anslation of the original version published in spanish in: Salud Mental 2014, Vol. 37 Issue No. 5.

Coming out of the closet in Mexico City

Alina Jiménez Solórzano, Martha Romero Mendoza²

Original article

SUMMARY

This article seeks to understand the process of LGBT identity construction in a sample of sixteen participants. It concludes that the Pérez model is comprehensive but not exhaustive, and that LGBT identity can strengthen individual self-concept and may generate small-scale social change.

Key words: LGBT identity formation, homoeroticism and social change.

RESUMEN

El objetivo de este artículo es comprender el proceso de construcción de la identidad lésbico-gay en una muestra de dieciséis personas. El artículo concluye que el modelo de Pérez es comprensivo, aunque no exhaustivo, que la identidad lésbico-gay fortalece el autoconcepto individual y puede generar procesos de cambio social a pequeña escala.

Palabras clave: Construcción de la identidad lésbico-gay, homoerotismo y cambio social.

INTRODUCTION

Lesbian/gay identity construction (LGIC) is the process by which people acquire awareness and negotiate and consolidate their sexual orientation as gay or lesbian people. LGI is an acquired sexual identity, which implies psychic work in which the person will have an active role in the construction of their identity.

It is a process of reintegration due to lesbian and gay people having been socialized in contexts where heterosexuality is expected. Due to the above, and conversely to other minority groups, people who begin to discover themselves in a sexual dissidence do not have the possibility to freely learn and express their sexual identity within their primary group. As such, LGIC requires time and courage for this formation, which implies some vicissitudes.³

It is necessary to specify some of the constructs that will be regularly used here with the aim of homogenizing their understanding. Sexual orientation (SO) is understood to mean one of the multitude of possibilities of erotic-affectionate relationships where people are attracted to others of the same sex, not necessarily of their own volition. It is important to point out that the existence of homoerotic sexual behaviors is not the only criteria to define a person's SO, given that many individuals relate sexually with other people of the same sex for reasons other than sexual orientation. Further-

more, the term sexual orientation is used rather than sexual preference, given that the latter alludes to a deliberate choice, and although that may be the case, participants in this research have indicated that they did not voluntarily choose to position themselves as LGBT. We will also use the term homoerotic⁵ to refer to all people who sexually desire and/or have experiences with other people of the same sex, without arriving at the constitution of a sexual identity. As such, LGBT people or men who have sex with men are some of the diametrically opposite forms covered by this term. Finally, the term "heteronormative" alludes to the set of norms that arguably position hetero-eroticism as natural, correct, and the norm, thereby diminishing the binary opposite of this.⁶

Throughout the previous four decades, important studies have been published around the formation of the lesbian/gay identity, which detail the vicissitudes and achievements of the formation of this identity, synthesized in multifaceted models that still have value, given that prejudice towards homoeroticism still exists. It is therefore necessary to construct a social space for it, starting from sexual dissidence.

These models go from the simple realization of the SO through to the most complex and exhaustive models,^{1,2,7} which coincide in the first and last stages due to them primarily alluding to the awareness, consciousness, and confusion about SO, continuing through an exploratory and comparative phase, and concluding with the integration or synthesis

Correspondence: Alina Jiménez Solórzano, Querétaro 147-506, Roma Norte, Cuauhtémoc, 06700, Mexico City. E-mail: alinajiso@gmail.com

¹ Faculty of Psychology. Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México.

² Directorate of Epidemiological and Psychosocial Investigation. Instituto Nacional de Psiquiatría Ramón de la Fuente.

of the SO. According to Troiden,¹ homosexual identity can be self-identity when people see themselves as LGBT; perceived identity when people know or think that others see them as LGBT; or presented identity when people present or announce themselves as LGBT in concrete social spaces.

