points of difference because of the different positions, responsibilities and expectations of men and women within Judaism (Beck, 1982). This may compound the existing differences between lesbian women and gay men (Hart & Richardson, 1980; McConnell, 1994). It was therefore decided to focus on the experiences of

one gender only and to leave it to other researchers to conduct parallel research with Jewish lesbians.

METHOD

Participants

Attempts were made to recruit self-identified gay men who had at least one Jewish parent and had grown up in a home where one or both parents were Jewish. This is a broader definition of Jewishness than that adhered to by Orthodox Judaism, where Jewish status is conferred by having a Jewish mother (or through having converted to Judaism under the auspices of an appropriate body) (Goldberg & Rayner, 1989). This broader definition was adopted because the study was not focused only on gay men from traditions which adhered to the idea of Jewish status being conferred matrilineally. Twenty one participants were recruited through advertisements in the gay press and the Jewish press, through an appeal in the newsletter of the Jewish Gay and Lesbian Group, through a London Reform synagogue which has a sizeable proportion of gay men in its congregation and by "snowballing" from those who volunteered through these channels, with the aim of accessing men who were less involved in gay affirmative Jewish contexts. When describing the study to potential participants, care was taken not to convey the hypothesis about identity conflict because of the risk of failing to attract participants who had not experienced conflict.

Therefore the study was simply described as being interested in the experience of "growing up Jewish and gay".

Interview Schedule

Nineteen men were interviewed face-to-face about their experiences of constructing and managing Jewish and gay identities. Two men, who lived in locations which were geographically distant from the researchers, filled out a self-completion questionnaire consisting of the same open-ended questions that appeared on the interview schedule. This schedule began with demographic questions, which were followed by questions on their Jewish socialization; the construction of sexual identity and their reactions to this process; the relationship between Jewish and sexual identities and the management of any difficulties which arose; the disclosure of sexual identity to parents and within Jewish communities; and conceptualizations of their current identity. Due to the nature of the research topic, a sensitive method of interviewing was used which was based upon an interactional style derived from counseling (Coyle, 1998; Coyle & Wright, 1996). The interviews lasted between one hour and two and a half hours. All were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim.

Analytic Strategy

The data were analyzed using interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) (Smith, 1996a; Smith, Flowers, & Osborn, 1997; Smith, Jarman, & Osborn, 1999).

This recently-devised procedure has been used to analyze qualitative data on a range of health and well-being topics (Flowers, Smith, Sheeran, & Beail, 1997, 1998; Golsworthy & Coyle, 1999; Holmes, Coyle, & Thomson, 1997; Jarman, Smith, & Walsh, 1997; Macran, Stiles, & Smith, 1999; Osborn & Smith, 1998; Smith, 1999). IPA provides a systematic way of analyzing qualitative data that aims to explore participants' experiences, cognitions and meaning-making. At the same time, there is a recognition that the outcome of any qualitative analysis represents an interaction between participants' accounts and the researchers' interpretative frameworks. Hence, the analytic process is both phenomenological and interpretative. While it is not claimed that the thoughts of an individual are transparent within verbal reports, analysis is undertaken with the assumption that meaningful interpretations can be made about that thinking (Smith et al., 1997).

Good qualitative research should be transparent about its process of analysis (Smith, 1996b). It is therefore necessary to outline the analytic procedure systematically. The first step involved repeated reading of the transcripts which resulted in notes being made on each transcript regarding key phrases and processes. These notes included summaries of content, connections between different aspects of the transcript (i.e., there was an orientation to issues of both content and process) and initial interpretations. Within each transcript, these notes were then condensed to produce initial themes, with care being taken to ensure that these themes were consistent with and could be illustrated by the data. When this process had been repeated with each transcript, the resulting sets of initial themes

were examined to identify recurrent patterns across the transcripts, producing a final set of superordinate themes. The links between these themes and the data set were checked again at this stage. Themes were then ordered in such a way as to produce a logical and coherent research narrative. While the themes and subthemes arose from the analysis of the data, inevitably some also reflected the content of the interview schedule, with general topics on the interview schedule being elaborated into more specific themes and subthemes through the analysis.

The quantification of themes was eschewed because the aim of IPA is to produce a detailed, analytic account of the nature and range of experiences in a particular domain, drawing upon prior knowledge and theory where appropriate, rather than the quantification of data. Also, note that, although the emphasis was on discerning commonalities, accounts of individual experiences were not jettisoned as these sometimes extended an understanding of the complexity of the common themes and the processes that underpinned them.

Inevitably such an analysis involves a high degree of subjectivity as it is shaped by the researchers' interpretative frameworks. However, in this study, it was hoped that the researchers would be sensitized to different aspects of the data set due to their respective positions as a non-Jewish gay man who is familiar with Judaism and a Jewish heterosexual woman who is knowledgeable about gay sexuality, thereby yielding a rich analysis. Furthermore, it was hoped that each researcher would be able to identify and compensate for the "blind spots" of the other and curb any

idiosyncratic interpretations.

This subjectivity means that traditional criteria for evaluating research quality (such as reliability), which are based on an assumption of researcher objectivity and disengagement from the analytic process, are inappropriate in assessing this study (Henwood & Pidgeon, 1992). Among the alternative criteria which qualitative researchers have suggested is the criterion of persuasiveness by "grounding in examples", which is applied through an inspection of interpretations and data (Elliott, Fischer, & Rennie, 1999; Smith, 1996b). In this paper, interpretations are illustrated by extracts from the data set (to the extent that space permits), with the aim of allowing readers to assess the persuasiveness of the analysis for themselves. In these quotations, empty brackets indicate where material has been omitted; information that appears within square brackets has been added for clarificatory purposes; and ellipsis points (...) indicate a pause in the flow of participants' speech. Pseudonyms have been used to indicate the varied sources of the quotations.

Due to the narrative presentation of findings associated with IPA, the traditional division of a research paper into separate results and discussion sections has been replaced by an analysis section where main themes are presented and interpreted and an overview section where consideration is given to the implications of the research for psychological practice.

