

ENTANGLEMENTS OF SEXUALITIES AND GENDERS WITHIN
HIGHER EDUCATION EMPLOYEES AND POLICIES

by

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ABSTRACT

This qualitative doctoral inquiry explored the intra-actions, entanglements, and lived materialities of university policies and LGBTQIA+ employees. At a public university located in the Deep South, three university-wide policies and interviews from twenty-seven queer and trans-spectrum employees were collected from October 2014 through January 2015. The data acquired during that timeframe were analyzed by thinking with Karen Barad's (2007) new material feminisms.

The multimethod framework operationalized new material feminisms concepts alongside qualitative research interviews and policy analysis as the methodological tools. Through methodological mapping, three assertions rose from the findings that made the following claims: (a) a university façade existed and was constructed through policies that require, reward, and hide the subjugation and compliance of its employees; (b) policy attempted to homogenize queer and trans spectrum identities and in doing so made gender and sexuality identities matter; and (c) policy language produced material implications and cloaked information relevant to LGBTQIA+ employees' lives. These assertions provide evidence of material realities in organizational policies and everyday experiences of employees.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to the girl who started me down this path of critical inquiry. Nora Kathleen Jennings, thank you for so fiercely living, loving, and challenging me with your brilliance. Without you, I know this would have never been achieved.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

As the demographics of higher education are changing, many institutions of higher education in the United States have instituted equality, inclusion, and/or diversity action plans, as well as non-discrimination notices. This is an effort to move beyond simply attempting to comply with federal laws and to foster educational spaces in which everyone feels safe and welcomed (Iverson, 2012). While federal laws were created to eliminate barriers for marginalized populations, research has revealed the ways in which institutional missions, diversity plans, non-discrimination notices, and accessibility policies continue to “other” people who fall outside societal norms (Allan, 2008; Allan, 2003; Allan, Iverson, & Ropers-Huilman, 2010; Iverson, 2012; Shaw, 2004; St. Pierre, 2000).

University employees are interconnected with the policies, procedures, and practices of their institution. While students continue to migrate through higher education, employees carry institutional knowledge and participate in reinforcing institutional social and cultural practices that affect and construct the university environment. Specifically, inclusion, equity, and/or diversity policies are idealistically intended to create systems where employees do not, for example, experience marginalization and/or discrimination based on their gender and sexual orientation along with many other identity markers. However, what are the unintended consequences and possibilities that emerge? These policies should reinforce a healthy learning environment that encourages a safe-yet-critical campus culture. Unfortunately, these types of

policies continue to discriminate against those they¹ intend to protect (Allan, 2003, 2008; Allan et al., 2010; Iverson, 2012; Shaw, 2004).

The engagement of university-wide policies and procedures with lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-spectrum, queer-spectrum, intersex, asexual, and aromantic spectrum, not straight, and/or gender nonconforming (LGBTQIA+²) employees continues to produce unintended discriminatory practices and marginalization. I am interested in better understanding how policies are interconnected to the lived experiences of queer-spectrum³ and trans-spectrum⁴ employees in higher education, and how both possibilities and unintended consequences are produced by the interaction between employees and policies.

Introduction of the Problem and Research Questions

To contextually situate this research on the macro scale, according to popular press news outlets and national polls, the United States has reached a queer and trans-spectrum “tipping point” (Steinmetz, 2014). In 2014 and early 2015 when the research data were collected, Laverne Cox, a celebrity Black trans woman, and Caitlyn Jenner, a White trans woman, adorned the covers of prestigious, mainstream magazines (Bissinger, 2015; Steinmetz, 2014). Also, on June 26, 2015, marriage between two consenting adults regardless of gender became the federal law with the *Obergefell v. Hodges* case (2015). Additionally, in the summer of 2015, the U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Safety and Health Administration established that trans facilities such as all-gender/gender inclusive bathrooms should be standard practice for places of employment.

¹ Their, them, they, and theirs are used as singular form as a way not to conform to the traditional discursive binary (she/he; her/his). This is a gender non-specific singular pronoun employed by trans people and sometimes their allies (Airtion, 2012). Throughout this document unless a participant uses specific gendered language, I will be using “their,” “them,” “they,” and “theirs” as singular pronouns to support trans activism.

² See “Key Terminology”

³ See “Key Terminology”

⁴ See “Key Terminology”

Higher education policy is entangled within the cultural shift to be more conscious and supportive of the queer and trans-spectrum folx⁵. The October 26, 2010 “Dear Colleague Letter” from the Office of Civil Rights was issued to emphasize that public education institutions must protect students from sex discrimination if the students identify on the queer and/or trans-spectrum, and to instruct higher education institutions to directly address student protections (Ali, 2010). The letter asserted that higher education is most responsible for the protection of students from discrimination and Office of Civil Rights presumes that institutions have the cultural competencies to enforce this. The Dear Colleague Letter did not address faculty or staff as protected classes.

On a more micro level, strategic development and implementation of university mission, equity, inclusion, and/or diversity policies is often done without the direct involvement of the groups those policies are intended to serve, which in this inquiry are queer and/or trans-spectrum employees (Allan, 2003; Iverson, 2012). These well-intentioned plans are often developed by top administrators who tend to be non-experts and non-members of marginalized groups (Iverson, 2012). These administrators have a knowledge gap when it comes to understanding the web of social and cultural complexities and the daily manifestations of being marginalized in educational contexts (Allan, 2003).

Straight and/or cisgender administrators with this knowledge gap do not understand how university employees who are LGBTQIA+ identified must navigate the university environment differently than their straight, cisgender counterparts. By not taking this into account, these policies tend to be implemented in ways that continue to further marginalize LGBTQIA+ employees. For example, under a 2014 policy at Deep South University⁶ (DSU), sexual

⁵ See “Key Terminology”

⁶ Research site. Find more information in “Pilot Study” section.

orientation was considered a “protected status” under the non-discrimination notice which was issued prior to the marriage equality decision. However, DSU dependents’ benefits policies required similar-gender⁷ married couples to provide several more forms of documentation to demonstrate long-term cohabitation and monogamous commitment of their relationship to receive institutional benefits. At that time, different-gender married couples did not have to prove their marital status nor did they need to certify with an affidavit that they were monogamous and cohabitating with their spouse to receive benefits.

Such policies not only require similar gender couples to “prove” that their relationships mimic the assumed commitment of straight, monogamous couple marriages, but also invade the personal lives of queer and/or trans employees (Bhabha, 2002; Warner, 2000). This study examines how policies and queer and trans-spectrum employees are entangled with higher education.

Research Questions

The focus of this qualitative inquiry was to articulate the complex, interconnected relationship between the university-wide policies at a higher education institution and the lived experiences of the employees who work at these institutions who self-identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-spectrum, queer-spectrum, asexual and aromantic spectrum, not straight, and/or gender nonconforming+. The following research questions guided this study:

- 1) How are university-wide policies and LGBTQIA+ employees entangled and intra-related?
- 2) What lived materialities are produced through these intra-actions?

⁷ I purposefully used similar gender rather than same-sex. “Sex” is presented as truth due to the fact it is situated in medical/biological/hard-science discourse. Since any science is socially and culturally constructed, sex too is a discursive term which is overly valued and often harmful to gender nonconforming individual (Bornstein, 2013).

Though higher education has a desire to be or presents as inclusive, I argue that the intra-actions of policies and employees more often limits rather than promotes inclusivity, diversity, safety, and a welcoming/open environment. By employing a new material feminisms theoretical framework, I examined the intra-relations of public university space, higher education policies, and LGBTQIA+ employment.

Research Background and Context of the Problem

Historically, “higher education has lagged behind” K-12 in regards to addressing gender and/or sexuality marginalities (Renn, 2010, p. 134). Higher education institutions vary in the ways in which they address issues of inclusion, equity, and difference from barely squeaking by in regards to federal mandates to purposeful, strategic efforts throughout the university system (Githens, 2012). Only within the last couple of decades, higher education institutions have utilized nationally accessible climate survey tools such as the Campus Pride Index to gauge the impact of their policies on things like satisfaction, safety, and attitudes that relate to the overall climate for students. Prior to the creation of institutionally administered surveys in higher education, national statistics from the Gay, Lesbian, & Straight Educational Network (GLSEN), which manages a K-12 campus climate survey, were used to measure how the climate is changing for students as a result of policy and programming. However, reliance on one quantitative indicator does little to close the knowledge gap in higher education to effectively address eliminating barriers for LGBTQIA+ populations. This study supports a growing movement and commitment for change in higher education toward a more inclusive, diverse, and equitable environment (Iverson, 2012).

In order to engage the complications and nuances of strategic inclusivity, diversity, and equity, higher education administrators need to use their campus experts to assist in orchestrating

a comprehensive plan for equity, diversity, and inclusion (Iverson, 2012). In addition to changing policy to affect change, there needs to be a commitment to learn and grow at *all* levels of the campus community from the president/chancellor to the building service workers to the contract companies that work directly within the institution. Although the chief executive officer of an institution (e.g., the president or chancellor) may have the power to establish this type of plan, there must be basic cultural competencies around the topics of diversity, inclusion, and equity to move forward effectively. For example, in both my undergraduate and graduate coursework, which were both in the field of education, many of my colleagues and I were advised to get to know the support staff (e.g., secretarial staff, technical workers, custodial staff) of any given offices. These people are the gatekeepers, the faces/voices of offices/departments, and the people that “actually get things done.” Also, educators in higher education (e.g., instructors, professors, student affairs professionals) may have strong grasps of their field of study but often lack the cultural competencies to effectively negotiate diversity plans/policies in their daily practice. This needs to be operationalized in every facet of the university to usher in a more welcoming, safe, inclusive, equitable, and diverse campus environment through functional policies. Employees hold the power to construct and enforce institutional knowledge and climate. Therefore, learning how all LGBTQIA+ employees navigate the materialities of policies illuminates how campus advocates must proceed to foster a more inclusive environment.

Material context of policies at Deep South University. At DSU, LGBTQIA+ faculty, staff, and students, both current and former, have been working toward fostering changes/updates to place sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression in the nondiscrimination notice as well as in implementing partner benefits for similar-gender couples.

This has been a constant, ongoing struggle. This dissertation looks at the material fissures that developed due to the implementation of these policies in an effort to be inclusive.

When I started my pilot study in the summer of 2012, the mission statement was the same as it was later for the 2014-2015 dissertation project. However, for the pilot study, the nondiscrimination notice included sexual orientation only, not gender identity or gender expression, neither of which were added until Fall, 2014. As of March 2008, sexual orientation existed as one of the listed protected classes. However, in 2014, parentheses were added around sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression as a subset of “sex.” Annually, the president’s office would disseminate the non-discrimination notice both electronically and in hard-copy form. In this communication from the president’s office, updates made to the policies were not specifically highlighted. Dependents’ benefits for similar-gender couples were enacted on January 1, 2012, and were advertised during the open enrollment period from 2011 onward. Nearly 3 years later, seven of the participants were unaware of the dependent benefits for similar-gender couples.

These policies were not ahistorical or apolitical. How the policies were disseminated and communicated throughout the campus community generated materialities within the campus community. For example, participants who were not connected with LGBTQIA+ campus activism were not aware of the updates and changes. Therefore, the two Black, closeted cis men in the study were surprised to discover that the nondiscrimination notice and dependents’ benefits supported queer and trans-spectrum folx. The policies are written and performed on people and have nonhuman lives of their own. This dissertation examines the lived material possibilities that were produced through the intra-relations of these policies and participants.

Methodology

Building further on the work of a previously conducted pilot study, I utilized a multimethod qualitative methodology that engaged qualitative research interviews and policy analysis tools with new material feminisms theoretical framework. New material feminisms was established as the foundational base for both the theoretical and methodological frameworks. Barad's (2007) diffractive methodology, and Jackson and Mazzei's (2012) thinking with theory—particularly new material feminisms—were then operationalized within the methodological framework.

I completed an analysis of three university-wide policies alongside the interviews. My goal was to meet a maximum of 20 to 30 LGBTQIA+ full-time employees at DSU at least once and to conduct follow-up interviews as necessary. I conducted initial and follow-up interviews with 27 participants, and these were transcribed and analyzed along with policy documents. Chapter III will provide an in-depth articulation of the specific methodological tools that were deployed to complete this inquiry.

Significance of the Study

In Iverson's (2012) discursive review of 21 university diversity plans, she noted that her analysis focused on written, textual, discursive analysis. She observed through this macro inquiry process that "a valuable extension of [her] research would be an investigation of the ways in which social and institutional context shape the diversity policy-making process" (Iverson, 2012, p. 169). Building off of this call to action by Iverson, this inquiry analyzes the micro entanglements with university policies and LGBTQIA+ employees, and the knowledge and becomings that manifest from these possibilities. Based on my findings, this research may

prompt higher education institutions to review and address their policies and the material impact those policies have on their employees.

Higher education needs inclusive, equitable policies that are functional in practice now; the profession cannot wait or institutions will continue to lose capable employees (Vaccaro, 2012; Zabrodska, Linnell, & Davies, 2011). As a posthumanist scholar, I am led to examine beyond the words of the policies into the materialities that exist for many employees, materialities that universities could and should take an active role in addressing (deLeon & Brunner, 2013; Sears, 2002). As higher education institutions become formal businesses, there is little interest in the personal lives of the employees and more interest in keeping the customers (e.g., donors; local, state, and federal politicians; students; parents) appeased and happy (Zabrodska et al., 2011). As there is still a small part of me that is idealistic and optimistic, I want the policies to actually have some teeth and reflect an activism, advocacy, and agency that will foster a safer, more inclusive, and diverse learning space for all people. I have hope, and I demand more from higher education.

My goal is to share the data with higher education professionals through a variety of means (e.g., peer-reviewed journals, higher education blogs, and online accessible publications). I want LGBTQIA+ people and their allies to utilize this information to justify strategic decision making and procedures as they relate to policies. Additionally, I challenge higher education professionals to not ignore this data simply because there is a belief that theirs is a conservative campus versus the perception that their campus is “more liberal”/“liberal.” For marginalized people in higher education, critical scholars have clearly delineated through national data sets that liberal campuses still have significant incongruences between policies and daily materialities

(Allan, 2003, 2008; Allan et al., 2010; Iverson, 2012; Marshall, 1997; Suspitsyna, 2010; Zabrodska et al., 2011).

Key Terminology

Terminology and language are changing more quickly than articles can be published in peer-reviewed, academic journals. Blogs such as Tumblr provide an accessible space for sharing and challenging knowledge. I am situating this dissertation in particular language that has relevance and value at this particular place in time. Over the course of this inquiry process, I attempted to update verbiage to reflect current manifestations of the ever-expanding queer-spectrum and trans-spectrum identities. The trans- and queer-spectrum communities are playing with language because we know that language, identities, and self-authorship matters. Therefore, this section should not be recognized as an exhaustive list of terms because that is unnecessary and impossible. However, the terminology frames the information in accessible and complex ways for reading this dissertation. Key terminology is presented in alphabetical order.

A *cisgender* person is someone whose gender roles, identity, expression, attribution, and assignment are often all in congruence. For example, as a cis woman, I was assigned female at birth, I internally identify as a woman, and I present to others and read as feminine. Although I engage in gender-bending societal roles and expressions, those gender-regulated roles and expressions are reimagined as feminine spaces because I am performing those tasks as a cis woman.

Folx is a gender inclusive word. “In some languages, ‘folks’ is a gendered noun, so using ‘folx’ is a way to include people of all genders, especially non-binary genders” (Because I Am Human, 2017).

LGBTQIA+ is the acronym for the following identities: lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans-spectrum, queer-spectrum, intersex, asexual and aromantic spectrum, not straight, and/or gender nonconforming plus all the other identities not noted. The + is crucial as there are hundreds of identities and more imagined each day. This acronym creates a hierarchy of gender identities and sexual orientations and demonstrates which identities matter. Trans- and queer-spectrum remove the hierarchical management of this acronym. Research focuses often on LGBT or LGBTQ identities with less knowledge production about intersex or asexual folks.

Plus sign (+) accounts for all the ways in which people identify as a sexual and/or gender minority. This gives space for people to identify and create inclusion in the community without writing out an acronym that will inevitably leave various identities out. This does not limit people from adding their own way of identifying.

Queer-spectrum is the overarching term for people desiring something unlike and/or beyond different gender coupling only (Beemyn & Rankin, 2011; Garvey, Hitchins, & McDonald, 2017; Garvey & Rankin, 2015). Identities that may be encapsulated under this term include, but are not limited to, gay, lesbian, bisexual, queer, polysexual, pansexual, fluid, down low (D/L), same-gender loving, gynosexuality, homosexual, pomosexual, skoliosexual, spectrsexual, etc.

“The closet” is a reference to how open, or not, an LGBTQIA+ person is about their gender identity and/or sexual orientation with the rest of the world or even themselves. *In or Out* is a way that the community identifies their relationship with “the closet.” “In” describes a LGBTQIA+ person who is not open in some or all times and places. Being out, outing, or outed is a process in which a person’s gender and sexual identities are made known and acknowledged

in a particular context. The person who is queer and/or trans-spectrum should have full control over this process.

Trans-spectrum is an umbrella term for people who identify within the trans community (Beemyn & Rankin, 2011; Garvey & Rankin, 2015). These identities within the spectrum demand that gender assignment does not define or dictate one's gender identity and/or expression. Trans-spectrum identities include, but are not limited to, trans-masculine, trans-feminine, trans-man, trans-woman, genderqueer, gender fluid, gender nonconforming, genderfuck, third gender, bigender, non-binary, trans, trans*, transgender, androgynous, two-spirit, hijra, etc.

Summary

As a higher education professional who is a White, polysexual, lower-middle class, petite, cis woman with disabilities, I am both personally and professionally interested in the data that was gained from this inquiry. This dissertation focuses on the intra-relations and materialities between Deep South University's policies and its LGBTQIA+ employees. As it relates to the intersections of gender and sexuality, there is a gap in the literature related to higher education employees who self-identify as LGBTQIA+. This stems from a violent history of discrimination against LGBTQIA+ educators and normative notions of sexuality and gender, as further articulated in Chapter II. To better articulate this web of interconnections, new feminist materialism was the guiding theoretical framework for the project. This framework calls on theoretical tools from queer theory and feminist poststructural discourse analysis, as more fully explained in the next chapter. Then, Chapter III presents the methodological tools that were used assembled to explain the data effectively.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter is divided into two sections. The theoretical framework provided the paradigm lens through which the data were analyzed by fusing new material feminisms to feminist poststructural policy analysis and queer theory, offering a thorough material *and* discursive examination of the data. The first section of this chapter includes the review of the literature for the theoretical underpinning for the study, which includes specific sections on feminist poststructural analysis, queer theory, and new material feminisms. The second section of this chapter includes a discussion of the topical literature directly related to the subject matter of this study and includes gender, sexuality, higher education, and the policy systems within the academy. Working with both the theoretical and topical frameworks, I situated the study, analyzed the data, and provided implications for the field.

Theoretical Framework

When a researcher makes a theoretical choice for their data, the purpose is to provide a lens through which to think “*with*” and “*through*” the data collected (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). Different methodological and theoretical inquiries produce multiplicity, complexity, and contradictions that are layered into data. I have found comfort in the messy, dangerous, and pluralistic folds of emancipatory and deconstructivist analyses (Lather, 2007). At the same time, considering and examining the appropriateness of various methodologies has been challenging. By working with my pilot study data for more than 5 years, and this project for more than 3 years, I utilized several theoretical frameworks as lenses through which to analyze the data. The

various frameworks together produced valuable methodological assemblages and offered vital theoretical tools. New material feminisms encouraged me to work with these theories simultaneously. As I read new material feminisms *through* and *with* feminist poststructural policy analysis and queer theory in order to theorize the data, I engaged in the conceptual practice of new material feminisms called diffraction. Taylor (2013) described this process of enacting multiple theoretical frameworks alongside new material feminisms:

In ‘diffracting the methodology’ . . . , the invitations data offers for theoretical journeyings and that these nomadic zig-zags disclose knowledge-ing as a messy multiplicity . . . [Knowledge] emerged and concretised through ‘backward’, ‘circular’ and ‘forward’ readings in which . . . lively data [was sited] alongside Butler alongside Foucault alongside Deleuze and Guattari alongside Barad, reading each theoretical account diffractively through the others. (p. 697)

All of them are understood with the other. Both queer theory and feminist poststructural policy analysis are critical components to working with and through new material feminisms. The methodology of new material feminisms will be explained for this inquiry in Chapter III.

Through the Lens of Feminist Poststructural (FPS) Policy Analysis

Feminist poststructural policy analysis literature developed out of two fields of research: feminist policy analysis and poststructural policy discourse analysis (Childers, 2011). As a standalone theory, feminism is a political as well as theoretical movement, and its goal is to address and eliminate inequities, particularly those based on gender (Hawkesworth, 1994). Functioning parallel to feminism, poststructuralism deconstructs notions of universal truths, reveals the restrictiveness of essentialist humanist thought, and exposes the harms of binary thinking. When interwoven, “feminist poststructural analysis interrogates how what is meant by ‘woman,’ ‘femininity,’ ‘truth,’ and ‘the body,’ are produced through the processes and relations of powerful interests and desires structuring social and cultural institutions” (Atkinson, 2008, pp. 103-104). More pointedly, Foucault and St. Pierre both stated that, “Feminism’s slogan that

everything is political must be joined with the poststructural idea that ‘everything is dangerous’” (Foucault, 1983, p. 231-232; St. Pierre, 2000, p. 484). Therefore, educational policy studies must address these always-present politics and dangers (Marshall, 1997).

In this sense, FPS policy analysis is a coalition theoretical framework which postulates pluralities and multidimensional knowledge assemblages (Allan, 2008; Allan et al., 2010; Iverson, 2012). This interdisciplinary, coalition scholarship of FPS policy analysis as a methodological framework was concisely articulated by Allan (2010): “research from FPS perspectives demonstrates how policy assumptions may carry exclusionary consequences, and hence limit policy effectiveness or even reinforce the very problem(s) the particular policy seeks to eliminate” (p. 30).

Building on this concept of feminist/critical and poststructural/discursive coalition, FPS has a salient commitment to intersectionality regarding the interlocking subjectivities of gendered, raced, classed, sexualized, (dis)abled, sized, aged bodies (Allan et al., 2010; Anzaldúa, 1987; Chenshaw, 2009; Childers, 2011; Erevelles & Minear, 2010; Marshall, 1997; McCall, 2005). Gendered lives are not monolithic, and there is a political agenda to treating and enmeshing all these fluid subjectivities (e.g., sexuality, race, class, (dis)ability, size, age, geographic region, ethnicity, religion, citizen status) within the analysis.

More specifically, Marshall (1997) provided a strong foundation for FPS policy analysis by acknowledging the ways in which feminism and poststructuralism expose the taken-for-granted, everyday hegemonic norms and policies within schools: “a micropolitical lens is needed to study, analyze, work within and change schools, and to reveal the less visible, the silences, the non-events like the ways schools silence voices” (p. 7). Policies are in no way innocent. Rather, they are social thermometers that gauge the ebb and flow of normative cultural constructs.

Accordingly, FPS scholars demand that the production of policies, from the formation to creation to implementation, needs to be evaluated as a socially constructed, subjective process that regulates and punishes those outside of the dominant, hegemonic norms (Allan, 2008; Allan et al., 2010; Atkinson, 2008; Lather, 2007; Marshall, 1997). In that vein, there are three distinctive goals for FPS policy analysis scholars:

(1) the process by which policy problems are defined; (2) the influence of identity differences in the shaping of policy problems and solutions; (3) ways in which policy as discourse not only reflects, but also contributes to producing subjectivities and sociopolitical realities (Allan, 2010, p. 26).

Without being prescriptive, feminist poststructural policy analysis methodologies offer formative concepts and ideas that assist in addressing these goals.

Feminist poststructural policy analysis has three distinctive folds: feminism, poststructuralism, and policy studies. Folds consider the ways in which all of these unique and distinct theoretical concepts are interrelated: “two dominant and contrastive styles often inflect each other. They crisscross and sometimes fold vastly different sensibilities into each other” (Conley, 2006, p. ix). Each of these fields brings a particular set of concepts into the FPS policy analysis literature. To better understand the folds in this robust theoretical paradigm, I have reviewed the major concepts that each theory brings to the engagement of FPS policy analysis. Each fold has notable contributions which are discussed individually within a literature review of main concepts. At the same time, these fields are meant to be understood as an intra-related web of knowledge both within feminist poststructural policy analysis and new material feminisms. Clearly, entanglements and intersections were apparent within each review.

