An Investigation of Gender Norm Resistance

by

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this dissertation was to explore the construct and experiences of gender norm resistance (GNR) using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The purpose of Study 1 was to standardize and universalize what is already known about GNR by creating a quantitative GNR measure. In so doing, I operationalized the implicit and explicit GNR framework described by Way and colleagues (2014). On a sample of adolescents (484 6th grade students; girls = 234; 10-13 years old, M_{age} = 11.44 years, SD = .56) the GNR measure was tested for gender differences and to explore how GNR aligns with and differs from other constructs related to gender identity and peer relations. The results supported the two-factor model (implicit and explicit forms of GNR), supported convergent and discriminant validity, and identified mean level differences depending on GNR form, gender, ethnic identity, and gender typicality. The purpose of Study 2 was to explore why young men resist gender norms, what motivates their acts of resistance, and how they understand those motives. I expected that implicit GNR would be motivated by the pursuit of authentic nonconformity and would involve an awareness of norms, feeling gender atypical, and authenticity. I expected that explicit GNR would be motivated by a dislike of gender norms, and that it would involve an awareness of, dislike of, and pressure to conform to gender norms. The results supported these expectations and indicated a subtype of GNR, activist GNR, defined by the desire to change gender norms to benefit the social group. Both studies rely on the resistance/accommodation framework to describe the balance of conformity and resistance as individuals navigate systems of power and oppression.

DEDICATION

To Brynn, Amandine, and new baby: None of you were around when this puppy got started. Life is much better with it gone and you here!

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With great thanks to my supportive advisor, Carol, my wonderful committee, and the participants who taught me so much in our time together!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

LIST OF TABLES vii

LIST OF FIGURES viii

PREFACE ix

CHAPTER

1 GENERAL INTRODUCTION 1

2 STUDY 1: QUANTIFYING GENDER NORM RESISTANCE 9

GNR Measure Creation 12

GNR Gender Differences 16

GNR and Constructs of Gender and Relationships 17

Current Study 22

3 STUDY 1: METHODS 27

Participants 27

Procedures 27

Measures 28

Plan of Analysis 32

4 STUDY 1: RESULTS 35

Factor Structure 36

Mean Levels 40

Correlations 41

Interactions 43

CHAPTER Page

5 STUDY 1: DISCUSSION 48

Strengths and Weaknesses of GNR Measure 48

Implicit and Explicit GNR 55

Gender Differences in GNR 58

Conclusion 60

6 STUDY 2: EXPLORING THE EXPERIENCE OF RESISTANCE TO MASCULINE GENDER NORMS 61

Identifying GNR Motives in Young Adult Narratives 64

Contextual Components of GNR 68

Current Study 73

7 STUDY 2: METHODS 76

Participants and Procedures 76

Recruitment 76

Data Collection 77

Coding and Analysis 79

Researcher Positionality and Reflexivity 80

8 STUDY 2: RESULTS 82

Aim 1: GNR Motivations 82

Aim 2: GNR components 92

CHAPTER Page

9 STUDY 2: DISCUSSION 101

Less Pressure than Expected 102

Gender-Typical Majority 104

General Atypicality (versus Gender Atypicality) 106

GNR Developmental Trajectories 107

Limitations and Future Directions 109

Conclusion 113

10 GENERAL DISCUSSION 114

REFERENCES 118

APPENDIX

A INTERVIEW GUIDE 133

B CODE BOOK 136

C IRB APPROVAL 140

LIST OF TABLES

Table Page

1. Table 1.1. Gender Norm Resistance Items... 29

2. Table 1.2. Means and Standard Deviations of Study Variables......................... 35

3. Table 1.3. Invariance Testing across Gender 40

4. Table 1.4. Correlation Matrix. Gender Norm Resistance Items 41

5. Table 1.5. Regression Outcomes for Implicit GNR... 44

6. Table 1.6. Regression Outcomes for Explicit GNR... 45

7. Table 2.1. Hypothesized relations between GNR Form and Key Gender Identity Constructs 110

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure Page

1. Figure 1.1. CFA Model 38

2. Figure 1.2. Implicit GNR Regression Plot 47

3. Figure 2.1. GNC, GNR Decision Tree 111

PREFACE

"I… insist that we interrogate the conditions under which, and the capillaries through which, oppression moves under the skin, into the soul and onto the tongue; how oppression is negotiated, challenged, queered, swallowed, rejected, and sometimes indeed internalized."

- Fine, Tuck, Yang, 2013

CHAPTER 1

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Barbies are for girls. So is the color pink. Boys say things are cool, not cute, and they do not wear skirts. These are examples of gender norms – behaviors and roles that are defined separately for men and women by the culture in which they live (Money & Ehrhardt, 1973). Western culture reflects white gender norms and ideology, though these norms can be racialized as they intersect with minority cultural norms (Ghavami & Peplau, 2013). Cultural gender norms influence daily human interactions, and expectations of gendered behavior structure interactions far beyond stipulating appropriate toys and clothing. Gender norms are an important focus of study because some are problematic for healthy development (e.g., Way, 2011; Gilligan, 2011). For example, male gender norms constrain the emotionality of boys, suggesting that sensitivity and vulnerability are “girly” and “boys don’t cry.” Such norms have negative developmental consequences for young people’s health and wellbeing (Way, 2011). These norms are at the heart of debates on the national and global stage about gender in marriage, gender in the workplace, and gender in athletics. *Gender typicality* refers to how an individual feels that he or she conforms to culturally held notions of gender roles (Egan & Perry, 2001). In contrast, the purposeful cultivation of identities or behaviors that go against culturally held stereotypes about gender is referred to here as gender norm resistance (GNR) (Rogers & Way, 2018).

GNR looks different for girls/women and boys/men due to the different norms associated with masculinity and femininity. For girls and women, this can look like

acknowledging and acting on sexual desire (Tolman, 2005), participating in STEM fields and executive positions (Leaper, Farkas, & Spears Brown, 2012), and proclaiming the importance of their thoughts and feelings as opposed to focusing on physical appearance (Moradi & Huang, 2008). Chu (2014) describes several ways that boys and men might resist gender norms including "those who willingly reveal (e.g., through their attitudes and behaviors) that they deplore acts of aggression; feel vulnerable at times; are attuned to, and capable of, expressing a range of emotions; and need or rely on close relationships" (p. 253). The majority of adolescent boys in one study of gender norms shared that they resist norms in moderate to strong ways (Way et al., 2014), and Way and Rogers (2017) theorize that resistance is an integral aspect of normative socioemotional development in that it allows individuals to live without restricting one's human qualities (e.g., thinking, feeling, desiring relationships).

Most research on gender nonconformity has assumed a deficit perspective in which nonconformity is viewed as having negative effects. Researchers have reported higher rates of internalizing and externalizing behavior (Carver, Yunger, & Perry, 2003; Vantieghem & Van Houtte, 2015; Yunger, Carver, & Perry, 2004), negative peer treatment (Toomey, Card, & Casper, 2014), and maladaptive identity development based on gender atypicality or childhood gender nonconformity (Bradley & Zucker, 1990). These studies suggest that conforming to gender norms is adaptive and not conforming leads to problems of psychological adjustment. This negative focus on nonconformity does not tell the complete story, however. There are many positive outcomes associated with resisting gender norms (Olson et al., 2016), and many good reasons for individuals

to resist gender norms including misogyny (Ussher, 1991), unequal pay rates and job access (Butler, 1990), and the physical and emotional toll of traditional gender norms (Connell, 2005; Gilligan, 1982; Pleck, 1981), all of which act to dehumanize individuals by limiting their ability to think, feel, or engage in meaningful relationships.

In the past twenty years, researchers have begun to study gender nonconformity from a positive, resistance framework (Austin, 2016; Barker, 2000; J. Chu, 2004; Doull, Oliffe, Knight, & Shoveller, 2013; Gilligan, 2013; Rogers, Scott, & Way, 2015; Smiler, 2014; Steinberg & Monahan, 2007; Turiel, 2003; Way et al., 2014). As is fitting in an emerging field of inquiry, the majority of this work is qualitative (for an exception, see Kaplan, Rosenmann, & Shuhendler, 2016). Qualitative analyses are particularly useful for exploring new and complex ideas, and the complexity of the experience of resistance has required in-depth exploration of individual narratives (Anyon, 1984). While qualitative work has helped gather data on experiences of resistance, it is limited in generalizability. For example, Way and colleagues' (2014), in a qualitative study, found that the majority of boys have resisted gender norms, however, other studies indicate that GNR was practically non-existent despite looking across several cultures (Yu et al., 2017). An important next step is to move toward an understanding of GNR that allows for the testing of its presence, frequency, and correlates across larger and more diverse samples. Based on prior literature, I have identified two important elements essential to frame a quantitative measure of GNR: an assessment of the forms that resistance may take (e.g., explicit or implicit GNR. See Way et al., 2014) and identification of motivation (e.g., intent to resist or change norms, see Anyon, 1984) underlying forms of

GNR. It is also important to establish the relation of GNR to other factors of gender identity development (e.g., pressure to conform to gender norms, gender typicality, see Egan & Perry, 2001). Doing so will help in establishing convergent and discriminant validity of the GNR construct.

I argue that not all nonconformity is resistant behavior; indeed, some non-conforming behaviors may not be resistant at all. I posit that motivations can be used to differentiate resistant non-conforming behavior from non-resistant non-conforming behavior. I content that non-conforming behavior that is resistant is grounded in an awareness of norms and the consequences that attended nonconformity. For example, a boy who plays with Barbies, despite knowing that people think Barbies are for girls, is demonstrating resistant non-conforming behavior. Playing with Barbies would not be resistant, however, if a boy had no awareness of norms he was flouting or of the potential consequences associated with nonconformity. In this case, his behavior would still be non-conforming, but it could not be resistant as he is not actively resisting anything. As captured in Way's explicit resistance, the motive driving some forms of resistance is to intentionally resist norms, to change social order, or to call attention to inequality. This is likely substantively different from resistant behavior that stems from a desire to act, think, or live in ways that happen to be prohibited by cultural gender norms. Nevertheless, non-conforming behavior motivated by a desire to be authentic to oneself is certainly resistance if it is enacted in the face of pressure to conform to gender norms.

I propose to quantify a measure of GNR that captures the implicit and explicit forms of resistance that have been described in qualitative work. In this measure, implicit

GNR is operationalized as intentional non-conforming behavior or ideology conducted despite an awareness of gender norms and the knowledge that others expect gender norm compliance (i.e., pressure to conform to gender norms) and is motivated by a desire to be authentic. It is captured by items that assess “wanting to” and “trying to” be gender non-conforming and avoiding conforming behavior. I operationalize explicit GNR as an awareness of norms and is motivated by a dislike of those norms. Accordingly, in this measure, explicit GNR is captured by items that assess a dislike of gender norms. I expect these two forms of resistance, implicit and explicit GNR, to form distinct constructs and that individuals will vary in mean levels of these two types.

I posit that GNR is one factor related to gender identity within a constellation of other constructs related to gender identity. This idea is consistent with the theoretical premise that gender identity is a multidimensional construct (Egan & Perry, 2001; Spence, 1985). I expect that established constructs related to gender identity (e.g., perceived gender typicality and perceived pressure to conform to norms) can be used to establish convergent and discriminant validity between implicit and explicit GNR (DeVellis, 2006) as well as to differentiate GNR from conforming behavior and non-resistant non-conforming behavior. To these established constructs, I propose to add *awareness of gender norms*, the motivation to pursue *authenticity*, and the motivation of *disliking gender norms and wanting to challenge these norms*. Though the themes of authenticity and intentionality are manifest in extant qualitative work, the formalization of them as research directions requires additional qualitative research to flesh out and explore them in greater detail. Furthermore, these gender identity constructs may be used

to identify additional forms of GNR, and the open nature of qualitative work enables this kind of exploration.

Finally, as much research (both qualitative and quantitative) indicates, the way one performs gender has strong impact on the relations one has with one's peers. Many studies show that peers disapprove of gender nonconformity and subsequently pressure or socialize children to higher rates of conformity (Jewell & Brown, 2014; Martin-Storey, 2016; Pascoe, 2014; Toomey et al., 2014). Yet while these studies capture the negative reaction to nonconformity in the broader culture, microcultures found within friendships (Way, 2011), peer groups (Morris, 2018), or classrooms (Jones et al., 2016) can accept and even encourage resistant behavior. Accordingly, I propose that analyzing the quantitative effect of GNR on peer relations, as well as analyzing the qualitative patterns of different types of peer relations on GNR adds breadth and depth to what is known about gender identity development and peer relations.

The aim of this dissertation, therefore, was to explore the construct and experiences of GNR using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The purpose of Study 1 was to work toward a standardization and universalization of what is currently known about GNR. To do so, I quantified the experience of GNR in adolescence in order test for gender differences and explored how GNR is similar to or different from other constructs related to gender identity and peer relations. The purpose of Study 2 was to explore why young men resist, what motivates their acts of resistance, and how they understand those motives. The first aim of this study was to explore the motives of implicit and explicit resistance. I expected that implicit GNR would be motivated by the

pursuit of authentic nonconformity and that explicit GNR would be motivated by a dislike of gender norms and desire to challenge them. The second aim was to explore whether forms of GNR could be identified and differentiated according to unique combinations of components relevant to GNR. I expected that implicit GNR would involve an awareness of norms, feeling gender atypical, and authenticity. I expected that explicit GNR would involve an awareness of, dislike of, and pressure to conform to gender norms.

Both studies rely on Anyon's (1984) resistance/accommodation framework to describe the balance of conformity and resistance individuals employ as they navigate their location in systems of power and oppression. In this conceptualization, resistance and conformity are interrelated and fluctuating reactions to cultural pressure: resistance as a tool to change harmful ideologies, and conformity as a tool to minimize personal cost of nonconformity. Both studies operate from the standpoint that conformity can lead to certain positive outcomes (e.g., social acceptance) and negative outcomes (e.g., adherence to damaging gender stereotypes). Similarly, resistance can lead to both positive outcomes (e.g., a broader range of emotional resources that can include both "feminine" and "masculine" coping mechanisms) and negative outcomes (e.g., social, emotional, and physical difficulties related to gender atypicality). Study 2 builds on Study 1 by exploring the motivations behind GNR including awareness of gender norms, dislike of norms, and authenticity. Additionally, Study 2 explores whether implicit and explicit GNR can be identified with unique combinations of component constructs. I show how implicit GNR can be identified using awareness of norms, gender atypicality, and

authenticity I show how explicit GNR can be identified with awareness and dislike of norms. Finally, both studies are oriented within a framework of Western gender norms that generally reflect expectations and attitudes of white masculinity. Together, these studies provide an overview of the construct and experience of GNR by quantifying the construct of GNR and by exploring qualitatively how a sample of male college students experience and perform forms of GNR in their own lives.

CHAPTER 2

STUDY 1: QUANTIFYING GENDER NORM RESISTANCE

Cultural norms are a set of beliefs about how individuals should act under certain circumstances or conditions. Gender norms are specific beliefs related to gender that, in Western culture, reflect white gender norms and ideology (e.g., girls should be thin and pretty; boys should be athletic and confident; see Ghavami & Peplau, 2013). Gender typicality refers to the degree to which an individual feels like they measure up to the standards set for their gender (Egan & Perry, 2001), and the degree to which an individual intentionally rejects these norms and behaves or appears or thinks differently can be referred to as gender norm resistance (GNR; see Rogers & Way, 2018). Resistance (to gender norms and social norms in general) has been the focus of a group of researchers for several years (Brown & Gilligan, 1992; Gilligan, 2011; Rogers, Scott, & Way, 2015; Smiler, 2014; Way, 1998, 2011; Way et al., 2014);, they employ primarily qualitative methods to identify and document this resistance process. An important next step in on this research topic is to clearly define and quantify the construct of gender norm resistance (GNR) with the goal of better understanding who resists and how resistance relates to other aspects of gender identity development (Berenbaum, 2018; Munakata, 2006). The goal of the current research is to test and provide validation for a quantitative measure of GNR.

I propose to quantify gender norm resistance by assessing the motive or intention behind the resistant behavior. I posit that assessing the motive enables one to differentiate

between non-conforming behavior that is resistant from non-conforming behavior that is not resistant.

For example, Way and colleagues (2014) describe implicit forms of resisting as those challenging norms in indirect or unconscious ways, and explicit forms as directly challenging or questioning norms and expectations. I expect that the motives of each GNR form are likely different: implicit GNR is motivated by the pursuit of nonconforming behaviors that one authentically prefers whereas explicit GNR is motivated by dislike of gender norms and a desire to change them.

Creating a quantitative measures requires testing for various forms of validity (DeVellis, 2006). In order to establish convergent validity (that GNR is related to things it should relate to) and discriminant validity (that GNR is not related to things it should not be), I assessed the relation of GNR with other important gender identity constructs. First, I posit that gender is an important factor in GNR because the limited research available on GNR shows that girls more frequently resist than boys (Kågesten et al., 2016; Rogers, 2018). Second, if GNR is a reaction against established cultural norms, I would expect that it relates to the level of pressure to conform to gender norms that an individual feels. For something to be classified as resistant, there must first be the force against which one resists. Some research indicates that more perceived pressure leads to less gender typical behavior (DeLay, Martin, Cook, & Hanish, 2017; Maccoby & Jacklin, 1987), but it also stands to reason that more pressure to conform could lead to more conformity (Ewing Lee & Troop-Gordon, 2011), thus less GNR. More research is needed to flesh out these relations. Third, I posit that GNR is related to feelings of gender

atypicality (e.g., feeling less similar to own-gender peers or more similar to own-gender peers) given that many adolescents prioritize gender norm adherence for themselves and their peers (Pascoe, 2014). Perhaps GNR would be higher for individuals who feel more similarity to the other gender, but some resistant individuals might not feel similar to either gender (e.g., people who identify as agender or genderqueer), and other individuals might hold resistant attitudes that are not reflected strongly in their gendered behavior. All these possibilities must be explored. Finally, I posit that GNR is related to peer-relationships. Gender identity development and expression take place within a social context and has very real social consequences for interactions with own and other gender peers (Egan & Perry, 2001; Martin et al., 2017), particularly during adolescence (Perry & Pauletti, 2011). Nonconformity is associated with social sanctions in the form of bullying and teasing (Drury, Bukowski, Velásquez, & Stella-Lopez, 2013), ostracism (Collier, Bos, & Sandfort, 2005), and physical and emotional abuse (Roberts, Rosario, Corliss, Koenen, & Austin, 2012). In sum, I propose that analyzing the direction and strength of relations between GNR and gender identity and peer relation constructs will establish convergent and divergent validity of the quantified measure of GNR. The current research had three aims. Aim 1: To develop and analyze a survey measure of GNR that identifies forms of GNR (differentiated by motive) with a sample of adolescents. Aim 2: To analyze whether prevalence and patterns of GNR differ for boys and girls. AIM 3: To examine convergent and divergent validity of implicit and explicit GNR.

GNR Measure Creation

The first aim of this dissertation is to create a quantitative measure of GNR. The study of gender norm resistance originates in feminist work on general resistance and the give-and-take between accommodating and resisting oppressive cultural norms (see Anyon, 1984; Brown & GIlligan, 1992; Gilligan, 1982, GIlligan, 2011). In Anyon's perspective, individuals outwardly accommodate (e.g., conformed) to norms when not doing so would jeopardize one's physical or mental safety (i.e., slaves who acted subservient to avoid beatings). But Anyon posited that accommodating to rules or norms anathema to oneself is also harmful, and that resisting those norms was an important part of maintaining personal dignity as well as potentially working to change cultural norms. As most gender norms espouse unachievable or contradictory aims (Pleck, 1981), everyone participates in some level in the dance between accommodation and resistance.

These ideas were taken up by Gilligan (2013), Way (1998) and other scholars interested in resistance (Rogers et al., 2015; Rogers, Yang, Way, Weinberg, & Bennet, 2019). Way and colleagues (2014) posit that there might be two different forms of GNR (implicit and explicit) that are differentiated by the unique behaviors. They described how implicit GNR takes the form of challenging norms in indirect or unconscious ways (e.g., boys involved in emotionally intimate friendships with other boys). Explicit resistance is described as non-conforming behavior motivated by a dislike of gender norms (e.g., verbal denunciations of gender norms). I build on this work by identifying the importance of assessing awareness in identifying and differentiating resistant behaviors. I argue that not all nonconformity is resistant behavior; indeed some non-

conforming behaviors may not be resistant at all. Non-conforming behavior that is resistant is grounded in an awareness of norms and the consequences that attend nonconformity. For example, a boy who plays with Barbies, despite knowing that people think Barbies are for girls, is demonstrating resistant non-conforming behavior. Playing with Barbies would not be resistant, however, if a boy had no awareness of norms he was flouting or of the potential consequences associated with nonconformity. In this case, his behavior would still be non-conforming, but it could not be resistant as he is not actively resisting anything. Resistant behaviors, therefore, can be identified by non-conforming behavior performed with an awareness that gender-typical behavior is preferred.

I also argue that delineating the nature of the motivation driving behavior can be used to differentiate resistant non-conforming behavior from non-resistant non-conforming behavior. Anyon (1984) gives an example: make-up and sexualized outfits are ostensibly very female-typical behavior, but a girl might use these as tools to distract her teacher and classmates, which is very norm resistant: girls are supposed to do well in school and not cause trouble. A behavior might be resistant in some circumstances, but not in others; resistant when enacted by one individual, but not by someone else. Thus, motive differentiates GNR as being behavior/ideology that reacts to gender norms versus nonconformity, which is behavior that might occur completely independently of gender norm knowledge or pressure.