ANALYSIS

Demographic Information

Participants' mean age was 37.2 years (range 19-67; SD 11.6). In terms of their highest educational qualifications, seven (33.3%) had a postgraduate degree or diploma, six (28.6%) had a degree, five (23.8%) had qualifications equivalent to GCSEs/O-levels, two (9.5%) had A-levels (or equivalent qualifications) and one (4.8%) had a diploma. Using the International Standard Classification of Occupations (International Labour Office, 1990), 12 (57.1%) were classified as holding professional jobs; two (9.5%) were senior managers or officials; and one (4.8%) was located in the category of service, shop and sales workers. Two participants (9.5%) were students. Of the four (19.0%) who were currently unemployed, three had previously been in professional occupations and one had never held a full-time job. At the time of the study, all the participants lived in urban centres within Great Britain, mostly in or around the London area.

In terms of their current Jewish affiliations, 16 (76.2%) described themselves as affiliated with Progressive Judaism, four (19.0%) with Orthodox Judaism and one (4.8%) was unable to define himself in these terms. Ten (47.6%) described themselves as not very religiously observant, five (23.8%) as not observant at all, three (14.3%) as quite observant and three (14.3%) as very observant. Ten (47.6%) felt that their sense of being Jewish was currently very important to them, nine

(42.9%) said it was quite important and two (9.5%) were unable to say how important it was to them.

Experience of Identity Conflict

The central hypothesis in this study was that simultaneously holding a Jewish and gay identity places an individual in a situation of potential identity conflict. Of the 21 participants, 20 (95.2%) reported that at times throughout their lives, they had struggled to reconcile the Jewish and gay aspects of their identity. For example, Nathan said:

> I just thought "God [ ] Jewish people aren't like this" [ ] If you're Jewish [] you know, you could not be gay.

This comment echoes Solomon's (1995) observation about the Jewish perception of homosexuality as "quintessentially non-Jewish". The task of trying to reconcile the two was not described as something that was addressed at one particular point in time (such as during adolescence or at the time when they were first engaged in constructing a gay identity) and then resolved. Instead, these participants described an extended process spanning many years that, for some, was still ongoing. As Joshua explained:

> I think [ ] all during my life the Jewish and gay business and the intertwining in

my life have dominated my thoughts.

In their explanations of the origins of identity conflict, most participants pointed to the effects of a negative evaluation of homosexuality within Judaism in both a religious and cultural sense. For example:

We're talking about a religion which on the whole is anti-gay. (Jeff)

The general homophobia within the Jewish community can make it difficult to be gay. (Darren)

Homosexuality in the wider mainstream Judaism is still unacceptable. (Sam)

The quotation from Sam implies that there are contexts outside the Jewish mainstream where homosexuality may be accepted. However, this "mainstream" was consistently represented as negative and problematic in its views. This negative outlook was attributed to the apparent injunctions against sexual activity between men in the Torah:

Alan: Being Jewish and gay has been an issue [ ] You know, there are conflicts.

Interviewer: What are those conflicts for you?

Alan: The Bible [ ] Leviticus chapter blah blah blah. "Man shall not lie

16

with man".

It was felt that, within Orthodox Judaism, because of the commitment to the idea of Torah min ha-shamayim, these injunctions were seen as carrying ultimate authority and so this outlook on homosexuality was difficult to change. Although participants did not draw upon cultural expectations concerning marriage and the family when offering explanations about the origins of Judaism's negative evaluation of homosexuality, this factor was invoked to explain negative parental reactions to their sons' gay sexuality (which will be addressed in the next subsection).

As well as reporting experiences of identity conflict in Jewish contexts, several participants described identity conflict in gay contexts and related experiences of anti-Semitism within gay communities and organizations. Several of the men who described themselves as observant Jews reported experiencing discomfort in many gay environments because they felt that their outlooks and values prevented them from fitting in. As Darren put it, drawing upon a particular construction of gay contexts:

> Clubbing, cruising, taking drugs and being promiscuous are alien to me. It's so...well, un-Jewish.

The experience of identity conflict was said to have carried a range of psychological implications. Several participants talked of this conflict having had a negative impact

upon their psychological well-being. Recalling the effect of being pulled in opposing directions by what he saw as irreconcilable identity components in his youth, Joshua said:

I was an unhappy...almost suicidal young man...I suppose that was partly due to being...to having these two forces.

For Raymond, being Jewish and gay were experienced as "two really [ ] distinct identities" which he tried to keep separate. This compartmentalization of identity components (which will be examined in more detail later) and its negative effect upon personal integrity and authenticity (see Markowe, 1996, on the potential importance of this dimension in sexual identity) was said to have exerted a significant detrimental effect on his sense of well-being:

God, I think I went through a period when I thought I was schizophrenic...I was paranoid, I was, you know [ ] not being true to who I was, I guess.

Another participant, Ben, talked of feeling that he had failed to live up to the ideals of Torah and the cultural expectations conveyed by his parents. This was said to have resulted in him seeking psychiatric help in an attempt to dispel his sexual feelings for other men and ultimately attempting suicide:

I attempted overdoses twice. I saw it as a form of punishment - a type of

stoning if you like [ ] I'd read it was wrong in the Torah. I'd also failed my

parents because I was not going with a girl. I put myself through electro-

convulsion therapy and in and out of psychiatric hospitals, hoping that

someone was going to wave some kind of magic wand and - hey presto - [ ]

these thoughts [sexual attractions towards other men] will disappear and I will

then start feeling for a girl or woman...settle down and have children, thus

therefore honoring my family, my community...being a better Jew.

Ben's "stoning" simile here refers to the penalty prescribed for same-sex sexual acts,

as discussed by the medieval codifier of Jewish law, Maimonides (Unterman, 1995).