Feminism. The first element of FPS policy analysis is feminism and feminist theory/practice/praxis. One of its major goals is to eliminate inequities and to address these concerns through the manifestations of policies (Allan, 2008). Feminist theory exists as an

emancipatory tool. Feminism accomplishes this through critical ideology in which the explicit intent is to “critique the social order and construct policy that empowers individuals to understand their social world and to change it in ways that promote justice and equality” (Allan, 2008, p. 7). To be empowered, “power” itself must be acknowledged and dissected as a concept. Foucault (1990) communicated that power is productive, is everywhere, and within everything; we cannot escape it. However, power does have specific “aims and objectives” (Foucault, 1990, p. 95). Discovering and acknowledging the ways in which power is produced is a goal of feminism. With that knowledge, tangible and justifiable measures can be taken to address inequities.

Acknowledgment of circulation of power connects directly into another main concept of feminist practice: agency. Feminists recognize the circulation of power dynamics and that people have agency to reinscribe, resist, and/or foster social change (Allan et al., 2010). However, even being conscious of these historical and political power dynamics does not make people exempt from reinforcing and replicating dominant norms and marginalizing practices that restrict notions of agency. As Lorde (2007) eloquently put it, “the master’s tools will never dismantle the master’s house. They may allow us to beat him at his own game, but they will never enable us to bring about genuine change” (p. 112). Using the “master’s tools” affects the larger goals of emancipatory, social justice goals. In this vein, feminists must be critical of their participation in power and notions of agency.

To aid in critical participation, incorporation of intersectionality as a concept is vital to feminist practice (Allan et al., 2010; Chenshaw, 2009; Collins & Bilge, 2016; McCall, 2005). Intersectionality engages the nuances and multiple dimensions and demands that researchers and activists are conscious of the violence that is done by creating monolithic, universal narratives

that do not address nuanced human experiences. Building off the feminist concepts, poststructuralism creates a more fluid understanding of these concepts and offers a few more in addition.

Poststructuralism. In the second fold, poststructuralism is a linguistic turn that gains entry into the following concepts: deconstruction, discourse, power production, and subjectivity. Historically significant to the robust field of poststructuralism, Derrida assists with the task of excavating and destabilizing metanarratives and providing a multiplicity and conflict in discourse through the methodological concept of deconstruction (Allan et al., 2010; Spivak, 1997). Deconstruction exhumes the ruins of dominant discourse narratives (e.g., a singular, objective notion of Truth, Justice, or Freedom) and recreates different possibilities and problems (Lather, 2010). Moreover, deconstruction dismantles “the metaphysical and rhetorical structures which are at work [in a text], not in order to reject or discard them, but to reinscribe them in another way” (Spivak, 1997, p. lxxv). Deconstruction is a significant tool that is salient throughout poststructural analyses.

Building off the messiness that is deconstruction, one of the goals of poststructuralism is to reveal that knowledge is produced through social negotiations, or discourse (Allan et al., 2010). Adams (1997) stated that discourse analysis completes this task by demonstrating that “there is no inherent truth in any discourse. Rather, all discourses are contrived and can thus be made and understood in multiple ways” (p. 144). There is no *a priori* knowledge (Foucault, 1972). No knowledge is apolitical or ahistorical. This invokes the Derridian notion that there is *always already* an agenda (Spivak, 1997). Everything is socially constructed within discourse and thus constrained by the notion of discourse. The conception of “discourse refers to both spoken and written language use, and the study of discourse (discourse analysis) includes the

examination of both talk and text and their relationship to the social context in which they are constructed” (Allan, 2008, p. 5). Discourse produces fluid realities which formulate dominant norms and power relations, while at the same time unearthing alternative possibilities and debunking universal structures (Ropers-Huilman, 2010). But make no mistake, “discourse is not a synonym for language...Discourse practices define what counts as meaningful statements...statements and subjects emerge from a field of possibilities. This field of possibilities is not static or singular, but rather is a dynamic and contingent multiplicity” (Barad, 2008a, p. 819).

Within deconstruction and discourse, the notion of subjectivity is breached as well as identity. Feminist formations of identity are politically useful for saliency, coalition building, and claiming space. At the same time, the demarcation of identity risks assigning prescriptive, structural, and fixedness to groups of people (Allan et al., 2010). Unlike the schema of identity, subjectivity is a fluid, unrestrictive concept that describes the ways in which one negotiates personal realities (Allan, 2008). Subjectivity is dynamic, pluralistic, and constantly challenging spatially social-constructed borders: “understood through [subjectivities], our sense of self can be considered in flux as we assume complementary or contradictory subject positions at the same time” (Allan, 2008, p. 7). Ideas of fullness, completeness, and simplicity become discursively inconceivable with the use of subjectivity and decenter the person as a subject. St. Pierre (2000) described the troubled, dangerous, messiness of subjectivity and the discursive web that the subject lives in: “a subject that exhibits agency as it constructs itself by taking up available discourses and cultural practices and a subject that, at the same time, is subjected, forced into subjectivity by those same discourses and practices” (p. 502). Subjectivity uncovers the limitation of agency, but does not commit to the notion that it is impossible (St. Pierre, 2000).

Being conscious and strategic about the overall goals of research, identity and subjectivity, deconstruction, agency, discourse, and intersectionality are some of the valuable concepts within FPS.

Through the Lens of Queer Theory

Queer theory is prolific and has situated itself in the deconstructive paradigm (Luhmann, 1998). This theory is often engaged by politically radical scholars that maneuver within deconstruction, e.g., crip theorists (Clare, 1999). Still part of the linguistic turn, this theory is used to demolish binaries and normed borders (Talbert, 2010). More specifically, queer theory is deployed as a methodological framework to blast open, disrupt, and collapse hegemonic, socially constructed normative binaries of power in regards to gender (feminine/woman/androgynous/genderqueer/man/masculine) and sexuality (straight/bi/pan/poly/gay/lesbian) subjectivities (Bornstein, 2013; Butler, 2008; Fuss, 1991; Jackson & Mazzei, 2012; Luhmann, 1998). Binaries and normative discourses conflate and flatten notions of gender and sexuality, processes that are highly detrimental to the exploration of new possibilities.

One of the goals of queer studies is to “disrupt dominant and hegemonic discourses by consistently destabilizing fixed notions of identity by deconstructing binaries such as heterosexual/homosexual, gay/lesbian, and masculine/feminine as well as the concept of heteronormativity” (Johnson & Henderson, 2005, p. 5). Butler articulated another goal, which is to unfold the historical/political power that surrounds the development of normalcy/deviancy (Allan et al., 2010). Then, Butler pivots knowledge production to reveal the discursive, performative, repetitive violence of naturalizing/neutralizing/normalizing/essentializing knowledge that disenfranchises queer people’s becomings/identities/subjectivities (Allan et al.,

2010; Talburt, 2010). Thus, “queer theory offers educators a lens through which they can transform their praxis so as to explore and celebrate the tensions and new understanding created by teaching new ways of seeing the world” (Meyers, 2012, p. 9).

Understanding that queer theory is imagined in relation to limitations of feminist articulations, this theory builds on these notions and creates new discourses in which to complicate and examine normative, binary thinking. The two main concepts are queer and performativity. Historically, the term “queer” is situated in understanding something to be deviant from the norm (Butler, 2011). Queer does not and was never meant to be *a* singular notion of gender or sexuality (Pinar, 1998). Queer engages in complex discourse between the pluralistic arrangements and intersections of these subjectivities and beyond (Pinar, 1998). For this specific focus, queer is a signifier that challenges one not to limit but to see the possibilities (Butler, 2011; Pinar, 1998). However, since everything is constructed and appropriated within discourse, possibilities can be restricted, punished, and regulated through heteronormativity and cisnormativity. “To queer” or “queering” is imagining movement outside of the set normative view (Butler, 2011; Pinar, 1998).

Queer is a fluid theoretical concept that challenges normed boundaries through acknowledging an omnipresent, productive, discursive process; the process itself is the concept of performativity. This concept of performativity is a political/historical methodological apparatus that enables it to have robust, messy complexities: “performativity draws from Foucault’s theory of power relations, Hegel’s phenomenology, Althusser’s theory of interpellation, Spinoza’s ethics, and Adorno’s and Nietzsche’s theories of morality” (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 67). Butler harnessed these theorists’ ideas and then developed and framed performativity as a concept. For Butler, performativity is the action of perceived knowledge and

understanding within the world and how people respond based on their particular experiences within this limiting repetitive practice: “the performative invocation of a nonhistorical ‘before’ becomes the foundational premise that guarantees a presocial ontology of persons who freely consent to be governed and, thereby, constitute the legitimacy of the social contract” (Butler, 2008, Section I, Paragraph 5). Performativity illustrates the dangers of a priori genealogy of knowledge that reinforces hegemony (Butler, 2008). Furthermore, Butler articulated that performativity is based in repetition towards gaining access to possibilities and transformative knowledge (Atkinson, 2008; Butler, 2011). “People do not choose their gendered identities; gender gets produced as people repeat themselves. People do not take on roles to act out as in a performance; people become subjects through repetition” (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 72). Heteronormative and cisnormative discourses produce essentialized repetitions of “proper” signifiers of sexuality and gender categories which regulate and punish non-normative identities/subjectivities (Butler, 1991).

Examining New Material Feminisms *with* Feminist Poststructural Policy Analysis and Queer Theory

New material feminisms imagined within a diffractive methodology promote collaboration with various theoretical frameworks. This section includes my review of the ways that the feminist poststructural policy analysis and queer theory are read with/in/through new material feminism for a robust data analysis.

Feminist poststructural policy analysis is conceptualized within unearthing the engagements between, alongside, and through the development, creation, and implementation of policies. As part of this theoretical framework, there is a circulation and centering of policies as the primary data source and the ways that the policies infiltrate and are fused with people as

gender and sexual beings (Allan, 2008). Additionally, the materiality of the policy or policies is only referenced in direct connection with people. Policies must be examined not only through discursive analysis but through a critical lens as well because “materiality is discursive...just as discursive practices are always already material” (Barad, 2008a, p. 140). As a nonhuman agent or actant, policies, within this analysis, have “materiality of language, not to draw language back to its emergent human, systemic and life-serving condition...it is when language is material - or literary – that it resists relations and vibrates in itself” (Colebrook, 2008, p. 59). The policies and people are “mutually interdependent” and both are studied entangled with, on, in, and through the other (Coole & Frost, 2010, p. 33). These are the critical collaborations between new material feminism and FPS policy analysis. There is additional layering with queer theory into new material feminisms.

Thinking about queer theory and how Butler invoked knowledge from other philosophical theorists, Barad engaged with Butler’s notion of performativity to define the constellation of new material feminisms posthumanist performativity. Moving from queer theory’s discursive repetition into the Baradian notion of post-humanist performativity, it includes agential realities of material bodies, not simply discursive ones. Barad values the significant contributions of discursive materialization, but discussed how new material feminisms provides a different lens: “[Butler’s] analysis does not give us any insights into how to take account of the material constraints, the material dimensions of agency, and the material dimensions of regulatory practices” (Barad, 2011, p. 194). The material and discursive are entangled and must be examined each entwined with the other. The following section discusses the ways to think with new material feminisms alongside queer theory and feminist poststructural policy analysis, enabling information to be exhumed in a different way.

With queer and feminist poststructural policy analysis, materiality was often sidelined for discursive analyses. New material feminism theory complimented the subjects and subjectivities *with my data* (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). New material feminisms specifically removed the privileging of deconstructive analysis over critical inquiry, and provided a different approach. Queer theory and FPS policy analysis value discursive deconstruction over the material realities of the subject. New material feminisms breaks down theoretically constructed binaries and equally values the material realities along with the discursive ones.

Feminist poststructural policy analysis and queer theory produced a historical, political knowledge set that assisted in continuing a critique of produced discourses and realities. New material feminisms was a distinctive way to extrapolate the material and discursive intricacies, nuances, and complexities that affect the world. In the following sections, I concentrate on the historical interconnectedness of new material feminisms and the theoretical concepts and goals of the theory.

Thinking *with* New Material Feminisms

New material feminisms has been emerging for the last few decades. Both Marxist materialism and linguistic turn had to be present and appreciated in the literature as well as the humanist paradigm for the new material feminisms to be imagined (Barad, 2008a; Colebrook, 2008; Haraway, 2008; Hekman, 2008; Jackson, 2013; Taylor & Ivinson, 2013). Whereas Marxist materialism provided an analysis of human embodiment and experiences through a material productive lens, it was not able to animate and incorporate non-human entities as formal actors within the process (Jackson, 2013; Taylor & Ivinson, 2013). Additionally, “when feminists criticized or rejected the notion of women as mired in material embodiment, they did so because matter was deemed to be devoid of dynamism” (Colebrook, 2008, p. 64). On the other end of the

theoretical spectrum, discourse theories such as queer theory and FPS policy analysis acknowledge material realities, but situate materiality within a discourse that creates a hierarchal engagement (Hekman, 2008; Jackson, 2013; Taylor & Ivinson, 2013). Poststructural feminisms and queer theory explain how discourse matters, but not “how matter comes to matter” (Barad, 2008a, p. 801). Thus, according to Barad:

Language has been granted too much power. The linguistic turn, the semiotic turn, the interpretive turn, the cultural turn; it seems that at every turn lately every ‘thing’ –even materiality- is turned into a matter of language or some other form of cultural representation. (2008a, p. 120)

Building off of both material and discourse theoretical paradigms, new material feminism equally values and evaluates the material and discursive realities within both human and nonhuman actants alike (Barad, 2008a). Matter is not an afterthought nor can it only be understood as the passive bystander to the active notion of *Discourse* (Hekman, 2008). New material feminisms delineates the importance of removing the binaries in theory and experiential realities (e.g., material/discourse, human/non-human). New materials feminisms holds that materiality and discourses are co-constituted, *and* does not privilege one above the other (Alaimo & Hekman, 2008; Jackson & Mazzei, 2012; Taylor & Ivinson, 2013; Zabrodska et al., 2011).

New material feminisms is a posthumanist theoretical framework that is conceptually focused towards the nonhuman and/or more-than-human engagements with or without the human (Alaimo & Hekman, 2008; Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). New material feminisms decenter the human subject and establish meaning-making with/through non-human and human subjects alike (Taylor & Ivinson, 2013). Haraway (1991) philosophically began to arrange the theoretical concept in her manifestation of the cyborg, a complex understanding of women’s becoming, which is nonhuman and human. Barad (2011) directly addressed the multifaceted ways of knowing and becoming with posthumanism inquiry:

The “posthumanist” point is not to blur the boundaries between human and nonhuman, not to cross out all distinctions and differences, and not to simply invert humanism, but rather to understand the materializing effects of particular ways of drawing boundaries between “humans” and nonhumans. (pp. 123-124)

In the same way that she articulated nonhuman and human engagements, Barad also created new ways and tools to think and be *with* the world. By breaking down the arbitrary formations between human and nonhuman, new material feminisms theorists developed concepts that are meant to entangle and enmesh in an effort to navigate this new space.

Theoretical concepts of new material feminisms. Intra-related in diffractive methodology, agential cuts are enacted alongside intra-action, onto-epistemology, agential realism, and posthumanist performativity. These main terms are closely interwoven, which reinforces this new way of engaging with knowledge and existence. These concepts and terms will be explored throughout this section.

“Diffraction is not about any differences but about which differences matter” (Barad, 2007, p. 378). Haraway (1992) articulated that the point and boundaries of differences that matter is the effects of those differences. Barad (2007) agreed. The entanglements of knowing and being must continually be reimagined and remapped based on the lens that funnels the data (Barad, 2007). The diffractive lens requires researchers to represent the varying perspectives and plural realities of corporeal and cerebral experiences in both nonhuman and human agents (Hekman, 2008). Researchers might believe that the differences are only produced by the boundaries and construction of the study itself when it is also about the researcher acting on it as well. Therefore, the goal of the analysis was to recognize and present the plural becomings of the policies and participants that were ensnared in the discursive and visceral realities. “A diffractive strategy takes into account that knowing is never done in isolation but is always effected by different forces coming together”(Mazzei, 2013, p. 778). Therefore, new material feminisms

recognized that the onto-epistemological lens does not exist as separate from other theories but is part of the lens itself. Diffraction allowed me space to fuse queer theory and feminist poststructural policy analysis with new material feminisms to construct a lens that enables differences to be imagined and recognized.

In a diffractive framework, the data set funneled with/through agential cuts and the apparatus which produces various enactments and possibilities (Barad, 2007). In the research inquiry, “the apparatus specifies an agential cut that enacts a resolution...*Hence, apparatuses are boundary-making practices* (Barad, 2007, p. 148). The apparatus determines the boundaries or the agential cuts of the study. This directly affects the methodological becomings of the study. Through the establishment of the apparatus which changed based on the data collected, cuts are enacted by the entangled realities the actants, both nonhuman and human, within the study. With the purpose to see new and constantly changing differences with/in the data, the nonhuman and human find collective engagement in the bounds of the apparatus. Agential cuts are purposeful decisions to manage the vast amount of data collected and determines exclusions in the research.

Cuts are mediated within the intra-actions among the established apparatus. *Intra*-actions co-constitute materiality and discourse (Alaimo & Hekman, 2008; Allen, 2015; Barad, 2007; Hekman, 2008; Jackson & Mazzei, 2012; Jackson, 2013; Mazzei, 2013; Taylor & Ivinson, 2013; Taylor, 2013; Zabrodska et al., 2011). *Intra*-actions must not be mistaken for *interactions* (Barad, 2007). This is different from *interaction*, which is to separate entities which are acting *on* each other and have their own humanistic form of agency (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). When applying *intra*-action, “knowing *and* being...are mutually implicated” (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 116). *Intra*-actions have histories and politics. Therein, participants do not exist outside of policies and vice-versa. *Intra*-actions are always mutually constitutive and entangled with one the other, and

produce enactments with varying diffractive possibilities. Also, Barad (2008b) noted, “knowing is a direct material engagement, a practice of intra-acting with the world as part of the world in its dynamic material configuring, its ongoing articulations. The entangled practices of knowing and being are material practices” (pp. 329-330). By repositioning the material—lived realities and experiences alongside discourse—new material feminisms reimagine discursive articulations and their intra-acting material realities (Alaimo & Hekman, 2008; Lather, 2007).

Intra-action establishes that matter and discourse, ontology and epistemology, knowing and becoming, nature, technology, and culture, human and nonhuman are co-constitutively acting together and mutually produce “both subjectivities and performative enactments” (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 111). This is the concept of an onto-epistemology: “knowing is a material practice of engagement as part of the world in its differential becoming,” or in short, “knowing in being”(Barad, 2007, pp. 89, 185). By entangling ontology and epistemology into “onto-epistemology,” Barad (2007) stressed that knowing and being are inseparable; they are forever intra-acting and, therein, function and formulate with notions of agency and reality. Onto-epistemological is the Baradian concept of agential realism (Barad, 2007).

Agency is therefore in new material feminism: “agency...is an enactment, not something that an individual possesses” (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012, p. 113). Thus, Barad (2008a) asserted a new concept of agential realism, one which posits a production of agency through the intra-actions of multiple entities that may be human and/or nonhuman. Hekman (2010) concisely summarized Barad’s conceptualizations of agential realism:

First, it is grounds and situates knowledge claims in local experiences. Thus objectively it is literally embodied. Second, agential realism privileges neither the material nor the cultural; rather, the production is material/cultural. Third, agential realism entails the interrogation of boundaries and cultural reflexivity. Drawing different boundaries has different ontological implications. Fourth, agential realism underlines the necessity of an ethic of knowing; our constructed knowledge has real, material consequences. (p. 73)

Agential realism exists within the productive process of possibilities and visceral consequences that emerge from the intra-actions (Barad, 2008a; Hekman, 2008). Additionally, within agential realism and unlike feminist poststructural policy analysis, agency is not an attribute that can be possessed. Agency is webbed into the entanglements through/between/among/with the active actants along with the possibilities that are produced (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012; Mazzei, 2013). Therefore, human and nonhuman actants are not voluntarily and consciously participating but are co-constituted through their intra-actions. Therefore for this inquiry, policies and participants are each agential to the other and so intra-acting. Both have vibrant becomings, which are fused to the other material realities.

In addition, agential realism is a performative intra-action. However, it is not the same as queer theory performativity. Butler's performativity formation failed to acknowledge the visceral, material experiences (Colebrook, 2008; Hekman, 2008). Barad redefined performativity distinctively as posthumanist enactment in which material bodies, human and/or nonhuman, and discursive constructions are intra-acting (Barad, 2008a; Hekman, 2008).

Agential realism between policies and participants. New material feminisms encapsulates and agitates FPS policy analysis and queer theories. To this end, policies and participants are envisioned as entangled, vibrant, messy, intra-acting becomings with varying possibilities. This section dives deep into the literature that conceptualizes policies as non-human actants with human participants.

Two of those theorists encapsulated the ways policies and participants are vibrant, entangled actants. Colebrook (2008) articulated how Elizabeth Grosz discussed art and the entanglements of culture and nature:

[We] must go further than problematizing the nature/culture binary: culture *is* nature, and nature *is* culture. Culture is nature, because without those tendencies to change, adapt, increase complexity, and newness, there would be no arenas of thought, beauty, or political grouping. Nature is culture because all those features that were once deemed to be elevated and human – invention, force, relations, activity – characterize life in general. (pp. 73-74)

Colebrook continued this examination of theoretical concepts by stating:

While certain industries and technologies, such as reproductive medicine and cosmetic surgery, may have their origin in reterritorializing life, they might also allow us to free life from any notion of that which *strives to live*. It is *this* potentiality of nonrealization, of dispersion, of remaining inert and refusing to be oneself that frees matter from the human, through the human. (2008, p. 82)

New material feminists, such as Colebrook, envisioned a deconstructivist paradigm with material becoming of cultural “things” without conscious, human-based thoughts to make them valid. Her application of new material feminisms assists us in thinking about policies and people as both agential actants; and not policies existing in control nor just as an extension of human experiences.

Furthermore, Bennett contributed an acute medium for policies as nonhuman agents entangled with human realities. Policies are actants of “thing-power” which is “the curious ability of inanimate things to animate, to act, to produce effects dramatic and subtle” (Bennett, 2009, p. 6). The theoretical focus of FPS policy analysis is situated within humanism but recognizes that humans are the subjects that imagine, construct, and govern them (St. Pierre, 2000). Policies reconceptualized through new material feminisms are dynamic, oscillate, and are intra-acting agents with the material realities of human participants. Both policies and participants are webbed together within higher education.

By understanding the actions that occur, the transformation of the environment is possible: “thinking through the co-constitutive materiality of human corporeality and nonhuman natures offers possibilities for transforming environmentalism itself” (Alaimo & Hekman, 2008,

p. 9). Alaimo and Hekman troubled the notion of the conscious human participant intra-relations and the ways that ecosystems continue to evolve with specific aims and possibilities. By identifying plural possibilities that emerge from the participants' engagements with policies, realities and implications can be formed and addressed. The possibilities are local, contextual, and are ever-emerging. These theoretical formations of new material feminisms examine the local becomings of the apparatuses for this inquiry.

Topical Framework: The Sexual and Gender Educational Apparatus

Building off of the theoretical framework of new material feminisms, this portion of the literature review contextualized one apparatus that is situated on the study. There are three main topical entanglements that create the parameters for the dissertation: gender and sexuality, higher education institution, and LGBTQIA+ employees and higher education policies.

Gender and Sexuality

In the initial review of the data, gender differences became apparent. For example, the men in the study were all administrators and none of the women held similar leadership roles. Also, gendered language was used by the participants to describe their partners, people at the institution, and perceptions of their gender identities. And while there were only three trans-spectrum identified participants, the lived articulation of gender variant participants (e.g., dyke) must be included in the conceptual knowledge of gender. Consequently, concepts of gender must be conceptualized as intra-acting with the notion of sexuality.

Gender. Gender is a fluid social construction based on the infusion of micro- and macro-politics and historical positionality at a particular place and time (Bornstein, 2013; Butler, 2011; Pascoe, 2007). The trans community demanded that the concept of gender widen the borders that earlier cisgender feminist and lesbian/gay researchers/activists constructed. The trans community

and gender nonconforming individuals articulated that the rigorous and decisive cultural and societal gender norms arbitrarily enact real and discursive violence upon anything beyond these harsh and unattainable boundaries (Sullivan, 2003).