I further build on the GNR literature by using motive to differentiate between each type of GNR. Implicit GNR is non-conforming behavior that is enacted and persists despite the awareness of norms. For example, a girl who enrolls in a high school shop

class despite encouragement to join art or dance is implicitly resisting those norms and that pressure. *Implicit GNR, then, is non-conforming behavior motivated by a preference for gender-atypical ways of thinking, doing, or being.* I posit that implicit GNR can be identified by an awareness of gender norms, gender atypicality, and an authentic pursuit of atypical preferences. *Explicit GNR is behavior motivated by a dislike of norms and/or desire to change them.* Explicit resistors are aware of gender prescriptions and proscriptions and they choose to oppose those rules. This might occur because an individual believes that gender norms are outdated or harmful (Rogers, 2018) or because they are bothered that others think boys should be "masculine" and girls "feminine" (Way et al., 2014). Thus, I posit that explicit GNR can be identified by a dislike of gender norms and pressure to conform to norms.

Adolescence is an important time to study GNR because adolescents experience an array of gendered motives and influences not seen at earlier stages. As children progress into and through adolescence, gender nonconformity accrues increasingly negative social repercussions (Brown & Gilligan, 1993; Chu, 2014; Pascoe, 2014; Way, 2011). Yet the pressures of adolescence differ from those of early childhood in ways that likely interact with the different forms of resistance. During pubertal maturation, teens are much more aware of body image and their presentation to others (Stone, Brown, & Jewell, 2015). Additionally, gender segregation lessens and individuals form cross-gender friendships and romantic relationships (Blakemore et al., 2009). At this time, peers become an even more influential source of socialization (Brechwald & Prinstein, 2011); in middle school and high school, boys and girls spend more time with friends

(Larson & Richards, 1991). They also feel pressure from their friends' ideologies and behaviors particularly regarding gender norm conformity (Clemans et al., 2010). Clemans and colleagues wrote, "early adolescence is a time when many individuals appear to abandon the increasingly flexible attitudes developed during late childhood and instead return to a more rigid, culturally defined gender-role structure on which they base their behavior and attitudes" (p. 530). Conversely, McHale and colleagues (2009) found general decreases in both masculine and feminine interests during this time, with subsequent gender-specific patterns of rises and falls over the course of adolescence. More work is needed to more clearly understand how individuals are navigating the shifting pressures they feel during this time and how these affect GNR.

Rogers (2018) found that explicit forms of resistance increase over the course of elementary school and reasoned that it will continue increasing along with increased capacity to cognitively reason about cultural mores. But even adolescents are still developing their ability to think critically about cultural gender norms (Halim et al., 2016), and cognizance of, not to mention intentional resistance to, gender inequalities will likely be relatively rare in early adolescence (Rogers, 2018). Further, peer pressure to conform can restrict gender nonconformity, despite increasing cognitive flexibility (Hoffman et al., 2019). As such, resistance that is motivated by a desire to act as one wants (implicit GNR) is likely to be more common with younger ages than resistance motivated by a dislike of cultural gender norms (explicit GNR). As critical consciousness increases throughout childhood and adolescence, explicit GNR likely increases in turn. Identifying as a sexual, gender, or ethnic-racial minority also likely significantly impacts

the development of critical consciousness and, consequently, GNR (Jones et al., 2016; Rogers & Way, 2018). An investigation into the development of GNR adds to our understanding of gender development as well as general identity development in adolescence.

Another important consideration is that gender norms vary across cultures, though all reflect white gender norms and ideology (Ghavami & Peplau, 2013). As such, researchers interested in studying gender norm conformity or resistance need to assess how their sample participants might experience gender norms. This is particularly important for marginalized participants who might experience increased levels of oppression connected to gender norms (Rogers et al., 2015). Additionally, researchers should take care to interpret their findings within frameworks that have developed to describe the nuanced experiences of study participants.

GNR Gender Differences

The second aim in the study is to analyze whether GNR differs between girls and boys. Gender is an important factor related to GNR because of cultural socialization forces aimed at differentiating girls and boys (Maccoby, 1998) and because there are more rigid expectations of male-typical versus female-typical behaviors (Leaper, 1994). The review on gendered resistance by Way and Rogers (2017) indicates that, although the norms that girls and boys resist are tailored for each gender, boys and girls seem to follow similar developmental patterns in resisting these norms. The years preceding adolescence are marked by more implicit resistance (e.g., girls speaking their minds, boys pursuing emotionally rich relationships), and the years of adolescence are marked with

stronger social sanctions regarding gender nonconformity for both girls and boys (e.g., girls being branded as bossy, boys as gay). Whether this means that boys and girls think about or do resist these forces differently during early adolescence remains to be seen.

The limited mixed-method data available on gender norm adherence/endorsement indicates that girls likely have higher mean levels of GNR than boys (Kågesten et al., 2016; Rogers, 2018). This outcome is not surprising when viewed in the light of the patriarchal organization of Western culture where men have more social, relational, and financial power (Walby, 1990). Gender inequalities privilege men and oppress women. Because of this, boys have fewer reasons to be frustrated with the system (e.g., explicit GNR), and girls have many more. However, in any organization, it is common for the ruling class to work to keep power located within their faction (Ramazanoglu & Holland, 2003), thus masculine stereotypes are consequently more rigid (Farkas & Leaper, 2016; Leaper, 1994) and infractions are punished more harshly (Pascoe, 2007; Ward, 2015). Thus, it is more difficult for boys and men to pursue authentic gender non-conforming interests (e.g., implicit GNR). Consequently, I expect that girls should have higher levels for both implicit and explicit GNR.

GNR and Constructs of Gender and Relationships

The third aim of this study is to examine whether other constructs associated with gender identity and peer relationships differentiate between forms of GNR. The remainder of this section is organized by gender identity constructs (gender typicality, pressure to conform to gender norms) and peer relationships (gender-based relationship efficacy, contact with own and other gender peers) with the goal of better understanding

who resists and how resistance relates to other aspects of gender identity and interpersonal development (Munakata, 2006).

Gender typicality. An individual's level of GNR likely differs depending on their gender typicality – how similar they feel to own- or other-gender peers. Egan and Perry (2001) define gender typicality as "children's sense of psychological compatibility with their gender category" (p. 452). Gender typicality is therefore a construct that is unique to the cultures of each individual; it denotes one's feeling of similarity to one's own gender group and cultural gender norms. The ways that gender identity researchers think of typicality has recently evolved from only measuring how similar one feels to one's own gender to including how similar one feels to other gender. The Dual Identity approach, proposed by Martin and colleagues (2017) and adopted by other gender identity theorists (Pauletti, Menon, Cooper, Aults, & Perry, 2017; Tam, Jewell, & Brown, 2019) identifies important differences for children based on their similarity to own- and other-gender similarity (Andrews et al, 2019; Martin et al., 2017). For example, children who feel more similar to own- and other-gender peers felt more included by and had more friendships with peers of both genders than children who felt more similar to own-gender peers and less similar to other-gender peers.

I theorize that GNR and typicality are related because both GNR and typicality assess a personal perception of one's gendered behavior. Gender typicality assesses the degree to which someone *feels* that they live up to gender ideals for their gender group. GNR is the perception that one's behavior/cognition is different than culturally proscribed stereotypes for boys/men and girls/women. Feeling gender-atypical, though it

may include intentionally resistant behavior, can also be the result of simply not knowing gender rules or striving to conform to norms but failing. GNR differs from these other forms of gender atypicality by motive: individuals who exhibit GNR do so either because they exhibit nonconformity in the face of awareness of norms (implicit GNR) or because they are motivated to defy norms (explicit GNR).

Both forms of GNR should show different patterns of mean levels and correlations with gender typicality. I expect individuals high in own-gender similarity to report less resistance than those who feel less similar to own-gender peers. Likewise, individuals with higher other-gender similarity to report more resistance than those who feel less similar to other-gender peers because traditional gender norms reward those who conform to them (Toomey et al., 2014). Above and beyond this, I expect that other-gender similarity may moderate these relations such that feeling more similar to both genders may relate with the highest levels of GNR. Adolescents who feel similar to peers of both genders are likely more accepted by all peers of both genders and thus face less-rigid social sanctions on their gender non-conforming behavior than those who feel closer to one gender or the other (Martin et al., 2017; Thorne, 1993). These patterns will be assessed using correlations between variables as well as variable mean levels.

Felt pressure. People care about how gender is construed and performed – how they themselves measure up to gender norm ideals is important to them, as well as how others around them measure up. This perceived pressure to conform to gender norms has been defined as felt pressure (Egan & Perry, 2001); feeling like one has to act/think/feel a stereotypical way because of culturally held notions of what men and women should be

like. As Menon (2017) described, this pressure likely plays a key part in inhibiting gender non-conforming behavior:

> [Pressure] motivates children to adopt gender-typical attributes and to inhibit gender-atypical ones, without regard for their potential to be psycho-socially limiting or even damaging. Thus, attributes that are positive, negative, adaptive, or maladaptive might be adopted or avoided simply because they are gender-typical or atypical as adolescents feel compelled to adhere to gender norms (p. 581).

I expect that felt pressure is an important correlate of explicit GNR in particular because to truly be classified as resistance, something must be resisted. Thus, along with awareness of gender norms, felt pressure is the force against which explicit GNR resists. I posit that if pressure is a force that compels one to act a certain way (which may not conform with personal desires), then resistance is a reaction, a choice to act differently, regardless of cultural pressure to follow norms. As such, I expect that pressure will be positively correlated with both forms of GNR.

Another factor in the relation between pressure to conform to gender norms and GNR is gender typicality. On one hand, research indicates that pressure or policing leads to decreased gender typicality (and therefore might lead to increased GNR) (DeLay, Martin, Cook, & Hanish, 2017). Maccoby and Jacklin (1987) found that boys with fathers who put *more* pressure on their sons to be masculine were less likely to prefer boys as playmates at that time as well as two years later. On the other hand, increased pressure can also lead to increased typicality. Ewing Lee and Troop-Gordon (2011) found that

children with many male friends were less atypical following gender policing, but those with more female friends showed the opposite trend.

As it stands, the relation between felt pressure, gender typicality, and GNR is unclear, but a more nuanced approach (e.g., utilizing different forms of GNR and differentiating between own-gender and other-gender similarity) might yield clearer outcomes. For example, adolescents who feel more similar to other-gender individuals might display lower levels of both forms of GNR under conditions of high pressure because more pressure might lead to adolescents feeling less able or safe to exhibit authentic, non-conforming behaviors. At the same time, these high-pressure situations might serve to exacerbate explicit GNR because these individuals may be more aware (and more resentful) of the ways that individuals around them pressure them to behave. More research is needed to test these expected directions and whether they vary under different circumstances.

Gender-based relationship efficacy. Gender-based relationship efficacy (GBRE) is defined as beliefs about one's ability to relate to own- and other-gender peers (Zosuls, Field, Martin, Andrews, & England, 2014). For many people, their feelings of comfort and confidence in interacting with own-gender peers is higher than with other-gender peers (Field, Martin, Andrews, England, & Zosuls, 2017). I theorize that GBRE is an important correlate of GNR because individuals who invest energy in resisting socialization aimed at making them more gender-typical (i.e., more similar to own-gender peers, less similar to other-gender peers) might feel like they have less in common with own-gender peers and more in common with other-gender peers. This applies equally to

implicit and explicit GNR: whether behavior is motivated by the pursuit of gender non-conforming interests or activities or the desire to rebuff gender expectations, these resistant actions may serve to enhance or inhibit their ability to connect with peers of one gender or the other.

Contact with own and other gender peers. Children's interactions are highly gender-segregated (Martin et al., 2013; Martin & Ruble, 2009) and this continues into young adulthood (Andrews et al., 2019; Leaper, 1994). Gender segregation is related to greater gender-typicality (Drury et al., 2013), and most children (particularly in early elementary) are strong reinforcers of gender norms (Xiao, Cook, Martin, & Nielson, 2019). Furthermore, as children age, it becomes increasingly clear to them that their peers respond negatively to gender non-conforming (Martin et al., 1999; Pascoe, 2014) and own-gender peers are generally the ones responsible for these negative reactions (Martin-Storey & August, 2016; Pascoe, 2014; Toomey et al., 2014). Accordingly, I expect that both implicit and explicit GNR will negatively relate to own-gender contact and positively relate with other-gender contact.

Current Study

The aims of this study were to analyze a quantitative measure of GNR with a sample of adolescents in order to: analyze the frequency of GNR, assess gender differences in the experience of GNR, and test the relation of GNR to other constructs related to gender identity. To address these aims, I examined the GNR measure factor structure, mean-level differences, correlations, and interactions.

Factor structure. The GNR measure is a new measure developed in 2010 by the CARE lab under the direction of Dawn England, who was then a graduate student. This measure built on qualitative work on gender resistance (Way et al., 2014), and as such, this GNR measure assesses different domains of resistance (e.g., dress, appearance, behavior, interests) and varies questions to examine affinity, effort, avoidance, aversion to each. Hypothesis 1A is that the GNR measure would differentiate two different forms of resistance, implicit and explicit resistance, likely with differing motivations (a major goal to explore in study 2) and correlates, with implicit GNR marked by a pursuit of atypical preferences and motivated by desire to be authentic and explicit GNR marked and motivated by a dislike of gender norms. Hypothesis 1B was that the two forms of resistance would be correlated because, as Anyon (1984) theorized, these constructs are fluid. For Hypothesis 1C, I expected that girls and boys would have the same factor structure, with both genders exhibiting implicit and explicit GNR (e.g., Rogers, 2018).

Mean levels. Qualitative research indicates that implicit resistance is more common than explicit resistance among adolescent boys (Way et al., 2014), and whereas there is no quantitative data available for girls, we expect that explicit GNR levels will be low for all children until their critical conscious cognitive capabilities mature (Rogers, 2018). For Hypothesis 2A, I expect participants to indicate higher mean levels of implicit GNR than explicit GNR because cognitive understanding of cultural gender norms is still developing in early adolescence (Halim et al., 2016), and intentional resistance to gender inequalities will be relatively rare at this age (Rogers, 2018). Additionally, there are gender differences in narratives of gender norm resistance (Rogers, 2018; Way & Rogers,

2017), and other data suggests this pattern will hold when analyzed quantitatively. For Hypothesis 2B, I expect that girls will have higher levels of both forms of GNR than boys because girls benefit less from traditional, patriarchal gender norms (Walby, 1990), and girls more frequently challenge norms and inequities than boys (Kågesten et al., 2016; Rogers, 2018).

Correlations. Much is still unknown about the development of gender identity and related constructs, but further investigation of the relations between these constructs likely will yield important information about these constructs (Berenbaum, 2018). For example, GNR might simply be a duplicate measure of whether individuals feel gender-atypical. Investigating the relation between GNR, own-gender identity constructs, and other-gender identity constructs would reveal whether or not GNR captures a significantly different construct than gender typicality. Additionally, certain gender identity constructs relate to developmental outcomes including peer relationships (Martin et al., 2017; Pauletti et al., 2014), and it is important to test if and how GNR might relate to peer relationship constructs. Accordingly, I analyzed the correlation between both forms of GNR, constructs related to one's own-gender collective (pressure to conform to norms, own-gender similarity, own-gender relationship efficacy, and own-gender contact), and constructs related to the other-gender collective (other-gender similarity, other-gender relationship efficacy, and other-gender contact).

Hypothesis 3A: I expected that both GNR constructs would negatively relate with own-gender constructs. Adolescents are rewarded for conforming to traditional gender norms (if only via peer acceptance, see Toomey et al., 2014), thus gender-typical

individuals would have less reason to resist or change existing norms. However, I did expect one exception to the negative correlation between own-gender constructs and GNR: that higher levels of pressure would relate to higher levels of both forms of GNR, Hypothesis 3B, because pressure may be one force against which resistance is oriented. Hypothesis 3C: I expected that both forms of GNR would positively relate with other-gender constructs because non-conforming behavior is traditionally met with own-gender peer disapproval (Martin-Storey & August, 2016; Pascoe, 2014; Toomey et al., 2014), thus individuals with higher levels of GNR might seek out the companionship of other-gender individuals and consequently GNR might relate with more positive interactions with other-gender peers.

Interactions. Quantifying the GNR scale enables the correlational analyses described above, but it also enables analyzing whether other constructs of gender identity interact with GNR in complex ways. Accordingly, I tested how gender similarity and pressure to conform to gender norms, two gender identity constructs that are heavily implicated in the process of resistance, might interact in ways that change the experience of GNR. Specifically, I analyzed how pressure might moderate the way that gender similarity relates to GNR.

For Hypothesis 4A, I expected that adolescents who feel more "gender-typical" (e.g., more similar to own-gender peers and less similar to other-gender peers) would display less implicit GNR when they felt more pressure. There seems to be a subgroup of gender-typical adolescents who feel insecure about their gender typicality (Nielson, Schroeder, Martin, & Cook, 2020); they feel a lot of pressure and seek to secure their

tenuous position within their friend group (Pauletti et al., 2014). It seems likely that these individuals would curb any inclinations toward gender non-conforming behavior and consequently show lower GNR of each type. Accordingly, I tested the overall interaction between these three constructs (own-gender similarity, other-gender similarity, felt pressure to conform to gender norms), as well as two-way interactions between each type of gender similarity and pressure. Follow up analyses were broken down by more or less pressure to conform to gender norms.

Regarding explicit GNR, I expected that less gender typicality and more pressure might relate to higher levels of explicit GNR (Hypothesis 4B) because these adolescents already seem to be less invested in adhering to gender norms, and more pressure might increase any resentment or dislike felt toward norms. Interaction and follow-up procedures for explicit GNR followed those outlined for implicit GNR.

CHAPTER 3

STUDY 1: METHODS

Participants

Participants were 484 6th grade students (girls = 234 (48%)); 10-13 years old (M_{age} = 11.44 years, SD = .56). The majority of the sample was ethnically identified as White (*n* = 308, 63%); Latinx (n = 77, 16%), Other[1] (including bi- and multi-racial) (*n* = 70, 15%), Asian (*n* = 29, 6%), and Black (*n* = 19, 4%). The sample was largely middle-class. Most mothers (*n* = 150, 83%) and fathers (n = 24, 74%) reported having at least some college education. Some parents indicated a family income of $25,000 or less (*n* = 14, 2%), the largest portion indicated an income of $26,000-75,000 (n = 82, 39%), some parents indicated the median income between $76,000-100,000 (n = 51, 24%), some parents indicated $101-150,000 (*n* = 64, 30%), and a few indicated incomes above $150,000 (n = 21, 10%).

Procedures

Data for this study are from a cross-sectional study investigating the correlates of early adolescents' socio-emotional adjustment. Participants came from 28 classrooms in four middle schools in the southwest United States. All adolescents in the 6th grade at these schools were invited to participate. Information was sent to the parents of every adolescent in the school, and adolescents were included in the study if they provided assent and if their parents did not opt out: the participation rate was 96%. Prior to data

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[1] Native American = 19 (4%); Latinx/White = 12 (2%); Black/White = 5 (1%); Native American/White = 5 (1%); Multi-ethnic = 5 (1%); Pacific Islander = 2 (<1%); and other bi-ethnic combinations = 18 (4%).

collection, the study and methods were approved by the University Institutional Review Board and by the school district. Data were collected from different schools during the spring and fall semesters of 2013 and in the spring semester 2014. The research team visited classrooms and administered a paper survey to all assenting students. Surveys included measures assessing students' peer relationships and their gender-related attitudes and beliefs. Students completed surveys on their own but were monitored by research assistants who provided assistance as needed. It took approximately 45 minutes for students to complete the packets. They were given a small gift for participating.

Measures

Gender norm resistance. The items for the GNR measure were created by the CARE lab under the direction of Dawn England (graduate student). Participants rated (0 = *not at all* to 4 = *a lot*) 12-items pertaining to gender norm resistance (see Table 1.1 for complete scale).

Table 1.1. Gender Norm Resistance Items[2]

Item #	Female	Male	Reverse Coded
1	How much do you try to dress or put effort into making yourself look like other girls?	How much do you try to dress or put effort into making yourself look like other boys?	Reverse
2	How much do you like to dress or put effort into making yourself look like other girls?	How much do you like to dress or put effort into making yourself look like other boys?	Reverse
3	How much do you avoid or try not to dress and make yourself look like other girls?	How much do you avoid or try not to dress and make yourself look like other boys?	
4	How much are you bothered that you shouldn't dress or make yourself look like a boy?	How much are you bothered that you shouldn't dress or make yourself look like a girl?	
5	How much do you try to act like other girls?	How much do you try to act like other boys?	Reverse
6	How much do you like to act like other girls?	How much do you like to act like other boys?	Reverse
7	How much do you avoid or try not to act like other girls?	How much do you avoid or try not to act like other boys?	
8	How much are you bothered that you shouldn't act like a man?	How much are you bothered that you shouldn't act like a woman?	
9	How much do you try to do feminine activities?	How much do you try to do masculine activities?	Reverse
10	How much do you like to do feminine activities?	How much do you like to do masculine activities?	Reverse
11	How much do you avoid or try not to do feminine activities?	How much do you avoid or try not to do masculine activities?	
12	How much are you bothered that you shouldn't do masculine activities?	How much are you bothered that you shouldn't do feminine activities?	

[2] *Note.* For each item, participants responded on a 5-point scale from 0 (not at all) to 4 (a lot). For items 4, 8, and 12, participants responded about the other gender. So, if a girl was taking the survey, she would see item 4 as "How much are you bothered that you shouldn't dress or make yourself look like a boy?" For all other items, participants responded about their own gender. For example, a girl would see item 10 as "How much do you like to do masculine activities?"