The suicidal behavior that Ben describes here is not unusual. Research has

consistently found a markedly higher incidence of suicidal thoughts and behaviors

among lesbian and gay young people than among heterosexual youth (e.g.,

D'Augelli & Hershberger, 1993; Hartstein, 1996; Rotheram-Borus, Hunter, & Rosario,

1994). A major contributory factor to this is the demanding experience of living with

a socially devalued sexual identity, perhaps with limited support from significant

others. Such a situation has considerable potential for eroding psychological well-

being (Coyle, 1993). In the present study, however, participants attributed the

psychological difficulties they experienced to the conflicts between Jewish and gay

identity components rather than to more general negative social representations of

gay sexuality.

The only participant who said that he had never experienced any difficulty in

reconciling the Jewish and gay aspects of his identity attributed this to a number of factors. Firstly, he reported that at the time he first thought he might be gay, he talked to his rabbi about his feelings. The rabbi was said not to have problematized these feelings and disclosed that his own son was also gay. The participant experienced this as validating and as helping to counteract the more usual negative stance toward homosexuality within Judaism, thereby rendering gayness and Jewishness more compatible for him. Secondly, he reported that his sexuality had been accepted by his parents, which he also linked to the lack of conflict in his account of his Jewish and gay identity. This issue will be addressed next.

Implications for Social Relationships

These identity conflicts were said to have carried implications for participants' social relationships. This section focuses on the nature and implications of the disclosure of sexual identity to parents and within Jewish communities.

Disclosure to Parents

The majority of participants reported that one or both of their parents knew of their sexual identity. Although most men said that they had informed their parents themselves, in some cases the information had emerged through an indirect route, such as through other relatives. A high degree of third person disclosure to other family members was said to have occurred. Selective disclosure and the management of information about sexual identity may be particularly difficult within

the Jewish community in Britain because of the close interrelations that characterize this community. One participant cited this as a reason why he decided to disclose to his parents:

> I literally thought "I've got to tell people", especially in the Jewish community. I mean, you tell one person something - there may only be three hundred thousand Jews [in Britain] but by the end of the week everyone will have heard about it so I just decided that that was the time to do [it]. (Robert)

Regardless of whether disclosure was direct or indirect, parental responses were described as varied and changeable over time. The range of responses was similar to that reported in studies of disclosure among gay men in the general population (e.g., Cramer & Roach, 1988; Herdt & Boxer, 1993; Remafedi, 1987; Robinson, Walters, & Skeen, 1989) and so this will not be explored in detail here. Initial negative reactions included shock, distress, disgust, verbal abuse and a refusal to discuss the issue, while initial positive or neutral reactions involved seeking further information and providing support and reassurance. The changes in parental responses over time that were reported were also varied. Some parents were said to have become more open and accepting after an initially negative response. Others restricted further discussion after having initially engaged with the disclosure in a relatively positive way, while others were said to have become more overtly negative after initial acceptance.

Participants' explanations for negative parental reactions to disclosure focused on parents' constructions of homosexuality as abnormal and as a mental health problem. However, half the participants said that their parents' main concern related to the continuation of their family and of the Jewish people. They described parental concerns about their sons not marrying, not creating a Jewish home and a Jewish family and not providing them with grandchildren. Sam reported that because of this, in his parents' eyes, as a gay man he was "a waste of manhood [ ] or a life".

Parental connections with the Shoah or Holocaust were often invoked by participants to explain negative reactions. Sam recognized this element in his father's distressed and verbally abusive response to his disclosure:

> I think the fact that my father lost so much family in the Holocaust was...I was going to continue that family and having a son was very important and having the name was very important.

This may partly explain the sense of guilt and regret reported by the majority of participants who had encountered negative reactions from parents. Reflecting on his feelings about his mother's sadness that he would not have children, Alan said:

> That sense of grief kind of held...kind of stayed with me - that sense of somehow I'd let her down.

The Holocaust was also invoked by some participants who explained why they had decided not to disclose their sexual identity to their parents. For example, Ben explained that he wanted his parents to maintain hope that he would marry and have children because both his parents were Holocaust survivors and Ben felt that their desire for grandchildren was "the only life they had left". He therefore felt that

My responsibility was to keep grief from the two people - the nearest to me - who had suffered more than anybody I'd ever know in my life.

Disclosure within Jewish Communities

Aside from parents, the majority of participants reported that some people in their Jewish social networks knew that they were gay. The targets of disclosure included close friends, rabbis, parental friends, colleagues and acquaintances. Disclosure to these people was said to have elicited the same range of responses as disclosure to parents. One participant described how, when he disclosed his sexual identity to one particular woman, he was confronted by the perceived impossibility of being Jewish and gay. He recalled their exchange thus:

She said "You're married?". I said "No, I'm gay". She said "You're joking" and...she said "You can't be". I said "Why can't I be?". "Well for a start you're Jewish. Jewish people aren't gay". (Nathan)

Negative responses were more commonly reported than positive ones. These

responses were attributed largely to an anti-gay outlook within Judaism, which was examined earlier. Most positive responses were encountered following disclosure in gay affirmative Jewish contexts. These responses were generally experienced as validating the individual's identity, including their sexual identity, and enabling that identity to act as a channel for attaining desirable identity goals such as self-esteem (Breakwell, 1986). Participants who had received tolerant or accepting responses in other Jewish contexts explained this in terms of the closeness of their relationship with the person whom they told or the nature of the role they played within their community setting. For example, Toby felt that his sexual identity was tolerated within his synagogue because of the major input which he provided into community activities. Describing what he saw as the conditional nature of this tolerance, he observed:

> I'm of use to people as I do quite a bit of committee work charity wise and they have to accept me.

The few participants who said that no one in their Jewish social networks knew that they were gay were all Orthodox Jews. They explained their non-disclosure in Jewish community contexts in terms of the particularly negative Orthodox outlook on homosexuality ("They regard it as a sin - a terrible sin" - Ben). Darren expressed concern that if his rabbi and community discovered that he was gay, they would pathologize him and try to "sort [him] out" by attempting to force him into marriage. He expressed concern that, as a practising Orthodox Jew, his position within his

community would become untenable if his sexual identity were known and that his parents' position would be compromised:

> I feel that my parents who are quite well known and respected within the community would be ostracized and I do not wish to see them being hurt.