Since gender is a product of cultural and societal knowledge, scholars have developed different ways to understand gender constellations. According to Bornstein (2013), gender is the compilation of five components: assignment, roles, identity, expression, and attribution. A person's assigned sex type is part of a hard-science positivistic construction. Thus, she reconceptualized this knowledge set as "gender assignment" (Bornstein, 2013). As she most eloquently stated, "please use sex only when speaking of fucking" (Bornstein, 2013, Chapter 2, Section 3). A consortium of 45 social workers, medical physicians, and academics from across North America agreed with Bornstein, declaring "gender assignment is a social and legal process not requiring medical or surgical intervention" (Anthony et al., 2006, p. 25). Through Bornstein's lens, scientific power is dismantled as static and finite; it places that knowledge and becoming into a larger cultural and societal fluid notion of gender. The other four components (gender role, gender identity, gender expression, and gender attribution) are generally accepted as culturally and socially constructed knowledge among queer and feminist scholars.

- Gender roles are cultural expectations of what career, lifestyle, and/or activities a person should do with or during their life (e.g., teacher vs. principal; mow the lawn vs. vacuum; surf vs. sun bathe).
- Gender "identity is personal" (Bornstein, 2013, Chapter 2, Section 3, Line 21). This is an internal feeling and it is fluid. However, many people tie their gender identity to their gender assignment, believing it is one and the same. Complexities manifest through identity through dissonance between genitals and how one thinks about themselves.

- Gender expression is putting identity into practice. Expression is how people “wear” gender through grooming practices, clothing, physicality, etc.
- Gender attribution is effectively reading another person’s gender expression along with the roles they perform and assigning a gender qualifier to them; such as “appropriate” pronouns (e.g., she, her, hers; he, him, his). This identity often lets the “reader” qualify if they can just be friends with this person and/or see them as a potential sexual companion.

Critical scholars note that gender enactments are taught and learned through repetition to sustain notions of hegemonic power and control (Blumenfeld, 2012; Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). And through Butler’s articulation of performativity, researchers were given the theoretical tools to investigate and destabilize normalized/essentialized, repetitive power structures (Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). By compiling all this knowledge under the gender paradigm, the data can be mined for realities and discursive productions and performances of gender and their intra-action with sexuality.

Gender must also be understood with these complexities, as it explicitly intra-acting with sexuality. As Wilchins (2004) noted:

Gender as gay issues has vanished from civil discourse. Thus gender has become, in effect, the new gay – it is not mentioned in polite company... It is now acceptable to be gay, but it’s still not yet okay to be a fag. You can be a lesbian, but not a dyke. (p. 17)

Wilchins analysis seeps into a material feminist framework by remarking that “gender is always a *doing*” (p. 12). She maintained the basis for sexual-based violence is gender. Throughout the Obama administration, the Department of Education issued *Dear Colleague* letters detailing that Title IX indirectly serves queer-spectrum folx because gender was often the reason that they were attacked, not their sexual orientation (Ali, 2010). In the pilot study data and the larger

inquiry, gender politics are strong mitigating factors that have delineated success at DSU. Higher education is situated in the interweaving of gender as sexuality.

Building onto the complications and intra-actions of gender and sexuality, Atkinson (2008) addressed the gendered politics of women in educational settings and how their teaching is sexually implicated based on dress and how their bodies are decorated in the classroom. Using Atkinson's (2008) assertions and applying it to my data, employee identity in an education setting reaches into the employee's "off the clock" hours as well. Further exploring analysis of how gender bodies are read, restricted, and punished in an educational work environment, participants intentionally attempted to desexualize and degender themselves within the work environment in an effort to eliminate the possibility of being the target of bullying, harassment, and discrimination. Gender is not ever far from sexuality and vice versa.

Sexuality. The participants interlocked their gender with their sexual identities because "sexuality saturates educational spaces, objects, and relations" (Gilbert, 2014, p. xiv). Sexuality, sexual orientation, sexual preference, and sexual identity are also influenced by the ebb and flow of cultural norms and perceptions and how one defines themselves (Shai, 2010). Sexuality has been normed to be synonymous with identifying one's self by their sexual, monogamous relationship with another person. However, Bornstein (2013) defined concepts of gender and sexuality as intertwined and productive, and ruptures the barriers and binaries of heteronormativity. Sexuality is more than "body parts and their configurations" (Bornstein, 2013, Chapter 6, Components of Sexuality, Line 4). There are a myriad of other factors in the constellation of one's sexual orientation, sexuality, or sexual preference which include, but are not limited to: subjectivities of interest in sex, gender, sensation, location and time, perceptions and communications, confidence and power dynamics, safety, love and romance, partnering,

community and interaction, comfort and risk, fantasy and playfulness, morality, spirituality and wisdom, etc. (Bornstein, 2013; Gilbert, 2014; Warner, 2000). This gives space for people to identify as asexual, sexual, straight, monosexual, polyamorous, polysexual, demisexual, pomosexual, gray, etc. “Sex does not need to be primordial in order to be legitimate. Civilization doesn’t just repress our original sexuality; it makes new kinds of sexual. And new sexualities, including learned ones, might have as much validity as ancient ones, if not more” (Warner, 2000, p. 11).

While the conceptual possibilities of gender and sexuality are infinite, normative notions articulate, define, and regulate strict, culturally-appropriate boundaries on gender and sexuality (Warner, 2000). Outside the bounds of the restrictive material articulations of these concepts lies queer. As noted above in the theoretical review of the literature, queer is not just a theoretical framework but how people identify themselves deploying theoretical articulations and inclusivity. Queer runs the gamut of gender and sexual identity, demanding that no box or social construction will or can define a person’s gender and/or sexual identity. This broad, emancipatory space removes the barriers between LGBTQIA+ alphabet-soup identity politics and asserts that gender and/or sexuality is always fluid, plural, and subjective, and shatters our material and discursive notions of normalcy (Blumenfeld, 2012; Clare, 1999). As Clare noted (1999), “*queer* names a hugely diverse group of people. It brings dykes, faggots, bi’s, and trannies in all our variation and difference and overlap under one roof; it is a coalition-building word” (p. 97). Even so, this emancipatory openness has its drawbacks.

Historically and currently (depending on tone and inflection), queer was/is a pejorative term and people who are gender nonconforming and/or not straight may have a negative guttural response to the word (Bornstein, 2013; Meyers, 2012). Additionally, there is a community

around how one identifies themselves (e.g., Black lesbians, gay men, men who love men, crossdressers, etc.) outside of the umbrella of “queer.” These specific communities provide a sense of connection and help to eliminate thoughts of pathologies and isolation while at the same time working toward social progress (Githens, 2012). Critical theorists also note that queer identity is a privileged term that envelops class, demographic, education, gender, and race politics (Clare, 1999; Sullivan, 2003). Queer identity politics “have been accused of being, among other things, male-centered, anti-feminist, and race-blind” (Sullivan, 2003, p. 48). As noted earlier, traditional conceptual knowledge of “identity” falls into the trap of fixedness, removing possibilities and variability. These complexities are crucial when understanding queer as an identity and not as a theoretical framework.

Higher Education Institutions and LGBTQIA+ Employees

Educational institutions, including higher education, have been bestowed with power by the culture to encourage, enforce, police, and punish culturally normed material and discursive realities (Allan et al., 2010; Meyers, 2012). Therefore, institutions of higher learning are part of the regulatory structure that perpetuates gender and sexuality norms and violence (deLeon & Brunner, 2013; Meyers, 2012). Higher education is one of the apparatuses in this inquiry. Therefore, this section explores queer and trans-spectrum folx in higher education.

Historical context. To contextualize the historical panic associated with higher education and LGBTQIA+ individuals, texts such as Willard Waller’s 1932 book *The Sociology of Teaching* instilled fear towards people “suspected” of having non-heterosexual identity: “according to Waller, homosexuality was a deviant, contagious, and dangerous disease that could and should be avoided in school by firing teachers who demonstrated homosexual traits including ‘carriage, mannerisms, voice speech, etc.’” (Renn, 2010, p. 133). Additionally, prior to

1973 “homosexuality” was a diagnosable, yet treatable, mental disorder in which a person could receive corrective therapy to rid themselves of this affliction (Renn, 2010). While higher education institutions may have kept students on campus who had observable “homosexual” traits in order to cure them, employees who were under suspicion chose to leave the profession, were fired from their positions, and/or were ousted by their scholarly community due to their “disease” at that time (Blount, 2012; Renn, 2010).

In the late 1970s and post-Stonewall Riots, these historical notions continued to fester within the United States political and educational arena. “Suspect” educational employees were equated with pedophilia, molestation, recruitment, and violence, and it was thus believed that they should not be in a profession that involved children/students (Blount, 2012; deLeon & Brunner, 2013). While years of studies have proven that almost always these crimes are committed by “straight” males, there still continues to be ignorance around this issue, which perpetuates the misperception that only straight people should work in education (Blount, 2012).

Even today, educational employees are expected to adhere to dominant notions of gender and sexuality within and outside the teaching environment (Atkinson, 2008; Blount, 2012; Gilbert, 2014). The expectation is that LGBTQIA+ people can be “normal” by adhering to social and cultural norms of affection toward intimate partners as well as establish dominant and oppressive roles within partnerships. Educational culture has still not lost this discriminatory process of eliminating “deviancy” from positions of power, and LGBTQIA+ employees are well aware of this campus climate (Allan et al., 2010).

Higher education as employment bullies. As noted by the historical context, it is not difficult to imagine that LGBTQIA+ employment in higher education has also been linked with workplace bullying (Zabrodska et al., 2011). Bullying is defined as “long-term, intentional, and

aggressive actions in which victims feel a balance of power difference between themselves and the perpetrators” (Hollis & McCalla, 2013, p. 7). Workplace discrimination is defined “as unfair and negative treatment of workers or job applicants based on personal attributes that are irrelevant to job performance” (Chung, 2001, p. 34). Discrimination practices and bullying happen simultaneously.

Since the McCarthy era, LGBTQ+ educational employees have been specifically and intentionally targeted for bullying and discrimination (Blount, 2012; Hollis & McCalla, 2013; Rankin, 2005; Warner, 2000; Zabrodska et al., 2011). Yet from the 1900s onward, anti-discrimination and anti-bullying of LGBTQIA+ in education has focused mostly protecting student populations (Blount, 2012). While there is historical context for discriminatory and bullying practices against higher education employees, the literature continues to be scarce (Blount, 2012; deLeon & Brunner, 2013; Messinger, 2011; Rankin, 2005; Sears, 2002; Vaccaro, 2012).

Situated in historical context, researchers have hindered LGBTQIA+ employees in higher education by heavily and nearly exclusively focusing on student experiences. Gilbert (2014) requested that researchers and the community at-large hone in on students because we:

create the child who must be saved – children are the future/ we are the future of our childhoods ... When human and civil rights for LGBTQ people are conceptualized as adult issues, the queer adult nevertheless needs ‘the child’ in order to advance [their] claim for civil rights, and those opposing the expansion of civil rights also need ‘the child’ as an alibi for their continuing discrimination. (pp. 15, 16)

There is a desire to hold onto and preserve the pure, hygienic, helpless innocence of sexuality and gender of children, and Gilbert obliterates that notion. Gilbert alerted researchers and practitioners to the dangers of entangling “the child”/ students in a project on educator employment.

Circulation of normalcy in universities. Additionally, the literature that is available surrounding discrimination and persecution of LGBTQIA+ higher education employees is intra-related in the material and discursive power production of the notion of “normal” formations of sexuality and gender – straight, cisgender people (Rankin, 2005). Those who fall outside the boundaries of “normal” are the target of bullying, harassment, and discrimination within higher education. Normalcy and dominant forms are infused into policy productions on college campuses (Iverson, 2012; Zabrodska et al., 2011). Moreover, normative notions are placed into regulating policies and enmeshed with circulations of power that intra-act with LGBTQIA+ institutional employees. These policies are idealized as the production of “rational,” “objective” notions to guide and facilitate the “healthy” practices on the collegiate campus (Iverson, 2012). However, pervasive normative and dominant notions of power are articulated and enacted through policies (Iverson, 2012; Warner, 2000). Because norms are so pervasive and culturally salient, even “well-intentioned policies committed to creating a more inclusive campus climate may unwittingly reinforce practices that support exclusion and inequity” (Iverson, 2012, p. 152).

Outside of the performance of hidden assumptions and taken-for-granted normed policies, silences produce knowledge (Iverson, 2012; Nicolazzo, 2017). These silences are recognizable as non-policy policies (Ballard, 2006). Material and discursive silences engulf notions of queerness as problematic and “reinforce the norm for those who are different” (Rankin, 2005, p. 21). Similar to Iverson’s (2012) findings of 21 university diversity action plans, normalcy as a non-policy policy trumps DSU’s university-wide non-discrimination policies and procedures and its intention to create an inclusive, equitable, welcoming, safe environment. At DSU, the pervasive production of heteronormativity and genderism are standard

non-policy policies that produce distinct human (LGBTQIA+ employees) and non-human (policy) entanglements.

Employment and university policies. The field of LGBTQ education history remains rich for study, as education historians have lagged behind other scholars in addressing LGBTQ issues, and educators remain unaware of how sexuality and LGBTQ issues have shaped contemporary policy and practice (Bailey & Graves, 2012, p. 44).

While the literature gap is closing on LGBTQIA+ students in higher education, there is still a large void in regards to LGBTQIA+ employees in higher education. Through the 1900s and 2000s, there has been a shift in activism benefiting LGBTQIA+ students over educational employees (Blount, 2012). There is a commitment to eliminate violence for “the innocent children” and college students, but children grow up (Gilbert, 2014). As adults, workplace discrimination, marginalization, harassment, and bullying are realities for LGBTQIA+ people. Since the Employment Non-discrimination Act (ENDA) continues to get voted down, there is still no federal law that prohibits workplace discrimination on the basis of one’s sexuality and/or gender. There is a correlation between higher education institutions continuing to move toward a more private-sector business model, and bullying is on the rise for employees (Zabrodska et al., 2011).

Recent studies have shown that universities are creating and sustaining conditions that incite “bullying and other forms of employee abuse” (Zabrodska et al., 2011). In “Bullying as intra-active Process in Neoliberal Universities” by Zabrodska et al., the authors stated that bullying is so frequently normalized that it forces the bullied out of positions and raises turnover for people with non-dominant marginalized identities which include, but are not limited to, gender and sexuality. However, people of non-dominant identities leaving the institution is seen

as “normal” for higher education due to the societal belief that people change jobs frequently throughout their lifetime. Using a new material feminisms lens, Zabrodka et al. (2011) effectively engaged the intra-actions between the bullying discourses (non-human) with the material realities of people (human) with non-dominant identities who experience workplace bullying as university faculty. This study encourages a refocus on employees of difference in higher education.

The literature that is available regarding employees in higher education focuses predominantly on faculty and educational leaders (Bilimoria & Stewart, 2009; Dozier, 2012; Messinger, 2011; Rothblum, 1995; Sears, 2002; Vaccaro, 2012). In 2002, Sears published a study on 104 LGB faculty members across the United States. Interestingly, Sears concluded that private, independent institutions of higher education were more “gay affirming or tolerant” than public institutions. Additionally, lesbian faculty has significantly poorer perceptions of their institutions compared to their gay or bi male counterparts (Sears, 2002). This study supports my findings that gender intersections need to be explored in regards to sexuality identity employment experiences on campus.

About a decade later in 2011, Messinger published a similar study, but explicitly focused on LGBT faculty who engaged in policy advocacy and activism in regards to gender and sexuality equality on campus. Of the 30 faculty members interviewed from 15 different campuses, most of the participants had received tenure prior to engaging in campus activism. These committed campus activists only began their agitating after they had gained job security on campus. What was also interesting was nearly half of the LGBT advocates identified as “heterosexual.” Moreover, if the participant LGBT identified and was not tenured faculty, campus colleagues discouraged them from engaging with campus LGBT politics. Building off

Messinger's finding, my study will focus on all employment positions within the university. This provides a stronger understanding of educational culture.

A year later, Vaccaro (2012) built upon Messinger's study by conducting an ethnographic study on one campus that focused on six LGBT affinity groups, and through those groups gained a sense of campus culture. There was one faculty group, one staff association, one undergraduate organization, and three graduate student groups that were connected to specific colleges within the university. Vaccaro individually interviewed 49 people from these groups, as well as attending the organizational meetings over the course of 2 years. The findings from this study noted that specific colleges/departments within a larger university environment determine how employees and students feel about their university experience. Since it is often easier and quicker to complete a surveyed campus climate study, Vaccaro asserted that "higher education practitioners must address *both* organizational-level *and* microclimate issues related to heterosexism, homophobia, genderism, and transphobia" (p. 441). By conducting a university-wide qualitative textual analysis alongside LGBTQ employees' interviews, I addressed Vaccaro's recommendation.

As most recently, deLeon and Brunner (2013) reported on their national qualitative study, in which 17 LG pre-K-20 educational leaders illustrated their experiences within their positions. deLeon and Brunner demonstrated the level of fear, indignity, and violence that the participants felt. For example, a majority of the respondents believed their LG identity is a "flaw." Also, almost a quarter of the participants were so ashamed of their LG identity that they chose to "suppress their same-sex feelings, and turn to accepted heterosexual marriages" (deLeon & Brunner, 2013, p. 175). These observations were startling, yet not surprising illustrations of how sexuality still deeply oppresses people, including those who are labeled as "educational leaders."

More specifically as it relates to my inquiry, deLeon and Brunner (2013) noted that the participants' personal lives in regards to their sexuality are intertwined with their work and it does affect their abilities to be productive leaders. As all these studies indicate, there was a significant gap between the university's educational policies, and how LGBTQIA+ marginalized people actually felt about their campus community.

Summary

Both the theoretical and topical frameworks are required to capture the nuances of the dissertation inquiry. As the foundational theoretical framework, new material feminisms requires the co-constituted knowledges of both FPS discourse analysis and queer theory to successfully navigate the complexities and contradictions of study. These knowledges and the concepts of entanglement, intra-action/intra-relations, and lived discursive/materialities are the theoretical entry points to the research questions.

The topical framework establishes the macro cuts of the study that include: higher education, queer and trans-spectrum employees, and policies. Within the literature, research participants connected how they were "policy-ed" within their work environment as it relates to their LGBTQIA+ identity (deLeon & Brunner, 2013; Messinger, 2011; Sears, 2002; Vaccaro, 2012; Zabrodska et al., 2011). These studies added to the literature by articulating the implicit and explicit entanglements between higher learning institutions' goals and aims, and LGBTQIA+ university employees and policies. Based on the knowledge gained from the literature review, Chapter III offers the methodological approach that entangles and operationalizes purposeful tools to answer the research questions.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

To be entangled is not simply to be intertwined with another, as in the joining of separate entities, but to lack an independent, self-contained existence. [Policies and people] do not preexist their intra-actions; rather, [they] emerge through and as part of their entangled intra-relating (Barad, 2007, p. ix).

The methodology for this study draws directly from the work of Karen Barad (2007) and her conceptualization of new material feminisms. I begin with this quote above to demonstrate how policies and people (i.e., discourse and matter in Barad’s original quote) will be theorized as not pre-existing one another, but rather as always already “entangled and intra-relating.” The goal of this study was to explore the following questions:

- 1) How are university-wide policies and queer and trans-spectrum employees entangled and intra-related?
- 2) What lived materialities are produced through these intra-actions?

This chapter delineates the relationships between the pilot study and the dissertation study, the methodological approach and corresponding research design, and the analytic framework and process. In this current study, I investigate the relations among three university policies and 27 queer-spectrum and trans-spectrum participants at Deep South University. A substantial amount of data were collected to examine how the governing policies and the employees in a university system do not exist outside of each other.

This dissertation project was a pivot from a previously conducted pilot study policy analysis. After working on the pilot study, I noted that the methodologies excluded the materialities and intra-relations between the policies and the participants. New material

feminisms provided me with different ways to analyze the data. Jackson and Mazzei stated that “[analysis] is about making new combinations to create new identities” (2012, p. 5). With new material feminisms, I was able to try a different approach with the data. Since “no specific method or practice can be privileged over any other” (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 7), this inquiry was an opportunity for me to operationalize new material feminisms and illustrate different phenomena and possibilities within the data.

Pilot Study

During the summer of 2012, I conducted a pilot study using a qualitative interview design and FPS policy analysis as the methodological framework. The aim of the study was to understand the relationship between policies and employment based on a person’s sexuality. I recruited both straight, cis allies, and queer and trans-spectrum employees for this exploratory study. I interviewed 11 participants: five who identified as straight, cis allies, and six who identified on the queer-spectrum. Table 1 indicates the participants’ identities that were revealed during the interview process on page 47.

Table 1
Pilot Study Self- Descriptors of Participants

Participant Pseudonym	Employment Type	Gender	Sexuality	Race	Level of Outness
Alana	staff	cis woman	bisexual	White	mostly in
Carrie	staff	cis woman	lesbian; dyke	White	out
Derek	administrator	cis man	gay	White	out
Dorothy	support staff	cis woman	bisexual; lesbian	White	mostly in
George	administrator	cis man	bisexual; queer	White	in
Janis	support staff	cis woman	straight ally	White	-----
Jeanette	faculty	cis woman	straight ally	White	-----
Laura	staff	cis woman	queer ally	White	-----
Logan	administrator	cis man	straight ally	White	-----
Sara	staff	cis woman	bisexual	Black	-----
Sean	administrator	cis man	gay	White	out

Note. All the participants’ identities are confidential and the researcher created pseudonyms for each participant.

Each participant completed a 45-90 minute interview, which I transcribed and analyzed using an open-coding approach (Charmaz, 2006). At the same time, I conducted a preliminary policy analysis of Deep South University's non-discrimination notice and dependent benefits.

I had two key findings from the pilot study that influenced the design of the dissertation study. Cis, straight allies were not able to reflect on their own sexuality and instead focused on their perceptions of queer-spectrum experiences. I decided to eliminate cis, straight allies as the goal was to better understand how policies intersect with the queer-spectrum employees from their perspective. Also in the literature, there was a lack of queer and trans-spectrum, higher education employment studies. Therefore, to strategically contribute to the research gap, I withdrew cis, straight allies from the dissertation inquiry and recruited only trans and queer-spectrum fulltime employees.

Also, there were apparent differences in experience based on gender and not just sexual identity (Pascoe, 2007). The pilot study data demonstrated how all the men I interviewed benefited from hegemonic male privilege, and the women were marginalized by their gender expression beyond their sexual identity. It was significant that all of the men who participated in this study were white administrators who discussed how their careers continued to move forward as their gender expression was traditionally masculine. The women in the study, however, spoke about their awareness of how others' perceive them as a gendered body, or how they were judged for their gender expression. Distinct from the men's experience, none of the women I interviewed were in administrative positions, and each acknowledged their gender. The stories participants shared with me also led me to consider a theoretical framework and methodological approach that could help me to better account for the affective-material intra-actions between trans and queer-spectrum employees and the university's policies.

Methodological Framework

By using the insights and findings from the pilot study, I identified important silences, gaps, and provocations that required further inquiry. For example, in the pilot study, no questions in the interview protocol asked the participants directly about the policies that I later analyzed. I tethered the participants' stories and lives to the policies with no interest in their analysis of the documents. As a discursive analysis, the pilot troubled the structural complications and implications of the university's policies at the research site and ignored the participants' love, rage, empathy, apathy, interdependence, isolation, resistance, assimilation, resilience, passivity, and joy that were present with the policies.

After observing this gap from the pilot, I wanted to know more about the participants direct intra-relations with the policies. For the dissertation and divergent from the pilot study, I interviewed the participants about their lived experiences at DSU and asked the participants directly about their conceptions of the three policies. However, as with the pilot study, the policies needed to be examined outside of the confines of the participants' responses so as to not center the human experiences over the nonhuman actants. Therefore, I conducted a discursive analysis as well.

I utilized qualitative data collection methods alongside a new material feminisms analysis that encouraged me to think about how participants and policies were entangled and lived as material-discursive events. This multimethod qualitative study was organized to collect the kinds of data that captured both policy and participants. The analytic process was used to focus in on the intra-actions of policy and trans and queer-spectrum employees. I collected interviews and documents and analyzed them using a policy analysis framework imbued with new material feminisms theory. Therefore, this multimethod qualitative analysis enacted the "cuts" of the

study that organized the data in order to gather, funnel, and highlight the findings with new material feminisms, qualitative interview research, and policy analysis.

New Material Feminisms, Thinking with Theory

Research protocols often remain caught within assumptions of transparent relay between data and meaning in which data is envisaged as inert, passive ‘stuff’ we (humans) go out and ‘collect’, return with and then pore over to analyze, code, and thematise. In treating data as ‘evidence’ in this way, data is rendered, contained, controlled, indeed it is condemned to the death-like status of object. In contrast, a vital materialism prompts us to treat this of data as lively matter – as a material actant – and research practices as ‘encounters between ontological diverse actants, some human, some not though all thoroughly material.’ (Bennett, 2009, p. xiii-xiv; Taylor, 2013, p. 691)

Bennett (2009) and Taylor (2013) eloquently delineated the ways that new material feminisms is an ongoing methodological process that enables the researcher to think with theory. Thinking with theory is a methodological approach energized by the need for “a new starting place[s],” not new methods (Barad, 2007). Therefore, this multimethod methodology that included qualitative research interviews and policy analysis, was nestled within new material feminisms. New material feminisms was the starting point for the study to be imagined.