Items assessed participant behavior/ideology relative to their own gender and the other gender, thus there were two versions of the measure: one structured for male participants and one for female participants. Items 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, and 11 were directed at own-gender constructs, and items 4, 8, and 12, were directed at other-gender constructs. For example, a girl would see item 10 as "How much do you like to do masculine activities?" Similarly, for girls, item 4 read: "How much are you bothered that you shouldn't dress or make yourself look like a boy?" Items 1, 2, 5, 6, 9, and 10 were reverse coded so that higher scores mean more resistance. Responses were recoded into own- and other-gender scores so that the responses of boys and girls could be grouped or compared.

Gender typicality. Participants responded to questions asking about their perceived similarity to their own and the other gender group (Martin et al., 2017). This is a 5-item scale including the item "How similar do you feel to boys." Responses were recorded on a Likert scale from 0 (*not at all*) to 4 (*a lot*). All participants responded to the five items twice, once asking about similarity to girls and once about similarity to boys. Responses were then recoded into own- and other-gender scores where higher scores indicated greater gender typicality. Reliability for own-gender similarity $\alpha = .83$, for other-gender similarity $\alpha = .76$.

Perceived pressure to conform to gender norms. Participants rated (0 = *not at all* to 4 = *a lot*) 12-items pertaining to perceived pressure to conform to gender norms. Items assessed pressure relative to their own gender, thus boy and girl version of the measure were created. For example, item 1 on the boy measure reads: "Other kids would

be upset if I acted like a girl". The items were adapted from Egan and Perry's (2001) measure of felt pressure to match the domains of gender typing in the measure of gender typicality (Kornienko et al., 2016). Higher scores mean more pressure to avoid other-gender aspects. Reliability for pressure to conform α = .76.

Gender-based relationship efficacy. Children's gender-based relationship efficacy toward own-gender and other-gender peers was assessed by using the GBRE questionnaire (Zosuls et al., 2014). This measure consisted of seven items, repeated such that children were separately asked about their efficacy for interacting with girls and with boys. Participants rated their relationship efficacy by using a 5-point scale from 0 (not at all) to 4 (a lot). Example items include "How much do you understand [girls/boys]?" and "How much do you know how to act around [girls/ boys]?" Responses were averaged into girl/boy scales and recoded to own-gender/other- gender scales to create separate scores for GBRE-Own and GBRE-Other. Reliability for GBRE-Own α = .85, for GBRE-Other α = .85.

Contact with own and other gender. This measure assesses the frequency with which individuals interact with peers of their own and other gender. The measure consists of ten items that assess different methods of interaction (i.e. talk with, hang out with, or do things outside of school with [girls/boys]?). Participants rated their contact by using a 5-point scale from 0 (never) to 4 (all of the time). All participants responded to the five items twice, once asking about contact with girls and once about contact with boys. Responses were then recoded into own- and other-gender scores. Higher scores for own

contact indicate more contact with own gender; vice versa for other-gender contact. For own-gender contact α = .83; for other-gender contact α = .86.

Plan of Analysis

Factor structure. To test Hypotheses 1A and 1B, that there are different forms of GNR, I conducted an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) with principal axis factoring and no rotation (because the factors are posited to be unrelated). Next, a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was conducted with two factors from the EFA. Acceptable fit was assessed by observing the chi-square significance test (significant outcomes should be noted, but allowed to continue), a comparative fit index (CFI) score above 0.90, a Tucker Lewis Index (TLI) above 0.90, and a root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) score below 0.08 (Little, 2013). After the model fit was deemed acceptable, the factor analysis was performed, and factor loadings were assessed. Factor loadings were deemed acceptable if $\beta > 0.40$ (Little, 2013).

To test Hypothesis 1C, that GNR for girls and boys will have the same factor structure, I repeated the CFA on a sample split by gender. Models were tested for invariance across gender using Little's (2013) Fixed Factor method of invariance. In this method, nested models of configural, weak, and strong gender invariant models are compared successively. A nested model has better fit than a parent model when the nested model has a significantly lower chi-square value than the parent model. Configural models include the same items held constant across gender. If configural invariance is achieved, the model undergoes weak invariance testing in which the configural model is compared to a model where factor loadings are constrained to be equal across girls and

boys. If weak invariance is achieved, the model is compared to a model in which factor intercepts and loadings are constrained to be equal across girls and boys. If strong variance is achieved, the model is considered invariant across gender and mean levels can be compared across girls and boys.

Mean levels. To test Hypotheses 2A, that participants will have higher levels of implicit than explicit GNR, and 2B, that girls would have higher levels of GNR than would boys, a 2 (GNR form: implicit, explicit) X 2 (gender: girl, boy) RMANOVA was conducted with GNR as the repeated measure.

Correlations. To test Hypotheses 3A-C, regarding how GNR related to other key constructs of gender identity, I conducted bivariate correlations between both forms of GNR, constructs related to one's own-gender collective (pressure to conform to norms, own-gender similarity, own-gender relationship efficacy, and own-gender contact), and constructs related to the other-gender collective (other-gender similarity, other-gender relationship efficacy, and other-gender contact). Correlations will be conducted on the whole sample and then split by gender. Significant gender differences will be tested for using z difference tests.

Interactions. To address Hypotheses 4A and 4B regarding the interaction between pressure to conform to gender norms, own-gender similarity, and other-gender similarity on both forms of GNR, hierarchical multiple linear regression analyses were conducted. The dependent variable for the first set of analyses was implicit GNR; the second set of hierarchical analyses tested explicit GNR. For each set of analyses, the first level was composed of dummy-coded racial/ethnic identity control variables for each

ethnic identity including Asian, Black, Latinx, and Other (including biracial/mixed racial identities) with White as the comparison group. The second level was main effect variables: pressure to conform to gender norms, similarity to own gender, and similarity to other gender. The third level included the two-way interactions (e.g., own-gender similarity by pressure), and the fourth level tested the three-way interaction. The continuous predictor variables (pressure to conform to gender norms, similarity to own-gender, similarity to other-gender) were centered.

At the level of controls, significant main effects for any minority ethnic identity indicates that group has significantly different outcomes than the White comparison group. Significant interactions will be probed using simple slopes analyses and represented graphically. A significant three-way interaction will be broken down by pressure to conform to gender norms and then own-gender similarity. High and low scores for pressure and own-gender similarity would be simulated by mean centering the variables then adding and subtracting the standard deviations from the means. Graphs were used to illustrate the direction of interactions, and simple-slope testing indicated whether these differences were statistically significant.

CHAPTER 4

STUDY 1: RESULTS

Means and standard deviations for all study variable are presented in Table 1.2. Implicit GNR showed a roughly normal distribution though it tended toward inflation of scores below the mean. Explicit GNR was left skewed with a high zero inflation (33% of the sample) and a small peak where about 6% of the sample scored the maximum. These scores indicate that while the one third of adolescents in the sample did not experience explicit GNR, two-thirds registered some explicit GNR with 28 adolescents indicating very high levels. Of those who scored highest on the explicit GNR scale, the majority were White (n = 12, 43%), then Other (n =4, 14%), and then Black, Asian, and Latinx participants (n = 2, 1%).

Table 1.2. Means (Standard Deviations) of Study Variables[3]

	Girls	Boys	Total	Range
N	234	250	492	
Implicit GNR	2.06 (.84)	1.61 (.94)	1.83 (1.24)	0-4
Explicit GNR	1.16 (1.06)	1.23 (1.40)	1.20 (.92)	0-4
Similar Own	2.79 (.99)	3.22 (.77)	3.01 (.92)	0-4
Similar Other	1.25 (.78)	.77 (.63)	1.00 (.75)	0-4
Pressure	1.60 (.86)	2.37 (.91)	1.99 (.97)	0-4
GBRE-Own	3.32 (.72)	3.52 (.58)	3.42 (.68)	0-4
GBRE-Other	2.51 (.88)	2.52 (.96)	2.51 (.93)	0-4
Contact-Own	2.78 (.78)	2.39 (.76)	2.58 (.81)	0-4
Contact-Other	1.26 (.81)	1.15 (.79)	1.20 (.80)	0-4

[3] *Note.* Statistics are reported as Mean (SD). Similar Own = Perceived similarity to their own gender group. Similar Other = Perceived similarity to the other gender group. Similarity measures scaled 0 to 5. Pressure = pressure to conform to gender norms. GBRE-Own = gender-based relationship expectations for own gender. GBRE-Oth = gender-based relationship expectations for other gender. Contact-Own = contact with own gender peers. Contact-Oth = contact with other gender peers.

The purpose of this study was to identify forms of GNR in a quantitative measure, assess their relation with other gender identity constructs, and whether GNR mean levels differed across different conditions (e.g., GNR forms, gender, gender typicality). To address these aims, I used several different statistical approaches that are outlined below.

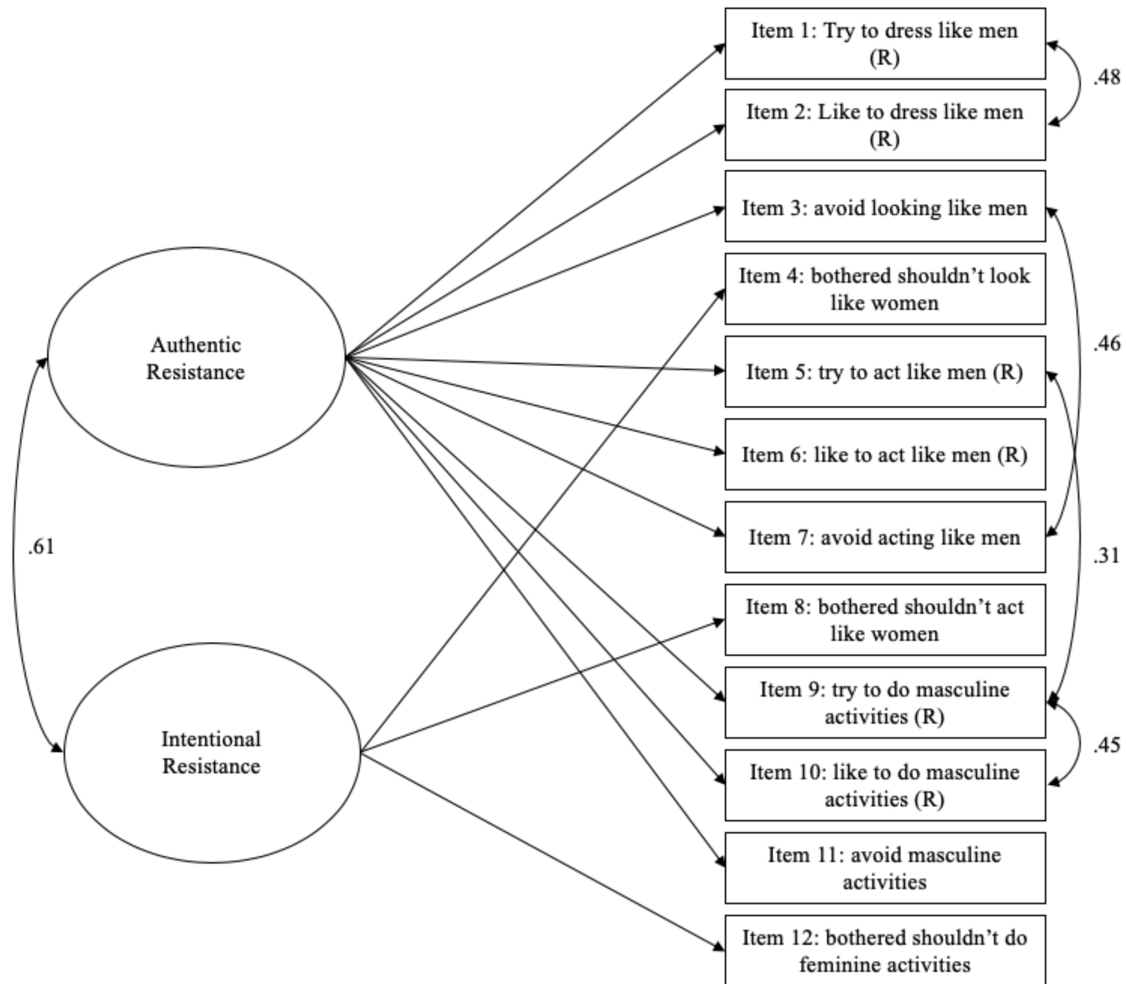
Factor Structure

To test Hypothesis 1A, that GNR can take the form of implicit or explicit resistance, an EFA was conducted on the quantitative GNR measure. The EFA initially indicated four factors, but two of these factors only included one item with a loading above .4. Accordingly, a second EFA was conducted that was restricted to two factors. The second EFA indicated a two-factor solution with items 1-3, 5-7, and 9-11 loading onto Factor 1. Items 1, 5, and 9 assessed *trying* to follow gender norms (reverse coded), items 2, 6, and 10 indicated *liking* following gender norms (reverse coded), and items 3, 7, and 11 indicated *avoiding* conforming to gender norms. Items 4, 8, and 12 assessed being *bothered* that one should not be like the other gender; these items loaded onto Factor 2. Factor 2 can be interpreted as explicit GNR that is motivated by an intention to directly challenge gender norms. It is behavior/ideology that is aware of and annoyed by gender norms. In contrast, Factor 1 items can be interpreted as indicating implicit GNR that is not motivated by a desire to directly challenge norms. Although these items imply that one might be trying to act (or not act) a certain way, the trying is not necessarily motivated by a desire to thwart gender norms. It may be motivated by a less conscious desire not to stand out from one's peers. Henceforth, Factor 1 will be referred to as

implicit GNR and Factor 2 will be referred to as explicit GNR. Reliability for implicit GNR $\alpha = .86$, for explicit GNR $\alpha = .78$.

Next, a two-factor model of GNR was tested via a CFA conducted with Mplus 7 software. The model revealed an acceptable fit to the data after adding inter-item correlations according to modification indexes suggested by Mplus: $\chi^2(41) = 162.349$, $p < 0.001$, CFI = 0.980, RMSEA (90% CI) = 0.078 [0.065, 0.090]. All items loaded above $\beta > 0.50$ on both specified factors and modification indices gave no evidence of cross-loading (see Figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1. CFA Model[4]



The exogenous factors (implicit and explicit GNR) were found to be significantly, positively correlated ($\beta = .61$, $p < .001$). This significant correlation supports Hypothesis 1B, that implicit and explicit GNR would be correlated.

To test Hypothesis 1C, that the two-factor model of GNR would replicate across girls and boys, multiple group analyses were conducted to determine whether invariance

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[4] *Note.* (R) = reverse coded. These are the items for male participants

could be established across gender on factor loadings (weak invariance) and intercepts (strong invariance) (Little, 2013). Results indicated that the strong invariant model (items, factor loadings, and intercepts constrained) was the best fitting of the gender differentiated models $\chi^2(94) = 230.10$, $p < .001$, CFI = .943, TLI = .934, RMSEA, .078, (see Table 1.3). This suggests that GNR can be measured similarly across gender groups.

It should be noted that when models were grouped by gender, the factor loading of item 11 (How much do you avoid or try not to do feminine/masculine activities?) was not above .40 for either girls or boys. If item 11 was removed from the model, item 10 (How much do you like to do feminine/masculine activities?) yielded a low, though acceptable factor loading across both genders (girls: .49, boys: .43). The third item that assessed activities, item 12, showed a tendency toward gender difference (girls: .40, boys: 76). These indicate that there may be a slight gender difference in how boys and girls perceive resisting *activities* of the other gender.

Given these mixed results, there is evidence to support that girls and boys generally think similarly about this GNR construct though they might differ in some ways, particularly around resisting gendered activities. Assuming invariance enables the statistical comparison of girls' and boys' GNR scores (e.g., mean levels, GNR correlations with other constructs). The knowledge gained from these comparisons, as well as the overall gender invariance in the GNR measure, make a reasonable case to assume gender invariance. Future research should, of course, continue to investigate how and why girls and boys think similarly or differently about GNR.

Table 1.3. Invariance Testing across Gender[5]

Model tested	χ^2	df	p	CFI	CFIΔ	TLI	TLIΔ	RMSEA
Configural	297.74	106	<.001	.923	-	.904	-	.087
Factor loadings	276.93	98	<.001	.925	.002	.916	.012	.087
Intercepts	**230.10**	94	<.001	**.943**	.019	**.934**	.018	**.078**

Mean Levels

To test Hypotheses 2A (that sample participants will have higher levels of implicit than explicit GNR) and 2B (that girls would have higher levels of GNR than would boys), a 2 (GNR form: implicit, explicit) X 2 (gender: girl, boy) RMANOVA was conducted. ANOVA results indicated a significant interaction between forms of resistance and gender ($F(1, 490) = 12.77$, $p <.001$, $\eta^2 = .03$). To test whether each gender scored significantly different across forms of resistance, pairwise comparisons were conducted. Hypothesis 2A was supported: implicit GNR was significantly higher than explicit GNR (implicit $M = 1.84$, explicit $M = 1.20$, $p < .001$, $p\eta^2 = .04$), and this was true for girls (implicit $M = 2.06$, explicit $M = 1.16$, $p < .001$, $p\eta^2 = .14$) and for boys (implicit $M = 1.62$, explicit $M = 1.23$, $p < .001$, $p\eta^2 = .03$). Hypothesis 2B was partially supported. Girls' implicit GNR was significantly higher than boys' (girl $M= 2.06$; boy $M= 1.61$, $p < .001$ $p\eta^2 = .06$), but the difference between girls' and boys' explicit GNR was not significant (boy $M= 1.23$; girl $M= 1.16$, $p = .526$ $p\eta^2 = .01$).

[5] *Note.* Significantly better fit is bolded.

Correlations

Next, I tested how each form of GNR related with gender identity constructs and peer-relation constructs (see Table 1.4).

Table 1.4. Correlation Matrix[6]

	Own-Gender Constructs				Other-Gender Constructs		
Girls	Pressure	Similarity	GBRE	Contact	Similarity	GBRE	Contact
Implicit GNR	-.14*	-.23*	-.21*	-.20*	.18*	.05	.06
Explicit GNR	.14*	.09	-.04	-.09	-.04	-.01	-.05
Boys							
Implicit GNR	-.07	-.20*	-.15*	-.13*	.02	.07	.01
Explicit GNR	.07	-.14*	-.02	.01	.14*	.04	.11
Total							
Implicit GNR	-.19*	-.26*	-.21*	-.10*	.17*	.02	.04
Explicit GNR	.10*	-.10*	-.02	-.04	.04	.02	.04

Hypothesis 3A (that both forms of GNR would negatively relate with all own-gender constructs except pressure to conform to gender norms) was generally supported (see Table 1.4). Implicit GNR was significantly negatively correlated with each construct, though the relations were generally not strong. Specifically, GNR was negatively correlated with similarity to own-gender peers ($r = -.26$, $p = .012$), positive expectations about interactions with own-gender peers ($r = -.21$, $p = .04$), and spending time with own-

[6] *Note.* Pressure = pressure to conform to gender norms. Similarity = similarity to own/other gender. GBRE = gender-based relationship expectations for own/other gender. Contact = contact with own/other gender peers.
* = $p < .05$

gender peers ($r = -.10$, $p = .023$). However, explicit GNR was only significantly negatively related to own-gender similarity ($r = -.10$, $p = .01$). It was not significantly related with either GBRE ($r = -.02$, $p = .231$) or contact with own-gender peers ($r = -.21$, $p = .142$). This might indicate that explicit GNR is either more socially acceptable or less visible than expected.

Hypothesis 3B, that GNR would positively relate with pressure was partially supported: explicit GNR and pressure yielded a small, positive correlation ($r = .10$, $p = .04$), but implicit GNR was negatively correlated with pressure to conform to gender norms ($r = -.19$, $p = .032$). This might indicate that pressure plays a different role in each form of GNR.

Hypothesis 3C, that both forms of GNR would positively relate with other-gender constructs, was generally not supported, though there was one exception: the significant, positive relation between implicit GNR and perceived similarity to other-gender peers ($r = .17$, $p = .02$) (e.g., a girl with higher levels of implicit GNR feels more similar to boys). The lack of correlation with other-gender constructs indicates that while implicit GNR may serve to mildly distance adolescents from their own-gender peers, it does not generally affect their relationships with other-gender peers. Explicit GNR was entirely unrelated to other-gender similarity as well as other-gender peer GBRE and contact.

When these correlations were replicated on girls and boys individually, most of the correlations showed the same patterns though there were a few exceptions. Although there seemed to be a gender difference in for the correlation between implicit GNR and pressure (girls' $r = -.14$, $p = .035$; Boys' $r = -.07$, $p = .16$), a z test indicated no significant

difference ($z = .77$, $p = .221$). Similarly, girls and boys differed on the correlation between explicit GNR and own-gender similarity (girls' $r = .09$, $p = .32$; Boys' $r = -.14$, $p = .013$), but this also was not significant ($z = .55$, $p = .291$). For boys, the pattern of other-gender similarity relation to each form of resistance was reversed, but these differences were not significant (implicit GNR $r = .02$, $p = .35$; explicit GNR $r = .14$, $p = .013$; $z = -1.34$, $p = .09$). The only significant gender difference was the relation between implicit GNR and similarity to other-gender peers (girls' $r = -.23$, $p = .034$; boys' $r = -.20$, $p = .16$; $z = 1.77$, $p = .04$).

Interactions

Finally, I explored how key constructs related to gender identity – felt pressure to conform to gender norms, own-gender similarity, and other-gender similarity – might affect the experience of GNR. These hypotheses were explored utilizing a hierarchical multiple linear regression analyses (see Table 1.5 for implicit GNR outcomes and Table 1.6 for explicit GNR outcomes).