Strategies for Minimizing and Coping with Identity Conflict and Identity Threat

Participants who attempted to ensure that information about their sexual identity did not become disseminated within their Jewish communities reported that they employed a variety of strategies to achieve this. One of the chief strategies involved taking care about the extent to which they engaged with others within these communities in order to avoid having to discuss relationships and other matters relating to sexuality - "keeping a very low profile" as one participant put it. This could be seen as a variant of the isolation strategy for coping with identity threat that Breakwell (1986) noted: here the individual isolates themselves to minimize the risk of experiencing rejection (and thereby having their self-esteem undermined and finding themselves with a negative form of social distinctiveness) because of the identity position that they occupy. This was not without psychological costs, with some participants speaking of their dissatisfaction at having to lie and maintain a distance from others. Several said that this led to feelings of loneliness and a general wariness in other relationship contexts. As Ben said:

Very seldom have I had actual relationships that have lasted because I am

scared of letting anybody that near.

Other strategies involved complying with community expectations around

heterosexual dating and simply lying. One man engaged in compliance to the extent

of getting married, although this marriage eventually broke up. The same strategies

were reported by the men who had told very few people in their Jewish social

networks about their sexuality. These men also adopted a strategy of very selective

disclosure, telling only those whom they felt sure would not react negatively.

The majority of participants spoke of how they had managed information about their

sexual identity by compartmentalizing the Jewish and gay aspects of their lives at

some time. This involves creating strict boundaries around the threatening aspect of

identity - in this case, the gay aspect - and keeping it separate from the rest of the

identity structure (Breakwell, 1986). For some men, this was experienced as a

routinized and unproblematic way of dealing with identity threat and avoiding identity

conflict. For example, Darren described it as "a balancing act that has so far

worked". Ben explained that his Orthodox Jewish life and his gay life were

completely compartmentalized:

I've lived with all these in various separate compartments for so long, I don't

think I can remember much of another way of life.

However, others reported finding this situation stressful, with Joshua, for example, describing it as "awful" to have two separate lives.

Those men who had encountered negative reactions to the disclosure of their sexual identities within Jewish communities often reported that they coped with this situation by disputing the right of the other person to judge them in this way and delegitimizing their views, thereby reducing any identity threat that these responses might have created (such as their potentially corrosive effect upon self-esteem or the attribution of negative distinctiveness to the person). For example, having encountered a negative response from his rabbi, Nigel said that he relied upon other sources of authority (i.e., himself and God) for determining how he should behave (see also Sweasey, 1997, on this):

> He [the rabbi] refused to talk to me [ ] [but] I do what I want to do - not what the rabbis say one should do because it [being gay] doesn't make me...[ ] if there is a good God...less of a Jew.

These strategies for managing information about sexual identity or negative responses to disclosure can be understood as methods of minimizing or coping with potential conflict between the Jewish and gay aspects of identity. Other strategies for coping with identity conflict and threat involved participants changing their relationship with Judaism. A few men said that they tried to cope by increasing their religious involvement and commitment in the hope that it would dispel same-sex

sexual feelings or to try to make up for the perceived failing of being gay. Reflecting upon his general coping strategy when he first became aware of his sexuality, Ben said:

I made a conscious decision that I would study more and I became [ ] a very deep believer [ ] It was very doubtful indeed that I was going to get married to a woman [ ] so part of my deepening into my Judaism I suppose was an attempt to make up for that part.

However, most participants reported that they decreased their involvement with Judaism in order to manage feelings of identity threat and avoid identity conflict. This interpersonal strategy had intrapsychic origins. Identifying religious prohibitions on homosexuality as lying at the root of their identity threat, many reconstructed their Jewish identity in cultural and social terms and decreased or ceased their religious involvement. Explaining his rejection of the religious aspect of his Judaism, Alan said:

I suppose the part of me that wants to throw away the religion is saying you know "Well, you know, you don't tell me what to do. I'm not hurting you or anybody else so, you know, get off my case".

By doing this, these participants revised the content and context of their Jewish identity, thereby reducing the potential for their Jewish identity to conflict with their

gay identity. Many men - including some who did not report having revised the content of their Jewish identities - dealt with identity threat by downgrading the importance of their Jewish identity within their overall identity structure at some time.

Several participants identified their socialization within Judaism as having provided a resource which helped them to undertake identity revision. These men represented Judaism as a tradition which is characterized by and encourages a questioning, inquiring approach rather than a passive acceptance of things as they are. For example, Jon said:

> I think with Judaism [ ] you know, it really encourages you to question things [ ] so I think it really encouraged me.

This questioning approach took Jon back to the Leviticus text which many participants identified as the basis of Judaism's anti-gay stance. In his interview, he led the interviewer through a lengthy exegesis of this text, challenging the assumption that it refers to gay sexual activity and concluding "that [the text] has nothing to do with me". Moreover, this reinterpretative strategy led him to discern an affirmation of gay sexuality in the Bible, an interpretation which enabled him to see himself and his sexuality reflected there, boost his self-esteem and interpret the distinctiveness accorded by his sexuality in positive terms:

> I was also really influenced by the story of David and Jonathan [ ] It begins

with David appearing at the court of Saul and you're told that Jonathan just looks at him and, you know, instantly he sees him "and his soul loved Jonathan's soul and was knit to his soul" [ ] and then later they, you know, they...[ ] they go out into the field and we don't quite know what happens you know. It says that they kissed and "held one another until David...was made great...was caused to be big" [ ] It just seems so clear to me that whatever they got up to, whatever they felt, that's what I felt. I feel like...I felt like David and Jonathan and that's in the Bible. It's OK. And...I don't care when people say "Oh but that wasn't really homosexuality". The fact of the matter is [ ] the language is very close to sort of expressions of ardour or romance or whatever you want to call it...call it my life and there it is in the Bible, you know. I couldn't find a more explicit affirmation.