The models by Cass and Troiden were pioneering in explaining in detail the different phases in the formation of a lesbian/gay identity, and they are still a key reference for understanding this process. The model by Pérez⁸ proposes that the process of constructing sexual orientation is split into five phases, which have an indefinite duration, and the transition from one phase to another is motivated by a personal incongruence. The phases that this author indicates are: 1. Awareness, where homoerotic desires are identified, which causes confusion, guilt, rejection, shame, and lack of reference points; 2. Consciousness, where the object of desire is recognized, but without "labelling" and it is assumed to be a passing fad; 3. Self-definition, where they call themselves homosexual, fearing social rejection, and becoming aware of the weight of the "heteronormative"; 4. Acceptance, which presents a reorganization of the hierarchies of the Self, which can appear as pride in being different, regular attendance of "scene" places, criticizing attitudes of rejection towards the LGBT community, and seeking social change; and 5. Integration, where the fact of being homosexual stops being the center of their lives, and they have strategies to protect themselves against social rejection.

The aim of this article is to understand the construction of the lesbian/gay identity, attempting to contribute to the theorization of the mountain of experiences that this group goes through. These results are part of a wider investigation into gay parenting.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The present article is a descriptive qualitative field study which uses the technique of data collection via in-depth interviews. The analytical strategy was carried out through an interpretative phenomenological analysis, as has been used in similar studies. The steps proposed by Smith, Flowers, and Larkin were used: transcription of interviews, reading and rereading of each of them, codification, development of emerging themes, and pursuing connections between all cases.

The participants were involved voluntarily, anonymously, and confidentially, through granting informed consent. The sample was formed of 16 people between 26 and 67 years old $(\overline{x}=35)$: 10 men and six women who identified themselves as LGBT and with a partner, all except one of whom were inhabitants of Mexico City. The length of the partner relationship at the time of the study was between two and 27 years $(\overline{x}=9)$ and they had been living together for between one and 27 years $(\overline{x}=7)$. Finally, the majority of the participants had a higher or postgraduate level of education (14 out of 16) and 13 of the 26 participants claimed they were Catholic or Christian.

RESULTS*

One of the most notable findings from this research was that four participants did not fit to the models of identity construction, as they did not recognize their homoerotic discovery as a conflictive event in their lives, but rather as a fact that was gone through in daily life and without any major upheaval. One participant advised not having paid much attention to his sexual desires until his late teens, when he decided to take an opportunity in a gay bar and discovered that he was eager to experiment "like a kid in a candy store". These participants are distinguished by their high levels of rationality *versus* emotiveness, not identifying with any religion, their progressive mentality, and "relaxed morals". Except in the case of Iván, who we will discuss later, they came out of the closet between 18 and 25 years of age.

When comparing the experiences of the participants, the similarity with the Pérez model became evident, therefore we decided to approach the process in a general way and specify what we found in the sample in a specific way.

The phases were not presented sequentially, and although the participants were in the phase of integration, sometimes they appeared reminiscent of previous phases.

1. Awareness: "The difference"

The majority realized that they were attracted to people of the same sex in childhood: "I have been pretty butch since I was really young". However, nobody labelled their experience as homoerotic and few experienced is as one of the possibilities of sexual desire: "If you like vanilla ice-cream, who says you can't like chocolate ice-cream too?" Some participants mentioned having erotic experiences with "close friends", which they described as experimental games without identifying themselves as LGBT. Homoerotic behavior in women is more emotionally/socially permitted than that between men inasmuch as some behavior is not even identified as such, while men must make more effort to hide their homoerotic desires or behaviors. Some recalled the bathroom as a place that was both feared and desired; on the one hand, the desire to see others intimately, and on the other, the fear of being caught looking indiscreetly at others.

Some identified this difference in relation to their peers when socialized by gender, given that they did not like doing activities traditionally assigned to their gender.

From childhood, you feel different from the other kids; well, I felt different to the other kids. There is something that you feel, or you don't do, I didn't do the same amount of sports, I didn't like rough sports... I think I liked two or three of my classmates, but you don't think about it, you see it as a prank or like something natural until you formally rationalize it, right? (Pablo, 36).

^{*} Quotations from the participants will appear throughout this article, both within speech marks and as standalone paragraphs.

Discomfort towards homoeroticism is frequent in this phase due to the negative connotations it has: "Damn, I'm queer, I'm a faggot, and that's bad", and they feel guilty and reject their sexual desires, as well as feeling the need to distance themselves from stigma or from people who have been stigmatized. There are also feelings of ambivalence: on the one hand, the importance of continuing the social duty to be heteronormative and on the other, the wish to experience their own homoerotic desires and feelings.