Thinking with theory, particularly new material feminisms, acknowledged, embraced, and produced the entangled agential materialities of qualitative research. Additionally, new material feminisms accept that I, as a queer cis woman researcher, have specialized knowledges, experiences, and agendas. These intra-actions would be highly unrealistic and unethical to ignore (Charmaz, 2006; Glesne, 2010). Therefore, I participated in the data, the analysis, and in the findings because I was the one making the cuts by deciding what to pay attention to and elevate. Even in my “new material feminisms qualitative researcher role,” I can never fully separate from my other subjectivities, nor would I want to.

The operationalizing of new material feminisms was a purposeful, salient endeavor throughout the project. As a theoretical and methodological tool, intra-actions were the method

through which I analyzed and discussed the productive materialities in the data set. This concept was applied generously to thinking about the policies, interviews, me as the researcher, and all aspects and facets of the inquiry.

Qualitative Research Interview

The interview design foregrounded the participants in the study. This would have been strictly a policy analysis without the critical contributions of queer and trans-spectrum employees. This data collection method authored the corporeal manifestations of the policies as well as tracking the macro, discursive occurrences.

In qualitative research interview, knowledge is produced socially in the interaction of interviewer and interviewee. The very production of data in the qualitative interview goes beyond a mechanical following of rule and rests upon the interviewers' skills and situated personal judgment in the posing of questions. (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009, p. 82)

As the researcher, I guided the data collection process. Conscious of this process, I built rapport with the participants and learned how the policies functioned daily with the participants without them thinking directly about them. For example, I asked the participants: "What is your perception of how the university views LGBTQIA+ people or groups?" Each policy was directly cited through this question by at least one of the participants. Then after discussing the policies, I circled back to their daily experiences.

Policy Analysis

In the ecosystem of higher education, policies are institutions within institutions. This discourse policy analysis that I conducted highlighted the reverberations of the policies with and in the organization, and the tangible confines in employees' lives. Through this analysis, layers within the policies were unveiled which included unspoken texts, or non-policies, that regulated the daily lives of the participants at DSU (Ballard, 2006; Zabrodska et al., 2011). While all university-wide policies were formulated, articulated, and established with specific intentions,

those intentions might have been met and, at the same time, provoked rogue consequences. Both the intentions and consequences connected with the employees' lives (Allan, 2010; Allen, 2015; Iverson, 2012). The policy analysis was more robust through the insights of the participants.

Research Design

While the research design appears traditional, it is the bringing together of the interview data and policy documents with new material feminisms theories that offers a different approach to thinking about policy and queer-spectrum employees. This section describes the research design components.

Setting

The policies and participants were from a traditional, large, public, comprehensive, predominately White, conservative, higher education institution located in the Deep South and the same site as the pilot study. I created the pseudonym Deep South University (DSU) for this institution in order to protect the participants.

Also, federal and state policies had a direct effect on the contextual moment during data collection. Post-repeal of the Defense of Marriage Act but prior to marriage equality, similar-gender couples who were married in states where similar-gender marriage was legal could change their federal tax statuses to "married." Since DSU was located in a Deep South state where similar-gender marriage was not legal at the time of data collection, these similar-gender couples had to file individually on their state taxes. Therefore, this setting provided a localized focus with implications for a larger, complex inquiry into the relationships of university policies and their LGBTQIA+ employees.

Data Collection

The collection of the data began in October 2014 and concluded in January 2015. The policy documents were identified and approved in the dissertation proposal defense. Recruitment of the participants began immediately following the dissertation proposal defense and the Institutional Review Board approval. Since I modified the already open IRB pilot study, IRB approval of the dissertation inquiry was acquired swiftly after the proposal defense. I used *NVivo* to store and analyze the data.

The policy documents. The Deep South University mission statement, non-discrimination notice, and the dependents' benefits policy were analyzed by myself with insights from the participants. As in the pilot study, I conducted an initial discursive analysis prior to working with the participants. Following this analysis, I solicited the participants' reading of the policy documents during their interviews. The policy analysis was, therefore, a collaboration between the participants' perceptions and my own discursive analysis.

Policy document data. NCapture for NVivo generated an interactive screenshot or PDF of the documents for continual, ongoing engagement and analysis of that particular contextual moment. NCapture enabled me to document the online policies with the embedded live links. Even if the website or the links were updated, NCapture archived the policies in time for me and I was able to return to that digital contextual moment.

The participants. The LGBTQIA+ employees were recruited through the university online weekly employee newsletter, recruitment fliers throughout campus, a recruitment email sent to identified potential participants, social media ads and announcements (e.g., Facebook, Twitter), relationship building, and snowball sampling (See Appendices A, B, & C). To be a

participant, the person had to self-identify as LGBTQIA+ and be a fulltime employee at Deep South University. My goal was to recruit participants who were of different sexualities, genders, races, and job titles to further diversify the pilot study sample. Listed below are the 27 participants' pseudonyms along with their employment type, gender, sexuality, race, and the range of years they have been employed at DSU. In an effort to keep the participants' identities anonymous, Table 2 shows the only identity markers that I directly connect to each person in the analysis (see page 53). Two of the participants spoke about their immigration status and each person identified their ethnicity which is not included in the table below as it would compromise the participants' confidentiality.

After the initial screening to determine if a person met all the qualifications to participate (LGBTQIA+ fulltime employee at DSU), each participant was asked to engage in audio-recorded personal interviews. Each participant agreed to engage in one to three 45-120 minute interviews over the course of the 2014-2015 academic year. At any time if the participants were not able to continue, they were able to remove themselves from study but the data were usable for the study.

Interviews. The interviews took place from October 2014 through January 2015. Each in-person interview occurred during the first-round with each participant. As I was and still am geographically removed from DSU's campus, I planned a 3-week block of time to be there to conduct the first set of interviews with each participant. This was extended to 5 weeks to complete all the first-round interviews on site. During their first interview, I discussed their continued electronic participation via Skype, FaceTime, Google Hangout, other video chat software, or phone. I always had phone access as a backup in case the video conferencing failed during the distant interviews.

Table 2:
Dissertation Inquiry Self- Descriptors of Participants

Participant Pseudonym	Employment Type	Gender	Sexuality	Race	Employment Time at DSU
Amy	Staff	cis woman	not straight	biracial	1-3 years
Anna	Staff	genderqueer	lesbian	White	10-15 years
Ashley	Faculty	cis woman	queer	White	4-9 years
Benjamin	Staff	cis man	bisexual	White	4-9 years
Bradley	Staff	cis man	gay	White	1-3 years
Caroline	Staff	cis woman	lesbian	White	4-9 years
Carrie	Staff	cis woman	lesbian	White	4-9 years
Charlotte	Retired	cis woman	bisexual	White	15+ years
Corey	Staff	cis man	gay	White	>1 year
Dorothy	support staff	cis woman	lesbian	White	10-15 years
George	Administrator	cis man	bisexual; queer	White	4-9 years
Gregory	Staff	cis man	gay	White	15+ years
Heather	Faculty	cis woman	queer	White	>1 year
Julie	Faculty	genderqueer	demisexual; lesbian	White	4-9 years
Karen	Administrator	genderqueer	queer; mostly lesbian; bisexual	White	10-15 years
Kenny	Staff	cis man	gay	White	1-3 years
Lacey	Staff	cis woman	lesbian	White	1-3 years
Pearl	faculty	cis woman	queer	Black	1-3 years
Robert	staff	cis man	gay	White	15+ years
Robin	faculty	cis woman	lesbian	White	4-9 years
Sara	staff	cis woman	bisexual	Black	4-9 years
Skylar	faculty	cis man	gay	Black	1-3 years
Stacey	administrator	cis woman	lesbian	White	10-15 years
Thayer	staff	cis man	gay	White	1-3 years
Toni	staff	cis woman	queer	White	>1 year
Vincent	support staff	cis man	bisexual	Black	10-15 years
William	faculty	cis man	gay	White	1-3 years

First-round interviews. In and around Deep South University campus, I was able to have a face-to-face interview with each of the participants. The sunny, warm, winter days in the South allowed for several in-person interviews to take place outside. Between interviews, I sat on campus benches and wrote analytic memos about the day, in particular about the interviews that took place.

Before each interview began, I obtained informed consent and addressed the participants' rights using the PDF Expert iPad app. The consent forms noted that any identifiable information gained in the interviews was to be expunged from the transcription. In addition, pseudonyms were used to keep the participants' identities confidential.

The first round of interviews was focused on building rapport, learning more about the participants' particular cultural context within DSU, and inquiring about their implicit and direct relations with DSU policies. I adhered to a semi-structured protocol (See appendices D & E). Each of the 45- to 120-minute interviews was audio recorded using the Voice Record Pro iPad app. When compared to the pilot study, one of the most significant additions to the interview protocol was the reviewing of DSU university-wide policies, which included the mission statement, non-discrimination notice, and dependents' benefits.

After the first round of the interviews, there was only one participant who did not complete a second interview. I never received follow-up correspondence from this participant.

Second-round interviews. Twenty-three people completed a second and final interview, which was less structured, more casual, and conversational. These interviews ranged from 15 to 45 minutes in duration. One participant did not respond to a request for a second interview, and I decided not to interview three other participants due to repetitions of answers in each of their first interviews.

Most of the second-round interviews were hosted over video conferencing tools that included Skype, Facetime, or Google Hangout. Traditional phone calls were used in six of the interviews due to technology malfunctions. If I had their previous interview already transcribed, we discussed their first interview by clarifying, omitting, or changing their contributions to the study. Due to the volume of the participants and the quick turnover time of 1 month or less between the first and second interviews with each participant, I only shared the first transcription with eight of the participants. I did provide notes and clarifying questions from the first interviews for each person. During all the interviews, I took notes as well as asked probing questions to get more specific information. This was done in an effort to clarify statements while the knowledge was fresh with the participant as well as to dive deeper into their experiences (Charmaz, 2006; Glesne, 2010).

Interview transcripts. I transcribed 15 interviews and the transcriptionist generated 35 transcripts. I reviewed each completed transcript while listening to the audio recording to ensure accuracy and increase my familiarity with the data. The transcripts were uploaded into NVivo to organize and assist in the data analysis processes.

Field notes and memos. Using the Notes Plus iPad app, I typed and hand-wrote with a stylus the field notes and memos. In the first few interviews, I actively took field notes throughout the interviews. After the fourth interview, the field notes were simply follow-up questions that came to me while the participant was speaking. In an effort to be present and actively listen, I wrote the note and then came back to the question after the participant had finished their current answer.

After the fourth interview during the first-round, I adjusted to memos immediately after the interviews rather than field notes. On some days that I had back-to-back interviews, I

chronologically journaled the day, which often included each interview setting, gender expression of myself and the participants, and the most notable moments in each interview.

The memo process continued throughout the data analysis. The interview field notes and memos were transferred into NVivo. The memos that occurred during data analysis were written within the NVivo program itself.

Data Analysis

The data analysis has been an ongoing process since October 2014. There were two distinctive analyses of two sets of texts that occurred over the past few years: policy document and interview analysis. Both analyses had discursive and material findings that were each directly related to the other.

Policy document analysis. The policy document analysis consisted of reading and examining the three policies separately, and then as part of the larger assemblage within the other. They all were distinctive but part of a system. I thought of policies like Matryoshka dolls; each is its own but also nestled within the other. The mission statement encapsulated all the policies and employees; it was then followed by the non-discrimination notice, the dependents' benefits, and finally, the participants. Therefore, I asked the participants about the policies in the following order: 1) mission statement; 2) non-discrimination notice; 3) dependents' benefits; and 4) how the policies were connected, if at all.

This was done in NVivo through the NCapture documents. The policies were part of the same node family constructed with the participants' interview transcripts. Node families were assembled not simply from the direct responses of the participants but also the ways the policies exhibited materialities as nonhuman agents and within the lives the participants. For instance, Gregory noted the way that sexual orientation was added to the non-discrimination notice:

That happened, as far as sliding sexual orientation in, that happened, if I'm correct, about 5 to 7 years ago. And it was very subtle, but it was very exciting when it happened. And it went through the grapevine, but it went, it was like it went through the gay underground.

[Interview, 10/21/2014]

The policy was “exciting” for the people in the know but several participants in 2014-2015 were still unaware of this update due to the “underground” nature in which the policy was communicated to the campus. This data were pulled into the node families from the interview transcripts, memos, and policies themselves. I examined the discursive/material intra-relations from textual documents. An example of a node family is demonstrated in the data mapping section.

Interview artifacts. The interviews with the participants had correlating transcriptions, field notes, and analytic memos (Charmaz, 2006; Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 2011; Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009; Yin, 2009). This constellation of documents for each interview constituted my interview artifacts. Findings evolved from a constant comparison of the data by reading each of the interview artifacts (e.g., transcriptions, field notes, memos) through the other.

Thinking with theory and NVivo data mapping. Because I was thinking with the new material feminisms concept of diffraction, the NVivo mapping process was purposefully broad. I sought to document contradictions, complexities, differences, and possibilities that emerged within the parameters of the policies and participants intra-relations. If I deemed the textual information appropriate, the policies or transcripts were placed into a NVivo node family. The following is an example of an actual node family from this NVivo project. The parent node was “non-discrimination notice” and its child nodes were possibilities, differences, and language.

Information chunks might be placed in none, one, two, or all of these child nodes depending on the data.

During the interviews, I experienced visceral moments in which I immediately elevated into the NVivo mapping process. This initial mapping through elevating particular intra-actions were the first cuts that I imposed onto the data. After the initial construction and review of the data maps, the vivid and lively entanglements that I noted between the policies and participants began the additional cuts to manage the considerable amount of data that was collected. The interview artifacts and findings were continually reviewed throughout the data analysis process to arrive at three assertions that ran through all of the data collected for the project.

Researcher Positionality

As the researcher, I am firmly embedded within the research. I was one of the diffractive lenses by which the findings were generated. Working in the “backyard,” I knew that complications were imminent (Glesne, 2010). I was an insider due to my connections across the Deep South state and region. Therefore, I was conscious of not making assumptions or having preconceived notions with the participants I did have personal/professional relationships with prior to the interview process. In my pilot study, I attempted to manage my insider status by not interviewing anyone with whom I had a personal/professional relationship; in this, I was successful. However, for the dissertation study, I accepted anyone who met the recruitment criteria, including DSU employees I knew prior to the inquiry. Even in my pilot study, I knew I had an insider status as a “loud and proud” polysexual, cis woman.

Researchers must be cognizant of the complications of their insider status which may include: overlooking data or having a heightened sense of knowledge and persons, subverting data to stay connected to people personally, and negotiating potential damage of

professional/academic career (May & Pattillo-McCoy, 2000; Mulhall, 2003; Zabrodska et al., 2011). I believe that my visibility and activism attracted as well as deterred participants from the study. When potential participants discovered that I was the researcher for this study, several out LGBTQIA+ administrators chose not to participate. While this is speculation, I believe that these administrators withdrew because they wanted to distance themselves from the “social justice trouble-maker.” So the recruitment contained complexities, and the interviews with the participants also presented complications.

I found benefits to being an insider as well (Iverson, 2012). First, I was able to more easily establish rapport and trust as I was transparent with each of my participants that I am a queer cis woman. While I had been regionally involved in the Deep South as a higher education professional for several years prior to data collection, I was a fulltime graduate student at the time of the data collection and not an employee of any institution of higher education. Additionally, I entered into a new professional higher education position in another part of the country immediately after I completed the data collection. This allowed me time and space from Deep South University and removed any sense of potential repercussions to my academic or professional career. In this regard, I was able to utilize my insider status to my advantage, for the most part.

The entire study was incredibly difficult for me due to my former unhealthy and abusive experiences as a queer, cis woman administrator at an institution of higher education in the Deep South. Every time I attempted to work on this project and on the analysis in any regard, I was sucked back into that location and time of severe anxiety, low self-worth, and general sadness. While my overall wellness is currently healthy, I have had to manage severe anxiety, panic attacks, and nightmares throughout this process due to the data. Therefore, I avoided working on

this project for several months, nearly a year almost, because of the visceral pain that this inquiry forced me to continually experience. Taylor noted that “many of us as researchers feel haunted by ‘our’ data long after collecting ‘it’” (2013, p. 691). The pain has lessened over time and only reviewing transcripts, not recordings, helped to diminish the ghosts of my past. However, certain data points come to life and I continue to experience the hauntings.

Trustworthiness

“Most agree that we cannot create criteria to ensure that something is ‘true’ or ‘accurate’ if we believe concepts are socially constructed” (Glesne, 2010, p. 49). These trustworthiness methods were not employed to foster “value-free science,” but assisted me in managing the substantial amount of data collected and analyzed (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011, p. 6).

I do believe concepts and their meanings are socially constructed. However, these were the practices that I administered in an effort to saturate the data and ensure the inquiry “projected” trustworthiness.

Member check. Except for four of the participants, each participant had a second round interview in which I reviewed their previous interview with them and asked clarifying questions. For the other participants who only had one interview, their responses were repetitive and continued to circle back to previous answers within a single interview. The member check allowed me to obtain examples and nuances in the participants’ responses and dive deeper into their conceptions of the policies.

Audit trail. For the interviews and the policies, I had audit trails with which I continuously mapped the data. The audit trails were in the form of analytic memos after interviews and through the data analysis processes. Moreover, the audit trail was a method that had multiple benefits as it was situated in an ecological, sustainable framework.

Ecological. In a digital, plugged-in age, I purposefully entangled technology and digital connectivity into the research design. Since March 2012, I used a third-generation iPad for all my doctoral coursework including my pilot study. I used the QuickVoice Pro app to record my participants in Summer 2012.

For this current study, my goal was to have a more sustainable project from start to finish. The interviews were just me, my iPad, and the participant, no paper nor writing utensils. With the policies, recordings, and transcripts, everything was connected with online, password-protected databases and uploaded into NVivo. Except for the 100 recruitment fliers, all aspects of the research design was intentionally completed through digital communication and technology that included iPad and PC computer applications. Future research could be completely digital as none of the participants were recruited through the hard-copy advertisements.

Initially, it was expensive to utilize all the necessary technologies. However, by using this technology for more than 5 years, I have saved money through the elimination of printing costs and supported a sustainable research method. Additionally, any research texts from PDFs or books were acquired and read through electronic means. The hard-copy research was only used if it was already in my personal collection before the study began or borrowed from the local library.

Ethical Considerations

There were specific ethical considerations for the overall structure of study, in particular for the participants. Per IRB standards, no protected populations were involved in this study. However, there was vulnerability for the participants as they were marginalized persons based on their gender and/or sexuality and their employment. Their livelihoods were tethered to their

employment and their concerns were valid. Below were the ethical considerations that guided this study.

Care for confidentiality. With the concern for anonymity, I needed to take care to connect with the participants in their desired manner. The participants chose where the face-to-face interviews occurred. Most happened on campus, but a few were off-campus. Most on-campus interviews occurred in locations where they would not be recognized. As there was a small population of queer and trans-spectrum “out” employees on campus, I assured the participants during the interviews that I would not include particular responses from them in the data analysis as the information would make them identifiable.

Informed consent was discussed and then given by the participants prior to beginning the interviews. However, even some of the “out” participants circled back to confidentiality in their interviews. They double checked that their identities would be protected through pseudonym and the like before proceeding with a story or response. Moreover, the person with whom I wanted to conduct a second interview may not have followed up with me because of palpable fear in the first interview, even though she identified as a loud and proud lesbian.

Advocate. Two of the participants trusted me enough to disclose during their interviews that they were sexual assault survivors. I thanked them for trusting me with this knowledge. Since I was aware of local resources, I provided information about the local, on-campus victim/survivor comprehensive services. Because both were cis men, they were concerned about utilizing the services that they viewed were for women only. I was able to ease their apprehension about the resources and followed up with them during their second interview about their healing processes.

Limitations

This study was at a contextual, local moment in late 2014 into early 2015. Therefore, the inquiry cannot, nor should it be, generalizable. In qualitative research, “generability [was] not the goal, but rather *transferability* – that [was], how (if at all) and in what ways understanding and knowledge can be applied in similar contexts and settings” (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012, p. 31). While there might be perceptions of significant differences, in the Deep South, public, predominately White higher education institutions are not unique in their issues of structural inequalities in diversity policies and procedures when compared with similar institutions across the United States (Allan, 2003, 2008; Allan et al., 2010; Iverson, 2012; Marshall, 1997; Suspitsyna, 2010; Yin, 2009; Zabrodska et al., 2011). Additionally, within the subset of higher education employment, the literature indicates LGBTQIA+ employees continue to experience complications within their daily engagements on campus (deLeon & Brunner, 2013; Messinger, 2011; Sears, 2002; Vaccaro, 2012; Zabrodska et al., 2011).

Another limitation is that straight, cis folx were excluded from the collection process. Going forward, research would be beneficial to include these participants to notate their understanding as gender and sexuality peoples in the system. There were specific policy formations that had implications for people of all genders and sexualities.

Summary

The methodology and the methods that were used for this project assisted in mining specific data and provided cuts to manage the volume of data that was collected. New material feminisms framed and encompassed the inquiry by encouraging my examination of the data for the materialities between policies and employees. Moreover, new material feminisms assisted me in navigating and documenting the setting, creating the memos, and noting the ecological

implications of the study itself, by calling me to be mindful of minute entanglements. Qualitative research interview methodology offered refined tools for interviews and the subsequent textual transcripts. Policy analysis established the necessary parameters to amplify the policy texts as both material and discourse data. The research design was developed and implemented in relation to these three methodological frameworks. Alongside the literature, the methodologies and methods provided manageable cuts for analysis of the intra-actions between university policies and LGBTQIA+ employees.

CHAPTER IV: DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter discusses how policies and queer and trans-spectrum employees were entangled at Deep South University. The analysis of the data from these relationalities was arranged through three policies: the mission statement, non-discrimination policy, and dependent benefits. By thinking with new material feminism and using multimethod research design tools, I dove deeply into the apparatus of the participants and policies. At the same time, the data revealed the intertwining nature of the discourses that circulate with/through/around the policies and employees. As the researcher, I would be remiss if I did not implicate myself in the analysis as well. There was a plethora of data that was not included. Based on my desire to organize and manage this data analysis, I enacted agential cuts that both silenced some and elevated other participants' and policies' entanglements.

Three assertions were supported in the analysis, each linked to specific evidence that formed part of an intricate tapestry of data stitched together to study the complexities of university policies and the queer and trans-spectrum university employees. Each of the assertions was woven into the others, revealing the relationalities complicating employment and policies within the university. The first of these assertions claims that there exists a university façade constructed through policies that require, reward, and hide the subjugation and compliance of its employees. The second assertion claims that policy attempts to homogenize queer and trans-spectrum identities and in doing so makes gender and sexuality identities matter. The final assertion claims that policy language produces material implications and cloaks information

relevant to LGBTQIA+ employees' lives. These assertions provide evidence of the entanglements of organizational policies with the everyday lives of employees.

Assertion I: The Façade

Assertion: A university façade exists and is constructed through policies that require, reward, and hide the subjugation and compliance of its employees.

How I describe the university... and it's funny because my parents recently came for a visit and I gave them a walking tour of the university. I gave them a walking tour and they were very impressed with the campus and kind of how I framed the tour and kind of framed my narrative just like [Deep South University] has beautiful façades. So I think the outward appearances are the paramount, so that's kind of how I view [Deep South University].

[Bradley, Interview, 10/30/2014]

Bradley described the physical imagery of DSU through its highly groomed grounds and stately building structures. The campus draws you in and makes you fall in love: “I love brick buildings. I love the look of our campus. I love big trees on campuses. I love libraries and stuff like that” [Robin, Interview, 10/29/2014]. All but two buildings on campus are built in the antebellum style infused with the same silvery-gray brick coloring. When I was preparing or waiting for an interview to commence, I relished waiting among the “beautiful façades” of the campus which included substantial, heavily manicured greenery, blossoming flowers, and mature trees for ample cool shade, and the apex of campus was the encapsulating buildings with sleek white Greco-Roman pillars with gray/silver brick siding. The gray bricks reinforced university spirit as this color is one of the institution’s school colors. (The university colors were white and silver.) It was *too* perfect.