Another way in which Jewishness constituted a resource for coping with being gay was identified by several men. These men described how their experience of dealing with a sense of difference and disconnection from wider society on account of their Jewishness had prepared them to deal with similar feelings that arose from their sexual identity, thereby echoing writing which has identified parallels between the Jewish experience and the lesbian and gay experience (Brown, 1991; Dworkin, 1997; Rogow, 1989). Recalling his experiences of growing up Jewish in a small, rural, mining town, Jeff said:

If you can say "I'm different" once in the face of that, then you can say "I'm

different" again in a different light [ ] And it really really helped.

Jewish identity was thus not a uniformly problematic issue in relation to sexual identity. For some, it was also said to have provided a resource for coping with socially devalued difference.

Several participants reported that they had dealt with feelings of identity conflict by seeking out such communities where they could experience a sense of belonging. In the UK at the time of writing, there are a number of such contexts in existence, i.e., the Jewish Gay and Lesbian Group, the Chofetz Chaim Foundation (an Orthodox group for lesbians and gay men: see Glaser, 1999) and Beit Klal Yisrael (a synagogue which has a policy of inclusiveness and which is affiliated with Reform Judaism). This seeking of group support has been recognized as an important strategy for coping with identity threat generally (Breakwell, 1986) and also with the threat that may be experienced by lesbians and gay men who hold religious beliefs (Sweasey, 1997). For example, some participants described the acceptance of both salient aspects of their identity that they found at one synagogue:

> Everyone accepts my Judaism and my gayness and there's no problem
> whatsoever and they accept me as a person. (Derek)

> It wasn't until I actually [ ] started going to the synagogue I go to now that I
> actually feel that yes, I can walk in the door as a whole person. I don't have to

leave a little piece of myself at the doorstep and go in as someone else. I can

enter as the whole person that I am. (Sam)

Similarly, Clive contrasted the sense of belonging which he feels at the Jewish Gay

and Lesbian Group with the feeling of marginalization that he experiences at his

synagogue:

If I am in my own synagogue [ ] the majority of them [the congregation] are

straight couples. I'm sort of [ ] on the fringe [ ] whereas in the Jewish Gay and

Lesbian Group one feels completely part of it.

Current Feelings About Judaism

Given the experiences of identity conflict and identity threat and the perceived need

for information management, it is not surprising that participants reported a range of

current feelings toward Judaism. Several expressed anger toward Orthodox

Judaism and felt that they were not welcome within it because of their sexual

identity. A few felt that gay men could derive nothing of benefit from Orthodox

Judaism because of its anti-gay outlook. Yet, despite feeling that they had to

compartmentalize their gay and Jewish lives, several Orthodox participants referred

to the pleasure and satisfaction that they still derived from their Jewish lives. Darren,

an observant Orthodox man, described the tension in his situation in this way:

The general homophobia within the Jewish community can make it difficult to be gay yet I still have feelings of loyalty towards the community [ ] I don't love Judaism any the less for it [ ] What I do find difficult to reconcile is that my co-congregationalists in synagogue would probably ostracize me if they knew I was gay.

Several participants noted that negative attitudes could also be discerned within the Reform tradition of Judaism and pointed to matters related to lesbian and gay sexuality which have caused controversy there, such as same-sex commitment ceremonies (see Seligman, 1996a, 1996b, 1997). In the light of these discussions, some participants stressed the importance of there being "safe" communities and contexts within Judaism for (lesbians and) gay men.

OVERVIEW

This study points to some of the difficulties that may be experienced by Jewish men who are trying to construct a gay identity and who are trying to find ways of reconciling Jewish and gay identity and managing information about their gay identity within Jewish contexts in Britain (and - although this was only mentioned briefly by a few participants - managing information about their Jewish identity in gay contexts). While there is some overlap between the challenges described by the men in this

study and those reported by participants in studies of gay identity construction in more general contexts, what distinguishes this study is the role which participants accorded to Jewish cultural contexts in shaping these challenges. The study also indicates what the implications of these identity challenges might be for the psychological and social well-being of the men concerned and identifies some ways in which difficulties might be managed. Yet, any conclusions drawn from this data set must be tentative because of questions about how representative these experiences are of the experiences of Jewish men who are negotiating sexual identity issues in Britain today.

The data set consisted of the retrospective accounts of adult men, with the youngest participant being 19 years old and the oldest 67: this latter man was, however, an outlier in terms of age. Although data which were felt to be historically specific have been omitted from the analysis, the social contexts which these men evoked may differ from those in which Jewish gay men today are embedded. Furthermore, it could also be argued that the retrospective nature of the accounts decreases the likelihood that they constitute an accurate representation of the events and experiences which they describe. However, there exists research evidence to suggest that retrospective reports and autobiographical memory are not necessarily and inevitably inaccurate and unstable (e.g., Blane, 1996; Brewin, Andrews, & Gotlib, 1993; Neisser, 1994; Ross & Conway, 1986; Rubin, Wetzler, & Nebes, 1986; Wagenaar, 1986).

More pertinently, the sample was drawn mostly from Progressive Jewish communities, with only four Orthodox men volunteering to take part, despite attempts to recruit from this branch of Judaism through "snowballing". However, these were current affiliations: the majority of the sample had grown up in Orthodox environments but had realigned themselves, mostly as a result of their struggles with sexual identity. The experiences of the men who remain Orthodox have been particularly attended to in the analysis because the process of constructing a Jewish gay identity seemed to have been especially challenging for these men. Given this situation, there is a need for further research which explores the experiences of a range of Orthodox gay men in more detail, although the difficulties of accessing and recruiting such a sample are considerable. Others whose voices are missing from the present study are men who dealt with identity conflict by "denying" one or other aspect of their identity, such as gay men who no longer define themselves as Jewish in any sense and Jewish men who do not define themselves as gay, even if their sexual feelings and/or sexual activity are significantly directed toward other men. However, it is possible that these self-definitional positions may not signify "denial" but may instead represent a more complex negotiation of identity challenges and may reflect the limitations of the "gay identity" construct within ethnic and cultural minority contexts (Manalansan, 1996).