2. Consciousness: "I am one of them, I am weird"

Once again, feelings of discomfort are reflected towards the negative connotation of the SO, for example, as an illness or a sin. It is evident that nobody deliberately chooses to place themselves within a stigmatized minority. As such, reactions of denial are common during this phase, and can become phobic or suicidal frameworks secondary to this experience.

I don't want to be homosexual. [...] Help me, I feel bad... Hypnotize me and block it out in my head that I like men. [...] Because the subject of suicide had been going around in my head a lot, I was not enjoying life any more. For me it wasn't enjoyable, something that is marvelous and wonderful; I didn't see it, I did not find the nice part. I said that I was unhappy, I didn't feel good, I did not know for sure that I was homosexual, I am not happy as I am, and the world is not worth it if you don't find happiness, there is no point. I started to look for ways to kill myself. (Lalo, 30).

Another negative representation is the relationship between homosexuality and the AIDS epidemic. This has given rise to the 'equation' of homosexuality = AIDS and AIDS = death, and as such, the line of thought that "I am going to die because I am homosexual". The participants in this study reported a large gap in information around homoeroticism both at school and at home, and that in trying to find explanations to understand their own experiences, some turned to other sources such as partners, the internet, magazines, and psychosexual development or self-help books such as Rina Reisenfeld's Mamá, Papá, soy gay. In this respect, they actively questioned the origin of their SO with the question: "why am I the way I am?" and developed theories to answer that question, concluding that its origin was genetic "from birth". They agree that it cannot be 'reverted' voluntarily and they do not identify with theories that link the development of homoeroticism with the family structure or dynamic: "I don't blame anybody, it isn't my father or my mother's fault". Here, it should be noted that the majority of the participants indicated that they had homoerotic family members.

Heterosexual relationships

All participants had had at least one heterosexual relationship in their lives, the majority of them forgettable: "I never touched her... I messed up because I didn't do anything with her". Some remembered a couple of important heterosexual partners for having been good in terms of genetic

complementarity: "That affection that women have, that a man can't have".

A history of heterosexual relationships is important because it illustrates three points:

- It facilitates "coming out of the closet" or "outing", because it confirms their attraction to people of the same sex.
- Heterosexual coital relationships can be pleasant experiences, which confirms the theory of the wide range of possible desires, which are not exhausted with the SO of another person: "I was with women, but while they were menstruating because it tasted good", and sometimes randomly, parental roles came into play.
- The third point is that heteronormativity is so strong for some people, that although they identify the direction of their sexual desire, they involve themselves in heterosexual relationships in order to meet social demands.

Self-definition: "I said 'I am gay' and I set myself free"

The terms used by participants to name their experiences in order of frequency are: gay, lesbian, homosexual, queer, and sissy.** However, it was also commented that the intention with which the term was used was more important than the word itself. They also considered that the terms 'homosexual' and 'gay' were generic to men and women; they perceive that the former is friendlier, more playful, gentler, less sexually explicit, and generally preferred, and they indicated that it was the term used upon entering the community. Conversely, the terms 'homosexual' and 'lesbian' seemed aggressive, strong, and explicit to the participants, with the exception of a lesbian-feminist couple who identified themselves as lesbians in order to reaffirm their different political identity.

Sexual orientation is apparently re-edited and defined during adolescence; the majority defined themselves during adolescence or early adulthood. Self-denomination is experienced as the resolution in their favor of a conflict of identity, the process of beginning to relearn what it is to be LGBT, and the decision to act on that.⁴ It should be clarified that the type of SO is not a voluntary act; rather, it is experienced as an event that happens, which they have to face for better or worse.