In those same serene moments, I found myself noting the connectedness between the architecture and how it is fused with policies and employees. Everything was strategically placed

to uphold and maintain the façade through order, control, and pristine appearances. As new buildings are imagined for the campus, architects must conceive new structures within the confines of campus color scheme and pre-Civil War era design. The building structures were present-day echoes of the era that oozed with the violence of gender, sexuality, and racial assimilation and subjugation. During my time in the open spaces of campus, I observed the Foundation Ambassadors⁸ skillfully walking backward and gesturing to these buildings while delivering seemingly innocuous tidbits of knowledge with a sense of importance. However, these highly manicured undergraduate employees cloaked the buildings' history of being named after notable members and high-ranking officers of the Ku Klux Klan.

Even digital spaces were infiltrated by the façade. The graphic image placed on the mission statement web page was a close view of the capital portion of an Ionic-style column on campus. Digital spaces replicated the brick and mortar of the campus's strictly regulated designs. The assertion of the façade permeated and was salient throughout the data.

Unrequited Love

In my pilot study, I noted that my participants repeatedly expressed love for their job and the university. I found this to be curious especially when those participants provided an in-depth critique of and expressed bitterness, animosity, and/or anger toward DSU. The current inquiry had a similar cadence: Nine people explicitly stated their love of Deep South University and five of them said it multiple times in one interview. Love was a pillar of the façade. Love drew people in and caused the employees to ignore the lack of infrastructure to support their employment as queer and trans-spectrum folx.

⁸ Foundation Ambassadors were the undergraduate students hired by undergraduate admissions to provide campus tours to prospective students and their families. These employees had to adhere to heavily gendered dress codes and body standards.

Charlotte was one of the participants who “loved” her job but struggled to reconcile her lesbian identity with her employment. In her verbal analysis of the mission statement, there was a clear complication of this relationship with the policy:

I mean if you have quality programs of teaching, research, and service, then hopefully there will be a lot of GLBT people teaching and doing research and service. I mean it doesn't specifically address it, but I guess I don't think everything has to. I mean we're under the umbrella, I mean, we are people too, you know.

[Interview, 11/04/2014]

Charlotte attempted to imagine and truly believe that queer and trans-spectrum persons, research, teaching, and service were a part of the university. As she spoke, I noted that these were firm, declarative statements.

Upon review of the recording and transcript, I heard her questioning the fabric of queer and trans-spectrum inclusion existing within the university. As she was employed by DSU for most of her adult life, Charlotte's hope was that the university valued her as equally as she was invested in the institution. For Charlotte, her life's work and family were intra-related with the university. She could not and would not envision a notion where her employment contributions were lessened by her lesbian identity. “I mean, we're under the umbrella, I mean we are people too, you know” [Interview, 11/04/2014]. I could hear in her voice that she was trying to convince me that the university had good intentions. As she spoke, Charlotte's focus changed quickly toward attempting to eliminate personal doubt in the university and its intentions.

Whereas Charlotte was grappling with her relationship with the university, Dorothy was sure of the university's strict divide between herself as a queer woman and university's mission.

I don't think it's supported at all. Where is service research and teaching toward me and my family, where my family being all of us together not just my immediate family? But no we don't do that as a university. I don't see me in there at all.

[Interview, 10/20/2014]

Dorothy was in both the pilot study and this project inquiry. Throughout all three interviews with her over a 2-year span, Dorothy illustrated her passion and used the word “love” repeatedly to describe the gravity of her connection with the campus. Deep South University held an almost majestic power for her, while simultaneously the campus was a source of anxiety as it related to her lesbian identity. Dorothy noted often that she never lied about her identity, but would strategically omit anything about her spouse who was a woman. Her initial goal was to create and maintain a strict division between identity and the university. But even during that time, she had her first wedding ceremony⁹ to her wife on campus because she loved the campus and its picturesque architecture. She navigated ways to connect her lesbian identity with the university. With extreme trepidation, she became a more out person on campus slowly over the 2-1/2 years that we were in contact. For both Charlotte and Dorothy, their unrequited love was a structural expectation of the façade that was reinforced by the mission statement.

Mission-Driven Policy for the “People of the State, Nation, and Globe”

The mission statement envisioned pristine, global goals, but for what or whom? Through a structural lens, mission statements exist to placate corporate norms and should be inspirational and instructional of the daily operations of the institution (Fugazzotto, 2009; Morphew & Hartley, 2006). For higher education, a mission statement is a document used to define the goals that drive the practices and policies of the institution. Deep South University presented a seemingly innocuous message that was linked to higher education policy practices. The mission statement, itself, stated that DSU was to *create, translate, and disseminate knowledge through research, teaching, and service to further the social and intellectual status of the people within*

⁹ Prior to marriage equality, Dorothy and her wife had a non-legal wedding ceremony and later a second ceremony in a state in which marriage equality was the law.

*the state, nation, and globe*¹⁰. Who was part of “the people within the state, nation, and globe?” Some of the participants had specific responses to who “the people” included and illustrated how façade was reinforced for and by “the people.”

Omission of “the people.” Ashley was not at all alarmed at the detached sentiments written into the document: “I think our mission statement is pretty standard for a higher education institution. I don’t read anything about LGBTQ employment into this but nor do I feel like I should” [Interview, 11/2/2014]. In her inflection, I could hear that Ashley’s annoyance and distrust were directed at the higher education industrial complex as a whole and expressed her clear disgust with apathy on behalf of DSU’s standardized, sterilized mission statement. Ashley visualized that DSU was not unique in omitting campus community people. One of her colleagues was more concerned about this clear omission.

Honestly, I’m disgusted that our mission statement for the university does not mention students anywhere. In terms of specifically LGBTQ-identified students or people who work on this campus, talking about the state, the nation, and the globe seems a little too majority tyranny if that makes any sense. It seems like we’re not caring at all about the individual, and so much of what a person is dealing with is their queer identity. It is kind of coming to terms with themselves as individuals, and so it feels alienating in that way.
[Bradley, Interview, 10/30/2014]

For Bradley, “students,” “LGBTQ-identified people,” and “people who work on campus” did not/could not exist within the “people of the state, nation, and globe.” As a staff person who was an LGBTQIA+ advocate on campus, Bradley articulated his increased anxiety for this work with students and the need to have comprehensive record-keeping and documentation for his services compared to his other outreach programs.

While Bradley noted that the statement did not make a connection to students, Anna observed the ways that the campus community at-large was excluded from the mission

¹⁰ The participants read the exact policies from Deep South University. However, I modified the mission slightly so it is not easily searchable as to continue to protect the participants by not revealing the specific campus identity.

statement: “It doesn’t include anything in here about who are the people that compose the body of the University. It doesn’t say anything about that” [Interview, 10/26/2016]. The “people of the state, nation, and globe” does not conjure up notions of the campus community. “The people” are stakeholders outside of the campus community.

To further support Ashley, Bradley, and Anna’s conclusions, the demographics must be reflected in the population of the campus for DSU to further the social and intellectual status of the people. Neither the nation, state, nor the DSU campus collects demographic data on people’s gender identity or sexual orientation, unlike other marginalized identities (e.g., race, veteran status, people with disabilities). Since there is not a federal mandate to collect information about students’ gender identity and sexual orientation, DSU does not have data on the queer and trans-spectrum populations. Therefore, the question still remains – who are “the people?”

“The people” are. The groups that the university included as part of “the people” were those who brought capital and prestige that sustained the façade of control and tradition: The educational experience that continuously supported only a select, elite group of people in the state, nation, and globe based on perceived capital value. Robin discussed her observation of this capital and elite relationship:

I think [DSU] is in an identity crisis phase I would say. I’ve only been here [4-9] years, but I think there are even changes that were starting before I got here and what we’ve seen in [4-9] years, they’re going to have to figure out in the next 5 or 10, maybe 15 at the outset, who are they, right? A faculty member put it to me last year that [DSU] has to finally let go of being an elitist preparatory school for just the top sliver of the state, and have to realize that if they want to be a kind of globally recognized research and teaching institution you have to let go of that older model of just catering to the old, rich families of the state who want to produce senators and governors and whatever else, that you could keep doing that I suppose, but you’ve got to figure out to serve everyone else.

[Interview, 10/29/2014]

In Robin’s analysis, the university had “catered” to this population to the point that DSU was struggling to reconfigure and uphold the strategically developed and managed façade. This was

not something that only employees noticed. Benjamin acknowledged how students vocalized their distaste for outside funding sources expectations for the campus:

I work out at the rec all the time and, you know. I hear, you know, in the locker room, I hear the frat bros all the time kind of bitching about, you know, the general structures of what's expected of them with these old cranky donors.

[Interview, 10/20/2014]

The institution cultivated the immediate financial benefits of a few “old, rich families of the state” over making a long-term investment towards a systemic educated populace within the state. The larger investment would change the mold, but DSU was not making that investment. Therefore, the institutional mission for “the people” was securing outside donor dollars from the “top sliver of the state” and funding from the state government made up of “senators and governors” produced at DSU. This was done so at the expense or acknowledgment of people, specifically queer and/or trans-spectrum folx, within the institution and their needs. The façade of “the people” left no space for LGBTQIA+ employees to exist in the mission of the university.

Daily Impact of Donor Dollars for Queer and Trans-spectrum Employees

While Robin and Benjamin described the systemic intra-relations of mission-driven neoliberalism, there were specific daily implications of queer and trans-spectrum employment at DSU. Establishing that the mission included placating donors outside the university, the participants discussed their personal experiences of donors impacts in their work. For Kenny, LGBTQIA+ people in the campus community, which included employees, resided in the closet because the university remained silent on queer and trans-spectrum inclusion. Kenny linked the absence of campus LGBTQIA+ pride to donors’ requirements for a conservative appearance.

If [LGBTQIA+ campus community] felt a little more comfortable being out, they would be out. But I think the university is in a position where they think they’d probably get some donors who might be unhappy about seeing that in the newspaper.

[Interview, 10/23/2014]

Even the possibility of queer and trans-spectrum inclusion could be viewed as improper use of conservative donors' dollars and may jeopardize future funding from these sources. These possibilities had repercussions on the daily lives of LGBTQIA+ employees. The university desired the donor dollars and catered to those donors. One of the most direct links to this can be found in Karen's experiences.

Karen described herself as "queer, mostly lesbian, bisexual" for her sexuality and genderqueer as to her gender. She examined how particular DSU-sanctioned events and spaces made her reflect about her own carefully crafted gender and sexuality façade. The time when she was most hyperaware was at a university fundraising and alumni event:

I don't know. I'm not sure that I'm ready to take any date to a function. Okay. So 10 or 12 years ago, I took Joanna to the [Karen's specific college of employment] Holiday Party as my date and danced with her and everything. Now that I have more responsibility and I deal with more influential people, I don't think I would feel as comfortable taking. Like we had a black-tie event two weeks. I would not have taken a date if I were dating somebody. I would not feel comfortable taking a woman to something that has a lot of old, wealthy donors...

Jessi: Okay. What do you think would make it so you felt comfortable bringing a female partner to an event like that?

Karen: Probably if I was out to that group, to that older, wealthy group.

Jessi: Who was the inviter to the?... I was trying to see where the breakdown of where you... Is it administration in [Karen's specific college of employment] or is it the group that you knew was going to be there?

Karen: The group that I knew was going to be there. So like, I'm perfectly comfortable around faculty, staff being out, administration in the college, some administration outside the college, and then you get to the alumni, who I have to work with a lot—not so comfortable.

Jessi: So, am I getting the perception that you don't want the College of [Karen's specific college of employment] to suffer because of your date?

Karen: Yeah, which is terrible, but you know, yeah.

(Silence; several second break in speaking)

Karen: And I had to wear a formal for that [University Foundation Fundraiser] thing, which was fine, you know, spice your dress up every now and then.

Jessi: Formal, and so what did you feel you had to wear versus what you wanted to wear?

Karen: What I wanted to wear was like a tux or something. What I got was a very nice, full length formal gown.

Jessi: Did you feel comfortable in that dress?

Karen: I felt comfortable in the dress. I did not feel comfortable in the Spanx and the corset.

Jessi: Spanx and corset? That sounds very unpleasant.

Karen: It was brutal. But you know, I looked nice. It's like by the end of the evening, I can't eat that dessert.

Jessi: Well I think that that's also another level of gender of just being able to feel, if you were in a tux, you wouldn't have felt....

Karen: No, absolutely not. I would have felt comfortable and free to move. Yeah, but that whole evening I was just thinking, "What? It's no wonder that women fainted when they were corseted and in 17th, 18th, 19th century clothing, because they couldn't breathe." The second part of that was what? Sexuality what?

Jessi: So, just describe what the University needs to consider in regards to gender and sexuality on campus?

Karen: Well, just from my perspective with the sexuality, from working with alumni, they need to continue to know that there are going to be gay couples that have money and if we're treated respectfully then they might get more.

[Interview, 10/23/2014]

Through her traditional gender expression, Karen harnessed restricted binary gender notions as a material tool for her advantage. Her Spanx and corset, modern representations of antebellum undergarments, were part of her own façade. Her goal was to get donor dollars from the "old, wealthy donors" into the department, and college and her sexuality and gender expression could slow or hinder this process for her. The college needed funding to educate current students, and Karen assessed that she did not have the time nor the desire to negotiate and teach the funding sources. Her final comment above illuminated on how queer and trans-spectrum fundraising was not even a consideration for the university; it was for cis, straight folx only.

Moreover, the ongoing connectivity to the alumni networks fostered a more stringent gender environment in her daily routines. The more time that she was in her position at DSU, Karen became more restrictive regarding her daily appearance, personal gender expression and comfort, and sexual relationships. Karen shaped her gender-binary, straight façade for the alumni donors and potential donors. While at the same time, the gender and sexuality façades began seeping into her daily life beyond the alumni galas. Karen knowingly molded the mission and

reviewed the ways it fashioned her too. For the participants above, the policies crafted, arranged, and reinforced a picturesque façade to match the elitist perceptions of outside stakeholders.

Assertion II: Identity Matters

Assertion: Policy attempts to homogenize queer and trans-spectrum identities and in doing so makes gender and sexuality identities matter.

The participants were cognizant of how their identities related to policies. Even though the language complied with federal policy and furnished DSU with what Ahmed (2009) called the “shiny surface” of supporting diversity, the policies did not recognize the great variety and range of sexualities on campus. If the policies were not written in a way that illustrated the institutional comprehension of these distinctive, inter-relational identities, could there be trust that the policy would be enacted in ways that recognized them?

Identity was what drew the participants to the study evidenced in their responses to the first question I asked them after receiving informed consent. That question was: “Why did you volunteer to participate in the study?” These were some of the responses:

I felt it was crucial, because... there’s not that many studies out there in any time I can help our cause being a gay person. I’m very much for that, and that’s one of the reasons I wanted to participate.

[Gregory, Interview, 10/21/2014]

I do feel still that it's important to participate and be visible.

[Kenny, Interview, 10/23/2014]

All kinds of people that live everywhere and, I guess, the more people that other people know, the more open-minded they tend to be. So, I figured research also kind of goes along with that, if that makes any sense?

[Lacey, Interview, 10/31/2014]

Well, to help the people who are younger than me and the younger generations to be able to have the opportunity that we were not afforded in our 20s or even in high school. There’s too many kids committing suicide, they’re thinking they’re wrong, you know, I

think everybody has a struggle with something in their life regardless of what it is, but for some reason this one just has such a bad tag on it. And so, you know, now at [mid-life year], it's just my time to give back and to empower them to go farther than what I've seen, you know, to where one day it's just total acceptance for everyone across the board, not just gays and lesbians or transgender, but you know, however you chose to live your life that there's not judgment on that.

[Stacey, Interview, 10/29/2014]

These comments carry the salient core notion that queer and trans-spectrum identities matter in relation to knowledge sharing, visibility, reducing isolation, inclusion and equity. Their identities matter in relation to the policies. Illustrated above, LGBTQIA+ identity was the motivation for the participants to get involved with the study. Identity was also the reason that I selected the mission statement, non-discrimination notice, and dependents' benefits.

Examination of the non-discrimination notice illustrates the knowledge that was produced through the policy onto/with the participants. Identity was written into the policy in a way that reinforced violent conflation of differences and removal of nuance between assigned sex or gender assignment, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation. In particular, the participants' responses to questions asking them to interpret the non-discrimination notice and dependents' benefits offer insight into the implications those hold for their everyday living decisions.

Non-Discrimination Notice of Identity and Neoliberalism

Most institutions of higher education, along with corporate organizations, have a non-discrimination policy or notice that often affirms federal mandates. These policy statements also offer a site where organizations may choose to demonstrate support for identities outside of federal compliance standards. To place this data in the appropriate cultural context of Fall 2014, there were federal court cases confirming that Title IX and Title VII protected people based on their gender identity, gender expression, and/or sexual orientation; but the Equal Employment

Opportunity Commission and Office of Civil Rights had provided minimal guidance, specifically, for inclusion of gender identity and expression. With no specific federal guidance, DSU had no standards for materializing queer and trans-spectrum identities into policy. Participants struggled with how DSU crafted gender and sexuality into the non-discrimination notice.

As with all the policies examined in this inquiry, the non-discrimination policy was read in full by each of the participants. It states:

Deep South University is committed to the concept and practice of equal opportunity and affirmative action. Deep South University complies with applicable laws prohibiting discrimination...and does not discriminate on the basis of genetic information, race, color, religion, national origin, sex (which includes sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression), age, disability, or protected veteran status in admission or access to, or treatment of employment in, its programs or services.

[DSU Non-discrimination Notice, 10/15/2014]

Similar to the mission statement, the non-discrimination notice did not directly address “persons or people.” There was no person-first language throughout the entire document; however, the statement did clearly identify specific protected classes. While several of the participants noted the omission of people in the mission statement, none of the participants noted the absence of “people” that persisted in this document. Therefore, persons could use the notice, but only when they disclosed any identity marker. Pertinent to this study, the notice required LGBTQIA+ employees to already be out or to out themselves to mobilize the policy.

There were only two staff members, Thayer and Lacey, who were completely assured and fully confident that the non-discrimination notice would protect them. All the other participants had trepidations about the notice or had personally documented discouraging actions. Was this by design? No discrimination cases, no scandals, and the money would keep rolling in.

“Why is it within those parentheses?” As a formalized document of the university, the DSU non-discrimination notice propagated and taught that people’s gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation comprised a monolithic identity of “sex.” The complications, divergences, and nuances of gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation were reduced to parenthetical afterthoughts.

The non-discrimination notice produced varied responses of confusion, annoyance, and expression of personal pain. Heather continually discussed her bewilderment with the way that the policy was written:

Gender identity and gender expression. I think it's interesting, though, that it is within sex, right? Because why isn't it by itself. Why isn't it race, color, religion, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age? Why isn't it all together? Why is it within those parentheses?

Jessi: So you would like it just out without the parentheses?

Heather: Yeah, it is obviously qualifying sex but why doesn't it say biological sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, age, disability? Yeah, why is it in parentheses?

[Interview, 1/12/2015]

Heather struggled to manage the conflation of gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation. She noted that the policy stated race, color, religion, national origin, age, and disability as multifaceted experiences within the campus community and Heather could not grasp how the policy did not articulate gender identity, gender expression and sexual orientation in the same vein.

While Heather was perplexed, Karen viewed the document as silly and was slightly annoyed at the ignorance laden in the notice:

Yeah. I mean I think that definitely represents us, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression. I think they could have just eliminated sex and just say, “Sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression.” It doesn’t need to be in parentheses because they are their own thing and not just part of sex. That’s just from the editor’s point of view. It’s redundant...It’s set apart from the rest.

[Interview, 10/23/2015]

According to Karen, this was a poorly proofed university document that places sexual orientation, gender identity, and gender expression into a separate and not equal plane within a document on inclusion and equity.

Unlike Karen and Heather, Toni conveyed visible frustration and hurt as she was a campus advocate for change. During this portion of the interview, Toni's voice pattern changed from light and fluid to direct and measured but even-tempered. To manage her irritation, she continued to run her fingers through her hair while we discussed this portion. I found this to be a clear indication that she had a personal/professional investment in this notice. Toni struggled with how she and her queer and trans-spectrum campus community members were (mis)represented in an official institutional document.

Toni: Yes. I have seen this as well. So my eyes immediately rocket towards the section that I know that we've been advocating a long time so the change I honestly think is kind of weird if you ask me. I think the wording is a little clunky.

Jessi: So what was the change that you're talking about?

Toni: [...] Okay so when it says, "Does not discriminate on the basis of genetic information, race, color, religion, national origin, sex...." From there it used to just immediately go to age, disability or veteran status and now in parentheses after sex it says, "Which includes sexual orientation." Although sexual orientation used to stand independent of that. Gender identity and gender expression which concerns me that there is this conflation that sexual orientation, gender identity and gender expression are now just sub descriptors of sex which is alarming because that is not the case. So I actually feel like sexual orientation lost ground.

Jessi: Okay.

Toni: And then gender identity and gender expression, I'm glad to see that it goes like that we've reached beyond just sex and listed gender identity and gender expression but, again, there's so many I mean students that don't know what that means and then also I have so many students who don't know what it means that it has been added to the policy. So now I see you have a route for recourse if you experience discriminations but they don't know where they would go. The problem is they have an ongoing history of being neglected or feeling like they had nowhere to go or in large feeling like they deserved it, right? That's a much bigger issue. But I don't really understand why they put sexual orientation with sex. I mean that's a noun there.

Jessi: You can't see why that they put that under....

Toni: Right, I don't think it all should be in parentheses after sex. I think it should say sex, gender identity, gender expression, sexual orientation because they are different things.

[Interview, 11/3/2014]

Toni recognized that she, as a visible queer employee and activist on campus, was directly impacted by the “clunkiness.” Throughout her interviews, she noted that she had participated in advocacy meetings with DSU administration surrounding this policy. She labeled herself as a “policy person” and she grappled with how the policy had regressed from its previous iteration and what it signified. Her exhausted demeanor indicated that she experienced personal responsibility for the clumsy, muddled state of the current non-discrimination notice. Toni would not have promoted and approved such a disjointed policy for the queer and trans-spectrum on-campus community, which includes herself and her wife, Lou, who also was employed at DSU. While Heather, Karen, and Toni focused on the identity language itself, Amy's analyses discussed the university's design of the non-discrimination notice identity.

The identity façade. Amy's familiarity with federal compliance laws left her unimpressed by the formality of the document:

We do not discriminate based on age, race, gender, blah, blah, blah, etc. and most of those things are because there are federally protected classes which is outside of the university's control and they'd be up shit creek without a paddle very quickly if they didn't comply with those things.

[Interview, 10/27/2014]

Amy continued to comment about the purposefulness between the existence of the non-discrimination notice and DSU being the recipient of federal public funding dollars. With the policy, the university satisfies the minimum requirements to put the campus community members on notice for its compliance. Through the visible inclusion of identities in the policy, DSU held and maintained the ability to receive federal funding. While institutions, including DSU, out of necessity and self-preservation were moving towards more funding from private

dollars, it was still reliant on federal dollars. Any perception of impropriety or noncompliance could stifle federal funding.

As noted by Amy, federal mandates required non-discrimination policies to be publicized, but DSU's notice did not include how the policies would be managed. The notice does not include procedures for how the policy would resolve reports of discrimination. Therefore, even people who believed in the inherent protections in the policy were skeptical of how the policy would function in practice. When only two out of the 27 participants believed a discrimination case would be handled fairly by the university, doubt was part of the material experiences of LGBTQIA+ life.

Writing Normality into Benefits

In the United States, health care is linked to employment status. Often large higher education institutions and large corporations, including DSU, offer self-funded healthcare plans. This means that DSU was able to define who gets to access the plan beyond the employee. All the other benefits were internal to DSU such as educational tuition grants and health care for an employee and the employee's family. Therefore, DSU could define and enforce the parameters of what a "normal" DSU "family" was. Dependent eligibility defined the family to include, and be limited to, a spouse and/or dependent child(ren). A spouse must be legally married which can include common-law marriage in the state of Deep South. To prove this eligibility, DSU required two forms of identification of the relationship. A dependent child or children were defined as being under the age of 26 and the legal child/children of the employee or of the legal spouse. A permanently incapacitated child beyond age 26 and unmarried was also considered a dependent child. For dependent child eligibility, there were two or fewer documents required to enroll them as dependents with DSU. There were two additional definitions as well: sponsored adult

dependent (SAD) and sponsored child dependent (SCD). Unlike a spouse, SAD and SCD status had additional documentation and constraints. With all these definitions and groupings, a structure emerged defining “normal” as a monogamous family regardless of the gender of the partner.