Although concerns can be raised about the sample, the present study represents an initial exploration of the research topic upon which other researchers can build. For psychologists working with Jewish men, the study identifies one factor (i.e., the

negotiation of sexual identity) that could possibly lie at the root of psychological distress and that might be borne in mind when exploring such distress with individuals from this group. However, as studies of psychotherapy with lesbian and gay clients have noted, it is also necessary to avoid assuming that sexual identity is inevitably problematic for lesbians and gay men (Garnets, Hancock, Cochran, Goodchilds, & Peplau, 1991; Milton & Coyle, 1998).

For men who are struggling with reconciling Jewish and gay identities, interventions may focus upon exploring the possibility of revising some aspects of Jewish identity that are proving problematic. Drawing upon the interpretative tradition within Judaism (Sarah, 1995) and the questioning tradition identified by several participants, these men can be encouraged to locate credible resources that they can use to reinterpret traditional Jewish views on homosexuality and fashion a version of Jewish identity that can co-exist with a gay identity. Others have successfully trodden this path: Laura Brown, a Jewish lesbian feminist psychologist, talked of having "struggled to come up with a Midrash, an interpretation [of Judaism], I could live with" and having been assisted by the realization that "to be a Jew is to live with contradictions and diversity" (Brown, 1991: 49). However, the social context of Jewish identity should not be ignored here. While it may be possible to revise Jewish identity at an individual level, this revised version may be implicitly or explicitly challenged within family and community contexts. The individual will need to find contexts in which a revised Jewish identity will be valued and supported. Also, resources may need to be identified for supporting parents who may be

struggling to come to terms with their son's sexuality.

However, in locating the roots of identity conflict within Jewish identity and more specifically within Jewish outlooks on homosexuality, there is a danger of pathologizing Judaism - or at least particular branches - and apportioning responsibility for change solely to Judaism. From a modern secular perspective, an Orthodox refusal to reconsider the nature of homosexuality on theological grounds may be difficult to understand and it may appear as if religious text is being used to justify oppressive and outdated views. Yet it is important to understand it because this perspective will be shared by Orthodox men who may wish to find a way of making sense of their sexuality without abandoning a Jewish or Orthodox identity. It is important to understand the Jewish and particularly the Orthodox context and listen to the value that some of the participants in the present study attached to their involvement with Orthodoxy, despite the difficulties that it presented for them. Various strategies have been identified which can be used to facilitate the co-existence of a(n Orthodox) Jewish and gay identity. These include de-emphasizing those aspects of Torah which cause problems - something which Unterman (1995) acknowledges as a standard strategy within many Orthodox communities for dealing with other seemingly obtuse and irrelevant injunctions - or interpreting Torah injunctions narrowly so that they are seen to refer to anal intercourse but not to prohibit other forms of same-sex sexual activity (Solomon, 1995). Yet these strategies are not without a price in terms of the demands of living with a "bad conscience". In working with Orthodox men, it may be necessary to explore the

possibility of creating a version of gay identity that they can hold - even if this means that it is only possible to reduce psychological stress to a manageable level - and identifying appropriate sources of support.

REFERENCES

Balka, C., & Rose, A. (Eds.) (1989). Twice blessed: On being lesbian or gay and Jewish. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Beck, E.T. (Ed.) (1982). Nice Jewish girls: A lesbian anthology. Watertown, MA: Persephone.

Blane, D.B. (1996). Collecting retrospective data: Development of a reliable method and a pilot study of its use. Social Science & Medicine, 42, 751-757.

Bouldrey, B. (Ed.) (1995). Wrestling with the angel: Faith and religion in the lives of

gay men. New York: Riverhead Books.

Breakwell, G.M. (1986). Coping with threatened identities. London: Methuen.

Breakwell, G.M. (1992). Processes of self-evaluation: Efficacy and estrangement. In G.M. Breakwell (Ed.), Social psychology of identity and the self concept. London: Surrey University Press/Academic Press.

Breakwell, G.M. (1996). Identity processes and social changes. In G.M. Breakwell & E. Lyons (Eds.), Changing European identities: Social psychological analyses of social change. Oxford: Butterworth Heinemann.

Brewin, C.R., Andrews, B., & Gotlib, I.H. (1993). Psychopathology and early experience: A reappraisal of retrospective reports. Psychological Bulletin, 113, 82-98.

Brown, L.S. (1991). How is this feminist different from all other feminists? Or, my journey from Pirke Avot to feminist therapy ethics. Women and Therapy, 10, 41-55.

Cass, V.C. (1979). Homosexual identity formation: A theoretical model. Journal of Homosexuality, 4, 219-235.

Cass, V.C. (1984). Homosexual identity formation: Testing a theoretical model.

Journal of Sex Research, 20, 143-167.

Chan, C.S. (1995). Issues of sexual identity in an ethnic minority: The case of Chinese American lesbians, gay men, and bisexual people. In A.R. D'Augelli & C.J. Patterson (Eds.), Lesbian, gay, and bisexual identities over the lifespan: Psychological perspectives. New York: Oxford University Press.

The Chumash: The Stone Edition (1993). New York: Mesorah Publications.

Cohn-Sherbok, D. (1996). Modern Judaism. Basingstoke: Macmillan.

Coleman, E. (1982). Developmental stages of the coming out process. Journal of Homosexuality, 7, 31-43.

Corker, M. (1996). Deaf transitions: Images and origins of deaf families, deaf communities and deaf identities. London: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Cox, S., & Gallois, C. (1996). Gay and lesbian identity development: A social identity perspective. Journal of Homosexuality, 30, 1-30.