Table 1.5. Regression Outcomes for Implicit GNR[7]

	Step 1: Controls			Step 2: Predictors			Step 3: 2-way interactions			Step 4: 3-way interactions		
Predictors	B	ß	t	B	ß	t	B	ß	t	B	ß	t
Asian	-.11	-.02	-.53	-.20	-.04	-1.01	-.20	-.04	-.99	-.20	.01	-1.01
Black	.06	.10	.19	-.03	-.01	-.10	.05	.01	.17	.06	.09	.19
Latinx	.22	.08	1.63	.27*	.09*	2.08*	.26*	.09*	2.04*	.26*	.09*	2.01*
Other Ethnicities	.04	.02	.33	-.13	-.05	-1.18	-.07	-.03	-.66	-.07	-.10	-.62
Pressure				-.14*	-.15*	-3.13*	-.12*	-.13*	-2.76*	-.10*	-.24*	-2.03*
Own				-.22*	-.22*	-4.64*	-.26*	-.26*	-5.28*	-.25*	.12*	-5.02*
Other				.07	.05	1.11	.14*	.12*	2.20*	-.14*	-.10*	2.120*
Pressure*Own							.02	.02	.38	-.01	-.03	-.07
Pressure*Other							-.07	-.06	-1.17	-.04	-.19	-.55
Own*Other							.17*	.18*	3.56*	.18*	.09*	3.60*
Pressure*Own*Other										.08	.01	1.53
R^2		.01			.10			.13			.13	
ΔR^2					.09			.03			.004	

[7] *Note.* Other Ethnicities = Bi-ethnic, multiethnic, and ethnicities outside of White, Asian, Black, and Latinx. Pressure = pressure to conform to gender norms. Own = similarity to own-gender. Other = similarity to other-gender.
* = $p < .05$.

Table 1.6. Regression Outcomes for Explicit GNR[8]

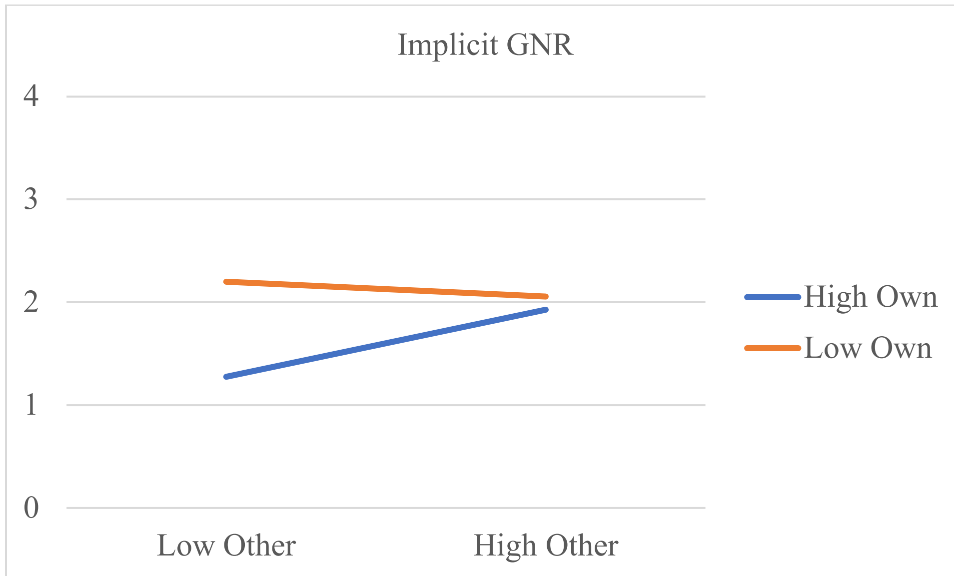
	Step 1: Controls			Step 2: Predictors			Step 3: 2-way interactions			Step 4: 3-way interactions		
Predictors	B	ß	t	B	ß	t	B	ß	t	B	ß	t
Asian	.39	.06	1.37	.31	.05	1.08	.33	.05	1.17	.33	.05	1.16
Black	.69	.08	1.65	.66	.07	1.60	.69	.08	1.66	.67	.08	1.68
Latinx	.32	.08	1.75	.28	.07	1.55	.28	.07	1.53	.28	.07	1.54
Other Ethnicities	.05	.01	.30	.03	.01	.18	.06	.02	.39	.07	.02	.42
Pressure				.18*	.14*	2.84*	.18*	.14*	2.90*	.21*	.17*	3.17*
Own				-.15*	-.12*	-2.17*	-.17*	-.12*	-2.43*	-.16*	-.11*	-2.22*
Other				.07	.04	.829	.010	.06	1.06	.10	.06	1.07
Pressure*Own							-.07	-.05	-.92	-.09	-.07	-1.25
Pressure*Other							-.06	-.03	-.63	-.01	-.01	-.10
Own*Other							.06	.05	.93	.07	.05	.97
Pressure*Own*Other										.10	.08	1.34
R^2		.01			.04			.04			.05	
ΔR^2					.03			.004			.003	

[8] *Note.* Other Ethnicities = Bi-ethnic, multiethnic, and ethnicities outside of White, Asian, Black, and Latinx. Pressure = pressure to conform to gender norms. Own = similarity to own-gender. Other = similarity to other-gender.
* = $p < .05$.

Hypothesis 4A, that adolescents who feel more "gender-typical" (e.g., more similar to own-gender peers and less similar to other-gender peers) would display less implicit GNR when they felt more pressure, was not supported. Pressure was not a significant moderator of gender typicality (own-gender similarity: β= -.03, p = .127; other-gender similarity: β= .19, p = .143). However, the main effects for pressure (β= -.24, p = .032), own-gender similarity (β= -.12, p = .024), and other-gender similarity (β= -.10 p = .021) were significant. It is important to note that Latinx adolescents displayed significantly higher levels of implicit GNR than their White peers (β= .09, p = .045). This has interesting implications about how GNR might look different in the context of racial/ethnic minority norms.

The interaction between own-gender similarity and other-gender similarity was significant (β= .18, p < .001). Probing this interaction indicated that feeling less similar to own-gender peers was related to relatively high levels of implicit GNR regardless the level of other-gender similarity, but adolescents with higher levels of own-gender similarity also had lower levels of implicit GNR, unless paired with higher levels of other-gender similarity (see Figure 1.2). More simply, the more similar one felt to own-gender peers, the lower their implicit GNR, unless they felt similar to both genders.

Figure 1.2. Implicit GNR Regression Plot[9]



Hypothesis 4B, that explicit GNR levels would be higher for adolescents who felt less gender typical and more pressure, was not supported (own-gender similarity: β= -.07, p = .191; other-gender similarity: β= -.01, p = .148). However, the main effects for pressure (β= .17, p = .005) and own-gender similarity (β= -.11, p = .03) were significant. These findings support the correlational findings: the more pressure adolescents felt, the more explicit GNR they displayed. Also, the less similar they felt to own-gender peers, the more explicit GNR they displayed.

[9] *Note.* Own = own-gender similarity, Other = other-gender similarity.

CHAPTER 5

STUDY 1: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to quantify the experience of GNR in adolescence to test for gender differences and explore how GNR is similar to or different from other constructs related to gender identity and peer relations. Factor analyses indicated two forms of GNR that map on to earlier proposals on implicit (indirect or unconscious) and explicit (directly challenges norms) forms of resistance (Way et al., 2014). Results supported hypotheses that there would not be gender differences at the structural level of GNR but that there would be some mean differences: girls had higher levels of implicit GNR; boys had higher levels of explicit GNR. In general, GNR was negatively correlated with own-gender identity and peer-relation constructs, but it did not positively relate to other-gender constructs. Finally, pressure to conform to gender norms was not as strongly implicated in GNR as expected. The implications of these findings are discussed below.

Strengths and Weaknesses of the GNR Measure

Strengths. The GNR measure showed several strengths including construct, convergent, and discriminant validity. These are discussed in greater detail below.

Construct validity. The analyses support the construct validity of the GNR measure. The goal of the study was to quantify the construct of GNR as described in extant qualitative and mixed-method work. Specifically, I sought to quantify the implicit and explicit GNR described by Way and colleagues (2014). My analyses identified two different forms of GNR that map on to the implicit/explicit framework described by Way and colleagues. Way and colleagues define implicit resistance as actions or ideology that

challenges norms in indirect or unconscious ways. In the GNR measure, implicit GNR is captured by items that assess predilection toward gender non-conforming activities, appearance, or behavior. Way and colleagues define explicit resistance as directly challenging or questioning norms and expectations. In the GNR measure, explicit GNR is captured by items that assess an awareness and dislike of gender norms.

Convergent and discriminant validity. I expected that GNR would be related to, but distinct from, other constructs related to gender identity including perceived gender typicality and felt pressure to conform to gender norms. In general, these expectations were supported. Regarding convergent validity, I expected that GNR would negatively relate with own-gender constructs (e.g., similarity to own-gender peers, contact with own-gender peers) and positively relate with other-gender constructs given that non-conforming behavior is traditionally met with own-gender peer disapproval (Martin-Storey & August, 2016; Pascoe, 2014; Toomey et al., 2014). Although these general patterns were identified, there were a few exceptions (e.g., explicit GNR did not relate to other-gender similarity).

Regarding discriminant validity, GNR showed important differences from other-gender similarity. GNR generally did not relate to peer relationship indicators (exception: implicit GNR negatively related to own-gender peer contact). Conversely, other-gender similarity showed moderately positive correlations with gender-based relationship efficacy and other-gender contact in this, and prior, studies (Martin et al., 2017). If GNR and other-gender similarity captured the same construct, we would expect to see GNR positively relate to other-gender peer relationships, but this was not the case; the

adolescents in our study indicated that GNR had no relation to their interactions with other-gender peers.

At face value, the GNR measure and the other-gender similarity measure seem to be capturing the same construct: do you do other-gender typical things? However, analyses indicated that GNR was a distinct construct from other-gender similarity. Perhaps the difference between these constructs is that other-gender similarity assesses *whether* someone *feels* like the other gender whereas GNR measures *why* someone *is* like the other gender. This difference seems to play out in how adolescents then relate to other-gender peers with other-gender similarity relating to stronger other-gender peer bonds but GNR not showing the same pattern with other-gender peer relationships. Finally, both the GNR and gender similarity measures are based on self-perceptions, and an individual's perception of their actions might be different from how other's perceive those actions. An individual might resist norms – in behavior or ideology – yet not *feel* gender atypical, which might influence whether or not they think of their behavior as resistant. For example, a boy who wears a feather boa to might feel completely gender-typical if pink feather boas are in line with his definition of masculinity.

Another reason why GNR differs from other-gender similarity is that whatever gender non-conformity or perceived atypicality that might result from GNR is theoretically intentional. Other-similarity, however, might be the result of unintentional non-conformity (e.g., someone striving to conform to gender norms but not achieving this goal). The intentional nature of GNR might be more protective than the potentially unintentional nature of other-gender similarity. A similar concept is portrayed in studies

about sexual minority bullying. Horne (2007) found that straight gender non-conforming adolescents were less socially acceptable than gay adolescents or even than the gay gender non-conforming adolescents (for similar results, see Martin-Storey & August, 2016). There seems to be a degree of clemency for those who are intentionally norm resistant (e.g., visible identification as a sexual minority) as opposed to those who have no “reason” for their non-conforming behavior. A similar example is found in the way that popularity allows children greater flexibility with gender norm conformity. In her observations of elementary children, Thorne (1993) showed how popular children were free to challenge norms and could even make non-conforming behavior cool. Similarly, Martin and colleagues (2017) found that being similar to both genders increased social acceptance by all peers. That is, exhibiting and holding feelings of psychological androgyny may act to increase popularity and decrease sanctions around gender nonconformity. This is supported by the interaction I found between own- and other-gender similarity and GNR: the higher the own-gender similarity score, the lower the implicit GNR unless participants felt similar to both gender peers in which case implicit GNR levels were high. More research is needed to find out more about other characteristics of those who resist norms and how their behavior is or is not related to peer-related outcomes.

Although I expected that pressure to conform to gender norms would be an important factor in resistance – that it would be the force against which one resisted – these ideas were generally not supported for either form of GNR. Explicit GNR was positively correlated with pressure, but the correlations were smaller than expected (r =

.10), and pressure did not moderate GNR outcomes based on gender similarity in the regression analyses. Regarding implicit GNR, there was a significant correlation between implicit GNR and pressure, but it was negative ($r = -.19$). Rather than pressure, perhaps explicit GNR resists the norms themselves. And rather than pressure working to increase implicit GNR, perhaps implicit GNR is inhibited by pressure. In as much as implicit GNR is motivated primarily by the pursuit of non-conforming behavior, the cost of this pursuit may increasingly outweigh the benefit as pressure mounts. Thus, more pressure will likely lower levels of implicit GNR. Or perhaps pressure plays a different or more nuanced role in GNR than theorized. In a recent publication, pressure was found to be more influential for adolescents who invest more effort into norm conformity rather than for adolescents who resist norms (Nielson et al., 2020). Adolescents who feel more similar (or want to feel more similar) to own-gender peers may feel heightened pressure because appearing gender-typical is important to them. It seems that pressure is an important factor relating to gender identity and gender performance, but more work is needed to accurately explore its role for people more and less invested in cultural gender norms.

Weaknesses. Along with the strengths of the GNR measure, there are also limitations that must be acknowledged including a confounding effect of reverse coding, failure to explore a cognitive element of implicit GNR and a behavioral element to explicit GNR. These are discussed below.

The confounding effect of reverse coding. Some items were reverse-coded and others were not, which may have influenced the factor analysis outcomes above and

beyond the GNR content of the items. The GNR measure included questions about three domains (appearance, actions, activities) that were repeated for each of four motives (try to, like to, avoid, bothered that one shouldn't). However, the "try to" and "like to" items were reverse coded (e.g., for the female-version of the measure: "How much do you try to act like other girls?"), which would introduce similarity between these items that may have confounded the factor analysis. These reverse coded items loaded onto the implicit GNR factor along with the "avoid" items. Both the EFA and CFA reported good fit for the bifactor solution as presented in this work, but whether or not these factors would be replicated without reverse coding should be assessed in future work.

Cognitions and behaviors. The implicit GNR items only assess behaviors and the explicit GNR items only assess cognitions. A stronger version of the measure would reflect implicit GNR that assesses awareness and intent along with behavioral enactment. As described above, *intentional* nonconforming behavior premised on an *awareness* of gender norms is the key difference between other-gender similarity and GNR. The implicit GNR items in their current form capture the predilection toward gender non-conformity, which implies awareness and intention, but it could be strengthened by items that specifically address these important factors. Similarly, the explicit GNR items, which focus on awareness and intent, would be strengthened by adding items that capture the behavioral enactment of explicit GNR.

Cultural differences. Finally, the GNR measure was tested on a sample that was specific to the unique cultural backgrounds of adolescents in a public middle school in a U.S. southwestern city. These may not generalize to youth in other settings. We included

a measure of ethnic identity and that allowed me to explain whether Latinx adolescents showed different patterns than White non-Latinx adolescents.   I found that Latinx adolescents displayed significantly higher levels of implicit GNR than did their White peers. These are important differences because gender norms vary across cultures. For example, in addition to the White male stereotypes of aggression and emotional stoicism, Mexican American masculinity also includes antisocial behavior and wishful thinking as a coping mechanism (Arciniega, Anderson, Tovar-Blank, & Tracey, 2008). Or, Latinx girls and women have more rules restricting their behavior and the consequences for transgressions are higher than for boys in their families (Estrada, 2019) in ways not seen in non-Latinx White households. In my sample, Latinx adolescents were the only ethnic-racial group that different significantly from White participants, and perhaps cultural-specific norms like these were driving that association.

In the GNR measure, participants supply their own definitions and examples of gender norms. Although this method ensures that the GNR measure is relevant to individual experiences, it relinquishes the ability of the researcher to know which norms exactly to which the participants are referring. Additional research during early adolescence across a variety of settings is needed to better ascertain the contextual specificity versus universality of findings presented in this study. Further work is needed to identify which norms, exactly, were different ethnic-racially identified participants thinking of, and how these specific cultural norms differentially affect behavior.

Implicit and Explicit GNR

Previous GNR research has identified various domains of resistance including appearance, activities, and ideological stances (Gilligan, 2013; Rogers & Way, 2018; Way et al., 2014). The present study collates these different domains and affirms that they relate to one another together, for adolescents, as items on a scale of GNR. The analyses also indicated two different forms of GNR. I expected that these forms of GNR would be correlated because of the protean nature of resistance. As Anyon (1984) explained, the same behavior may be resistant in one setting and not another; an action by one individual may be resistant, the same action by another could be accommodating. The boundary between explicit and implicit GNR is similarly blurry. The item "Trying" to engage in an activity generally associated with another gender, for example, loaded into the implicit GNR subscale. This could certainly be interpreted as a girl experimenting with playing football because she is interested in the game, rather than because she is trying to change the expectation that girls are active rather than passive. But maybe this football playing girl is also aware that, although not her main intention, her non-conforming behavior is working to reduce female stereotypes. To truly differentiate between these two forms of resistance would require specific questions regarding the behavioral motive – and even then, the answers might be more complex and nuanced than one expects.

Do individuals themselves identify as resistant, or do they feel that they simply display resistant behavior at various times? This is a difference of seeing GNR as a state-like versus a trait-like phenomenon. Anyon's (1984) formulation of resistance as a

dynamic trade-off with accommodation registers more as state-like. In one situation an individual may be conforming, in another, they may be resistant. Rogers' (2018) use of resistant narratives, in which the experiences of children are used to determine over-arching "narrative types", falls more in line with a trait-like approach. Importantly, Rogers' narrative types are not posited as static over time, and they still acknowledge a shifting balance of accommodation/resistance, but they can be used to indicate an orientation toward resistance or conformity. It is reasonable to believe that some individuals develop a stronger inclination toward resistance when we acknowledge that certain individuals experience greater degrees of oppression than others (Crenshaw, 2016). It is important to continue the investigation how GNR can be both a dynamic balance between the benefits/safety of conforming or resisting as well as a more stable identity trait.

I expected that implicit GNR would be higher than explicit GNR for adolescents, and this was supported. In research on a similarly aged group of boys, 80% described implicit resistance in their behavior and 20% described explicit resistance (Way et al, 2014). This difference is likely due to the development of critical consciousness. Critical consciousness is the understanding of systematic oppression, awareness of the intersections of one's own oppression or privilege, and one's sense of efficacy in combatting oppression (Freire, 1973). In general, critical consciousness increases over time, along with cognitive abilities, though this depends on one's intersections of privilege and oppression; privileged individuals are much less likely do develop a critical consciousness than oppressed individuals (for a review see Heberle et al., 2020). As such,

we would expect levels of explicit GNR to increase along with age and critical consciousness.

Another explanation for the lower levels of explicit GNR is that the "gender policing" – norm conformity enforcement – likely ebbs and flows in accordance with developmental stages. Cognitive gender theorists argue that norm adherence and policing increase in rigidity through childhood as they adopt the categories, then relax onward as they master them (for a review, see Halim et al., 2015). Adolescents might face an increase in norm conformity expectations (Hill & Lynch, 1983; Hine & Leman, 2013; Hoffman et al., 2019) that negatively affect one, or both, forms of resistance.

It is also important to note that this implicit/explicit framework of analyzing resistance maps on to other methods of assessing resistance. For example, previous researchers have coded resistance narratives according to gender stereotype subscription (Rogers, 2018; Way, 2011). These stereotype subscriptions may further be classified as either implicit or explicit (Way et al., 2014).Thus, the explicit/implicit framework can build on other existing frameworks rather than compete with or replace them. In their work, Way and colleagues (2014) have connected GNR to positive well-being outcomes, but how might these relations be nuanced by differentiating outcomes according to implicit and explicit resistance? Is implicit GNR more socially acceptable than explicit GNR, for example? Some research indicates that children and adolescents who combine masculine and feminine traits enjoy popularity with peers of both gender (Martin et al., 2017; Thorne, 1993). Those whose actions or behaviors indirectly challenge norms might not face the social sanction of those who expressly resist norms. More research is needed

on GNR outcomes and the potential moderating effect of different forms of resistance on these outcomes.

Gender Differences in GNR

Quantifying GNR enables researchers to test for statistically significant differences in factor structure or mean levels of GNR. The factor analyses in the present study indicated that although norms might be specific to each gender, boys and girls resist them in the same manner. Boys and girls each responded in a similar manner to questions about GNR domain (e.g., appearance, activities, ideological stances) as well as motives (try to, avoid, like to, bothered that one should not do). When mean levels were assessed, however, girls indicated higher levels of implicit GNR than did boys. This was expected given that adolescent girls experience more freedom regarding gender norms at this stage: it is increasingly acceptable for girls to engage in behaviors that were previously seen as masculine such as playing sports like soccer and wearing “boy clothes” (Yu et al., 2017). Yet this does not mean that norms are necessarily changing, and a girl who plays soccer might still feel like she is tomboy if she prefers physical competition to frilly pink things. Girls may be transgressing norms more frequently than they did historically, but their feelings of transgression while doing so seem not to have decreased.

My findings indicated that boys had significantly higher mean levels of explicit resistance than did girls. This is contrary to my expectations and previous GNR research which indicates that girls and women tell more resistant narratives than do boys (Rogers, 2018). Girls having higher implicit levels make sense during early adolescence: girls

have more freedom to transgress norms at this stage (Halim, Ruble, & Amodio, 2011). Following this line of thinking, it might also make sense that boys have more explicit GNR in early adolescence: boys are bothered that they are restricted from certain ways of doing and being. The discrepancy between my findings and Rogers' (2018) work might also be addressed by focus and method of study. Rogers' research was conducted using qualitative interviews that had the potential to delve deeper and more widely into the nature of norms and the resistance intention. Conversely, the quantitative measure at hand assesses the desire or preference for doing certain specific things (e.g., dressing, activities, spending time with). Even the "bothered that you can't" items were assessing specific behaviors rather than cultural paradigms. Perhaps the adolescent participants of this study took the questions at face value. Older participants might supply more structural/institutionalized gender stereotypes when answering these items and yield outcomes more similar to those found by Rogers. This, and other developmental changes should be tested by assessing the outcomes of this measure on an older population.