The Cloaked Violences of Defining “Family”

Dependent benefits had operational intra-relations cloaked within the daily lives of the participants. For the participants who were not familiar with the policy, several of them read the SAD and SCD statuses as elder care statuses for aging family members like parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, etc. One of those participants was Benjamin, who was enthusiastic that family members with disabilities were included in the policy:

Yeah, no I think this is a really good thing and I do think that this is having a fair amount of the university community who are older and have to deal with caring for older parents, it has clear benefits, this benefits sort of living arrangement, as well, which makes it really easy to cloak these sort of policies as you know, helping people who have their parents living with them. I don't care how you accomplish something, as long as it's accomplished.

[Interview, 10/20/2014]

He saw SAD not as a similar gender partner status, but as one for aging family members whose primary health care resource was the employee. Benjamin was quick to note that the policy “cloaked” something and so he logically thought that this language supported aging family members. During this conversation, masking information from the campus community was clearly a standardized policy practice that Benjamin was keenly aware of. I sensed that Benjamin had trained himself to examine policies for the hidden clues that would reveal the true objective of the document.

Even though Benjamin was a member of the Coalition Foundation¹¹, which advocated for this status for similar-gender couples, he was completely oblivious that the status was directly linked to providing an opportunity for similar-gender couples to receive benefits from DSU. This ignorance was another articulation of how the policy was cloaked even within the membership of this LGBTQIA+ employee advocacy organization. In contrast to Benjamin's genuine gratefulness for coverage of adult family members, other participants resisted this cloaking, which revealed the circulation of further subjugation for people with disabilities.

Adding insult to the already injured. Another violence was limited access to resources which was apparent in the struggle, frustration, and messiness written in the document and read by the participants. While Benjamin conceived how this policy could be inclusive for adult family members who were experiencing disability, other participants grappled to find the words to even voice their resentment with the cloaking infused into the SAD status. Caroline was not familiar with the policy and was processing her aggravation out loud:

Jessi: So were you able to understand this section, a sponsored adult dependent?

Caroline: When I see sponsored adult dependent, I'm thinking about a person who, say, has Down's syndrome as an adult.

Jessi: That actually would be where you would qualify.

Caroline: Okay. Because that's why I didn't pay much attention to it. Okay. So if I didn't work here... well, we wouldn't have to have a marriage certificate, right? Because it says if applicable. I mean, I don't even want to read this. It's a bit insulting, quite frankly.

Jessi: Why?

Caroline: It's just like, really, seriously? Is not my relative? I mean, I get it, but it's just like, seriously? That's insulting.

[Interview, 11/6/2014]

Carrie experienced a similar amount of discord with the way the policy presented dependent statuses:

Jessi: When you read this, did this signal to you yours and Amelia's

¹¹ Coalition Foundation was the faculty, staff, and graduate student LGBTQIA+ organization at Deep South University.

relationship?

Carrie: Oh no, well and that's the other thing, like "sponsored adult dependent" like there's somebody that I'd have to do something for rather than a spouse.

That's kind of insulting terminology too. I think that's part of the thing that and I know the dependent in its legal term, but when you read it that way, it's kind of like "oh, this incapacitated person I'm taking care of," rather than my equal partner.

[Interview, 10/31/2014]

After reviewing the interviews by listening to the recordings and reading the transcripts, "insulting" was the word that was consistent between these two interviews. For Carrie and Caroline, disability was an insult to the second-class status to which they were already regulated as lesbians with partners/families. Neither could imagine an equitable status with a partner with a disability. Caroline and Carrie grappled with what they both considered to be the paradox emerging from the intra-action of lived realities and the health benefits policy which produces the dependent family member as an adult relative with a disability and ties that status with an independent, able-bodied partner/spouse.

Removing the cloak, the importance of using LGBTQIA+ language. While George was not as impassioned as Caroline or Carrie were by the policy, George expressed his dissonance related to family ties and ability.

Jessi: And this, so when you read the sponsored adult dependent, that doesn't read as partner benefits for you.

George: No.

Jessi: That's what that was intended to be.

George: Oh, okay.

Jessi: Why do you think you didn't read it that way?

George: I don't know. It's not language I was familiar with because when it says "sponsored adult dependent" I was thinking more, you know, you're caretaking for somebody. Yeah, so I just sort of skipped that as, "Oh, I've got a mom with Alzheimer's living at home." Or because then it's similar especially since it comes after incapacitated child. So sponsored adult dependent doesn't tell me that's my gay spouse. Or my life partner or whatever you want to have.

[Interview, 10/24/2014]

In his reading of the document, George drew a linear and proximal connection between how the sections were listed and the context of each section. The statuses were listed in the following order with qualifying information for each:

1. Spouse
2. Dependent Children
 - Biological or Legal Child
 - Stepchild
 - Incapacitated Child
3. Sponsored Adult Dependent
4. Sponsored Child Dependents
 - Biological or Legal Child
 - Incapacitated Child

As George illustrated, an incapacitated child under the Dependent Children was immediately above SAD. Not one of the participants expressed how they might have a partner for whom they were the primary caregiver. They conjured up thoughts that partners/spouses were autonomous and healthy while other adult family members could have disabilities that they would willingly provide care to. For Caroline, Carrie, and George, these identities were mutually exclusive even though the document was titled Dependent Eligibility Definitions. For both Spouses and SAD, the policy itself has the potential to establish violent hierarchical power dynamics within DSU couples seeking eligibility.

Assertion III: Lived Entanglements with Policy

Assertion: Policy language produce material implications and cloak information in LGBTQIA+ employees' lives.

As mentioned in Chapter III, I conducted a pilot study that included a discourse policy analysis of Deep South University and interviews with 11 participants. As the project was a discourse analysis, it overlooked the lived impacts of the policies. By using new material feminisms, policies were intra-related with the subtle and dramatic intra-actions in LGBTQIA+ employees' lives. For example, Karen's Spanx and corset was lived façade entanglement with the policy. The entanglements of policies and participants produced specific material implications within employment for queer and trans-spectrum peoples.

Christmas Stories

Carrie was one of the participants who traversed from the pilot study into this current inquiry. Carrie identified as a butch, lesbian, DSU staff person who was married to a woman with whom she has two children. While she had the sense that her work environment had "gotten better" since 2012, Carrie's lived realities told different stories. Both subtle and dramatic narratives revolved around Christmas and the lived entanglements of DSU's non-discrimination notice.

"Well, toys for kids, that's good." In 2012, the non-discrimination notice included "sex and sexual orientation" *without parentheses* as well as "religion;" all were protected classes. Religion, particularly anti-LGBTQIA+ Christianity, superseded sexual orientation for Carrie in several ways, and, in particular, around the end of the year. One iteration of this hierarchy of protected classes was the Christmas toy donations to the Salvation Army's Toys for Tots.

Carrie: Our college also, every year, does a . . . toy drive for Salvation Army and that's a group that I'm not necessarily fond of supporting, and one year I kind of talked to someone about, "Well, maybe we should suggest that we can either give toys to Salvation Army or another group that we're more comfortable with," and I was basically kind of discouraged of that, "Do you really want to pick that battle with the Dean?" And, I decided not to, but I mean it's one of those things where I think well everyone's like, "Well, toys for kids, that's good." It is, but there is also toys for kids with a group that doesn't also believe in preaching against, you know.

[Interview, 7/12/2012]

At that time, the Salvation Army was an openly anti-LGBTQIA+ service provider. Therefore, every 10 to 15 minutes, Carrie continued to circle back to this toy donation that would not aid families like hers.

Jessi: Yeah. Have there been times when you wanted to share your concerns with others but didn't? If so, why?

Carrie: In terms of being a lesbian?

Jessi: On campus, yeah.

Carrie: Yeah, I mean, I think one of the examples I gave about the Salvation Army toy drive, and then there have been other things.

Jessi: Can you explain that further.

Carrie: Well, I think it's unfair. They require you to go to this luncheon. They require you to donate a toy. Basically, the only people who get out of going to this luncheon is if you call in sick the day of, and then you're kind of getting the embarrassment and wrath of the Dean for not, you get a lot of pressure to do that. You know, but yet, it's going to a cause that you feel a little uncomfortable about supporting, at least I felt uncomfortable about supporting it.

...[10 minutes later]

Carrie: The Salvation Army, there is a conservative religious group involved with it that is anti-homosexual, and I don't feel, I think they are also judgmental about some other issues as well to be honest with you, and I mean I know that they're giving toys to children, but I know that they wouldn't support me and I would rather find a group that doesn't actively work against homosexuality. It's kind of like this comes up, this is not related to [DSU] but, well, this actually has happened with coworkers, like when people eat at Chick-fil-A. You know, I kind of say, I don't eat there. You know it's not just that they're a Christian group, because I am a Christian, it's that they actively put money in anti-homosexual campaigns, so I don't want to eat there. In saying that to friends, most of them aren't queer, aren't aware. You know?

[Interview, 7/12/2012]

Fast forward 2 years into this current inquiry, Carrie was still struggling to with the expectations to give to the Salvation Army.

Carrie: I may have mentioned this last time, so tell me if I did, something that's bothered me since I've been here is that, the college-wide Christmas party gives to Salvation Army, which, it's kind of, did I talk about this last time?

Jessi: You did.

Carrie: Okay, yeah, I was going to say I haven't had the courage to go up and talk to [them] about that. I get the impression it wouldn't be very well received.

As she mentioned in 2012, giving toys to children was the priority, without consideration of whose families mattered according to the organization. Carrie was concerned for queer-spectrum families who were experiencing poverty and if they would receive gifts from the Salvation Army if they disclosed their identities. As she mentioned, there were different gift-giving organizations that were inclusive about their gift donation practices. In the span of 2 years, Carrie never felt able to voice this concern about a discriminatory practice without repercussions. This was not the only instance of policy intra-relations for Carrie.

The Christmas party. In 2012 after the recording stopped, Carrie illustrated how her supervisor encouraged her to not bring her legal wife to the annual Christmas party; she was the only queer-spectrum person in the department. Upon arrival at this out-of-office event, Carrie observed other employees who were in different gender couplings, not necessarily married, and were welcomed as a pair to the event. This was considered an “outside” function from her position, but the invitation was directly linked to her departmental employment. From this incident, she questioned where she was protected and where she was not; and even could, or should, she bring pictures of her family to work and display them on her desk as her fellow colleagues do?

In 2014, I circled back to this conversation with Carrie.

Jessi: [Last time,] you had talked about your supervisor and your dean. Has that relationship changed at all in relation to how you negotiated space with [them]?

Carrie: [...] [They] won't necessarily ask me about Amelia, that's a distinction I don't know if you've heard from [other participants], they'll ask you about your kids, but not about your partner, or they kind of gloss over that.

Jessi: Have you brought your wife to the Christmas party since we've met?

Carrie: It's...

Jessi: Well, you talked about not bringing her to the party the last time because you felt like it wasn't a safe space for you or encouraged for you to bring a partner to that event.

Carrie: Yeah, no, well, no...

[Interview, 10/31/2014]

Carrie went on to discuss that with having two young children she did not have the time nor the energy to attend outside office functions, which included the annual Christmas party. Carrie discussed her “legitimate” excuse to not attend the annual party that required her attendance to be single. Even though she remarked that the relationship with her supervisors had gotten better over the past 2 years, Carrie noted that they accepted the children but “glossed over” Carrie having those children with her wife. The façade was required systemically as well in intra-relations such as the one between Carrie and her supervisors.

Troubling Comfort: I was in the Closet with Him

This faculty member, Skylar, had never, not even in a personal, private setting, disclosed his sexual identity. Being a Black gay cis man, the consequences of doing so were significantly different than for the other faculty in this inquiry. Alongside Skylar’s sexuality, his experiences were viewed through his lens as a person of color at a predominately White, Deep South institution. Both he and the other man of color, Vincent, who was a support staff person, were the only two who were completely closeted on campus.

In our in-person on-campus interview, I participated in his reality by whispering throughout the interview; I was in his closet with him. While I was immersed with all my participants, I was particularly aware during Skylar’s in-person interview as we leaned into each other from across a table to be able to hear, and hushed our laughs in an effort to not draw attention. Skylar’s office was in the main hallway with no adjoining faculty offices. There was no way to see into the room when the thick, wooden door was shut, as it remained throughout the in-person interview. When a student knocked and was welcomed to enter, Skylar’s whole demeanor changed. His soft whispers with me gave away to a widely expressive, full, bass voice

and diaphragm-supported chortle. When transcribing this interview, the final transcription had various gaps because his voice was inaudible both to myself and the professional transcriptionist.

Throughout his interview, he continually stated that the campus was not a welcoming or safe place to be out. However, when I asked about whether or not he felt protected and safe by the non-discrimination notice, Skylar stated:

Actually, honestly it does give me some sort of comfort.

Jessi: Good.

Skylar: Yeah. I feel like in some way that because this is what I was saying, that sort of public affirmation.

[Interview, 10/23/2014]

This was the façade in action; he felt comfort in the words but with no substantive practices.

These words were not enough for him to be out, even to a few people, on campus. Throughout our discussion, Skylar continuously brought up that being gay is a small part of him and how he attempted to disentangle his “personal life” from his position at DSU. This included not acknowledging his spouse, who was employed on campus as well, while on campus and living in the closest large city that was more than an hour’s driving distance for both him and his spouse. Skylar articulated how the non-discrimination notice was not integrated into his campus experience:

Jessi: You kind of spoke to this, but I want to ask the question. How do you feel your gay identity impacts your employment at [DSU]?

Skylar: I think [inaudible] so I think that nobody knows now so it’s fine but I think if people did, I do think that it could limit my opportunities here because, for example, when [off-campus organization name] signed the deal [in-audible] over a million dollars with our college, the Dean selected five faculty because it’s a research partnership. He selected five faculty and, [inaudible], from a hundred. All of the faculty that were doing research, and I was one of the five they selected, and I honestly don’t think I would have been part of the exclusive group because [inaudible] afraid, “Oh, you no, what if [off-campus organization name] has a problem...” because [in-audible]. And so I think, and I may be completely wrong but that’s how I think, you know? That’s what is about, it’s about perceptions, right? So I feel like super career limiting.

[Interview, 10/23/2014]

Skylar's perceptions manifested in his negotiation of his reality; His gay identity was "a problem" that he needed to manage for others inside and outside DSU. In his department, he did his best to minimize differences. Skylar approached his sexuality as a personal, private hindrance which he was personally responsible for managing, and that it was not the campus's responsibility to directly support through the notice. When he stated, "I honestly don't think I would have been part of the exclusive group," I could hear how painfully Skylar wanted to be out during this interview. At the same time, his position was so personally fulfilling that he sacrificed his gay identity to be part of the DSU research collaborative. For Skylar, the non-discrimination notice was designed to have an inclusive feel with unknown direct supportive actions. Similar to the uncertainties surrounding the structural enacting of the non-discrimination notice, purposeful silences plagued the dependents' benefits and their enactment.

QPOC Faculty Isolation through Conflicting Policies

Circling back to the university mission statement, expectations were set that DSU engages with service, research, and teaching. Of the two faculty of color in the study, both experienced isolation in pursuit of fulfilling part of the mission. Skylar was one of those isolated persons. As mentioned above, he made the decision to be in the closet for his position. Teaching was also part of his role as a faculty and he noted that he had to keep students at a distance:

Yesterday a student and I went for lunch. I'm not sure if Cole is bi or he's experimenting or what. It's kind of interesting because we've met a few times this student last semester and for some reason he seems very. He grew up in [foreign country] but he's American now, [Southern state other than Deep South], but he seemed very...he seemed a bit overly attached to me. And one day he came here and he wanted a meeting and then I saw him and I said, "Cole," I said, "I really can't," I said, "because I've got a meeting across campus and I gotta walk." And he said, "Oh, no problem." He said, "Do you mind if I walk with you?" And I did mind because I was trying to prepare for the meeting but I said, "Oh, sure." And he said, "Oh." He said, "Thank you." He said, "I just like being around you." And so [in audible] relationship, right? And yesterday he

said to me, he said, “Dr. [Skylar’s last name], how’s life going, are you in a relationship, are you seeing any girl or guy?” And it was the first time ever that happened and I’m thinking, “I don’t know if he’s asking for him or it’s...” Maybe, you know? But that was the first time, like, a student even intoned that they had that idea, you know, a current student.

[Interview, 10/23/2014]

Skylar was terrified by these questions being asked by Cole. Teaching via mentorship was not something Skylar could provide if it involved revealing his sexual orientation. There was an immediate desire to create distance between himself and Cole, both physically and metaphorically, which frustrated Skylar. He “loved” working with his students but he could not get “too close” them. As the non-discrimination notice lacked the strength to protect him, Skylar ignored his duties to mentor his students and fulfill the mission of the university. Skylar was not alone in this conflict between these policies.

Pearl also had to negotiate the contradictions in the mission statement, which caused isolation from her community. At the time of the interview, she had only been at DSU for a few years. As Pearl made her sexuality known as part of her interview process, a group of queer students of color approached her as a new faculty wanting her to help advise a new group called QPOC, Queer People of Color. Pearl desired to be part of the formation and be a visible support to the young queer people of color students, but service time was precious:

I was approached early on in the semester, and I kind of regret not taking it on. In one way I regret it and in one way I don’t regret it, because when you’re new Black faculty, sometimes you get pushed to take on a lot of stuff you really shouldn’t be taking on, but I had African-American female, gay-identified African-American females said, ‘we want to start a subgroup within the larger group.’

[10/21/2014, Interview]

Pearl deeply desired to work with the student group, but also recognized that while her department and college admired this commitment to the campus community, this would not be a “substantial” service contribution to her field. The university did not view mentorship of queer

students of color an appropriate time commitment for Pearl's service requirements as a new faculty. She longed to advise the group, but she recognized that engaging would ultimately harm her promotion progression. This isolated the students from a mentor and the mentor from building a larger queer and trans-spectrum network for folx of color. While there were divergent experiences of these two participants, both illustrated the contradictions within the policies that relegated faculty of color into further isolation.

Policy Rewards and Punishments

Steady employment was rewarded to the employees in exchange for their compliance in queer and trans-spectrum discrimination, quid pro quo. Without prompting, all except four of the participants stated that the dependent benefits were laden with discrimination, but none of the participants indicated they would report that as discrimination using the non-discrimination notice. Ten participants specifically stated they were willing and able to file a discrimination case, yet none of them did. The only person who did file a discrimination complaint resigned after no findings were revealed in her case. Within that climate of distrust in policy practices, the university has financial power and control over queer and trans-spectrum employees through the awareness that non-discrimination policy investigations have "not great" outcomes [Karen, Interview, 12/11/2014]. To stay employed, an employee should not file a complaint or be explicitly queer and/or trans in their expression. Going outside of these bounds, LGBTQIA+ employees would need to be prepared to find other employment opportunities.

Corey noted that if "the university really wants you gone," they would find a way to do that without seeming like the termination was due to gender or sexuality [Interview, 10/29/2014]. There were three instances where the participants' colleagues who were LGBTQIA+ were punished by being pushed out or terminated. This reinforced Corey's notion that policies were

subverted and the financial interests of the university were protected, with no favor given to the participants. Of the nine who did not trust the policy, these participants were noting the vileness that was intra-related within the policy's purpose, which was to undermine and ignore cases of discrimination. There was a palpable thick distaste from each of the participants as they brought up instances that were never even considered a policy violation. Robert questioned one of these occurrences:

Robert: I had heard, but I have no idea if it's based on reality, there was someone at [name of university department] a few years ago that was having employment issues, but I don't know the full story.

Jessi: In relation to their race or their sexuality?

Robert: Sexuality and whether or not that was questioned or if they were, and again I don't really have either side, but there is a question as to whether or not this person was dismissed because of sexuality or dismissed simply because they were not doing the job.

[Interview, 10/28/2014]

As far as he was able to recall, Robert discussed how the policy was never considered in this case. The policy had a use but protecting people from discrimination was not one of them. These secondary accounts of the policy in practice allowed insights on how the participants would doubt utilizing it, to begin with.

Different from the secondary accounts, Anna spoke about her direct, primary engagement with the policy in practice.

I don't have proof that my salary thing is because I'm queer, because no one has ever said anything to me, so that's really hard. I think that if people are going to be experiencing any kind of discrimination or harassment based on their sexual orientation or gender identity it's going to be much more pronounced. People will say things that are concrete that then you can take. You know what I mean? So I never had that happen, but I'm sure there are people on campus who have had those instances, and I would like to know if they used the non-discrimination policy to help them.

[Interview, 10/26/2016]

Anna had been with DSU for 10-15 years and had remarked that she believed that she was substantially underpaid. By the time we had our first interview, I had already completed nearly

half of the first round of interviews with the participants. Several of the people in the study articulated how they perceived Anna and commented that due to her androgynous, genderqueer identity, her work environment was always hostile. The participants that made these observations voiced Anna's praises in regards to her strong work ethic and commitment to the university while expressing as genderqueer. When I met with Anna, I disclosed to her how the other participants illustrated her identities on campus while managing their confidentiality at the same time. The excerpt above was from our first interview.

By the next time we had spoken via Skype interview on December 14, 2014, she had filed a grievance with human resources citing gender identity and sexuality orientation discrimination that was reflected in her lack of promotions within the institution and inequitable pay. Since I could not give her the names of the people who made these observations, she struggled to make the case with human resources as it was on her to provide "the evidence" that discrimination had taken place. Human resources demanded she present quid-pro-quo evidence that she was dealing with a hostile environment, which was incredibly difficult to prove. This was communicated during our second interview along with her decision to leave the university at the end of the semester. I could hear sadness and disappointment in this decision as she loved to cheer for the Silver Stampede. Even so, she did not feel that her personhood was fully recognized and/or appreciated. Anna desired to be recognized and celebrated for all parts of her personhood. She held tightly to the notion that the non-discrimination notice would provide protection for her when/if she needed it. Anna expressed apathy in how the notice ended up functioning for her in "real life."

The participants who distrusted the notice interpreted it to mean there would be no financial remuneration for discrimination that took place, but rather penalties in their places of

employment. Many of the participants were place-bound and took seriously the possibility that filing a case of discrimination would harm their employment. The non-discrimination notice was part of the façade projecting safety, diversity, and inclusion to the campus community, but in practice, the notice reinforced DSU's financial power at the expense of the LGBTQIA+ employees' lived experiences. The policy punished the people who were not loyal. In exchange for compliance with the façade, the LGBTQIA+ employees who were loyal were rewarded through continuous employment.

Unspoken Expectations

Gender expression was a protected class under the guise of "sex," yet both Anna and Karen's lived realities required knowledge of and adherence to the gender-binary façade. For some DSU employees, there were specific written dress codes codifying the gender binary, even though the policy was in direct violation of the non-discrimination notice. None of the participants worked in areas that had explicit, written gender expression expectations, such as dress codes. However, when asked specifically about dress codes for the employees, 20 out of the 24 participants articulated dress code expectations for employment at DSU. Amy stated that dress codes were "one of those unspoken things" [Interview, 12/12/2014] that were assumed to be known and upheld. In this way, the façade materialized in the daily gender expressions of the participants.

These unspoken expectations demanded obedience with the gender expression binary. Karen recognized the parameters of gender and fashioned it to her advantage. Anna was oblivious to gender expression expectations until it was too late. Since the dress codes were not written anywhere, gender expression expectations for employees varied. For example, Benjamin remarked:

I'm going to. Yeah. I'm going to ring up my the [college's name] flag on the flagpole. Just a bunch of very liberally minded, not the sort of place that would... Okay, so when I say that there are places on campus where it's a complete different, like your professional experience is completely from one place to another. [The non-discrimination notice] is an incredibly wonderful, you know, case in point. Nobody cares. I could color my hair blue and, you know, I doubt anybody would care... If you're a guy, so at any rate, that's the reason I have long hair. In terms of professional environment, it's not really a deal.

[Interview, 12/18/2014]

Benjamin kept his hair long and noted later that long hair signified femininity on campus. His long hair proved to him that the non-discrimination notice worked.

Most of the employees did not have similar experiences as Benjamin. Participants illustrated how subtle comments reinforced the gender expression binary expectations.

The university dress code I would say is pretty cisnormative. You know, I feel like typically for men who do identify as male they have a lot less freedom to explore with you know, colors and hair choice and you know, even piercings. I've been asked a couple questions about this big earring that I wear. I think I am as heteronormative appearing as I've ever appeared in my entire life and still that the one little bauble I have gets noticed. I think it is very, you know, among the most cisoriented places I've ever worked in terms of dress code.