Coyle, A. (1993). A study of psychological well-being among gay men using the GHQ-30. British Journal of Clinical Psychology, 32, 218-220.

Coyle, A. (1998). Qualitative research in counselling psychology: Using the counselling interview as a research instrument. In P. Clarkson (Ed.), Counselling psychology: Integrating theory, research and supervised practice. London: Routledge.

Coyle, A., & Wright, C. (1996). Using the counselling interview to collect research data on sensitive topics. Journal of Health Psychology, 1, 431-440.

Cramer, D.W., & Roach, A.J. (1988). Coming out to mom and dad: A study of gay males and their relationships with their parents. Journal of Homosexuality, 15, 79-91.

Dank, B.M. (1971). Coming out in the gay world. Psychiatry, 34, 180-197.

D'Augelli, A.R., & Hershberger, S.L. (1993). Lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth in community settings: Personal challenges and mental health problems. American Journal of Community Psychology, 21, 421-448.

Devine-Wright, P., & Lyons, E. (1997). Remembering pasts and representing places: The construction of national identities in Ireland. Journal of Environmental Psychology, 17, 33-45.

Dworkin, S.H. (1997). Female, lesbian, and Jewish: Complex and invisible. In B. Greene (Ed.), Ethnic and cultural diversity among lesbians and gay men. Thousand

Oaks, CA: Sage.

Eliason, M.J. (1996). Identity formation for lesbian, bisexual, and gay persons: Beyond a "minoritizing" view. Journal of Homosexuality, 30, 31-58.

Elliott, R., Fischer, C.T., & Rennie, D.L. (1999). Evolving guidelines for publication of qualitative research studies in psychology and related fields. British Journal of Clinical Psychology, 38, 215-229.

Flowers, P., Smith, J.A., Sheeran, P., & Beail, N. (1997). Health and romance: Understanding unprotected sex in relationships between gay men. British Journal of Health Psychology, 2, 73-86.

Flowers, P., Smith, J.A., Sheeran, P., & Beail, N. (1998). "Coming out" and sexual debut: Understanding the social context of HIV risk-related behaviour. Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology, 8, 409-421.

Garnets, L., Hancock, K.A., Cochran, S.D., Goodchilds, J., & Peplau, L.A. (1991). Issues in psychotherapy with lesbians and gay men: A survey of psychologists. American Psychologist, 46, 964-972.

Gillman, H. (1988). A minority of one: A journey with Friends. London: Quaker Home Service.

Glaser, K. (1999). Love that still remains silent. Jewish Chronicle, Jan 15th, 26.

Goldberg, D.J., & Rayner, J.D. (1989). The Jewish people: Their history and their religion. London: Penguin.

Golsworthy, R., & Coyle, A. (1999). Spiritual beliefs and the search for meaning among older adults following partner loss. Mortality, 4, 21-40.

Greene, B. (1994). Ethnic minority lesbians and gay men: Mental health and treatment issues. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 62, 243-251.

Greene, B. (Ed.) (1997). Ethnic and cultural diversity among lesbians and gay men. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Greene, B. (1998). Family, ethnic identity, and sexual orientation: African-American lesbians and gay men. In C.J. Patterson & A.R. D'Augelli (Eds.), Lesbian, gay, and bisexual identities in families: Psychological perspectives. New York: Oxford University Press.

Hart, J., & Richardson, D. (1980). The differences between homosexual men and women. Bulletin of the British Psychological Society, 33, 451-454.

Hartstein, N.B. (1996). Suicide risk in lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth. In R.P. Cabaj & T.S. Stein (Eds.), <u>Textbook of homosexuality and mental health</u>. Washington DC: American Psychiatric Press.

Henwood, K.L., & Pidgeon, N.F. (1992). Qualitative research and psychological theorizing. <u>British Journal of Psychology, 83</u>, 97-111.

Herdt, G., & Boxer, A.M. (1993). <u>Children of horizons: How gay and lesbian teens are leading a new way out of the closet</u>. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Holmes, S., Coyle, A., & Thomson, E. (1997). Quality of life in survivors of bone marrow transplant. <u>Journal of Cancer Nursing, 1(3)</u>, 106-116.

International Labour Office (1990). <u>International standard classification of occupations: ISCO-88</u>. Geneva: International Labour Office.

Jarman, M., Smith, J.A., & Walsh, S. (1997). The psychological battle for control: A qualitative study of healthcare professionals' understandings of the treatment of anorexia nervosa. <u>Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology, 7</u>, 137-152.

Johnson, S., & Robson, C. (1999). Threatened identities: The experience of women in transition to programmes of professional higher education. <u>Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology, 9</u>, 273-288.

Lampert, G. (1995). Bamidbar. In B. Bouldrey (Ed.), <u>Wrestling with the angel: Faith and religion in the lives of gay men</u>. New York: Riverhead Books.

Lewis, L.A. (1984). The coming-out process for lesbians: Integrating a stable identity. <u>Social Work: Journal of the National Association of Social Workers, 29</u>, 464-469.

Litzenberger, B.W. (1994). Struggle and strength in the lives of two lesbian priests. In C.E. Franz & A.J. Stewart (Eds.), <u>Women creating lives: Identities, resilience, and resistance</u>. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

Macran, S., Stiles, W.B., & Smith, J.A. (1999). How does personal therapy affect therapists' practice? <u>Journal of Counseling Psychology, 46</u>, 419-431.

Manalansan IV, M.F. (1996). Double minorities: Latino, Black, and Asian men who have sex with men. In R.C. Savin-Williams & K.M. Cohen (Eds.), <u>The lives of lesbians, gays, and bisexuals: Children to adults</u>. Fort Worth, TX: Harcourt Brace.

Mariner, R. (1995). The Jewish homosexual and the Halakhic tradition: A suitable case for treatment. In J. Magonet (Ed.), <u>Jewish explorations of sexuality</u>. Providence, RI: Berghahn Books.