Attempts at mapping developmental change of gender norm adherence/resistance invariably show variation (Bartini, 2006; Halim et al., 2016; McHale, Updegraff, Helms-Erikson, & Crouter, 2001). Bartini (2006) finds that boys have more freedom and girls are more constricted in early adolescence, and that expectations for girls grow even more rigid over time. Liben and Bigler (2002) indicate that girls grow more flexible over time. McHale and colleagues (2001) show how trajectories are influenced by various sources including presence and gender of siblings, etc. A review on the influence of longitudinal gender identity development and the influence of family members concludes that

increasingly specific and statistically complex methods are needed to map trajectories of gender identity development (McHale, Crouter, & Whiteman, 2003). Clearly issues of resistance and gender are complex and nuanced, and more longitudinal analyses are needed.

Conclusion

The current research focused on the ways that adolescents experience the nature and process of gender norm resistance. This was done by creating a quantitative measure of GNR. In the GNR measure, implicit and explicit GNR were operationalized in ways that align with resistance theory as it has been described in the literature (Way et al., 2014). Specifically, I found that these two forms are distinct, yet correlated; implicit resistance is more common than explicit resistance among early adolescents; girls show more implicit resistance than boys, boys show more explicit resistance than girls; GNR is distinct from measures of other-gender similarity in the way it relates to constructs associated with peer interaction. Finally, the developmental and ethnic-racial cultural implications of this inspire interesting avenues for future research such as investigating more closely specific gender norms cultural minorities envision when they think about GNR.

CHAPTER 6

STUDY 2: EXPLORING THE EXPERIENCE OF RESISTANCE TO MASCULINE GENDER NORMS

Rogers and Way (2015) describe gender norm resistance (GNR) as the purposeful cultivation of identities/activities that go against culturally held stereotypes about gender. Masculinity is a particularly rich area to study GNR because male norms are traditionally more strongly enforced in patriarchal societies (Haraway, 2001) and the discrepancy between adherence to masculine ideals (how well one embodies ideals) and endorsement (how important one thinks ideals are) is related to a host of negative internalizing and externalizing outcomes (Liu, Rochlen, & Mohr, 2005; Pleck, 1981). This is particularly true of gender non-conforming behavior – actions that are not in line with culturally prescribed roles for men and women – which has traditionally been viewed as a risk factor associated with negative outcomes. But the study of GNR adds a strengths-based approach to the study. For example, researchers who study GNR have found that it is associated with striving to distance oneself from negative stereotypes via academic achievement or professional success (Rogers, 2018; Rogers & Way, 2015). Rogers and Way (2018) posit that resistance "reveals how individuals… reject dehumanizing ideologies" such as those that restrict the emotional expressivity of men or the academic/professional contribution of women. In this way, GNR can be associated with positive adjustment indicators and gender conformity to negative ones; norm-resistant behavior can become a sort of social activism by those who are aware of stereotypes and seeking to change them.

In this dissertation, I define gender nonconformity as behavior that does not follow gender-based cultural norms. In this way, it is similar to gender norm resistance. Both resistance and nonconformity are states of non-compliance with gender roles, but nonconformity can lack the intentionality of resistance. I define resistance as an intentional *reaction* against the cultural scripts to which the resistant individual might be philosophically opposed. This differentiates resistant behavior from "non-resistant" non-conforming behavior because individuals may be non-conforming with no understanding that they are flouting social mores. Resistance, however, is defined as an intentional pushback against norms, which requires an awareness of norms. GNR then, may be manifest by individuals who exist, behave, or think in ways that go against established gender norms (Austin, 2016; Way et al., 2014).

Way and colleagues identified two different forms of GNR: implicit GNR which is manifest by challenging norms in indirect ways, and explicit resistance which is manifest by directly challenging or questioning norms and expectations (Way et al., 2014). In study 1, I built on this framework by attempting to identify the unique motivations and contextual factors that influence each form of GNR. The results from this study supported the expectation that implicit GNR is motivated by the pursuit of authentic gender nonconforming desires and that explicit GNR is motivated by a dislike of gender norms and desire to change them. However, the quantitative nature of the study, though effective in standardizing and operationalizing GNR, was not well suited to

flesh out GNR motivations. Qualitative information is needed to better understand how these forms of GNR are motivated and how they affect gender development narratives.

Resisting gender norms is not always easy to disentangle from accommodating gender norms. Actions that may be conforming in one light may be resistant in another (Anyon, 1984). For example, a man bragging about sexual conquests would conform to the masculine norm of sexual assertiveness, but if those sexual conquests were between two men, it would serve as resistance against the norm that men should be heterosexual. Identifying resistant behavior, then, requires accounting for contextual factors such as external socialization (e.g., pressure from self and others) along with an analysis of motivations. Study 1 indicated that implicit GNR can be identified by contextual components including awareness of norms, perceived gender atypicality, and authenticity. However, the GNR measure in Study 1 is focused on the behavioral enactment of implicit GNR (e.g., preferring atypical clothing) and does not explicitly assess the perceptions of awareness and authenticity. In Study 1, I theorized that explicit GNR can be identified by the components awareness of gender norms, pressure to conform to gender norms, and a dislike of gender norms. But the GNR measure lacked an explicit focus on awareness and pressure.

Accordingly, the first aim in this study was to identify the motives that drive different forms of GNR in the narratives of young adult men. I expected that implicit GNR would be motivated by the pursuit of authentic nonconformity and that explicit GNR would be motivated by a dislike of and desire to change gender norms. The second aim in this study was to map how implicit and explicit GNR might be further identified

by a unique combination of contextual components. I expected that implicit GNR would involve components of awareness of gender norms, perceived gender typicality, and authenticity whereas explicit GNR would involve awareness of gender norms, pressure to conform to gender norms, and dislike of gender norms. In doing so, I sought to better understand lived experiences of different forms of GNR.

Identifying GNR Motives in Young Adult Narratives

Narratives are an ideal format in which to explore the influence of motivation and context on GNR. Through their stories of gender identity development, individuals describe how they navigate between (potentially) conflicting personal and cultural goals. Using a narrative framework one can position individual narratives against cultural narratives – or master narratives. A master narrative is a set of cultural instructions on social norms and how one should adhere to them (McLean & Syed, 2016). The use of "master" denotes that the roles outlined by these cultural narratives are understood and endorsed by most of the population. A master narrative represents the expected, mainstream path of development. It would be the narrative of perfect adherence to cultural norms. Connell's (1987) hegemonic masculinity is an example of a master narrative because it is ubiquitous and there is strong pressure to adhere to cultural masculine codes.

Gender researchers have used master narratives to study the process of conforming to or resisting gender norms, because a master narrative framework positions individuals in relation to cultural norms and highlights their potential struggle between conformity and resistance (McLean & Syed, 2016). Master narratives are compulsory and

“those whose personal narratives do not align with these master narratives are telling stories that are less valued and less ‘good’, and are in a more marginalized position in society” (McLean et al., 2018, p. 633). Thus, every member of culture would feel strong pressure to conform to the norms presented in the master narratives, and those whose behavior is contrary to master narratives about cultural gender norms will experience conflict. In the course of personal identity construction, individuals internalize master narratives, thus identity creation (and subsequent behavior) becomes a function of positioning oneself in relation to master narratives (McLean & Syed, 2016). If individuals align themselves against master narratives – that is they resist cultural norms – they are going against cultural pressures to do so, and they must have strong motivations.

In previous work, comparison between master narratives and individual narratives have been used to identify GNR in children and adolescents (Brinkman, Rabenstein, Rosén, & Zimmerman, 2014; Rogers & Way, 2015; Way, 2011; Way et al., 2014; Yu et al., 2017), and intriguing patterns are emerging about the potential developmental nature of GNR (Rogers, 2018). A master narrative framework is particularly useful in investigating the development of individuals who do not fit neatly within proscribed norms (e.g., those who resist gender norms) because they generally engage in self-reflective identity work as they establish their relation to (or against) cultural norms (McLean et al., 2018). Indeed, gender-typical men may never have had cause to reflect on these issues; Western men with little desire for gender non-conforming behavior benefit from their patriarchal culture and have few reasons to reflexively engage in gender norm narratives (McLean & Syed, 2016; Walby, 1990). A man who has reflected on masculine

norms and resistance to them is also likely able to articulate his own experiences of resistance or conformity (De Visser & Smith, 2006). Accordingly, in this early stage of research, men with interest or experience in analyzing their gender identity may yield richer narratives than those who have not.

It is important to remember that master narratives are specific to the culture from which they emerge. Thus, a White man in the US will feel a different set of pressures and expectations than will a Black or Latinx man (Liu, Colbow, & Rice, 2016). Qualitative research, and semi-structured interviews, in particular, are well equipped to identify and address the intersectionality of lived experiences. Interviewer and participant are able together to discuss the unique pressures the participant, with their specific ethnic-racial, geographical, sexual, abilities, etc., has experienced.

Developmental change. Gender identity development is multifaceted and while some aspects may be tightening, others are relaxing. The majority of gender identity development literature focuses on the effects of gender socialization among children and adolescents and less is known about socialization as individuals progress through young adulthood. Romantic relationship formation and maintenance is a prominent focus during this stage. Interestingly, research illustrates that men and women display similar levels of intimacy within their close relationships (Milevsky, Smoot, Leh, & Ruppe, 2005; Norona, Preddy, & Welsh, 2016; Radmacher & Azmitia, 2006), but the same may not be true men's relationships with other men. Indeed, one study shows that emotional constraint between men may increase as they progress through adolescence (Way, 2011).

A longitudinal analysis of masculinity adherence in men revealed that subscription to traditional masculinity ideals wanes from adolescence to young adulthood (Marcell, Eftim, Sonenstein, & Pleck, 2011). There are a number of issues that might influence subscription to masculine ideals in young adulthood including participation in sports teams (Steinfeldt et al., 2011), media exposure (Firminger, 2006), and living with one's father (Marcell et al., 2011). Though I have only addressed romantic relationships in this review, other young adult milestones include joining the workforce and starting a family. The socialization messages individuals receive change across each of these domains and milestones as it does for milestones/domains in childhood (Halim et al., 2016), but researchers have yet to investigate how marriage and entering the job force impact gender identity development in young adults. More research is needed to determine the gendered experiences and socialization of young adults and how pressure to conform or resist might change over time.

Young adulthood has been posited as an ideal stage in which to utilize a master narrative framework because it is marked by a strong drive to develop identity (McLean et al., 2017), contrasting desires to both fit in and be unique (Arnett, 2000), and the ability to make meaning by constructing narratives of "selective and subjective" interpretations of childhood and adolescence (McLean et al., 2017, p. 2). In short, increased cognitive ability to both recognize cultural inequality and also to reflect on oneself make young adulthood a perfect time to make meaning of identity development trajectories including the development of GNR.

Contextual Components of GNR

Although explicit GNR and implicit GNR might both be used to describe the same gender non-conforming behavior (e.g., a man wearing a dress), the difference lies in the motivation behind the act as well as contextual factors. Implicit GNR is wearing a dress because one likes dresses, likes the pattern and cut of the dress, likes the feel of the fabric against one's legs, or enjoys the freedom of the loose-fitting garment. Explicit GNR is wearing a dress because you want to prove that men can wear dresses. It is non-conforming behavior driven by the belief that gender norms are wrong. I posit that implicit GNR can be identified by three components: an awareness of gender norms, desires or behavior incongruent with prevailing masculine norms (i.e., gender atypicality), and authentically pursuing ones' preferences (i.e., authenticity). I posit that explicit GNR can be exemplified by three components: an awareness of gender norms, a dislike of gender norms, and pressure to conform to gender norms. The following sections describe how each form of GNR can be identified by these combinations of components in participant narratives.

Awareness of gender norms. I propose awareness as an important component of both forms of GNR because one must be aware of gender norms in order to resist them. A young boy who likes to paint his nails is not actively resisting unless he is aware that he lives in a culture which discourages boys from painting their nails. Given that gender norm education and enforcement begin very early (Halim et al., 2016), young adults are likely very aware of gender norms. Thus, awareness is an important starting point for any form of resistance.

Gender typicality. I posit that an important component, specific to implicit GNR, is feeling gender atypical. It is not typical for men to think about, question, or defy gender norms (De Visser, 2009; Kaplan et al., 2016). Thus, even thinking or talking about gender norms is atypical behavior for men and a manifestation of GNR. I expect that implicit GNR will be identified by feelings of atypicality given that it originates in gender atypical preferences and desires. Behavior that deviates from the master narrative of gender conformity yields gender policing (Martin-Storey & August, 2016; Pascoe, 2014) and cognition that deviates from gender norm narratives might yield internal questions about one's own typicality (De Visser & Smith, 2006). Although nonconformity and typicality measure different constructs (nonconformity measures actual behavior, typicality measures self-perception of fitting in with own-group gender), I expect there to be a correlation because non-conforming behavior is generally quickly policed (Toomey et al., 2014). The pointing out of difference likely leads to less feelings of belonging and of typicality of one's own gender group. However, there is also support for the contention that there is a gap between peers' perception of an individual and an individual's self-perception. For example, a man who has a very typically masculine presentation (tall, strong, interest in cars, etc.) may *perceive* himself as less typical from his male peers if he differs from them in ways that are not readily transmitted by his appearance or behavior. Similarly, a man who may be seen as less typical based on feminine hand gestures or manner of speaking may consider himself to be very typically masculine based on other factors such as interests or interpersonal relationships.

Authenticity. What happens when the behaviors and characteristics that one enjoys are not typical of one's gender (i.e., not in line with master narratives)? I posit that authenticity is the last important component in implicit GNR. Some scholars discuss the "authenticity" of the self as a potential motivator for resisting norms (Austin, 2016), though individuals may also authentically desire to conform to norms. Authenticity has been included in studies on sexual minority identity development (Riggle, Rostosky, Mohr, Fingerhut, & Balsam, 2014; Russon & Schmidt, 2014) and transgender identity development (Austin, 2016; Ehrensaft, 2011), but it is not generally included in most studies of gender identity development. However, the importance of authenticity in gender norm-related choices is recognized by adolescents (Brinkman et al., 2014), and it is strongly positively correlated with self-esteem and other aspects of well-being (Wood et al., 2008).

Authenticity is an important aspect of identity development because it emphasizes the active role individuals takes in their own identity socialization. Constructivist theorists point to the cognitive self as an important filter of external socialization (Liben & Bigler, 2002; Martin & Halverson, 1981), and Brinkman and colleagues (2014) posit that authenticity is an important part of this filter because the children in their sample consistently described the importance of being themselves/being true to themselves. Just as individuals may feel pressure to conform to norms from others and themselves, they may also feel pressure to be their authentic selves. If being themselves is counter to prevailing gender norms, the pressure to be authentic works against pressure to conform

to gender norms. The current study seeks to track the functions of these various pressures and intentions in decisions of conformity and resistance.

Dislike of gender norms. I expect explicit GNR to be motivated strongly by a dislike of gender norms; that is, the individual thinks gender norms are unappealing, old-fashioned, or harmful to society. Dislike of gender norms can be translated to resistant behavior aimed at changing the status quo, such as a female participant from Rogers' (2018) research who said that being a girl is important because "some people think that boys are better, and I just wanna change that" (p. 10). But a dislike of norms does not have to lead to behavioral enactment; it might simply be manifest as an acknowledgment that a different way of doing things would be better, as this boy from Way and colleagues' (2014) study who said that "it might be nice to be a girl, then you wouldn't have to be emotionless" (p. 242).

In fact, the likelihood of feeling bothered by gender norms, as well as being motivated to change them, is moderated by broad cultural forces. Those who are in subordinate positions are more likely feel the negative impact of inequality (Marx & Engels, 1955). In an androcentric culture, such as the US, this means that women are valued less than men. Thus, we see Rogers' (2018) findings that "girls, because of their subordinate position in the hierarchy, are confronted more explicitly with gender inconsistencies and are arguably more motivated to question or resist the oppressive narrative" (p. 14). As part of this androcentric focus, value is extended beyond male to masculinity in general, and consequently femininity, in general, is also devalued. So even though men, as a social category, enjoy more privileges than women, less masculine men

experience less privilege and more subordination than more masculine men (Connell, 1987). Although GNR research shows strong patterns of higher GNR levels for girls and women (Kågesten et al., 2016; Rogers, 2018), it is likely that less masculine men also experience a disproportionate amount of dislike of gender norms compared to masculine men. It is important to see how these dynamics might influence the development of men who identify as more or less gender-typical. Accordingly, dislike of gender norms is proposed to be a key characteristic of explicit GNR.

Pressure. The second component of explicit GNR is perceived pressure to conform to gender norms. Research on gender pressure in Western societies indicates that almost everyone experiences it, including those with high levels of gender norm conformity (Horn, 2007; Pascoe, 2014). Widespread felt pressure is common in cultures marked by strong homophobia and a "one-drop rule" regarding gender typicality (Flanders & Hatfield, 2014). This idea was adapted from ethnic-racial identity literature where, historically, the smallest amount of African heritage constituted a black ethnic-racial identity. Similarly, any amount of gender non-conforming behavior is potentially incriminating. Thus, even individuals who are highly similar to own gender individuals are constantly at risk of displaying atypical behavior and potentially losing status. Gender conformity forms the master narrative of which individuals feel pressure to follow.

Male gender norms are particularly rigid, thus many men face high levels of pressure to conform to gender norms. Indeed, regarding the male master narrative, the sociologist Erving Goffman said, "There is only one complete unblushing male in America: a young, married, White, urban, northern, heterosexual, Protestant, father, of

college education, fully employed, of good complexion, weight and height, and a recent record in sports." (1963). Though some things have changed since the time this was written (i.e., being married, being religious), the other social (Gerdes, Alto, Jadaszewski, D'Auria, & Levant, 2018) and physical norms (Parent, Schwartz, & Bradstreet, 2016) remain strong. Pleck and Garnets (2016) describe that when individuals internalize gender idealizations and fail to live up to their internalized ideals, they may suffer lower self-esteem, anxiety, or self-loathing. To alleviate these negative symptoms, some men strive ever harder to conform to norms and live up to their ideals. Some men, on the other hand, react to the presence of harmful stereotypes by defying them (Rogers, 2018; Rogers & Way, 2015). This is resistance motivated by a desire to be true to oneself in the face of pressure to conform to gender norms.

If Explicit GNR behaviors arises *because* of the existence of gender norms and pressure to conform to them, it might increase over development as an individual feels rising levels of pressure. The transmission of cultural gender norms via socialization and the subsequent conformity/resistance to norms is not a straightforward endeavor; more work is needed to discern how exactly pressure relates to different forms of GNR and affects the experience of those enacting resistant behaviors.

Current Study

The purpose of this study was to explore why young men resist, what motivates their acts of resistance, and how they understand those motives. During the interview, participants were asked a variety of questions (see Appendix A) about their experiences with gender norms from adolescence through young adulthood. In the interviews, I

sought to gain a better understanding of the different ways participants resisted gender norms (e.g., “Has there ever been a time in your life where you made the conscious effort to resist gender norms”) and how constructs related to GNR (e.g., felt pressure to conform to gender norms, gender typicality) might have influenced their development (e.g., “How much pressure do you feel to be masculine?”, and “Do you feel like you fit in with other guys? Why or why not?”).

This research had two aims. The first aim was to explore whether different motivations are identified in personal narratives for each form of GNR. In Study 1, I proposed that implicit GNR is the pursuit of authentically nonconforming behaviors, desires, and ideologies whereas explicit GNR is a cognition or behavior motivated by a dislike of gender norms and desire to challenge them. Forms of resistance were identified using criteria from Study 1 including non-conforming behavior despite an awareness of gender norms (implicit resistance) and behavior motivated by the belief that gender norms are wrong or harmful (explicit resistance). The second aim was to explore how certain combinations of contextual components might be used to further differentiate between forms of GNR. Previous work has validated the relation of GNR to gender typicality and pressure to conform to gender norms and suggested the importance of including awareness of gender norms, authenticity, and a dislike of gender norms as important aspects of GNR (see Study 1). In this work, I posited that implicit GNR involves a combination of awareness of gender norms, perceived gender atypicality, and the pursuit of authenticity. I expected this because, in order to be resistant, individuals must have a knowledge of gender norms (i.e., awareness) so that they are able to

understand when their behavioral choices are in line with or counter to expected behavior for their gender (i.e., gender atypical). I posited that explicit GNR involves a combination of awareness of norms, dislike of gender norms, and pressure to conform to gender norms. Similar to implicit GNR, individuals must have a knowledge of gender norms in order to be resistant. Different from implicit GNR, the non-conforming behavior of GNR is motivated by a dislike of gender norms, rather than a pursuit of authentic non-conforming desires. I expected explicit GNR to be marked by pressure to conform to gender norms because if explicit GNR is a reaction against gender norms, then more rigid norms should evoke stronger resistance. Finally, I anticipated additional ways of resisting; thus, I was open to identifying any new types of resistance exemplified in the narratives.

CHAPTER 7

STUDY 2: METHODS

Participants and Procedure

The data for the current study came from a sample of young adult male college students in the Tempe area. The target population was individuals with experience resisting gender norms. This was assessed by describing the study aims (e.g., mapping out development of gender socialization, pressure, and resistance) and asking potential participants whether they felt like they have experiences that relate to this topic. This stratified recruiting strategy resulted in a sample of 30 young adult men with a mean *age* of 23 (years SD = 4.20; range = 18 through 32). The sample was primarily white (*n* = 23, 76%) with 4 Latino participants (13%) and 3 Asian participants (10%). The sample was also identified as primarily heterosexual (n = 21, 70%), then gay (n = 5, 17%), then bisexual (n = 3, 10%), with one participant identifying as pansexual (n = 1, 3%). It should be noted that all participant names have been changed.