Until I realized, to start with it wasn't something that I decided, I didn't wake up one day and say 'I want to be gay'. The truth is, it isn't as easy or simple as saying 'this is what I want to be'. Later at age 15 I was more rational, I knew perfectly well what I wanted, I

^{*} This is not a question that any heterosexual would ask themselves, or at least it would be rare for a heterosexual person to question the origin of their heterosexuality. The heteronormative project by the Argentinian activist group "Mujeres Públicas" [Public Women] is illustrative of the possibilities for questioning the obvious: http://www.mujerespublicas.com.ar

^{**} The frequencies were as follows: (number of times the word appeared in discourse): gay 341; lesbian 65; homosexual 61; queer 14; sissy 7; fag 4; weird 2; obvious 0.

positioned myself, and I accepted myself, I was convinced with no pain, with the urge to live my life and with total acceptance, with no guilt around my sexual condition. (Mauricio, 34).

The prestigious trilogy by Guillermo Núñez

This is a complex and inconclusive theoretical position which maintains that sexual identity is formed of three elements: 1. Sexual assignment (man, woman, or intersexual), 2. Gender identity (male, female, or androgynous), and 3. Sexual orientation (homosexual, heterosexual, asexual, or bisexual). In this model, and in patriarchal societies like Mexico, the trilogy with the greatest social prestige is a male (masculine), heterosexual man; and a greater distance from these categories decreases social prestige. As such, being a masculine, homosexual woman is at the bottom of the pyramid of social prestige. Following these ideas, homoeroticism is presented as heresy in the sexual sphere, and a betrayal of hegemonic masculinity because it subverts the expected alignment with the trilogies. For example, Iván has been defined by others as different, given that an effeminate nature automatically places him in a homoerotic space: "It is obvious he is gay". Here, homoeroticism is open because it is evident. As such, in Iván's case, there was no closet, and he had to assume the homophobic cost of sexual dissidence. Frequently, those who can "pass for" heterosexual inasmuch as "you don't notice" they are lesbian or gay, often do so in order to avoid stigma. It is women who tend to reject stereotyped gender roles more forcefully than men, due to masculinity having greater social prestige.11

Preparation for "coming out [of the closet]" (outing): catalytic experiences

"Coming out" is the process by which a person feels the desire to socialize their homoeroticism. We call factors that assist this process 'catalytic' and we have divided them into personal and social catalysts. The former refer to those experiences which help people to position themselves as LGBT in front of themselves (self-identity), while social catalysts are experiences that encourage this process in the social sphere (presented and perceived identity). Personal catalysts were: a committed relationship with a person of the same sex, living in another country, comprehensive reading about homoeroticism, socializing on the lesbian/gay scene, and religion. In this respect, some men recognized their first sexual relationship with another man as another personal catalyst. On the other hand, social catalysts were: getting married, cohabiting, having a child, and becoming pregnant.¹² This last catalyst -due to the obvious bodily changes- is "a private event from your past which has become incredibly public and which you can take anywhere you go". 13 Religion can be both a catalyst and an obstacle4 and it is worth mentioning that there are some churches that do support LGBT members, such as *quakers*, ethical humanists, the United Church, the Metropolitan Community Church, and Buddhism, some of which have a presence in Mexico.

4. Acceptance: "We are who we are and they love us for it". The gay world

This is about a subculture within sexual dissidence in which an ideal gay representation is created. The prototype is a young, physically attractive person, ("the hotter you are, the more you score") who likes to party, is fashionable, and appears to be in a good economic situation. The concern for being gay in old age was mentioned, which happens prematurely after the age of 40, as well as the lack of information and the limitations experienced during childhood due to rigid gender stereotypes: "It hurts me when I see a clearly gay child, shut up in the closet, forced to play with toy soldiers." These elements configure a culture of masculinity from the gay archetype, as well as having concordance with the aspirational Mexican culture.

That's how I see it, I can't generalize, but a gay man is always looking to see if I use brand-name lotion, or if I use Chanel, or if I use this or that, if I buy such-and-such a brand, if I buy whatever kind of flashy car. So if you don't have it, it causes a conflict, and suddenly I was so surprised out in the scene, that everyone swore they lived in Polanco, Interlomas and places like that [upscale areas of Mexico City] but that day they were staying with their grandma in Tacuba, Azcapotzalco, or el Toreo [more run-down areas]; that's very common. (Lalo, 30).