Markowe, L.A. (1996). <u>Redefining the self: Coming out as lesbian</u>. Cambridge: Polity

Press.

McConnell, J.H. (1994). Lesbian and gay male identities as paradigms. In S.L. Archer (Ed.), Interventions for adolescent identity development. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Milton, M., & Coyle, A. (1998). Psychotherapy with lesbian and gay clients. The Psychologist, 11, 73-76.

Minton, H.L., & McDonald, G.J. (1984). Homosexual identity formation as a developmental process. Journal of Homosexuality, 9, 91-104.

Neisser, U. (1994). Self narratives: True and false. In U. Neisser & R. Fivush (Eds.), The remembering self: Construction and accuracy in the self-narrative. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Osborn, M., & Smith, J.A. (1998). The personal experience of chronic benign lower back pain: An interpretative phenomenological analysis. British Journal of Health Psychology, 3, 65-83.

Perry, T., & Lucas, C.L. (1987). The Lord is my shepherd and He knows I'm gay. Austin, TX: Liberty Press.

Raphael, L. (1995). To be a Jew. In B. Bouldrey (Ed.), <u>Wrestling with the angel: Faith and religion in the lives of gay men</u>. New York: Riverhead Books.

Remafedi, G. (1987). Male homosexuality: The adolescent's perspective. <u>Pediatrics, 79</u>, 326-330.

Robinson, B.E., Walters, L.H., & Skeen, P. (1989). Response of parents to learning that their child is homosexual and concern over AIDS: A national study. <u>Journal of Homosexuality, 18</u>, 59-80.

Rogow, F. (1989). Speaking the unspeakable: Gays, Jews, and historical inequity. In C. Balka & A. Rose (Eds.), <u>Twice blessed: On being lesbian or gay and Jewish</u>. Boston, MA: Beacon Press.

Romain, J. (1990). The changing face of British Reform. In A.J. Kershen (Ed.), <u>1840-1990: 150 years of Progressive Judaism in Britain</u>. London: RSGB/ULPS.

Ross, M., & Conway, M. (1986). Remembering one's own past: The construction of personal histories. In R.M. Sorrentino & E.T. Higgins (Eds.), <u>Handbook of motivation and cognition: Foundations of social behavior</u>. New York: Wiley.

Rosser, B.S. (1990). Christian and Catholic background and adherence in New Zealand homosexually active males: A psychological investigation. <u>Journal of</u>

Psychology & Human Sexuality, 3, 89-115.

Rotheram-Borus, M.J., Hunter, J., & Rosario, M. (1994). Suicidal behavior and gay-related stress among gay and bisexual male adolescents. Journal of Adolescent Research, 9, 498-508.

Rubin, D.C., Wetzler, S.E., & Nebes, R.D. (1986). Autobiographical memory across the lifespan. In D.C. Rubin (Ed.), Autobiographical memory. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Sarah, E. (1995). Judaism and lesbianism: A tale of life on the margins of the text. In J. Magonet (Ed.), Jewish explorations of sexuality. Providence, RI: Berghahn Books.

Saunders, K., & Stanford, P. (1992). Catholics and sex. London: Mandarin.

Seligman, C. (1996a). Woman rabbi to conduct British lesbian "wedding". Jewish Chronicle, Sept 27th, 1.

Seligman, C. (1996b). Lesbians call off "wedding" after bar on officiating rabbi. Jewish Chronicle, Oct 4th, 56.

Seligman, C. (1997). Top Reform rabbi threatens to resign if gay "weddings" are sanctioned. Jewish Chronicle, Sept 19th, 1.

Smith, J.A. (1996a). Beyond the divide between cognition and discourse: Using interpretative phenomenological analysis in health psychology. <u>Psychology and Health, 11</u>, 261-271.

Smith, J.A. (1996b). Evolving issues for qualitative psychology. In J.T.E. Richardson (Ed.), <u>Handbook of qualitative research methods for psychology and the social sciences</u>. Leicester: BPS Books.

Smith, J.A. (1999). Towards a relational self: Social engagement during pregnancy and psychological preparation for motherhood. <u>British Journal of Social Psychology, 38</u>, 409-426.

Smith, J.A., Flowers, P., & Osborn, M. (1997). Interpretative phenomenological analysis and the psychology of health and illness. In L. Yardley (Ed.), <u>Material discourses of health and illness</u>. London: Routledge.

Smith, J.A., Jarman, M., & Osborn, M. (1999). Doing interpretative phenomenological analysis. In M. Murray & K. Chamberlain (Eds.), <u>Qualitative health psychology: Theories & methods</u>. London: Sage.

Solomon, M. (1995). A strange conjunction. In J. Magonet (Ed.), <u>Jewish explorations of sexuality</u>. Providence, RI: Berghahn Books.

Sweasey, P. (1997). <u>From queer to eternity: Spirituality in the lives of lesbian, gay & bisexual people</u>. London: Cassell.

Troiden, R.R. (1979). Becoming homosexual: A model of gay identity acquisition. <u>Psychiatry, 42</u>, 362-373.

Troiden, R.R. (1989). The formation of homosexual identities. <u>Journal of Homosexuality, 17</u>, 43-73.

Union of Liberal & Progressive Synagogues (undated). <u>Affirmations of Liberal Judaism</u>. London: Union of Liberal & Progressive Synagogues.

Unterman, A. (1995). Some Orthodox perspectives. In J. Magonet (Ed.), <u>Jewish explorations of sexuality</u>. Providence, RI: Berghahn Books.

Wagenaar, W.A. (1986). My memory: A study of autobiographical memory over six years. <u>Cognitive Psychology, 18</u>, 225-252.

Webber, J. (1997). Jews and Judaism in contemporary Europe: Religion or ethnic group? <u>Ethnic and Racial Studies, 20</u>, 257-279.

Weinberg, T.S. (1983). <u>Gay men, gay selves: The social construction of homosexual</u>

identities. New York: Irvington.