Recruitment

Theoretical sampling focuses on recruiting participants with specific qualities to elaborate and refine emerging patterns and theories. Accordingly, purposive and snowball sampling strategies were used to locate potential participants for this study. This method was chosen because it has been noted that it may be difficult for the general population to recall experiences of challenging of gender norms (Yu et al., 2017), and it was important to find participants with experience in resisting norms, as well as conforming to norms.

Flyers with information about the study and eligibility requirements were handed out on ASU campus. Research assistants and other participants referred potential interviewees to the study. Potential interviewees contacted the author by email to express interest in the study and to schedule an interview time and location.

Data Collection

Data collection ran from February 2019 to April 2019. Interviews were scheduled at a time most convenient to the participant. For the interview, participants came to the Principal Investigator's (PI) office on campus. Participants were first asked to sign a consent form. Interviews were about 60 minutes long and were guided by an interview script (see Appendix A). After the interview concluded, participants were given a five-minute exit survey that assessed their demographic information and GNR on a quantitative scale. Surveys were administered on the Principal Investigator's computer. At the conclusion of the interview and questionnaire, all participants were reimbursed $25 in cash. This amount was to offset the time and potential travel associated with interview completion. Funds to support compensation were provided by a Graduate Research Support Program Grant. To receive payment, participants needed to arrive at the interview appointment and participate in the interview.

Interview protocol. The semi-structured interview guide (see Appendix A) was designed to capture the subjective experience of gender identity development via open-ended questions (Mishler, 1986; Rogers & Way, 2015b). However, the interview guide was modified along the way as initial data analysis and coding yield emerging categories and concepts (Maxwell, 2013). The interviews focused on men's recollected experiences

with pressure to conform to gender norms and gender norm conformity/resistance from adolescence to their current stage of development. The interviews covered a range of topics, including social interactions with family and friends, victimization, self-descriptions, awareness of gender stereotypes, and gender identity. Interview questions were developed in collaboration with the CARE lab at ASU. The CARE lab is a collection of graduate and undergraduate students studying gender identity development under the direction of Dr. Carol Martin. Interviews were conducted by the PI and one of three female undergraduate research assistants.

Retrospective studies have been critiqued as an unreliable method of gaining accurate information about past events and facts (Halverson, 1988; Henry, Moffitt, Caspi, Langley, & Silva, 1994); however they are appropriate for this study as it is more concerned with perception and influence than historical accuracy. Thus, an individual's recounted version is what influences his/her relation to master narratives. Additionally, Mclean and colleagues (2018) describe how the process of engaging with and against master narratives produces more conscious engagement with identity development. If individuals align themselves against master narratives – that is they resist cultural norms – they are going against cultural pressures to do so, which likely requires more conscious decision making than otherwise.

Meaning-making practices began with the first interview. Early memo-writing by the interviewers included free-writing notes and exploration of the patterns that emerged during the course of the interviews. This information was adopted into interview protocol so that subsequent interviews built upon knowledge gained in previous interviews.

Data storing and transcription. Interviews were recorded on two recording devices. Interview audio files were removed from the devices and placed inside an encrypted folder immediately. From that secure location, a portion of the interviews were transcribed by the PI and undergraduate research assistants, and the majority were sent to a paid transcription service (rev.com). Both recorded and transcribed interviews were stored on a digitally locked file in the Sanford school server. Efforts were made to memo and take notes following each interview on participant appearance, mannerisms, and interview proceeding. Important realizations and connections were also included. The interviews were transcribed as soon as possible after they were conducted.

Coding and Analysis

In order to identify the different forms of GNR and other constructs related to gender identity, I utilized template coding (Patton, 2002) to identify instances that exemplify forms of resistance (e.g., implicit, explicit) described in previous qualitative work (see Way et al., 2014) as well as key gender identity characteristics (Namey, Guest, Thairu, & Johnson, 2008; Saldaña, 2011). These characteristics included *awareness of norms, dislike of gender norms, perceived gender atypicality, perceived gender typicality, pressure to conform to gender norms,* and *authenticity*. For each form of GNR as well as each characteristic, concepts from the literature available on each topic were used to create a codebook (see Appendix B) to identify GNR forms and gender identity constructs in the experience of participants.

I also utilized grounded theory coding methodology (Austin, 2016; Charmaz, 2014; Saldaña, 2011) as a way to account for subtypes of GNR or characteristics that

emerged during the coding process. For example, it became clear that resistance based on political/social engagement to reduce gender-based inequalities was different from my definitions of either explicit or implicit Resistance. This emergent resistance, labeled activist GNR, might look like statements such as, "I called out my friends for listening to homophobic rap".

The transcriptions were coded by myself and a team of five undergraduate research assistants using the online coding platform, Dedoose. To begin, the whole team coded the same one transcript. In the first consensus meeting, this transcript was analyzed code by code for discrepancies between coders. At the conclusion of this meeting, the same transcript was recoded by each team member. This process was repeated for three additional transcripts. From then on, transcripts were coded in pairs of coders and questions/discrepancies/code updates were discussed in weekly lab meetings. By the conclusion of this process, each transcript was coded by at least four different coders. During this coding process, coders were continually modifying the codebook to more accurately describe forms of GNR and identity constructs as they appeared in the interview transcripts. Whenever any new subtypes of GNR or gender identity constructs emerged during the coding process, each transcript was recoded to identify instances of the emergent code.

Researcher Positionality and Reflexivity

The primary researcher and author, a White cisgender man with a master's degree in human and family development, was responsible for recruiting participants, conducting interviews, and will be responsible for authoring the publication. Undergraduate research

assistants included seven White, cisgender women. They participated in participant recruitment, conducting interviews, and analyzing the data. Despite the researchers' positive intentions, they recognize the potential impact of the privileged status of their racial, professional, and gender identities. Several steps were taken to clarify the researchers' stance in relation to participants, subject matter, and emergent findings. First, the researchers maintained a reflexive journal throughout the process where they documented their emotional and intellectual reactions to interviews and data. Second, as theories and patterns emerged during the data collection process, they were discussed with participants during the interviews. These practices helped the researchers distinguish between their own views and the experiences of the participants.

CHAPTER 8

STUDY 2: RESULTS

In the current work I studied young adult narratives to explore the motivations and combinations of components marking implicit and explicit GNR in a continued effort to differentiate between these two GNR constructs and identify any additional forms of GNR. To address these aims, I analyzed participant narratives and coded constructs of GNR (implicit and explicit), an emergent subtype of explicit GNR (activist), and components of GNR (awareness of norms, dislike of gender norms, perceived gender atypicality, perceived gender typicality, pressure to conform to gender norms, authenticity). The first portion of the results section uses case studies to explore what motivates their acts of resistance. The last section in the results explores the expectations regarding the combination of components that might be used to further differentiate different forms of GNR.

Aim 1: GNR Motivations

In the following section, I explore specific case studies to depict how different forms of GNR stem from different motivations. I also elaborate on activist GNR – a "subtype" of explicit GNR with behavioral focused on changing gender norms.

Implicit GNR: Pursuit of authenticity. I expected that implicit GNR would be motivated by the pursuit of one's authentic non-conforming behavior, and the narratives supported this. The narratives of Atlas and Armand depict how those who enacted implicit GNR felt different from their gender-typical peers and how they could choose to mask their authentic selves and attempt to conform to norms in order to fit in or how they

could embrace their authentic atypical selves and face whatever consequences might follow.

Atlas. Atlas was a 31-year-old, Italian American who identified as straight and worked as a research analyst on campus. Atlas had dark hair, a square jaw, and intense blue eyes – he was a strikingly handsome man – yet despite his outwardly typical appearance, his view of himself was surprisingly dissonant:

> I do not have a deep, gruff voice. I do not have a physically imposing frame. Even as I'm talking now I notice that I'm talking with my hands, which are kind of large and spidery. Even my frame, I have a very large head but kind of a skinny body. I don't look like any kind of masculine ideal in that regard, and I don't identify as such either.

Similarly, despite enjoying many "masculine" activities including camping, hiking, and playing ultimate frisbee, Atlas also felt that his personality and interests were largely disconnected from what he considered the typical man: "People describe me a lot of times I think in terms of just me being strange, thinking strange things, saying strange things, making weird comparisons that don't make sense to other people, having a really effusive personality." These perceived differences might be explained, in part, by an early adolescence disrupted by several moves. When he was in middle school, Atlas' family moved from Connecticut to a series of rural Midwest towns where he was viewed as different because of his tan skin and urban childhood. Atlas felt like his gender atypicality excluded him from normal masculine socialization; a cycle that perpetuated and produced him – a very different kind of man from the men around him:

> It just feels like there were certain activities that those guys would do together and that I didn't do. It almost feels like a pipeline where in junior high and high school

> you get in on the ground level and you start learning about how to be one of these kinds of guys, then eventually you're more fully baked in this situation. It felt like I missed a lot of those opportunities to get in at the ground level so to speak.

One outcome of his perceived atypicality and alternative socialization that Atlas felt like conforming to masculine expectations and cultivating his authentic self were opposite endeavors. This view was strengthened by the way others around him made him painfully aware that his authentic self did not fit masculine expectations: “You discover at some point that your authentic behavior doesn't fit into the categories that people want. They constantly fucking remind you that your authentic self doesn't fit into those categories.” The natural result of these constant reminders of difference and wrongness made Atlas feel overwhelming pressure: “Therefore you're uncomfortable with that kind of authentic behavior and now you feel this pressure to have to go into one bucket or another. Or actually, you only have one bucket as a choice. You get in the bucket, or suffer the consequences is kind of the proposition.” Atlas’ narrative resembles many of the other participant’s experiences in middle school and high school. These men felt different, so they felt pressure, and they attempted to conform to reduce it:

> You capitulate… because you feel like your own identity isn't solvent enough. So then you do it, and either it's liberating that it didn't work [e.g., your conformity attempts were not successful] and you feel affirmed, or you feel awful about it that you did it and that creates a negative self-opinion and a need to try to conform some more.

And it is important to note that Atlas is not exactly aware of what his differences are that others see and comment on. All he knew was that it was “something he was projecting” that marked him as different. In this context, Atlas’ resistance was more a function of being unable to change his behavior and conform to norms, despite effort on his part. The

uncertainty of the origin or extent of his difference continues to exert pressure on Atlas that creates a constant noise inside his head, making him question his behavior throughout the day:

> I'll police myself about something like that. "Oh, do I own too many pairs of shoes?" Because the ideal man owns two pairs of boots, damn it, and that's it. I just find myself, it's like a little gremlin in your head. Having these little thoughts like, "Oh, the carpet in your living room, is it square and masculine enough? Does it have too many colors in it? Maybe your apartment is too well lit. Maybe it needs to be just a little bit more stripped down, because it's just ... I notice the colors match here and here too, so maybe that's not masculine enough."

Yet despite these insecurities and omnipresent sense of pressure, Atlas persisted in cultivating many authentic, non-conforming ideologies and behaviors. His efforts to be authentic represent an impressive effort of resistance because they were performed in the face of strong pressure:

> When I think about my resistance to gender norms other than just not trying to change my behavior on a day to day basis and just kind of accepting the fact that I'm just going to move and talk in particular ways and I'll just roll with that.

Atlas' narrative portrays how choosing to pursue one's authentic, non-conforming self is truly resistant and how his resistance is implicit because it is not always founded in a rejection of norms. Rather, it is almost a capitulation to nonconformity because conformity is unachievable.

Armand. Armand's narrative provides a valuable description of the pursuit of authenticity and how this pursuit can be rejected as a result of pressure to conform to gender norms as well as pressure to resist norms. Armand, was a Latinx undergraduate student majoring in Justice Studies who identified as gay. Like most participants in the sample, Armand described himself as pretty masculine, though he acknowledged

feminine characteristics, too, like his voice, which had bothered him when he was younger:

> I think the hardest thing for me always was just I guess around my voice, and I don't know why that particularly seemed to be ... Like now, I don't think about my voice at all, but as a child, it was really like the cadence of my voice and the way ... Like I would go as far as to be like silent at times because I just speaking, I remember being around my brother's friends when I was a kid, and just by me talking, they would kind of pick at me and with my brother… and talk about how gay I sounded.

Also similar to other participants, Armand remembered how he attempted to rigidly conform to masculine norms at one stage in his life. For Armand, this was when he lived with his homophobic, femmephobic father in middle school:

> I remember like as a kid particularly having to think about the way I talked and walked, and everything was accounted for… I remember as a little kid before my voice even dropped, trying to make my voice sound deeper because I would get mocked for it.

But then Armand moved out of his father's home and began attending an alternative, art high school where he saw others modeling more flexible gender presentation, and, like other participants, this gave Armand the confidence to begin his own experimentation. In this environment of dramatically lowered pressure, Armand described reacting flamboyantly against the pressure he had felt in middle school by using make-up and doing drag. Unexpectedly he described switching to another school a few years later and resumed his rigidly conforming presentation as a reaction to his earlier flamboyance:

> I switched schools, and I cut it off there. It very quickly switched, and I think in my next two years of high school, it went being shutting that down. It was just very much how can I just I guess go on unnoticed? I think in a lot of ways it was that it was as to not draw attention or as to not ... It just became easy to fit in.

Unlike in elementary and middle school, this rigid conformity was not driven by pressure. Rather, Armand used this traditional masculinity as a “corrective measure” to his earlier flamboyance which, in a pressure-free environment, felt as inauthentic to him as rigid conformity. In time, he came to realize that both rigid flamboyance and traditional presentation felt “performative”, and now he feels most comfortable with a mildly androgynous presentation:

> I don't particularly wear makeup or like maybe every once in a while I'll throw on some eye shadow if I'm trying to look spooky or something... and I guess I paint my nails and… sometimes I'll wear cool earrings, but yeah. I don't think it ... I guess it kinda just feels more natural.

Armand’s narrative is an important addition because it illuminates the way resistance can become performative in reaction to pressure felt currently or in the past.

Explicit GNR: Dislike of gender norms. I expected that explicit GNR would be motivated by a dislike of gender norms, and this was largely supported by the narratives, though the degree of resistance differed across participants. Micah’s narrative shows an uncompromising resistance against gender norms whereas Jason largely approved of gender norms but understood that there were situations where norm conformity was potentially harmful.

Micah. Micah was a textbook definition of explicit GNR. His GNR was motivated by a dislike of norms and what he saw as the harmful outcomes norms produce. His narrative also depicts how his GNR approach was due, in large part, to the extremely accepting environment created by his parents. Micah was a blonde-haired, blue-eyed, White undergraduate from an upper-middle class background. He was gregarious and unconventional: during a gap year in Europe, he lived on the streets in

Rome for a month in order to experience what it felt like to be homeless. He balanced active, adventurous interests like surfing and slacklining with creative and cognitive hobbies such as painting and chess. Micah often disagreed with gender norms because he felt that they prevented people from coming together in meaningful ways. Thus, his resistance was never geared toward offending people or making them uncomfortable. He described how he would happily wear a dress to school in order to bring about social change even if he did not really like wearing dresses. For Micah, disliking gender rules lead not only to resisting gender norms at the individual level but to resisting norms at the institutional level:

> I think… the resistance where you do it because you disagree with what's happening, that kind of usually gets linked with other [resistant actions] …like you do more than just playing with Barbies at that point…. That's when you start to open your eyes, and you're like, "Oh well actually I'm going to maybe wear a dress now or maybe I'm going to speak out to this with my friends."

In this way, Micah's resistance was clearly rooted in an awareness of norms and a dislike for norms that he viewed as harmful.

Jason. Jason's narrative sheds like on the protean nature explicit GNR. Generally, Jason strove to conform to norms and even policed the non-conforming behavior of his male peers. Yet, he was flexible with norms when he knew resistance was called for. Jason was an outgoing, tall, dark-haired, sports journalist with an insuppressible air of All-American boyishness. He had dark hair, blue eyes, identified as straight, and in his own words he did not "put a lot of thought into masculinity". He had two older brothers, belonged to the most exclusive fraternity on campus, and felt like he fit in well with other men his age, though he did sometimes get tired of their lack of maturity. Jason

acknowledged feeling pressure to conform to gender norms at times, though this was particularly strong in middle school as a result of generalized adolescent social anxiety:

> I think middle school is like the rough time for everybody. Like the worst 3 year-span of life of your childhood. Going to school and getting teased and bullied was not awesome and I think I probably tried to make up for it in other ways like trying to be good at sports or been more manly in other ways like dousing myself in Axe…if I put this whole can of Axe on my body, everybody is going to be like OK don't mess with him.

During the interview, Jason described how he generally was not comfortable with emotional expressivity between men. Emotional stoicism, particularly between men, is a hallmark of masculine normativity. However, there were times that Jason would make exceptions to his rule if a friend was truly upset.

> One of my buddies in high school, like his mom like left, and he came over to my house and I didn't know and like all of a sudden he broke down crying and usually I'd probably be like, 'dude, what the fuck's happening?' But I was like in that moment I was like oh, something really actually serious is happening and so I like took him in and he like cried on my shoulder and I think like in a moment like that you're like, okay, I need to like not be macho Jason and like just be here for my buddy and like whatever loving way I can.

Although Jason did not particularly "dislike" the masculine norm of emotional stoicism, he recognized that it sometimes prevented his ability to be a good friend. In those instances, Jason was able to intentionally resist those norms and help his friends. Jason's narrative illustrates why explicit GNR is not rooted in authenticity and how dislike of norms may be interpreted more broadly to cases where the individual recognizes the lack of utility of norms certain contexts.

Activist GNR: Changing norms. The narratives indicated different ways of explicitly resisting norms. While the explicit GNR narratives reviewed thus far focused primarily on *awareness* and *dislike* of norms, some explicit GNR was additionally

marked by a desire to change norms for the benefit of the social group. I have identified this as a type of explicit GNR and labeled it “activist GNR”. JT’s narrative depicts how Activist GNR is exemplified by resistant behavior that explicitly challenges norms for the purpose of changing those norms for the benefit of society.

JT. Like Jason, JT would have preferred norm conformity in an ideal world. However, he describes in his narrative how he was willing to sacrifice social acceptance in order to overcome the damage that he had experienced from masculine norms regarding mental health. JT was a straight, White, 19-year-old with a self-professed masculine interest in “High-impact sports. Things like football. Things like NASCAR”. Yet JT also felt atypically emotionally open and available as a result of dealing with mental illness throughout his childhood and adolescence. For the most part, these different aspects of his personality remained at odds:

> You know everybody getting loud and rowdy at a football game, that's more in line with some of my interests anyway so it's easier to be one of the guys and you know get loud, get rowdy, do you know whatever that group is doing. But if I'm maybe feeling kinda depressed one day and I need to talk about it, it's very stressful to be hanging out with that group of people knowing I can’t talk about this in this setting, this group of people.

In fact, JT found that even in more intimate settings his emotional openness was not well received:

> My Sophomore year, high school, spring semester. I had just returned from in-patient care and some male friends of mine were asking, “Hey what's going on? Where were you at?” And as I was kinda getting into it my friends kinda cut me off about halfway through it like, “Whoa that's more than we ever needed to know. Don't ever bring that up again.”

Social acceptance was really important to JT, and being open about his emotions inhibited his ability to make and keep friends:

> I place a lot of value on sociability and the ability to have those friends make those relationships whatever they may be. So if I really feel like I need to blend into a group in some way, shape or form then yeah, it is almost a survival type deal of you know, hey I have to be social, I have to make these friends so I'm gonna do whatever it takes.

True to his word, Jason doubled down on his attempts to conform in high school:

> That kinda started the role of really observing what my guy friends would be doing and how they're acting and kind of their personalities and it was, okay they really like it when this thing happens or when somebody acts this way. So I should probably try and emulate that more if I want to keep these friends around. And I became just very, very apprehensive about that over the next three years.

But while masking his authentic needs and desires enabled his friendships to survive, it worsened his mental health situation.

> I would say [conforming] fixed the problem of kinda blending into that group. It fixed the problem of making sure that I still had those friends. But it also created a new problem of I don't feel like I'm being true to myself. Which ultimately led down kinda another dark mental health path of like, if I'm not being myself is it really worth it hanging out with these people? And questions like that of you know, should I really be doing this and it became more of an internal struggle than a struggle between me and my friends.

To say sane, it seemed like JT would have to craft a very calculated balance of accommodation and resistance. In the end, though, he found that although his own wellbeing might not be a strong enough motive to openly defy his friends' norm conformity expectations, concern for other's wellbeing was. JT said,

> I became a big on-campus advocate for mental health. I made sure that anybody that I knew on campus, whether I had I relationship with them or I didn't know, knew about the resources on campus that we had. I would kinda make myself available and just fight against the stereotype of guys being not as emotionally available by trying to be almost overly emotional, available and you know, hey if anybody needs to talk I'm right here.

Given the importance JT felt for social belonging, this never became an easy task, but the hope that he might help others enables him to keep actively resisting masculine norms:

> There is that anxiety of knowing, hey I'm doing something that probably a lot of people are not gonna be super happy about because it goes against, you know, what they know, what their values are. But at the same time it feels great to kind of fight against that a little bit and show people who are more like me that hey, there is hope you don't have to be like me and be a social chameleon. You can just kinda go out and live as you live and don't apologize for it.

In summary, JT's narrative shows how activist GNR is motivated by a desire to change gender norms for the sake of the social group, even in the face of strong pressure to conform and the desire for to be accepted by one's peers.