[Bradley, Interview, 1/5/2015]

By simply getting asked questions about his earring, Bradley sensed he was challenging the stringent gender expression boundaries. This tiny "bauble" negated all other parts of his self-identified cisnormative presentation. While Bradley was regulated toward a more masculine appearance, Toni was too masculine. She recognized the dress code standards for her office space through similar subtle encounters with her colleagues:

I have never seen a dress code if there is one... But for me I dress up in the sense that I wear nice professional clothes but I wear a button up almost every day and I think in my individual office, I've never encountered any not retribution but corrective humor or anything but it's definitely noted. I remember two of the women who traditionally dressed in a more femme manner kind of joking about a pattern... It's like jagged... That's called chevron. But I said something about like, "Is that a gas station?" And they were like, "Oh you wouldn't know, you with your button ups and this, that and the other." You know what I mean? Things have been stated like, "Oh well Toni will never wear a dress." One time one of the gals said to me, like I said we socialize so it's often friendly banter but I wear a dress or, you know what I mean? We got collared shirts for

orientation and I don't like the traditional women's cut collared shirt with the slightly lower V, the buttons always go longer down your torso and the little cap sleeves. I just don't. That's not my style. I don't like those shirts and so of course there were three women already working in the office and a guy got hired on the same day and I said something and they said, "You know you better order your shirts and you can get this size and this is what I prefer." And I was kind of like, "Uh can I look at the shirts?" I wanted to order a men's shirt initially and the woman in the dean's office called back and she was like, "I need to look at your order here." And I was like, "Yep, no that's right." And she was like, "Well I mean I think you kind of need to look at one of these." And so she sent me a website and so it was the women's shirts but then luckily I found one that, I was kind of scrolling through looking for anything and eventually I found one that they called relaxed fit but while she's on the phone with me and she's sending me this link, I was like, "I like the shirt that I sent over." She was like, "No, I have that one recorded for Jared but Jared's a man." And I was like, "Nope, I'm aware and I still would like the shirt that I ordered." You know? So eventually I had to kind of compromise on this ladies but relaxed fit or this, that and the other but I was like, "Are you kidding me?"

[Interview, 1/3/2015]

Toni's colleagues gendered fabric patterns and knew "she would never wear a dress." While at the same time, Toni still had to find a shirt that was designed for women. She quickly illustrated these different instances of ridicule and rejection surrounding her personal gender expression. For both Bradley and Toni, these regulatory actions disregarded the notice and materialized the personal façades that the participants negotiated daily as queer and trans-spectrum employees.

Summary

As a researcher, I struggled to place the data points into specific assertions. The findings were entangled and entrenched in the three assertions throughout this analysis. The assertions engaged the complications, messiness, and contradictions between the participants and the university policies.

The implications of the three assertions provide significant contributions to the literature of new material feminisms, higher education, and policy analysis. The higher education façade was exposed as hollow for LGBTQIA+ employees and policies relationship, but was upheld and reinforced through outside sources. Queer and trans-spectrum employees were permanently

scarred and left the policies visibly void of power causing violences. These violences have consequences for higher education, policies, and employees which are further explored in Chapter V.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This inquiry demonstrated how intangible policies enacted tangible, material consequences on/in LGBTQIA+ employees lives. Materialities were documented through the exploration of the intra-relations and entanglements between the policies and the participants. New material feminisms encouraged me to theorize, recognize, and analyze how policies vibrate with material and discursive ramifications among LGBTQIA+ employees. Chapter V discusses how the findings attend to the research questions, the recommendations for the field of higher education, and the theoretical and topical areas for further research.

The findings showed the ability of the university façade to animate effects in the employees' lives. The policies animated through imposing an authoritative physical presence in the manicured and carefully maintained grounds and buildings, the ambiguous and sometimes absent language, and the lived explicit and implicit expectations. In the following sections, I offer a discussion of how findings from the study respond to the research questions and the relevant analytical points drawn from the data. That is followed by a discussion of my recommendations drawn from the data analysis, and closes with the implications that provoked critical considerations of the possible. Hopefully through this study, theorists and practitioners alike will have access to fresh, innovative tools to tackle research and effect change in their work.

Research Questions' Findings

In the previous chapter, I offered analysis of policy entanglement with queer and spectrum employees that emphasized the maintenance of the façade, how identities have matter, and employees' lived entanglements with the policies. Separating the discussion of the research

questions was tricky as the findings overlapped into both questions. Recognizing the significant intra-relations, the findings were organized to address the two research questions individually.

Entanglements and Intra-Relations

The first research question is: How are university-wide policies and LGBTQIA+ employees entangled and intra-related? Answers to this questions were observed and documented primarily in the first two assertions. The policies were actants which animated and were entangled through/among the lives of LGBTQIA+ employees at DSU (Bennett, 2009). Intra-relations of the policies and participants were recognizable through the façade, differing expectations from funding sources, and policy/participant language entanglements.

The mission of the façade. The façade is a metaphor for the performative entanglements of policies and queer and trans-spectrum employees that required constant upkeep. The data documented how the entanglements shaped and fashioned policies with the LGBTQIA+ employees. Being a document of DSU, the mission statement was a conduit of the façade, delivering expectations of who were valued. Therefore, “the people” in the statement signaled to the participants they were not part of the mission of the university. Participants noted in the mission statement that “students” were never mentioned, nor was any community inside the university. Several of the participants were quick to note this subtle omission of communities inside the university. In contrast, the participants also noted that the mission’s “people” referred to external individuals with resources. For Deep South University, the policies were driven by entities outside of the academy, such as donor dollars, athletics, and federal and state government agencies.

The university has benefited from outside entities, but for how much longer could it sustain this neoliberal façade built up over years? As Robin noted, DSU was going through an

“identity crisis” of serving more than the “old, rich families of the state who want to produce senators and governors.” The university’s capitalizing on out-of-state student tuition dollars brought with them the potential to gain alumni dollars in the future. However, even this crisis of identity existed based solely on the possibility of dollars coming in from outside the state, as the university was quite actively recruiting out-of-state students. With the demographics of the campus community changing, new façades were emerging to placate conservative *and* liberal constituents and funding sources.

Contradicting improprieties of the non-discrimination notice and identities. The intra-relations of the façade permeated throughout the mission statement into the non-discrimination notice. The desire to maintain the “shiny surface” of the façade to the various outside funding sources resulted in many unanticipated complexities in actual practice for DSU (Ahmed, 2009). These complexities stemmed from efforts to meet both demands for compliance and inclusion from governmental agencies and from more liberal, potential, out-of-state stakeholders, as well as meeting the expectations of the traditional conservative sources of support from wealthy alumni. Transgressions of any of these expectations reverberated as improprieties. Deep South University attempted to continuously manage these contradictory demands that required, in some form or another, the participation of both the LGBTQIA+ employees and the policies.

Public impropriety. Being a public institution, DSU was required to adhere to federal laws. At the time of the study, the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) prohibited employment discrimination based on gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation through Title VII litigation cases. As DSU was an educational institution as well, the Office of Civil Rights forbade discrimination of LGBTQIA+ students under Title IX and Title

VII. Additionally, with the substantial influx of students from out of state, DSU desired to project a more liberal shiny façade.

There was expediency in putting gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation in the non-discrimination notice along with offering dependents' benefits for similar-gender couples (Bell Jr, 1980; Ladson-Billings, 1998). However, none of the participants who self-identified as campus advocates stated they were consulted in the development of these documents. Once the policies were enacted, these advocates were told to celebrate "quietly." Deep South University wanted to present that they were upholding the law in order to remove potential impropriety brought on by scandals from LGBTQIA+ employees or students filing discrimination suits, and possible public scrutiny due to federal fines and penalties.

Private impropriety. While DSU still existed as a public, non-profit organization receiving federal and state dollars, the university was functioning more as a private institution because of multiple and generous sources of donor dollars. Since those dollars currently came through "old, rich families of the state who want[ed] to produce senators and governors," DSU needed to present as socially conservative for these donors, which included displays of anti-LGBTQIA+ practices [Robin, Interview, 10/29/2014]. The cloaking in the policies forced the LGBTQIA+ campus advocates/activists to celebrate these "gracious" policy commitments in return for their obedience and silence. With no vocal/visible presence from the administration or the queer and trans-spectrum campus community, DSU avoided the impropriety of being considered a liberal organization and continued to cater to the conservative donors.

Policy inconsistencies and violences. Both the non-discrimination notice and the dependents' benefits had language that granted protections for marginalized identities, and in particular through "sex." This delineation had an impact on participants' lives. Sex existed in the

policies as both a gender assignment and, as Bornstein (2013) stated, in regards to “fucking.” The consistency of the identity language was neglected between the non-discrimination notice and dependents’ benefits (Cook & Glass, 2008). These intersectionality intra-relations further marginalized participants and fostered nullification of the policies (Allan et al., 2010; Chenshaw, 2009; Collins & Bilge, 2016; McCall, 2005).

Gender. In the non-discrimination notice through parenthetical constraints which were noted by several participants, an employee’s sexual orientation and gender identity were subset identities to their gender assignment; specifically, their genitals. Ears, nose, fingers, and hair do not determine gender or sexuality any more or less than genitals. In the notice, gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation existed as smaller components of “sex.” Therefore, genitals are intra-related through policies and require “sex” evidence to utilize the policy. This binary enactment of gender assignment stifles and asphyxiates the pluralities and multidimensions of gender diversity.

Sexuality. Through language normed in the dependent benefits, “sex” was sexuality and required LGBTQIA+ employees to only imagine their families as monogamous couples. As Gilbert notes, it is “remarkably difficult to become a member of a family. The family works by exclusion” (2014, p. 89). Polyamorous families are excluded from defining themselves as a legitimate. Identity-based exclusion had matter because benefits were tied to legitimatizing who was part of a “family.”

Disability. While there were silences surrounding polyamorous families, possibilities of existing as a queer and trans-spectrum family with disabilities was an “insulting” notion as noted by Caroline and Carrie. This established a hierarchy of identities; disabilities were beneath queer and trans-spectrum campus community members. Even the participants who acknowledged the

benefits of including family members with disabilities gave off a distinctive sense of pity for families who needed benefits based on that identity. The clarity in the policies reminded employees that their identities are not understood, nor are they equal to their cis, straight, able-bodied colleagues on campus.

Documented Lived Materialities

The second research question is: What lived materialities are produced through these intra-actions? The data analysis answered this question through the second and third assertions by documenting the lived materialities. The policies seeped into the participants' employment with tangible, daily materialities. Expectations were placed on the participants, warped the policies from their intended written functions, and produced varying material possibilities.

Lived expectations of personal façades. For Karen, her façade was a tool used as a means to facilitate her goals within DSU. Benjamin, Bradley, and Toni's façades diverged from one other. Benjamin noted that his masculinity was not limited by his long locks. However, even with purposeful cisnormative markers, Bradley's small, femme earring required second looks and questioning of his understanding of gender masculinity expectations. While Karen worked femininity for her advantage, femme attire was forced upon Toni. Personal façade expectations upheld the gender expression binary, with no space for ambiguous, genderqueer folx. For these participants, the non-discrimination notice became distorted and functioned on behalf of the gender binary, not queer and trans-spectrum employees.

Warped policy functions. Skylar's façade was existing on campus as a cis, straight man. He presented on campus this way to avoid people questioning his sexuality and the negative career impacts that would transpire if he was out. Even though he claimed that the non-discrimination notice gave him "comfort," it was not enough to remotely consider coming out

and filing a report if needed. The façade performed a function. The illusion of comfort encouraged employees to imagine that there was no need to file a discrimination complaint.

Expectations manifested differently in Anna's case as her engagement with the notice differed from Skylar's. She perceived the notice as intended to benefit marginalized persons such as herself. Prior to our interview, Anna was oblivious to how the requirements and expectations of the gender expression façade applied to her. Addressing the other participants' observations of her sparked Anna's decision to file a discrimination-based case. Without the stories from the participants, there was "no evidence" that discrimination occurred. Anna was apathetic to the outcome of the case and made her decision to leave the university immediately without even a job offer from another organization. She did not fight the decision or cause any scandal; she simply left quietly. This was also the policy performing its function by weeding out the genderqueer "problem" employees.

Materialized possibilities. With the systemic warping of the policies and recognizing façade expectations, Carrie and Pearl chose to evade and disengage from queer and trans-spectrum advocacy and activism on campus.

Over a 2-year period, Carrie never started a conversation with any person in her work environment to address her concerns with the office Christmas party couple standards nor the expectation that she must donate to Toys for Tots. Both annual events were fueled by conservative, Christian values and violated the non-discrimination notice based on sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, and religion. In all her interviews over the 2 years, Carrie, unprompted, brought up her heavy disdain for the organization that facilitated the toy donations, "[she got] the impression [pointing out this violation of policy] wouldn't be very well received" [Interview, 10/31/2014]. Because this was not addressed, she was required to

exist as a single person at the Christmas party and donate a toy for a child in need, just not one that was part of a queer and/or trans-spectrum family.

Pearl's materialities stemmed from the hierarchical mission placed upon tenured faculty. In academia, the evidence shows that faculty of color and women are expected to engage with higher service loads and be equally as productive with their research publications and teaching commitments (Dyer, 2004; Jackson & Mazzei, 2012). These intersectional identities cause women and/or faculty of color to not receive tenure at the same rate as their White, male counterparts. As a queer woman of color faculty member, Pearl was keenly aware of this trend to overload and deny tenure to Black women who are faculty. Therefore, she turned down the opportunity to advise the newly-formed QPOC student group. From this decision, Pearl experienced isolation from queer people of color and yearned for the university to value advising student groups like this as a critical component in the tenure review process. According to Pearl, there were no time releases for advising underserved, marginalized students as this service was not attending to the mission of "the people." Students were denied services and Pearl continued to exist in isolation as a queer woman faculty of color. For Carrie and Pearl, policies lacked depth towards their intended purposes, so quiet injustices thrived in the participants' lives.

Discussion of the Inquiry

Iverson's (2012) discursive policy analysis of university diversity policies sparked my inquiry journey more than 5 years ago. She stated that a valuable extension of her work would go beyond the written text and investigate the "ways in which social and institutional context shape diversity policy-making process" (Iverson, 2012, p. 169). When I attempted to respond to her call to action in 2012, the seduction of discursive policy analysis dominated my pilot study inquiry and did not appropriately highlight the participants' lived material realities.

In an effort to balance and complicate discourse and lived materialities, I chose new material feminisms as the organizational guide for my study. Attempting to navigate and operationalize new material feminisms through the theoretical framework and as part of the methodology was considerably challenging for me. I constantly reminded myself that materiality and discourse are entangled and intra-acting, and *not* a dualistic enactment. In those moments that happened often, I learned to sit with my discomfort. The findings are more vibrant, complex, and challenging because the process required me to slow down and think with the theory. My goal was to do right by my data. With the extra care and tools provided by new material feminisms, this goal was accomplished.

While I perceive that there is a reasonable balance throughout the dissertation between the policies and participants as well as discourse and materialities, the task of balancing was arduous and involved constant, purposeful choices. These choices came at a price: too much data were lost. While Lather (2007) reminded me to accept these losses as a learning experience, I felt as though I violently betrayed my data with my own time and space constraints. I recruited and interviewed too many participants, which I did based on Morse's (2000) recommendation for participant sample size saturation. In the future, I would suggest 10 to 15 participants as a maximum for a similar project. Even with a smaller sample size, I believe that the data would have shown significant findings. While this was a large sample, this allowed me to meet my goal of connecting with a cross-section of LGBTQIA+ employees from all levels and racial identities and addressing one of the literature gaps (Bilimoria & Stewart, 2009; Dozier, 2012; Messinger, 2011; Rothblum, 1995; Sears, 2002; Vaccaro, 2012).

Circling back to Iverson's (2012) research request, my findings noted that the material subtleties of how gender and sexuality are policed with LGBTQIA+ employees in the higher

education workplace continued to “construct outsiders.” By using a diffractive lens, I documented the ways that queer and trans-spectrum employees were materialized as outsiders (Barad, 2007; Zabrodska et al., 2011). For example, both Pearl and Skylar experienced policed isolations as queer faculty of color in completely different ways. These differences have matter and are institutionally and socially situated in the DSU local context. Bringing forward the differences surrounding particular policies/participants entanglements and lived materialities was one of my choices that raised data into the assertions. My goal is that divergences are continuously noticed and generate possibilities beyond the variations articulated in this study.

While in this study, I found one of these divergences was the process of documenting compromises. Compromises were constantly negotiated by queer and trans employees which required more personal energy output than their cis, straight colleagues (Hollis & McCalla, 2013). For instance, both Karen and Carrie grasped the placation of the policies in their daily lives and made intentional compromises in regards to their gender and sexuality for their positions at DSU. Unintentionally, the policies as actants generated fewer possibilities for change with each compromise that a queer and trans-spectrum person made.

While individual compromises may be considered personal and even empowering decisions, when placed together those compromises unveiled the structural bullying present and created by the policies (Hollis & McCalla, 2013; Vaccaro, 2012; Zabrodska et al., 2011). For example, Anna never questioned that her genderqueer expression had any impact on her employment. Once I provided her with insights from several participants, she adopted a new reality in which she was systematically bullied. For queer and trans-spectrum employees, policies projected the appearance that the campus was inclusive and safe, and at the same time cloaked the hostile environment.

In this vein, I agree with Zabrodska et al.'s (2011) appraisal that “bullying [is] an intra-active network of forces” (p. 717) in higher education, and the network is highly fortified by years of subjugating marginalized populations. Therefore, the maintenance of campus gender and sexuality inclusion must not be an individualized phenomena that employees are expected to recognize and tackle alone. The burden should be proportional. The individual employees should feel empowered with the policies, and the university must generate possibilities to eliminate the need for personal and professional compromises (Hollis & McCalla, 2013; Zabrodska et al., 2011). As higher education institutions are such fortified structures of influence, I call on the field of post-secondary education to lean into their policies and practices on behalf of their queer and trans-spectrum employees and redesign/reimagine the current façades as inclusive. This leads me into my recommendations and implications of this study.

Implications and Recommendations for DSU and Higher Education

For the purpose of this study, there were contextual, localized recommendations for DSU, as well as for the field of higher education in general. Both will be noted in this section. I begin with specific recommendations for Deep South University, followed by higher education as whole.

Self-Authorship of DSU Policed Identities

Policies should be built *with* the stakeholders (Hollis & McCalla, 2013). This should include LGBTQIA+ employee activists as well as the general queer and trans-spectrum employee population. The DSU mission statement, non-discrimination notice, and the dependents' benefits would have been more queer and trans-spectrum friendly if the queer and trans-spectrum campus community had influence over these documents. Several participants noted gender and sexuality violences and/or inaccessibility of language for the nondiscrimination

notice and dependents' benefits in particular. Therefore, I recommend that DSU immediately remove the parentheses and "sex" from the non-discrimination notice. As a proactive measure when developing policies, require queer and trans-spectrum community insights before implementing policies for the community; work *with* us, not *for* us. Furthermore, and based simply on the specific intersectional enactments that were raised through this inquiry, DSU specifically should implement hiring and retention policies for queer and trans-spectrum employees of color, who have disabilities, are polyamorous, and/or have varying immigration statuses, along with their families.

Once developed and implemented for any higher education institution, the updated policies should be publicized through a variety of platforms that would include campus administration, campus addresses, digital media, etc. The information should be easily searchable and linked throughout all the campus departments' digital mediums to improve accessibility. The more digital connections this information has, the more vibrant the policies will be become, making queer and trans-spectrum policies part of the digital façade. These purposeful digital communications are also a recommendation for all higher education institutions.

Possibilities for Identities to Come to Matter at DSU

There were two distinctive possibilities for identities to come to have matter at DSU. One identity recommendation was directed toward the DSU mission. This recommendation focused on recruiting university capital resources that would benefit LGBTQIA+ populations on campus, including employees. Secondly was the way that sexual orientation can be reimagined and have matter through dependent benefits.

Materialities of donor dollars. In Fall 2014, the out-of-state, incoming students outnumbered incoming students who were residents in Deep South state. If DSU wants to continue to encourage alumni donations, they need to start developing, implementing, and assessing policies that demonstrate inclusion for the campus community. Garvey and Drezner (2016) demonstrated:

...the importance of undergraduate experiences (i.e., academic training, campus climate, institutional values) on LGBTQ alumni financial giving and participation. Results create a clear relationship between LGBTQ student experiences and alumni giving, demonstrating a need for student affairs educators, advancement staff, and other higher education professionals to recognize and celebrate the unique positionalities graduates. (p. 39)

Garvey and Drezner's research focused on the student/alumni experience. Taking their study alongside findings from the Human Rights Watch, an important intra-relation is revealed between LGBTQIA+ employees and the experiences of students' who matriculate and become alumni donors:

When students perceive, as they often do, that teachers are gay, lesbian, or bisexual, but also perceive that it is not safe for them to be open about their identity, the youth again receive the message that how they identify is unacceptable. (Bochenek & Brown, 2001, p. 96)

Queer and trans-spectrum identities matter for active students and future alumni/donors; therefore, queer and trans-spectrum identities should matter to the university. If DSU wants LGBTQIA+ alumni to be active donors, it will need to learn to uphold the façade in new, innovative ways that would benefit queer and trans-spectrum employees at the same time (Bochenek & Brown, 2001; Garvey & Drezner, 2016). Deep South University will need to provide a holistic inclusive experience while the students are on campus. However, if the opposite happens, DSU will lose potential donors. For example, Cole (Skylar's student mentee) found the courage to cleverly ask Skylar if he was part of the queer-spectrum community—a

question that went unanswered. Donor dollars might have been lost from that engagement. This would reinforce the neoliberalism façade, but would also require the university to reimagine the campus to include queer and trans-spectrum folx. At the same time, LGBTQIA+ alumni who are in poverty are still removed from these spaces of power and access.

Polyamorous and disability identities mattering. None of the participants identified as polyamorous, but rather monogamous or monoromantic. However, DSU has a completely self-funded benefit plan, and through these plans the institution had the capacity to support polyamorous relationships between three or more consenting adults. In both the Spouse and Sponsored Adult Dependent sections, this dependent status was strictly defined as a singular, adult, assumed romantic and sexual relationship. Since neither documented higher education institutions nor any United States' corporations offer multiple-partner benefits, discourse did not exist around this family structure having access to benefits. If there was not any precedent for this type of familiar inclusion, this activism and advocacy was inconceivable for DSU queer and trans-spectrum employees.

At this time, stigma still surrounds polyamorous relationships to the point where there were no successfully litigated polyamorous familial inclusion cases. Yet, businesses and/or higher education institutions that have self-funded benefit packages do not need litigation to move forward. Also, the unsubstantiated claim and myth that similar-gender partner benefits would open companies up for fraud has transferred to polyamorous families as well. While there was and is no evidence of similar-gender partner benefit fraud, organizations would evoke neoliberalist, conservative accusations concerning defrauding the system, the cost of this addition, and the threat to traditional family structures.

For DSU, the most expensive portion of the benefits package was healthcare. Deep South University did not offer a “plus-one” status for healthcare benefits. Therefore, if an employee were to add any number of dependents, they would automatically opt into a “family” plan. Therefore, DSU’s healthcare system was already arranged to welcome polyamorous relationships *and* adult family members with disabilities. Yet, the policies explicitly prohibited polyamorous families and/or adult family members with disabilities from receiving benefits. People are dying without access to affordable healthcare coverage. By opening up the definition of family, DSU can literally save lives.

Subverting the Façade in Higher Education

Higher education façades will require updating to actively engage queer and trans-spectrum campus members and enact campus policies with transparent, strategic short- and long-term goals and outcomes. For this study in particular, linkages, transparency, and consistency between policies for the LGBTQIA+ employees need to be present to effectively navigate the additional barriers within campus life.

For example, if gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation are noted in the non-discrimination policy, how can the university structurally combat gender and sexuality discrimination? To begin, institutions need to minimally document queer and trans-spectrum employment experiences in a similar tracking method that already occurs on campuses for recruitment, hiring, and retention of people based on race, ethnicity, veteran status, disabilities, and sex. These systems are in place for federal compliance standards, and it would require minimal cost and labor to update and track these identities aggregately.

Once the campus is able to know who their queer and trans-spectrum employees are based on the system above, the institution would need to focus on retention of these individuals.

To assist in this, the university should disseminate and maintain transparency of policy implementation processes, specifically for the campus's non-discrimination complaints. There must be clear legal expectations and protections for employees who file reports. Once a case is filed, the campus should require investigation of all discrimination complaints and have institutional actions developed from the investigations. Cases can provide insights to developing better structural, proactive measures to support queer and trans-spectrum employees. Finally, the university should create and staff an anti-discrimination, confidential advocate office that would provide options and assist in processes for seeking justice on campus. The advocate would be able to offer the complainant expectations for the management of their case and the varying possible outcomes, as well as promote a process that monitors and responds to retaliations that may occur.