According to Núñez, "joteo" is a playful attitude that exposes gender roles in a socially fetishistic way. Participants use "joteo" or *campness* as a humoristic and performative language created by them in order to relax, have fun, and feel part of a group. "Joteo" is used discretionally, only when they are "in confidence" within their group; in other words, when they know that they will not be singled out. Some need a little alcohol in order to drop their 'ego' barriers and "be camp".

Right now, with friends we gossip lot and speak in a feminine way, like 'oh yeah, honey'.

I'm telling you, that's what makes us laugh, when you say 'how dare you say that when you start dancing like Verónica Castro [a Mexican singer and entertainer] when you're drunk?' Well, that's what you say! (Matías, 29).

The Importance of homoerotic socialization: "they started chit-chatting" [socializing]

Going out to 'scene' places and meeting others 'like you' happens at any time and is important, given that an affinity with SO encourages feelings of permanence and pride in a group. The Zona Rosa [gay district] and places like the Cabaré-Tito [a well-known gay venue] are still meeting places for the homoerotic community in Mexico City.

A group of friends or "mentors" is fundamental for the process of cultural change that occurs for new members of the gay community. Another group was also mentioned in terms of homoerotic socialization of self-help, where those with more experience help and socialize with members who are new to the group. Some participants indicated that they

had become an "example to follow" as their life experience inspired other people.

Like many gay people, those who have still not come out or don't feel comfortable because they will be attacked in society, try to do so by segregating themselves and having their little group of friends, we have always been open and the majority of our friends are heterosexual [...]

I think people see us as an example. They always call us and we try to help people who have problems with how to go out and accept themselves. There is no bigger problem, it is a role that we can take but without parenting them, you know? To help young people to see that nothing will happen, or if you want, we can talk to your parents. It has happened a lot. Suddenly you want to help them, maybe someone you don't even know, or someone who needs to finish their studies, and we help them when we can. (Carlos, 56).

Places exclusively for the LGBT community are necessary and are encouraged for those who are entering the community and later are an option for fun and certainly for finding a partner. As such, exclusively LGBT places have responded to a necessity to create a social space in the face of a stigmatized identity; it is therefore about spaces for freedom and solidarity.

Psychoeducation

Psychoeducation is the process of teaching that focuses on achieving a change in attitude about a certain social phenomenon; in this case, the LGBT experience. The majority of the participants carry out processes of psychoeducation almost unconsciously within their social microcosms, which constitutes a small-scale social change and an example of exercising citizenship towards awareness around homoeroticism. The process of psychoeducation can be set out in two senses. The first is the possibility of managing a change in attitude around LGBT people in the immediate environment. To achieve this, LGBT people will need to reduce internalized homophobia and begin to relearn to be LGBT from a respectful, and very often loving, framework. Furthermore, supportive attitudes must be promoted through identification with members of the lesbian and gay community itself, as well as defending people from homophobic comments or providing advice to people who are coming out; "care for someone's awakening like someone cared for mine". It is about adding to the chain of positive behaviors. A concordance was found with Laguarda's14 concept of the "gay brotherhood*" which expresses solidarity and a "pleasant symbolic alliance" between those who call themselves gay or lesbian.

Inside it all, there is a community that is very supportive, it is always identified within your set of friends, your group of close friends, like 'oh, how is he? He needs help, blah blah blah', you know? Or like if you know someone is coming out and you have links with their family, you are always there like 'no, don't worry, friends are there for that,' you know? Or something like that...

- Yes, it's like a brotherhood.
- Yes, exactly, you feel very united and protected within your circle.
 (Matías and Pablo, 36 and 29).

Homoerotic coming-out

This process starts with couples and then with family, the majority of people first 'coming out' to their mothers. The mothers then started a process of accepting that news; in no case was it automatic, some 'shed a tear' accepting it, and others sought help in the form of therapy. On the other hand, fathers were told by the mother or 'turned a blind eye'. Some parents confronted their children and in other cases, a rift was caused in the parent-child relationship, although years later, these were reconciled due to religion: "What stays with you is to love him and help him because he is your child, just like the others, because that is why you are a parent".

Generally, those who come out expect negative reactions to the news, because they have heard horror stories such as being "chased out of the house, hit by relatives, or forced to go to *table dancing* clubs to try and cure them". Pérez⁸ refers to the parents' reaction being the most feared, especially for men, because of which, some who plan their coming-out strategy concluded that they would reveal their SO once they had financial independence.