Aim 2: GNR Components

The second aim in this study was to identify GNR forms by contextual components that participants experience as the resist norms. Here I discuss how implicit GNR was reliably depicted by awareness, atypicality, and authenticity; how explicit GNR was depicted by awareness and dislike of norms; and how activist GNR was depicted by a desire to change norms.

Implicit GNR. I expected that implicit GNR would be exemplified by three components: an *awareness* of gender norms, perceived gender *atypicality* (i.e., desires/behavior incongruent with prevailing masculine norms), and *authenticity* in pursuing ones' preferences. These expectations were supported. Individuals who showed Implicit GNR consistently described narratives that involved the expected components: implicit resistors authentically pursued their desired outcomes, and when these paths became non-conforming they continued either because it was worth it or they could not help it.

Drew (19 years old, White, straight) was made keenly aware of gender rules by those around him and how his authentic, atypical emotional openness was not acceptable:

> This idea that men don't cry, men don't have mental health conditions. I think that was something echoed to me when I was starting out with all this and becoming more open. My parents used to tell me only cry if you get physically hurt or something like that.

As Drew become more open about his mental illness (authentic nonconforming behavior), others informed him of the norms and the undesirable nature of nonconformity.

Other participants emphasized how gender atypicality interacted with the components of awareness and authenticity in their implicit resistance. Jaden (21 years old, White, semi-closeted gay) said, "Being gay – that has always felt like a resistance and still feels that way. Most of my friends growing up were women and now most of my friends who are guys happen to be queer and whatever." And in his words, these differences were not unintentional or negligible: "I just feel like the way guys talk about women or the way they view queer people, most of the time it's like, just uncomfortable to me." Thus, one aspect of Jaden's perceived differences, preferring the company of women or other gay men, affected how he viewed the world which, in turn, made conformity less appealing and resistance more important.

Some participants emphasized how authenticity interacted with atypicality and awareness in their implicit GNR. Felix (18 years old, White, straight) said:

> Well, I've just always grown up with thinking that you should be yourself. It's never anything that I've thought of. I just decided, you know what, I'm not going to succumb to that. It was just unconsciously being myself. Because to me it just made sense. Why would I pretend to be those other people?

For men like Felix, whatever negative social ramifications of persistent gender atypicality they might face was less motivating than the positive personal effect of authenticity.

It is important to note that several participants described feeling pressure to conform to gender norms, but it did not substantially or permanently inhibit their implicit GNR. For example, Harmon, (18 years old, White, straight) described how he really enjoyed watching “girly” tv shows, but his peers would police that behavior. “I was always pressured into not liking them because ‘ah, they are girly shows don't watch that.’” When asked whether this stopped his behavior, he said, “I just closed off that part of my life from them. ‘Like oh, you still do that?’ No, I'm going to lie, and say ‘no I don't do that anymore.’ But secretly I would because I enjoyed it.” Harmon’s father, too, tried to stop his behavior: “Whenever I would watch that [Hannah Montana] my dad would come home. He would just yell at me, berate me. You watch this girly crap.” Given that it would be easier for his father to catch Harmon watching the shows, this represented a higher-pressure situation than the policing of his peers. Indeed, Harmon did try to harder to conform: “well I would stop watching them for a period of time. I would miss it then I would go back to it.” In his statements, we see how Harmon is aware of the rules that a boy should not watch certain shows, he describes his “atypical” preference for such shows (“I enjoyed it” “I missed it”), and yet the benefits he gains from authenticity eventually trumped the pressure he felt to conform.

Explicit GNR. I expected that explicit GNR would be characterized by three components: an awareness of gender norms, a dislike of gender norms, and pressure to conform to gender norms. Participant narratives indicated that their explicit GNR was certainly motivated by awareness and dislike of gender norms, but the role of pressure in their resistance was less straightforward than expected. For some participants, pressure

did interact with awareness and dislike to define their explicit resistance, as expected. When asked whether a homophobic gender policing incident affected his behavior, Zander (26 years old, White, gay) replied, "I think I was actively resisting trying to make it change my behavior. Cuz I think there was this idea of that's what they want." Zander was made aware of the norms by the harassment, but he expressly did not want to change or conform because he knew it would be giving in to the pressure and his tormentor's desires. For others, pressure was present in their resistance narratives, but it was more a result of their resistance rather than a cause. Irving (28 years old, Latinx, straight) described how his coworkers pressured him to conform to male drinking norms (drink beer and drink a lot) and how he resented being told how and what he should drink:

> I would [go out and drink] sporadically. Because, once in a while, it's fun to relax. But, then I will feel the pressure of them [his male coworkers]: "you only drank two beers. You need to drink six, seven." Seven? Come on, first of all I don't want to waste money on seven beers and second, I have to work tomorrow. "Yeah, but you have to. Come on, suck it up and drink seven beers." I felt that pressure, I never fell into the pressure because at this point it's just stupid.

Irving was aware of the norms, and he disliked them, but while he was clearly feeling pressure from his coworkers, it did not seem to affect his behavior. This was not a straightforward positive association where more pressure begat more resistance. In fact, some participants described explicit GNR in current contexts of low pressure as a reaction to previous periods of higher pressure. Armand (22 years old, Latinx, openly gay) described how he reacted against the rigid gender norms of middle school by being overly (for him) flamboyant in high school:

> I went to an art high school for the first two years of high school and I guess there that I was pretty expressive in gender. I did things like drag and I was wearing

> makeup. I think what inspired such a dramatic rendering… it was kind of, I think, in some ways, reactionary.

Thus, for Armand, more pressure lead to less resistance. This dampening effect of pressure was also manifest in Chase's explicit GNR. Chase (22 years old, Chinese-American, straight) found it difficult voicing his dissenting opinions about gender norms at church because of high levels of pressure. "I think it's just uncomfortable because people avoid talking and thinking about it. Yeah. They just flat out avoid it. At least all the more traditional church members."

However, for the majority of explicit GNR experiences in the narratives, pressure was not a large factor. Rather, these explicit GNR narratives were marked by a strong dislike and strong awareness of norms. Evan (21 years old, White, openly gay) explained how though he was well aware of what society expected, his dislike of gender norms – both masculine and feminine norms – were what motivated his explicit GNR:

> I had these two friends who were like, "if you're going to get better with makeup, you need to do it this way and that way and you need to watch YouTube videos". And I was like "no, I'm just gonna fuck around and use makeup wipes when I fuck up." Even the way they were like, "for you to participate in this, the drag stuff, there's rules." And I was like "there's not rules. That's the whole point is that there's not rules.

Several participants utilized explicit GNR as a reaction against cultural norms or models of masculinity that they did not like. For example, Harmon purposefully cultivated a different, resistant form of masculinity as a counterpoint to his fathers' traditional masculine representation: "I had this vision of masculinity of my dad who I didn't want to be like. So that kind of drew me away from the norms of the kind of father-figure type person in that period of my life time". Felix described how he would

intentionally use his awareness of norms to combat stereotypes and norms he disliked: “When anything bad happens or it's weird, the guys will be, ‘That's gay.’ And so I always did hear that, and I guess this is just a form of resisting, but I guess I would purposely be myself, because I wanted to prove to them there's nothing wrong with it.”

It should be noted that in some cases, participant’s explicit GNR was marked by the pursuit of authenticity, which I expected was unique to implicit GNR. Irving, the Latinx man with the coworkers at the bar, later related another resistant incident about drinking norms:

> One time I just decided I will mess with these guys. Instead of ordering beer, I ordered a piña colada without alcohol. They were like, “What? Why would you do that?” “Because, I like it”, and they couldn't believe it. I think in their brain, it's not possible to drink something you like. I really like piña colada.

Although Irving starts off the account by stating he was just “messing” with his friends, near the end he describes that there was more substance to the interaction: he really did like drinking piña colada, and he found his peers’ subscription to male drinking norms limiting and frustrating. His resistant behavior was motivated by an authentic pursuit of his preferences as well as a desire to resist his coworker’s gender norm expectations.

Activist GNR. It became clear that there were participants who performed explicit resistance motivated by more than an awareness or dislike of gender norms. In these cases, their explicit GNR was motivated primarily by a desire to change gender norms for the greater social good. Whereas explicit GNR was focused on awareness and dislike of norms and consequently may or may not be enacted in behavior (e.g., an individual can subscribe to resistant ideology), activist GNR was marked by the additional desire to make changes.

Micah described that he was motivated to resist and change gender norms because: “I think that it’s ridiculous you’d care that if I play with Barbies, so I’m going to play with them cause I think people should be able to play with Barbies.” Micah was aware of the rule (boys should not play with Barbies), and he thought that was ridiculous; those were his sole motivations. He did not necessarily want to play with the Barbie because he liked her aesthetic; he simply wanted to change that norm. Nate (22 years old, White, straight) related how he would respond in the future based on an experience he had in which an autobody shop worker tried to cheat his friend, Julie:

> If I were to go to an autobody shop, and I were in line, and there was a girl in front of me that was being taken advantage of by the guys at the counter, I probably would step in. I'd be like, listen, you can't just take advantage of her because of that.

When Nate became aware that autobody shops often over-charge customers who are unfamiliar with cars, he would by calling out the discrimination that he saw and trying to change the norm.

The primary way that participants described trying to enact change was by educating others. For example, in situations exemplifying activist GNR, people would identify what they saw as problematic behavior in those around them (awareness) and explain why that behavior is problematic (dislike and desire for change). Jason (21 years old, White, straight), called out his friends’ misogyny:

> If I am hanging out with my buddies I can say, “What are you talking about”, like “that’s an awful thing for you to say”… So like a woman basketball player who went to Oregon had a phenomenal game and ESPN Instagram posted about her and when you hit the comments every comment that was like “where’s my sandwich…why aren’t you in the kitchen…I can dunk on her…” and it’s like no you couldn’t, she’s like a D1 athlete!

Corbin (23 years old, White, openly pansexual, gender-fluid) was passionate about educating the children that he worked with at an after school program for elementary students. He often tried to lead by example when he saw students enforcing masculine norms:

> I feel like I want to fight the pressure that they're saying for these norms; I'll be like, "No, you don't have to do that. No. Here's me. Look, I can do this, and you guys can do it, too"… I want to challenge the norms to them so they can be like "Oh, maybe I should do that too." Or can at least consider the possibility of that being an option.

When asked why he resisted, Micah said, "I'm making people think and, like, stepping out of their comfort zone, which is, like, I appreciate that that's how you grow as a person – stepping out of your comfort zone and thinking. So I kind of force people into that but not in, like, a negative forceful way."

Unexpectedly, for some participants, awareness of gender norms functioned as an inhibitor of activist GNR, rather than a motivator. Corbin, the elementary after care instructor, described how he was less motivated to intervene with his charges' gender identity development when he was clearly aware of the strength of the gender norms in their world: "There are kids who take me less seriously because of my gender presentation. You have to know your audience, because some students I'll never reach. Like there's the ones who are already firmly, firmly ingrained." Similarly, Wyatt (20 years old, White, bisexual, gender non-binary) talked about how he felt limited in his ability to advocate for the rights of gender non-binary folks because he was aware of visibility expectations regarding activism and he, himself, was not visibly non-binary. "I can go out to protest but, I can't protest, you know, as somebody who's non binary. As

long as I dress the way I do publicly… and where I'm just kind of shy about things, I can't use my queerness for activism." To summarize, activist GNR was identified by desire to change the status quo as well as awareness and dislike of gender norms, though sometimes higher levels of awareness inhibited rather than increased activist GNR.

CHAPTER 9

STUDY 2: DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to explore why young men resist, what motivates their acts of resistance, and what components marks those acts of resistance. I posited that implicit GNR would be motivated by the pursuit of authentic gender nonconforming desires. As such, I expected that implicit GNR would involve awareness of gender norms, gender atypicality, and authenticity. The narratives supported these expectations and showed how those who enacted implicit GNR felt different from their gender-typical peers and how they chose to embrace their authentic atypical selves. I also posited that explicit GNR would be motivated by a dislike of gender norms and desire to change norms. Accordingly, I expected explicit GNR to involve awareness of, dislike of, and pressure to conform to gender norms. The analysis of the narratives supported the motivational expectation of explicit GNR as well as identified a subtype of explicit GNR defined by a desire to change norms for the benefit of the social group. Although the narratives supported the expectation that explicit GNR would involve awareness and dislike of norms, pressure to conform to gender norms played a more nuanced role: some men exhibited more explicit GNR in high pressure situations, some exhibited more in low pressure. The effect of awareness of gender norms on activist GNR was also variable. Like with pressure, some participants indicated that awareness heightened their GNR, for some, awareness lowered their GNR. This discussion covers these relations in greater detail: specifically, the surprisingly small influence of pressure on GNR and the tendency

for most participants to view themselves as typically masculine. It closes with a discussion on the developmental trajectories of GNR.

Less Pressure than Expected

Given previous findings that gender nonconforming individuals experience more harassment from peers (Horn, 2007; Toomey et al., 2014), I expected that pressure would significantly affect explicit GNR. If those who used explicit GNR viewed norms as the problem, stronger pressure to adhere to those norms should evoke stronger resistance. However, for many men, pressure was not a salient aspect of their lives as adults. There were a few cases in GNR increased as pressure decreased. In the case of implicit GNR, this might be because the goal of implicit GNR is not necessarily resistance – the goal is pursuing authentic, gender-atypical desires. In high pressure situations, men might feel less able or safe to pursue these gender-atypical desires. This works to explain the negative correlation between implicit GNR and pressure from Study 1 as well.

While most participants described low levels of pressure in adulthood this was not always the case. Every single participant described feeling much more pressure in middle school, but most felt it relax as they grew older. This supports the theory that felt pressure is an "immature" aspect of gender identity and that most people grow out of it over time (Ruble & Martin, 1998; Yunger et al., 2004). During young adulthood participants felt much more comfortable with themselves whatever their degree of perceived gender atypicality, though pressure was not gone completely. While those who display implicit GNR may have felt more pressure in the past, for most men, pressure seems to dissipate and in these narratives, the changes seem to relate to the increased control over social

environments. Childhood and early adolescent peer environments are forced and unchanging whereas the peer environments of later adolescence and young adulthood are chosen and changeable. There are few longitudinal studies of pressure and gender-typicality trajectories, and those that exist focus on early adolescence (Cook et al., 2019; Hoffman et al., 2019). This is an area ripe for investigation.

Another explanation for the low significance of pressure in participant GNR narratives is that rather than an overarching master masculine narrative, the West is experiencing a shift toward multiple masculine narratives that are more flexible. In masculinity literature, these multiple narratives are captured under the concept of multiple masculinities (Anderson, 2009; Connell, 2005) which argues that there are many different "master narratives" of masculinity tailored to specific identities such as ethnic/racial groups or gay men. This is in contrast to the concept of hegemonic masculinity (Connell, 1987) which posits a master narrative of masculinity which all men recognize as ideal. The recognition of multiple masculinities may stem from a growing acceptance of gender nonconformity which might work to reduce the pressure that individuals feel to conform to norms. Yet whether or not gender nonconformity and inclusive masculine master narratives are actually growing more acceptable is hotly contested (O'Neill, 2015). Perhaps a rigid hegemonic masculine master narrative remains the ideal for most men, and deviations from it evoke negative personal and social reactions that can only be overcome with effort. More work is needed on the shifting personal and social landscapes of masculine narratives.

Gender-Typical Majority

Another support for an inclusive masculine framework is that many participants felt mostly gender-typical overall. I did not expect those who displayed GNR would feel very typical because they would a) be aware that GNR is, by definition, flouting gender norms and b) their gender nonconformity would evoke negative reactions from their peers, which would serve to alienate them (in some degree) from feeling similar to their peers. But while the participants acknowledged certain aspects of their behavior or ideology that were less typical, in general, they felt as masculine as their peers.

As Spence (1985) described, individual gender identification is a “complex calculus”, and each person has a personal formula involving unique factors. Although I might have read someone as gender-atypical, they might have thought of themselves as perfectly typical, depending on their own definition of typicality, the accuracy of their self-knowledge, or the rigidity of the gender norms in their social circles. For example, Aldo (23 years old, Latinx, straight) had a slim body, higher voice, limpid, expressive hand gestures, and he loved salsa dancing. Yet, when asked, Aldo said that he felt more masculine than not because he was not very open or expressive about his emotions. He was offended when people asked him if he was gay and had practiced masculinizing his speech and gestures. For different reasons, Evan, (21 years old, White, gay) a fashion major with flamboyant speech and gestures also felt decidedly gender-typical because he was tall and large and because he took the “provider” role in his relationships.

Finally, many men in the sample considered resisting pressure and “being one’s own man” as a form of masculinity, which increased their perceptions of themselves as

gender-typical. For example, Bryan (25 years old, Latinx, straight) said, "I do get that sense that I look like a fruitcake ordering an Appletini but you know those drinks are good. That's what I want. And I think that shows me as more of a man than anything is standing my ground." In fact, participants stretched the construct of masculinity to include almost any behavior. Irving (28 years old, Latinx, straight) thought wearing make-up could be masculine if you were doing it because your daughter wanted you to, and Skyler (29 years old, White, straight) thought that crying and emotional vulnerability was masculine. These narratives support the Personal Pathway model of gender identity development (Liben & Bigler, 2002) in which individuals project their personal gender beliefs onto the broader society (in contrast to the Attitudinal pathway in which individuals base their gender ideology from observations of others). This inclusive, person-oriented approach to masculinity and gender typicality is very different than traditional lists of traits/activities that delineate into masculine or feminine qualities (e.g., Bem, 1974). These results support the practice of allowing gender identity measures that allow the individual to form their own reference point (Martin et al., 2017; Wade, 1998) because these types of measures produce more accurate (though more complicated) results. These "Personal Pathway" outcomes also support the contention that a multiple, inclusive masculinity framework is more applicable to the experience of these men than a single hegemonic, master narrative framework.

Finally, the narratives revealed that for many of the men in the sample, when they thought of masculinity, they thought of positive qualities. Yes, they could enumerate traditional negative norms such as homophobia or male-dominance, but they often

described how they were seeking to become men who protected others, who were confident, and successful.

When researchers approach the study of White masculine norms with a positive framework, important traits emerge such as courage, group orientation, and being a good father (Kiselica & Englar-Carlson, 2010). Similarly, despite stereotypes that portray the negative Mexican American masculine traits (generally embodied in the concept of *machismo*) as most prevalent, more Latino men identified with positive forms of masculinity including honor, provider, protector, moral courage, responsibility (Torres, Scott, Carlstrom, Solberg, & Carlstrom, 2002), affiliation, ethnic identity, and problem-solving (Arciniega et al., 2008). Similarly, the men in the sample were striving to live up to positive masculine norms – even as they resisted aspects of masculinity that they found negative. Clearly, it is important to approach the study of GNR with a nuanced approach that allows for varying conformity and resistance across disparate domains.

General Atypicality (versus Gender Atypicality)

Along with those in the sample who mostly felt similar to their male peers, there was a set of boys, including Felix, Steve, Nate, Jaden, Eli, Corbin, and Wyatt, who felt quite different from other guys their age and always had. Some of these men were simply out of the social loop. They were introverted, perhaps, or liked gender-neutral activities (e.g., drawing, writing, listening to music) rather than traditional masculine or feminine-typical interests. These men described how they did not follow normal social patterns through middle school and high school such as spending time with friends, experimenting with drugs and alcohol, or dating. Some of these men resonated with a

disestablishmentarian viewpoint and said things like “stick it to the man”. These were men who resisted social norms in general, not just gender norms. These ideologies stemmed, for some, from a dislike of being told what to do. Similar to Evan’s earlier resistance to use make-up in the “correct manner”, these men defied the idea of male-norms, female-norms, straight-norms, or gay-norms.

These ideologies are resonant with queer theory, an intellectual position that “acclaims the ultimate instability of all received assumptions about gender and sexuality” (Goldie, 2008, p.9). Queer theorist Dean Spade (2003) explains how the gender binary of Western culture insists that individuals recognizably perform as either masculine or feminine. People like Micah and Evan, who refuse to play by any of the gender rules, successfully expose the socially constructed nature of these gender rules. This very explicit resistance, captured perfectly in queer theory, is diametrically different than implicit resistance. Where an explicit “queer” approach is highly aware of norms and chooses behavior calculated to best oppose those norms, an implicit approach is directed (as much as possible) by personal preference rather than cultural mandates.

GNR Developmental Trajectories

The participant narratives described unique and context-dependent trajectories of GNR as they progressed from adolescence to young adults, but, in general, most participants described an increase in GNR over time. For example, implicit GNR grew as participants experienced the increasing social and self-acceptance that comes as adolescents mature. Peers grew more accepting of nonconformity and individuals grew more confident in themselves. A relaxed social environment and increased confidence

gave participants the permission they may have been lacking at younger ages to pursue their authentic gender atypical preferences.

Explicit GNR grew as individuals increased in cognitive capacity and critical consciousness. Rogers (2018) theorized that resistance against systematic oppression (e.g., sexism, racism, homophobia) grows with one's critical consciousness – the awareness of systems of oppression, one's position therein, and one's efficacy in changing those systems (Freire, 1973). The participants in this research described how when they were in middle school, their strongest desires were to fit in by conforming to masculine gender norms. However, over time, they came to realize that many of these masculine norms were not only not admirable, they often caused harm to the men who subscribed to them (e.g., over drinking, emotional distancing) or to those around them (e.g., objectifying women).

The participants also described how the development of one form of GNR informed the development of another. As their awareness of the undesirable nature of many masculine norms (i.e., critical consciousness) grew, their desire to conform diminished. In the wake of this diminished conformity desire, their desire for authentic nonconformity was allowed more and more room to grow. By the time they got to college, the participants described how they felt the freedom to be whatever kind of man they wanted to be because trying to be someone they were not was not worth it, and their friends generally would not allow it.