I didn't choose [to study] medicine because although I already accepted myself as I was, I said to myself that if they found out at home, they would kill me or chase me or who knows what would happen to me, and if I was studying medicine it would end my career. So I decided to study management so I could work and study in case they found out at home, because at that time I had an active life as a gay man. (Miguel, 34).

Contrary to what was expected, the reaction of the majority of families in our sample was positive. The age at which the news was given –late teens and early adulthoodwas related to the families' acceptance, perhaps because due to the young people already having achieved important development markers and survived both professionally and economically, in such a way that they had gained enough respect that nobody would question their private life.

However, families who took the news badly and whose coping strategy was to ignore the subject were allowed to continue with a cordial relationship: "there is a very firm line between the parts of your life I want to know about". Sometimes the mothers considered that they had done something "bad", in such a way that they decided to actively deny the most obvious reality: "if you are gay, I don't want to know, don't tell me".

The participants' relationships with their family is a fundamental emotional reference and their most important social and instrumental support network. Generally, the maternal figure is considered a person who is unconditional and highly emotionally important. Other social support networks are partners and close friendships, who you might call "family by choice".

^{*} This "gay brotherhood" could also be understood as a process of protection and solidarity that was forged as a positive historical heritage against the discrimination suffered by the lesbian/gay community.

5. Integration: "A feature among many others"

During this phase, the SO becomes something more than the identifying characteristic and ceases being so central in life.

During those happy years of university and great discoveries, being gay was that kind of factor that determined and became a huge point of seriousness and meaning in my life, maybe because I had a lot of boyfriends and I was very emotional and all that. Now for me, it has become, or I would like it to become, a characteristic within the many things that make up my life. It is a fantasy because people say 'well, being gay is no different than having brown eyes or being left-handed', and that's fine, but we could talk about being gay for three hours, but you'd probably only talk about being left-handed for 30 minutes. (Ricardo, 27).

With integration, self-concept is reinforced, because it is perceived as "a goal that has been reached", a state of being where they dreamed how they wanted it to be, and in that way, being gay is understood as a motivator to move forwards. Alex illustrates the integration of homoerotic desire (HD) by using the powerful metaphor of the mesquite tree in the desert:

A lot of the decisions I have made are related to the fact that I am gay; it is what gives me the fortitude to keep studying, I like studying and I like my course, but I had that incentive that I have to get ahead because I know that the future will be difficult, uncertain, and adverse, because I am gay [...] Later you get to thinking, and the philosophy occurs to you that maturity or growing old is like the trees. To quote the Bible, the tree that grows in the hardest place is the strongest, it puts down the best roots, like the mesquite in the desert that has very deep roots in order to get water. It does not have it easy, but you will never uproot that tree, it is not like other plants, not like the ones which live for the rain and when the rain goes, they die.

Yes, being gay has influenced me. One day I just said: 'screw it, this is the way I am and I have to be happy because we never know what tomorrow will bring, I don't know if I'm going to get sick or if a meteor will fall on my head'. (Alex, 39).

Finally, it is important to note that for those who participated in this study, economic and political capital was a protective factor against discrimination, given that their class position allowed them certain balances in power relationships.

DISCUSSION

The present article takes account of the reality of the LGIC process as an exercise in identity formation that stems from social stigmatization where the participants have had to create strategies in order to take up a place in society. There is still a framework of prejudice around the lesbian/gay sexual identity, which clearly makes self-identification difficult. This article has attempted to provide evidence of how LGBT people have had to carry out serious psychoeducational work in order to create a social space in a particularly adverse context. This should become commonplace and earn a 'right of indifference' in public life (an anthropological concept used in Spain). ¹⁵

On the other hand, the findings presented in this article should be understood as particular to this sample, and in no way are they representative of the entire lesbian/gay population. Furthermore, it is important to note that the use of models such as theoretical frameworks to understand LGIC has been criticized due to the creation of models implying an exercise of maximum synthesis which runs the risk of leaving out important components of the experience. Some of the most important criticisms about the use of models are as follows: it is difficult to find a rigid linear progression of the phases of daily life clearly marked out, and furthermore not every person is recognized within them. Likewise, models shut off possibilities of unlinking with a good outcome where other possible paths are not considered.¹ Finally, the vast majority of models are extremely personal and pass by the various contexts in such a way that they overgeneralize a single gay identity when identities are fluid and changeable.4 In terms of social changes that have promoted a greater openness around homoeroticism and have left phases such as "pride" or the importance of "publically coming out" by the wayside, they do not seem to take into account homophobic threats such as hate crimes that make the closet permeable.

Also, the use of retrospective narratives diminishes the veracity of the account, although for social scientists, subjective truth is superlative to history. Finally, and *generally speaking*, more similarities than differences were found in the processes of constructing an LGBT identity, due to which in later studies, it would be convenient to split by gender and study in detail the differences between lesbian women and gay men.

Although we accept these criticisms, we consider that the richness of the data presented adds value to the theorization of lesbian/gay studies. We are living in a time of great social change and Mexican society is currently a huge social laboratory where the meanings associated with being lesbian/gay are slowly changing. This is proven in those people for whom the LGIC was not a dramatic event. These people question the existence of the HD models and their particular cases could be the promise of how a normalized homoeroticism could be lived. Perhaps in the future it will not be necessary to have models to study the LGIC and this article may be obsolete.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We gratefully acknowledge all the participants in this study for their generosity and the opportunity to get to know them. I would also like to acknowledge Dr Patricia Ponce for her support, wisdom, and loving companionship on the doctoral journey.

REFERENCES

1. Troiden R. The formation of Homosexual identities. J Homosexuality 1989;17:43-74.

- Cass V. Homosexuality identity formation: A theoretical model. Journal of Homosexuality 1979;4: 219-235.
- Rosario M, Schirimshaw EW, Hunter J. Different patterns of sexual identity development over time: Implications for the Psychological adjustment of Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual youths. J Sex Research 2011;48:3-15.
- Alderson K. The ecological model of gay male identity. Canadian J Human Sexuality 2003;12:75-85.
- Núñez G. Sexo entre varones: Poder y resistencia en el campo sexual.
 Segunda edición. México, DF: Miguel Ángel Porrúa; 1999.
- 6. Tovar H. Familias Queer en la sociedad de la Ciudad de México: Construcción de espacios público-privados. Tesis de Maestría en Estudios Políticos y Sociales. Facultad de Ciencias Políticas y Sociales. México, DF: UNAM; 2003.
- Mohr J, Fassinger R. Measuring dimensions of Lesbian and Gay male experience. Measurement Evaluation Counseling and Development 2000;33:66-89.
- Pérez B. Homosexualidad: Secreto de familia. El manejo del secreto en familias con algún miembro homosexual. Madrid: Editorial EGALES; 2005

- Smith JA, Flowers P, Larkin M. Interpretative phenomenological analysis: Theory, method and research. Londres: SAGE Publications; 2009.
- Touroni E, Coyle A. Decision-making in planned lesbian parenting: An interpretative phenomenological analysis. J Community Applied Social Psychology 2002;12:194-209.
- Marszalek J, Cashwell C. The Gay and Lesbian Affirmative Development (GLAD) Model: Facilitating positive Gay identity development. Adult Lifespan 1999;1:1-13.
- Ben-Ari, Livni T. Motherhood is not a given thing: Experiences and constructed meanings of biological and nonbiological lesbian mothers. Sex Roles, 2006;54:521-531.
- Jessner L, Wegert E, Foy JL. El desarrollo de las actitudes parentales durante el embarazo. En: Anthony EJ, Benedek T (eds.). Parentalidad (213-249). Buenos Aires: ASAPPIA Amorrortu editores; 1970.
- 14. Laguarda R. Ser gay en la Ciudad de México: Lucha de representaciones y apropiación de una identidad, 1968-1982. México, DF: Instituto de Investigaciones Dr. José María Luis Mora y Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social; 2009.
- Delgado M. Sociedades movedizas: Pasos hacia una antropología de las calles. Barcelona: Anagrama; 2007.

Declaration of conflict of interests: None