Exceptions to the general increase was the up and down trajectories of implicit GNR for those who transitioned from contexts of very high pressure (e.g., strict parents,

conservative schools) to low pressure environments (e.g., living away from family, liberal school). These men described how their first reaction to the increased freedom was to massively increase their implicit GNR. As Armand (22 years old, Latinx, openly gay) described, however, they found this flamboyant resistance excessive and settled down to a more moderate resistance. One participant showed an explicit GNR trajectory with a similar decline. Micah (20 years old, White, straight) described how he used be rather militant about avoiding stereotypical male behavior, but over time, he has moved away from using gender norms as guidelines and relies on his authentic preferences instead be they more or less gender typical.

Limitations and Future Directions

The current work is not without its limitations. Though 30 participants is an appropriately large sample for qualitative work, the findings and conclusions of this work reflect the experiences and beliefs of these particular participants. To mitigate these effects, effort was made to collect a sample that reflected a diverse range of ethnic and sexual identities. Another recognition is the bias introduced by the researchers whose own beliefs and interests drove the direction of the interviews and the connections that were highlighted in the write-up. Rather than attempt to mask these biases as objectivity, I have attempted to be transparent about my background, along with those of the research assistants.

Despite these limitations, the research contributes several significant findings to the literature. First, it presents a system of classifying different forms of GNR. Previous work has theorized how resistance may be implicit or explicit, but there was no

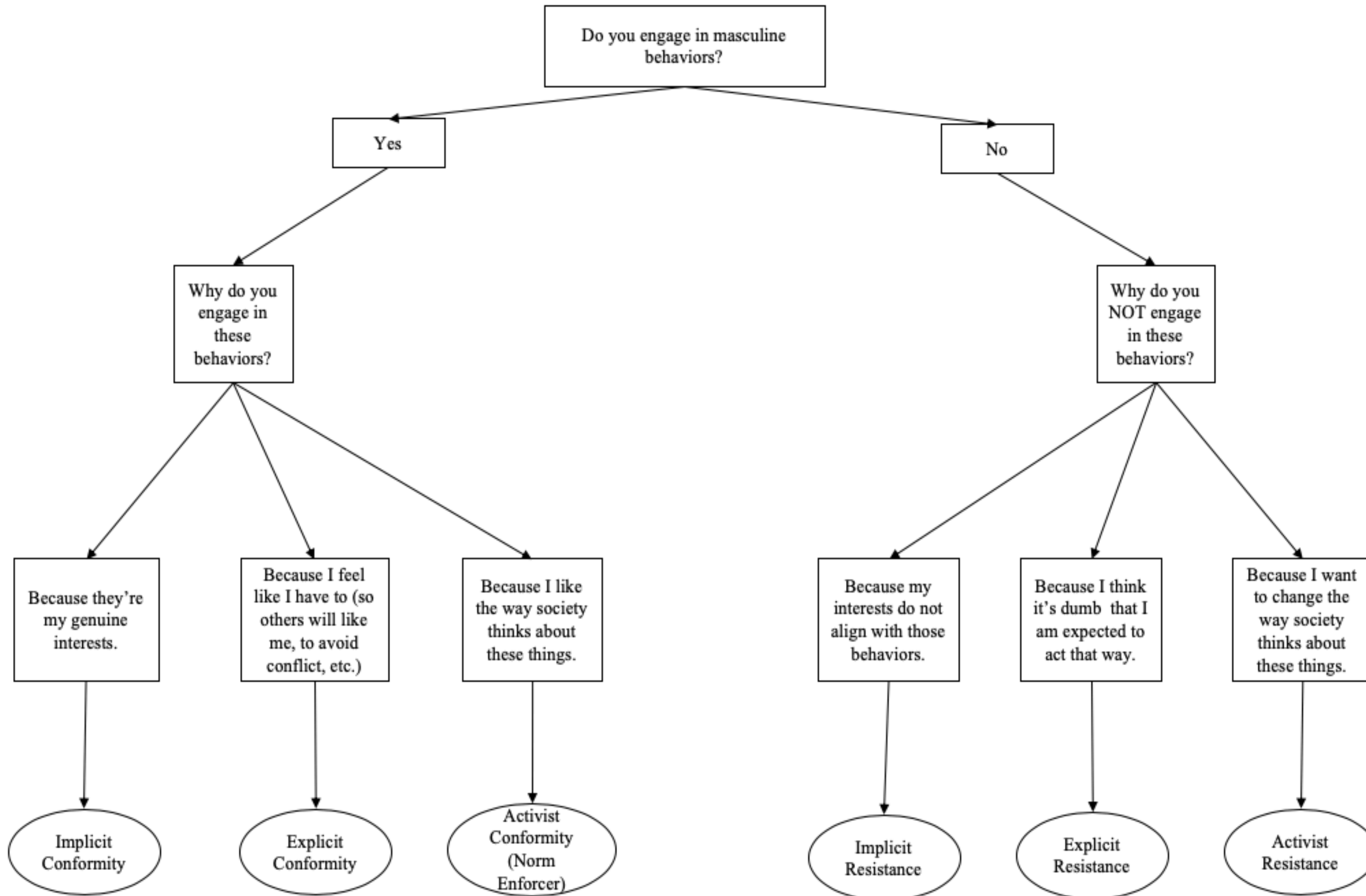
explorations of how these different forms might be enacted in behavior or how they might be differentiated. I depict how both types of GNR are differentiated from non-resistant, non-conforming behavior via awareness of norms – which indicates an intentional challenge to established behavioral expectations. Further, I show how implicit GNR can be reliably identified by perceived gender atypicality and pursuit of authenticity which differentiates it from explicit GNR – which is, in turn, primarily identified by an awareness and dislike of gender norms. This framework sets up a theoretical diagram for mapping forms of gender norm conformity (GNC) that complement the forms of GNR in this study (e.g., implicit conformity, explicit conformity, and activist conformity). I created a symmetrical table of resistance and conformity (see Table 2.1), and a decision tree (Figure 2.1) that maps out the relation of each type of GNR and GNC with gender identity constructs related to resistance and conformity. Future research should validate the existence of these GNC constructs, as well as determine what outcomes they and the GNR constructs predict.

Table 2.1. Hypothesized relations between GNR Form and Key Gender Identity Constructs[10]

	Awareness	Pressure	Dislike	Atypicality	Authenticity
Implicit Resistance	X	~	~	X	X
Explicit Resistance	X	X	X	~	~
Activist Resistance	X	X	X	~	~
Nonconformity	~	O	~	X	X

[10] *Note.* Awareness = awareness of gender norms; Pressure = pressure to conform to gender norms; Dislike = dislike of gender norms; Atypicality = feeling dissimilar to own gender and similar to other gender; Authenticity = agreement between desired and actual behavior. X = always present; O = not present; ~ = can be present.

Figure 2.1. GNC, GNR Decision Tree



The second important contribution of this work is that it provides a developmental view of GNR up through young adulthood in a field that has primarily been limited to cross-sectional analyses. This approach sheds light on the complicated trajectories of important components of gender identity including gender typicality and pressure to conform to gender norms. The participants' narratives indicate that while pressure to conform to norms alleviates for many as they leave behind middle school and high school, this is not the case for all. Some participants retained an oppressive sense of pressure up through their 20s and 30s. More research is needed to investigate what factors lead to this undesirable outcome and how it might be mitigated.

The participants also described how GNR developed along with critical consciousness. But it is important to note that critical consciousness does not develop among all people equally. People who experience more privilege and less oppression are less likely to develop critical consciousness. Indeed, critical consciousness was developed as a way to describe how marginalized people come to understand and resist their oppression (Heberle et al., 2020). Men of color, men who feel atypical, who feel high levels of pressure to conform to gender norms, or who identify as sexual or gender minorities are more likely to develop critical consciousness than men who do not experience these things. The participants of this research undoubtedly had higher than average levels of critical consciousness as a result of experiencing one or more of those conditions. Because of this, they had previously thought about issues related to gender norms and were able to partake in a fruitful discussion about their experiences with masculine norms as they grew up. Yet, according to the gender role strain paradigm

(Pleck, 1981), all men suffer under certain masculine norms and decades of research support this (for a review, see Rogers et al., 2020). It is important to study, along with the development of GNR in marginalized men, the costs and benefits ostensibly privileged men experience when accommodating to and resisting gender norms.

Conclusion

In the course of this work, 30 men shared with me their personal journeys, their feelings, their insecurities. This act alone represents a daring resistance to expectations that real men have neither feelings nor insecurities. I was surprised how much the men themselves enjoyed the experience. They described how valuable it was to talk about gender norms with other people and make meaning of their life experiences. These individual testimonials are indicative of the larger good that is accomplished by researching and demonstrating the benefits of flexible gender roles.

General Discussion

This work makes several important contributions to the literature on gender identity development in general and GNR development specifically. First, I created a quantitative measure of GNR that maps onto established frameworks of GNR (Way et al., 2014) and shows similar mean levels of resistance as are seen at similar ages (Rogers, 2018). Moving to a quantitative framework enabled the testing of factor structure and mean levels and indicated that while there were mean gender differences (girls displayed more implicit GNR, boys displayed more explicit GNR) and mean differences between GNR types (implicit GNR was more common than explicit GNR in early adolescence), girls and boys experienced GNR in similar ways (e.g., there were no structural model differences in GNR).

These mean differences reinforce extant literature which shows increasing evidence that boys face stronger pressure to conform to gender norms than do girls in early adolescence (Cook et al., 2019; Nielson et al., 2020; Schroeder & Liben, 2020). The rigid gender regulations (Yu et al., 2017) and heightened policing that boys experience at this age (Reigeluth & Addis, 2015) likely serve to depress implicit GNR (e.g., easily observable actions that can be policed by peers) and increase explicit GNR (e.g., frustrations with a system that limit one's agency).

Second, my results indicated that pressure to conform to gender norms was not as strongly related to GNR as I expected. I initially proposed that pressure to conform to gender norms was one of the forces against which individuals were resisting, but the results do not seem so straight forward. Although pressure was significantly correlated

with early adolescent outcomes (negatively with implicit GNR, positively with explicit GNR) the numbers were smaller than expected (e.g., $r < .20$). Pressure was even less of a factor in the narratives of young adult men. They described how the increasing social and self-acceptance they experienced as they grew up and had more control over their social circles enabled the GNR. But the young adults also unanimously described the high levels of pressure they felt in early adolescence and the inhibiting effect it had on their GNR. Most men described how the pressure they felt in middle school initially motivated them to try harder to conform to norms and mask any nonconformity or GNR. Over time, these conformity attempts generally proved unsuccessful, but nonconformity mattered less as they grew up. The quantitative results from the boys in the current adolescent sample did indicate reasonably high levels of pressure (e.g., M = 2.37, SD = .91, range = 0-4), but it did not as clearly show the suppressive link between pressure and GNR the young adults described. Herein lies a challenge of studying perceived pressure to conform to gender norms: does one's perception of pressure change over time? Is it amplified in retrospect? As an anecdotal example, we conducted a practice interview on a male high school student who described his high-pressure environment complete with a femmephobic football coach and friends. He described how if he quit the football team and joined the color guard his friends would drop him instantly. Yet, paradoxically, he described feeling no pressure to conform to gender norms. This may be because, as he described, he had no desire to have any feminine behavior around his football coach or to join the color guard, so the was no pressure to subvert this desires. But it might also be that, over time, he might discover some gender non-conforming desires and realize how

his high school environment was, indeed, replete with pressure. Then again, maybe not. He may go through life highly content with his level of gender norm conformity and occasional resistance, and not feel much pressure either way. More research is needed to determine how and why perceptions of pressure may change over time and whether the effect of pressure on GNR is stronger in adolescence but only recognized retrospectively.

Finally, as mentioned above, this research provided an interesting insight into the development of social- and self-acceptance and the influence it has on GNR. The narratives of the young men in Study 2 illustrated how self-acceptance was key to a sustaining GNR and to GNR producing positive (as opposed to negative) wellbeing outcomes. The narratives also showed how the key to developing self-acceptance was experiencing social acceptance. Man after man described the life-changing experience of meeting other people who were comfortable with themselves and their own nonconformity/GNR and how that comfort enabled the participant themselves to develop self-acceptance. There are wonderful practical applications to this work including pairing early adolescents with confident role models of GNR and teaching practitioners who work with parents and children to encourage the acceptance of the nonconformity/GNR they see in their early adolescent clients.

There are likely those out there who would resist the encouraging the growth of GNR in adolescent or young adult populations. To these individuals, I would point to the research which increasingly shows the negative outcomes that certain people feel (particularly sexual and gender minorities) in relation to gender norms and forced conformity (Birkett et al., 2015; DeLay et al., 2016; Jewell et al., 2014; Pauletti et al.,

2014; Tam et al., 2019). Importantly, I am not saying that all gender norms are harmful for everyone or that GNR is the best course of action for everyone, but my research, and the research on which this dissertation builds, shows that, for some, GNR is an important way to fully experience the human condition of being rational and emotional, scientific and sensitive, compassionate and courageous.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Gender Norms: Social rules encompassing a range of behaviors and attitudes that are generally considered acceptable, appropriate, or desirable for people based on their actual or perceived gender.
Gender Policing: This includes teasing you, telling you boys don't behave like that, or making you feel dumb for doing things that are not in line with gender norms.

- Mike and his mom are buying clothes. Mike really likes a purple shirt, but his mom says that he shouldn't get it because the color is kind of girly.
- Justin, waiting in line to use a single-stall bathroom, sees that the women's bathroom is open and starts toward it. As he walks in, his friend says, "You're not going to use the girls' bathroom, are you!?"

Introductory Questions
1. Where do you consider home?
2. What are your hobbies?
3. How would your friends describe you?

Main questions
1. How do you think US culture would describe the ideal masculine man?
    a. How would *you* describe masculinity?
2. Keeping that in mind, would you describe yourself as masculine?
    a. Is this different for positive aspects of masculinity (e.g., leadership) vs. negative (e.g., no femininity).
3. Do you feel like you fit in with other guys? Why or why not?
    a. If there is a "non-fit" is that stressful?
    b. Have there been times in your life where this was more or less stressful?
    c. Do you feel like you fit in with girls more than boys?
4. Is there anything about yourself that makes you feel different from other guys?
    a. Behavioral/Interests?
    b. Interactional/Relational?
5. If so, what made you realize you were different?
6. Can you tell me about a specific experience where you were policed for not being masculine enough? How did you react to this experience?
7. Did you feel more pressure to be masculine because of this experience?
8. Have you ever tried harder to be masculine because you were policed?
9. If so, did trying harder to be masculine reduce the teasing or pressure?
10. *Did you f*eel better, worse, or the same when you tried to be more masculine?
11. How much pressure do you feel to be masculine?
12. Are there social situations where you feel like you need to be more masculine?
13. Does this change depending on your relationship with those around you (e.g., family, friends, peers, strangers)?
    a. Pressure from friends?
    b. Pressure from parents?
    c. Pressure from self?
    d. Pressure from strangers?

e. Pressure from media?

14. Has there ever been a time in your life where you made the conscious effort to **be more masculine** more than usual?
    a. [If yes] Why did you decide to be more masculine?
    b. How did you feel when you tried to be more masculine?
    c. How did others react?
    d. Were there positive outcomes?
        i. Negative outcomes?
15. What are your motives for being more masculine? (or for resisting if we are there yet?)
    a. Do you want to fit in?
    b. Is that just who you are?
    c. To avoid negative outcomes of nonconformity?
16. Has there ever been a time in your life where you made the conscious effort to **resist** gender norms more than usual?
    a. [If yes] Why did you decide to resist more?
    b. How did you feel when you tried to resist?
    c. How much pressure do you feel when you resist norms?
    d. How did others react?
        i. Were there positive outcomes?
        ii. Negative outcomes?
    e. What are your motives for resisting norms?
        i. Do you want to fit in?
        ii. Is that just who you are?
        iii. To destabilize gender norms?
17. Description of Behavioral and Cognitive Resistance
    a. Behavioral resistance is when someone's authentic desire/behavior/self it atypical, but they *persist in the face of pressure to be typical.*
    b. Cognitive resistance the motive driving someone's behavior is to change cultural norms.

Intentionality

1. What do you like about not following gender norms?
2. What do you like about following gender norms?
3. What are the benefits of doing this?
4. Does following norms prevent you from doing anything you'd like to do?
5. Would people would like you better if you followed norms more? Why or why not?
6. Would people would like you better if you followed norms less? Why or why not?

APPENDIX B

CODE BOOK

Code	Description	Example
Activist Resistance	Behavior motivated by the desire to change gender norms by challenging the gender beliefs of others that one views as wrong or harmful. Exemplified by social/political engagement to reduce gender-based inequalities.	"I called out my friends for listening to homophobic rap". "So yeah I just I wanted to resist it all. I just wanted to like go against it all and completely change the system by just not participating in it." Tries to convince others.
Authenticity	Behavior/Ideology motivated by a desire to be true to oneself.	"I like my face to look nice, so I wear make-up."
Awareness of Gender Norms	When someone understand that there are rules for gender behavior and can give examples of different rules. Awareness of gender norms captures the idea of societal pressure. Because in order to be aware of societal gender norms, one is aware of a societal pressure to conform. Awareness of norms/societal pressure does not imply liking or disliking the pressure – just awareness.	Motivated to resist because of dislike.
Dislike of Gender Norms	When someone does not like gender norms or thinks they are stupid.	"I don't understand why people get upset when boys play with Barbies."
Explicit Resistance	Behavior motivated by the belief that gender norms are wrong or harmful. When participants resist gender norms because they think they're wrong or stupid. Identify using participant's reasons for why they do not like the norm. Explicit resistance may be motivated by personal preference for gender non-conforming behavior as well as a desire for greater equality.	"I think it is stupid that men shouldn't show emotions".
Gender Atypicality	Feeling dissimilar to other men. This does not entail feeling similar to girls: participants could feel low similarity to peers of either gender. Typicality is exemplified by individual perceptions or feelings.	"I have always been interested in things that girls normally like to do".
Gender Typicality	Feeling similar to other men. Behaving in ways that conform to established masculine stereotypes.	"I like working on my truck – I do a lot of stuff like that, so I think I'm a pretty regular guy."

Implicit Resistance	Non-conforming behavior motivated by a desire to be true to oneself that persists in the face of pressure to conform to gender norms or awareness of gender norms. Someone’s authentic desire/behavior/self is atypical and they persist their nonconformity in the face of pressure to be typical. Exemplified by participants who feel like their non-conforming behavior is motivated by a desire to be true to themselves (vs. actions motivated by a desire to fit in, or to do something one thinks one *should* do).	“I’m really into emotional music and I tried masking it for a while but that wasn’t working. A desire to blend in or conform is like negatively motivating for me”.
Pressure to Conform to Gender Norms	The impression that one should be more gender typical.	“The guys in my grade used to make fun of the way that I ran and say that I ran like a girl.”

APPENDIX C

IRB APPROVAL

Approved

Entered IRB: 2/21/2019 2:55 PM
Initial approval: 2/27/2019
Initial effective: 2/27/2019
Effective: 2/27/2019
Last updated: 2/27/2019 11:42 AM

STUDY00009753: Gender Norm Resistance

Principal investigator: Carol Martin
Submission type: Initial Study
Primary contact: Matthew Nielson
PI proxies:

IRB office: ASU IRB
IRB coordinator: Tiffany Dunning
Letter: Correspondence_for_STUDY00009753.pdf(0.01)
Regulatory authority: Pre-2018 Requirements

Next Steps

- View Study
- Printer Version
- View Differences
- Create Modification/CR
- Report New Information
- Assign Primary Contact
- Manage Guest List
- Create Clinical Research Study
- Add Comment
- Bundle Attachments to PDF
- Combined PDF

History | Funding | Contacts | Documents | Follow-on Submissions | Reviews | Snapshots

Filter by: Activity | Enter text to search for | + Add Filter | ✖ Clear All

Activity	Author	Activity Date
Letter Sent	Metosky, Susan Beth	2/27/2019 11:42 AM
Correspondence_for_STUDY00009753.doc		
Finalized Documents	Metosky, Susan Beth	2/27/2019 11:42 AM
Changes Submitted	Martin, Carol Lynn	2/26/2019 3:11 PM
Clarification Requested	Williams, Erik Bruce	2/26/2019 11:44 AM
1. Since you are collecting and using "eligibility survey data" for research purposes, participants should be consented prior to completing that. Either second consent form should be used for these procedures or the consent form should be updated to reflect that survey. In addition, update the "Consent Process" section updated to reflect these procedures. 2. Update the consent form to recommend that participants avoid using names/identifying information of individuals during the interview process whenever po… read more		
Bundle Attachments to PDF	Metosky, Susan Beth	2/25/2019 2:50 PM
Combined Attachments PDF		
Changes Submitted	Martin, Carol Lynn	2/22/2019 3:49 PM
Clarification Requested	Dunning, Tiffany Louise	2/22/2019 9:10 AM
1. The ASU IRB has chosen to participate in a test of an electronic "wizard" that, if successful, would provide investigators with a tool to self-determine if their project requires review by an IRB or if it meets the federal definition of exempt. During our testing phase, all new protocols submitted to the ASU IRB through the ERA system will also need to be put through the wizard. You will need the IRB Protocol Number that is provided when you submit your study through the ERA to complete the wizard. The I… read more		
IRB Coordinator Assigned	Metosky, Susan Beth	2/21/2019 3:47 PM
Assigned to Tiffany Dunning		
Submitted	Martin, Carol Lynn	2/21/2019 2:55 PM
Study Created	Nielson, Matthew Glade	2/21/2019 12:30 PM