As an immediate way to recognize if the campus is viewed as safe and welcoming, DSU or any higher education institution could review the number of gender and sexuality-based discrimination cases that have occurred in the last 5 years; the more filed, the better. Additionally, how many of those cases were found in favor of the complainant/queer and/or trans-spectrum person? This review of cases and findings is a quick litmus test for LGBTQIA+ employees viewing the policy processes as safe and effective. If there are no cases or findings in favor of the complainant, the institution is not safe, not welcoming, and not inclusive. Over time, if these recommended policy practices are put into place, the systemic changes would seep into the façade and will reveal more rainbows, both literal and metaphorical, alongside the silver landscapes.

Implications for New Material Feminisms Research

Outside of this inquiry, no published literature was available on policy analysis using new material feminisms as the theoretical framework. Recognizing and valuing policy materiality as well as the lived realities of the participants was a gap in critical policy discourses. Additionally, there were three significant implications that rose from my work on the dissertation: thinking with concepts, documenting possibilities, and catalytic validity emerged from operationalizing new material feminisms.

Thinking with Concepts

The study was imagined through Mazzei and Jackson's (2012) *Thinking with Theory in Qualitative Research: Viewing Data Across Multiple Perspectives*, particularly with new material feminisms. When immersed in the inquiry, I held to thinking with theory, but specifically, I learned to work the theoretical concepts (Wilson, 1963). Intra-actions, entanglements, and materialities were foundational concepts that informed all aspects of the research beginning with the inquiry questions. With the immense amount of data collected, these concepts defined parameters enabling me to sift through the data more productively. By thinking with concepts, the findings and the relations among them surfaced. While this is not a new way of conducting analysis, continuing to work the concepts of new material feminisms would be an adventure.

Documenting Possibilities

Possibilities are part of the mapping of new material feminisms: "mattering and its possibilities and impossibilities for justice are integral parts of the universe in its becoming" (Barad, 2007, p. x-xi). Imagining possibilities is part of the Baradian diffractive methodology canon (Allen, 2015; Barad, 2007; Taylor & Ivinson, 2013; Zabrodska et al., 2011). Often these

possibilities are futuristic and have not existed yet. However, possibilities are constantly emerging and were documented throughout the analysis. For example, Skylar found comfort in the non-discrimination notice. With no transparent, actionable processes or the hint that the university valued this document beyond federal compliance expectations, he still could not even imagine himself being out.

I had harnessed this concept with neither intention nor purpose. During my session at an academic conference, I learned I was engaging in this practice through a response to a question on my research. I was able to articulate this concept because I already utilized it in practice.

This dissertation documented subtle and dramatic contextual, fleeting moments of possibilities. These possibilities and impossibilities existed with material implications on both the policies and participants. Further research on documenting possibilities would benefit new material feminisms.

Catalytic Validity

Throughout the research process, I shared information, learned from my participants, as well as they from me, and I continually exhumed actionable possibilities from this research. Catalytic validity is the “degree to which the research process re-orientes, focusses, and energizes participants in what Freire (1973) terms ‘conscientization,’ knowing reality in order to better transform it” (Lather, 1986, p. 67). There is/was catalytic validity in the moments between the participants and myself that reoriented them, particularly in regards to the DSU policies on campus.

For example, catalytic validity was present when the participants learned quickly how to analyze and critique the policies during their interview with me. Since the participants read the mission statement of DSU first and then were asked questions following the reading, they were

more attuned to reading the non-discrimination notice and dependents' benefits with a more critical eye. The participants carefully formulated and crafted more thorough responses. Another instance of catalytic validity took place during interviews when most of the participants were aware that the non-discrimination notice included gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation. They learned more about their institution in that moment and, for some, experienced a brief excitement at the possibilities of existing on the campus with pride and in celebration.

Topics for Further Research

This section focuses on the topical recommendations for further research. Once again, this project collected a significant amount of data and therefore this section does not address all the possibilities beyond the findings presented in the analysis. As I am attuned to my personal sense of research fulfillment, my desires guided these topical recommendations of areas to further agitate in the future.

Research Site Borders

Based on the locale of this study, I welcome and encourage higher education scholars to replicate this research on different types of campuses. This would include, but would not be limited to: community colleges, private institutions, historically Black universities and colleges, tribal colleges, and religiously affiliated institutions. Additionally, I would like to conduct a similar study at various large, public institutions in different regional settings such as the Northeast, West Coast, Appalachia, and the Midwest, to name a few. While some institutions would want to distance themselves from Deep South institutions, I imagine there would be similar possibilities that emerge more than they would care or want to admit.

Dress Code Policies

To manage the significant amount of data that was collected, I was not able to address several findings. One was DSU's organizational dress codes. For this study, I focused on how the codes were entangled with the non-discrimination notice. However, these codes need to be examined independently as well as intra-related with the non-discrimination notice. Several participants accounted for lived consequences for LGBTQIA+ employees in their working environments, and their ability to sustain continuous employment in relation to these unofficial dress code policies.

These were not policies that I began with, but the participants drew me toward these policies by discussing the gender expression of themselves and others in clothing choices. With a review of the first-round of interviews, I began to ask questions in the second round of interviews about gender expression specifically. Simultaneously, I collected policy documents at the university in regards to its dress code. By using new material feminisms to engage dress-code policies, vibrant findings would be produced demonstrating these dramatic and subtle relationships.

Sexual Orientation: The Expanded Edition

Many participants stated, "we are just like them" - them being monogamous, cis, straight families. While I totally understand this sentiment, I am not personally interested in normalized sexual identities and how they function in traditional work settings. I want to shatter the sexual orientation boundaries that I placed on this study. For example, one of my participants alluded to previous kinky and polyamorous experiences. With this in mind, I desire to recruit participants in a new study whose queer-spectrum identities range beyond "the normal" sexual orientations, which includes, but are not limited to: ace spectrum, polyamorous, promiscuous, non-

procreative, casual, cross-generational, commercial, kink, submissive, dominant, etc. (Rubin, 1998; Warner, 2000). In theory, this could incorporate cis and straight employees back into the research. However, I would recruit and work with participants who are engaged with consenting adults only. Ethically, I could not effectively engage with participants that I viewed as sexual perpetrators.

The Field of Higher Education

The following recommendation is for higher education researchers to consider for their future projects. One of the findings and implications of the study was the lived materialities of LGBTQIA+ employees, policies, and funding sources. Further studies examining the entanglements between the student's perceptions of queer and trans-spectrum employees, their personal experiences of safety and wellbeing, and alumni donating would provide additional layering into this study.

Conclusions

I want to close the chapter with the notion that nothing is innocent or pure. This is a vital point in demonstrating how the data analysis resonated with contradictions, messiness, and entanglements. There are no perfect resolutions or final representations as everything is always already producing new relationships. In that, "each one of us is situated ontologically and epistemologically inside a network of ethical dilemmas that arise as part of the ongoing entanglements of matter and meaning and their endless diffractive impact on everyday lives" (Zabrodska et al., 2011, p. 717). Combing through the immense amount of data was long and painstaking. Deciding on what to elevate into this project was excruciatingly difficult because each cut meant something was abandoned or lost (Lather, 2007; Pitt & Britzman, 2003). The

policies, participants, and I, as the researcher, are all implicated in the vastness that is higher education, and in this study.

While the study was not innocent, the “shiny surfaces” of higher education institutions can generate possibilities of inclusion that redistribute power into the policies and with queer and trans-spectrum employees. The recommendations offer ways to begin these processes along with the implications for the further research. The university’s policies are vibrant, intra-related actants with LGBTQIA+ employees. Policies are not just part of the required texts of higher education, but are critical realities in placating, upholding, maintaining, and regulating the multiple pristine façades. Lived materialities of queer and trans-spectrum employees are emergent within policy analyses offering nuances, complexities, contradictions, and messiness that is social justice research.

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APPENDICES

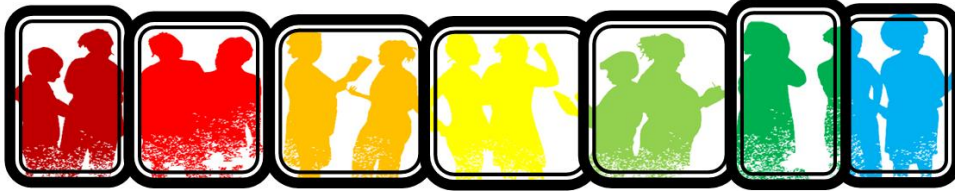
Appendix A: Faculty/Staff Online Weekly Newsletter Announcement

CALL FOR RESEARCH VOLUNTEERS — Jessi Hitchins, a doctoral student in social and cultural studies in education at The University of Alabama, is conducting a study on the experiences of LGBTQIA+ people who are employed at DSU. She invites any DSU fulltime employee who is at least 19 years of age and is self-identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, not straight, and/or gender nonconforming to participate in her research study. Participation is voluntary, and participants may withdraw at any time. Participants will undergo three 45-120-minute interview with Hitchins at a location of their choice. Responses will be kept confidential. The results of the study will be used for scholarly purposes only. All participants will receive a copy of the transcribed interview and have the opportunity to discuss the interpretation of the interview. For more information, contact Hitchins by email at jessi.hitchins@gmail or jlhitchins@crimson.ua.edu.

Appendix B: Recruitment Flier

RESEARCH VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans*, and Queer+ People
Employed at Deep South University



Are you an employee at Deep South University and a self-identified Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans*, Queer, not straight, and/or gender nonconforming (LGBTQ+)?

Do you ever feel that your experiences at Deep South University connect into your LGBTQ+ identity?

My name is Jessi Hitchins. I am a graduate student in Social and Cultural Studies in Education at The University of Alabama. At this time, I am conducting a study on the experiences of LGBTQ+ people who are employed at Deep South University.

This is an opportunity to share your experiences.

Whether you are openly LGBTQ+ or only "out" to just yourself, I would like the opportunity to speak with you.

Who can participate: Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans*, and Queer+ people who are employed as a full-time support staff, professional staff, administration, or faculty at Deep South University. Must be at least 19 years of age.

How to participate: Selected participants will participate in three 45-120 minute interviews. ***All interviews will be kept strictly confidential.***

To learn more about this study or sign up as a study participant, please contact Jessi Hitchins at jlhitchins@crimson.ua.edu or jessi.hitchins@gmail.com

Jessi Hitchins
Dr. Becky Atkinson

Doctoral Student Researcher
Faculty Advisor

jlhitchins@crimson.ua.edu
atkin014@bamaed.ua.edu

Appendix C: Recruitment Letter

Subject Line: LGBTQIA+ Employee Study at DSU: Seeking Participants

Good Afternoon,

Are you an employee at Deep South University and a self-identified Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, not straight, and/or gender nonconforming? Do you ever feel that your experiences at the Deep South University connect into your LGBTQIA identity? You are not alone. My name is Jessi Hitchins. I am a graduate student in Social and Cultural Studies in Education at The University of Alabama. I am conducting a study on the experiences of LGBTQIA+ people who are employed at Deep South University. If you identify as LGBTQIA+, employed at Deep South University, and at least 19 years of age, I would like to invite you to participate in my research study. Your participation in this research study is voluntary and, if you decide to participate in this research, you may withdraw at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you withdraw from participating at any time, you will not be penalized.

As a participant of this study, you will be asked to participate in three 45-120 minute interviews with me. The interview will take place at a location of your choice and your responses will be kept strictly confidential. The results of this study will be used for scholarly purposes only. All participants will receive a copy of the transcribed interview and have the opportunity to discuss the interpretation of the interview. If you would like to know more information about this study, please contact me at jessi.hitchins@gmail.com or jlhitchins@crimson.ua.edu.

It is impossible to do this kind of research without participation from staff and faculty like you. Attached, please find a flyer with additional information. Feel free to share this flyer with others.

Sincerely,

Jessi Hitchins
Ph.D. Candidate
Educational Leadership, Policy, and Technology Studies
Social and Cultural Studies
The University of Alabama

(This research has been approved by the University of Alabama Institutional Review Board for research involving human subjects. If you have any questions, please contact me at jessi.hitchins@gmail.com, jlhitchins@crimson.ua.edu, or my advisor, Dr. Becky Atkinson, at atkin014@bamaed.ua.edu.)

Appendix D: Informed Consent

Participants: Please keep a copy of this consent form for your records.

Title of Project – LGBTQIA+ University Employees Lived Experiences

Primary Investigator

Jessi Hitchins
College of Education
Department of Educational Leadership,
Leadership,
Policy, and Technology Studies
Area: Social and Cultural Studies, Qualitative
Research, and Women’s Studies

The University of Alabama
13032 Garden Creek Lane
Northport, AL 35473
jessi.hitchins@gmail.com

Secondary Investigator

Dr. Becky Atkinson
College of Education
Department of Educational
Policy, and Technology Studies
Area: Social and Cultural Studies &
Qualitative Research

The University of Alabama
Box 870302
Tuscaloosa, AL 35487
atkin014@bamaed.ua.edu

Please read this document and ask any questions that you may have before agreeing to participate in this study.

This study is being conducted by a doctoral student in social and cultural studies within the College of Education at The University of Alabama. This study is part of a larger dissertation research project and will be overseen by the secondary investigator.

Background Information:

This study is designed to describe the experiences of lived experiences of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, not straight, and/or gender nonconforming and are fulltime Deep South University employee. An interview format is proposed for this study in order to relay the narrative accounts of the study participants.

Procedure:

If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to do the following: participate in three audio-recorded interview in which you will be asked questions about your experiences as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, not straight, and/or gender nonconforming person who is employed fulltime at Deep South University. Each interview should take between 45-120 minutes. Your audio-recorded interview will be transcribed in full. During the course of the study, all audio-recorded interviews will be in a locked safe at the residence of the primary researcher.

What is this study about?

Increasingly, there are a number of self-identified Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, not straight, and/or gender nonconforming employees at Deep South University. The focus is to have insight to the everyday lived experiences of these individuals. Specifically, the investigator would like to know how personal identities impact the experiences of the study participants.

Why is this study important—What good will the results do?

The findings will help campus professionals (staff, faculty, etc.) understand the lived experiences that surrounds Deep South University employees who are also Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, not straight, and gender nonconforming individuals.

Why have I been asked to take part in this study?

You have been identified and contacted by the researcher based on personal contacts or referrals only. You self-identify as Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, not straight, or gender nonconforming as well as a fulltime employee at Deep South University.

How many other people will be in this study?

The investigator hopes to interview 20-30 Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, not straight, or gender nonconforming employees of Deep South University. The investigator also hopes to conduct all interviews within the next three months.

What will I be asked to do in this study?

If you agree to be in this study, Jessi Hitchins will interview you in a place of your own choosing about your experiences as a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans Queer, not straight, or gender nonconforming employee at Deep South University. The interview will consist of in-depth, open-ended questions that are conversational in nature. The interviewer would like to audiotape the interview to be sure that all your words are captured accurately. However, if you do not want to be taped, simply tell the interviewer, who will then take handwritten notes.

How much time will I spend being in this study?

The three interviews should last about 45-120 minutes, depending on how much information about your experiences you choose to share.

Will being in this study cost me anything?

The only cost to you from this study is your time.

Will I be compensated for being in this study?

No.

How will my privacy be protected?

You are free to decide where we will visit you so we can talk without being overheard. I will visit you in the privacy of your home or in another place that is convenient for you. During the interview, you may refuse to answer a particular question or not share information as you see fit.

What are the alternatives to being in this study?

The only alternative is not to participate.

What are my rights as a participant?

Being in this study is totally voluntary. It is your free choice. You may choose not to be in it at all. If you start the study, you can stop at any time. Not participating or stopping participation will have no effect on your relationships with Deep South University.

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board is a committee that looks out for the ethical treatment of people in research studies. They may review the study records if they wish. This is to be sure that people in research studies are being treated fairly and that the study is being carried out as planned.

Risks of Being in the Study:

The study may have the following risk: There is minimal to no risk if you are involved in this study. If you had a difficult experience that you share during the interview, you may experience heightened anxiety, stress, or sadness when sharing that experience with the interviewer. If this occurs, you will be given time to collect yourself before continuing, if you desire to do so. You can also control this possibility by not being in the study, by refusing to answer a particular question, or by not telling us things you find to be sad or stressful. In addition if you inquire about mental health services, the primary investigator will refer you to campus counselors which are available for Deep South University employees should you desire to take advantage of them. Seeing the counselor would be at your own expense.

Benefits of Being in the Study:

The study may have the following benefit: While there is no direct benefits to you for participating in this study, you may find it encouraging that the research may have the opportunity to help current Deep South University employees to better understand the experiences that you have on campus so that they can move past any misinformed perceptions that they may hold about Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans, Queer, not straight, or gender nonconforming people. Your participation in this study provides you with the opportunity to share your experiences in a way that can lead to policy and program changes for a more inclusive, safe campus for all employees at Deep South University.

Confidentiality:

For research related purposes, the interviewer would like to record your race, gender, sexual orientation, and special interest area. Your name and the name of your current employment area will not be recorded. The transcripts of your interview will have any personally identifiable information removed. Your transcript will be assigned a number as a way to separate it from other transcripts. Additional measures of confidentiality will include reasonable steps to ensure that the only persons with access to research records is the primary researchers, Institutional Review Board (IRB) professionals and other persons or agencies required by law. Such steps include using pseudonyms chosen by each participant in place of participant names and storing all research material in a locked safe at the residence of the primary researcher. Upon completion of the primary researcher's dissertation, all research material will remain in a locked safe for six months, at which time it will be shredded and discarded by the primary researcher. Audio-recorded interviews will also be destroyed one month after transcription. This information may be published, but your identity will be kept strictly confidential.

Contacts and Questions:

The researchers conducting this study are: Jessi Hitchins, a doctoral candidate in social and cultural studies in the College of Education at The University of Alabama and Dr. Becky Atkinson an

associate professor of social and cultural studies in the College of Education at The University of Alabama.

You may ask any questions you have now by contacting the researchers.

If you have questions about this study, you may contact the researchers at jlhitchins@sa.ua.edu. You may also contact the faculty advisor for this research, Dr. Becky Atkinson, at (205)-348-0357, or by email at atkin014@bamaed.ua.edu.

If you have questions, concerns, or complaints about your rights as a participant in this research study, you may contact Ms. Tanta Myles, the Research Compliance Officer at the University of Alabama, at 205-348-8461 or toll-free at 1-877-820-3066.

If you decide to participate, you are free to withdraw at any time without penalty.

You may also ask questions, make a suggestion, or file complaints and concerns through the IRB Outreach Website at http://osp.ua.edu/site/PRCO_Welcome.html. After you participate, you are encouraged to complete the survey for research participants that is online there, or you may ask Jessi Hitchins for a copy of it. You may also e-mail the IRB Outreach Office at participantoutreach@bama.ua.edu.

Appendix E: Interview Script and Question Protocol

Pre-Interview Script

- Start each interview with an introduction of the interviewer, an introduction to the study, and a review of the informed consent form. Allow time for study participants to ask questions. Ask again if recording the interview is acceptable to the study participant before beginning the interview.
- Each interview is planned to be 45-120 minutes long and will take place at a location of the study participant's choosing. The location chosen by the study participant will be a private room that is conducive for a confidential one-on-one interview with the primary investigator. Schedule 2 hour blocks for each interview to allow for a review of the informed consent and for participants who speak at greater lengths about their experiences.
- All interview questions will be general and open-ended in nature.
- The same interview questions will be used for every interview.
- Use probe questions to clarify participant responses (Ex. Would you give me an example? In what ways? What do you mean by that? Would you explain that further?)
- Upon completion of the interview, that the study participant for their participation, ask them if they have any questions and reassure them again of their confidentiality.

Interview Questions

1st Round of Interview Questions

- Why did you volunteer to participate in this study?
- Describe to me your gender.
- Define to me your sexuality and/or your sexual orientation.
- When did you come "out" as (fill in gender and/or sexual identity)?
- Can you tell me a story about your experiences as (fill in gender and/or sexual identity)?
- When did you begin working at the DSU?
- Tell me about the university.
- Describe a typical day on campus.
- ?
 - How does the university make you feel as it relates to your fill in gender and/or sexual identity identity?
- Illustrate what it is like to be an employee at Deep South University and self-identify as (fill in gender and/or sexual identity)?
- How do you feel (fill in gender and/or sexual identity) identified impacts your employment at DSU?
- What would you most like classmates, professors, administrators, family to know about your experiences as (fill in gender and/or sexual identity) person?
- Describe to me what that you think the university needs to consider in regards to gender and sexual orientation people on campus.

Based on continual analysis of interviews, these are possible questions for 2nd round interviews.

- (IF APPLICABLE) Have you ever had your gender and/or sexual orientation addressed in student evaluations?
- (IF APPLICABLE) Do you feel that your gender and/ or sexual orientation was discussed in your performance evaluations?
- Have you experienced personal victories on campus in relation to your (fill in gender and/or sexual identity) identity?
- Have you experienced barriers to your goals due to being (fill in gender and/or sexual identity) identified? If so, how did you overcome these barriers?
- What kind of advice did you get about employment? Who did you get it from?
- Have you ever shared being (fill in gender and/or sexual identity) with a fellow employee? If so, what was their reaction?
- Have you ever shared being (fill in gender and/or sexual identity) with your supervisor? If so, what was their reaction?
- (IF APPLICABLE) Tell me about the first person you came out to on campus.
- Discuss with me the university dress code for employees.
- How might that effect non-binary, genderqueer, trans folks specifically?
- Describe university policies or procedures that are necessary to make LGBTQIA+ equal to their straight and gender conforming counterparts?
 - Do you feel DSU does a good job of implementing these ideas?
 - What do you think they could do more of?
- To what do you attribute your motivation towards your continual employment at DSU?
- As (fill in gender and/or sexual identity), what types of services or programs have you taken advantage, if any?
- Have there been times when you wanted to share your concerns with others but didn't? If so, why?
- What ways do you negotiate as an (fill in gender and/or sexual identity) person on a primarily heteronormative campus?
- What support systems do you utilize (on and off campus)?
- Who do you talk to about your problems?
- Who do you talk to for advice on a campus?
- Who do you socialize with on campus?
- What types of organizations or activities on campus are you involved in? Do you believe that your involvement helps you? How?
- Have you shared your concerns with family or friends? How did they react? Did you notice differences in their interactions with you?

Is there anything else you would like to add?

Thank you for your participation.

Appendix F: Institutional Review Board Approvals

Office for Research
Institutional Review Board for the
Protection of Human Subjects



October 21, 2014

Jessi Hitchins
Department of ELPTS
College of Education
Box 870361

Re: IRB # 12-OR-213-R2 (Revision 2): "Policy, Gender, and Sexuality:
LGBTQ+ Higher Education Employees and Policing Policies"

Dear Ms. Hitchins,

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board has reviewed the revision to your previously approved expedited protocol. The Board has approved the change in your protocol.

Please remember that your approval period expires one year from the date of your original approval, July 1, 2014, not the date of this revision approval.

Should you need to submit any further correspondence regarding this proposal, please include the assigned IRB approval number. Changes in this study cannot be initiated without IRB approval, except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,

Stuart Usdan, Ph.D.
Chair, Non-Medical Institutional Review Board
The University of Alabama



358 Rose Administration Building
Box 870127
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35487-0127
(205) 348-8461
fax (205) 348-7189
TOLL FREE (877) 820-3066

Office for Research

March 30, 2015



Jessi Hitchins
Department of ELPTS
College of Education
The University of Alabama
Box 870361

Re: IRB # 12-OR-213-R2 (Revision # 3) "Policy, Gender, and Sexuality: LGBTQ+ Higher Education Employees and Policing Policies"

Dear Ms. Hitchins:

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board has reviewed the revision to your previously approved expedited protocol. The board has approved the change in your protocol.

Please remember that your approval period expires one year from the date of your original approval, July 1, 2014, not the date of this revision approval.

Should you need to submit any further correspondence regarding this proposal, please include the assigned IRB application number. Changes in this study cannot be initiated without IRB approval, except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,

Carpatho T. Mytes, MSM, CIM, CIP
Director & Research Compliance Officer
Office for Research Compliance



358 Rose Administration Building
Box 870127
Tuscaloosa, Alabama 35487-0127
(205) 348-8461
fax (205) 348-7189
TOLL FREE (877) 820-3066

April 26, 2016

Jessi Hitchins
Department of ELPTS
College of Education
The University of Alabama
Box 870361

Re: IRB # 12-OR-213-R4 "Policy, Gender, and Sexuality: LGBTQ+ Higher Education Employees and Policing Policies"

Dear Ms. Hitchins:

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board has granted approval for your renewal application.

Your renewal application has been given expedited approval according to 45 CFR part 46. Approval has been given under expedited review category 7 as outlined below:

(7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

Your application will expire on April 25, 2017. If your research will continue beyond this date, complete the relevant portions of the IRB Renewal Application. If you wish to modify the application, complete the Modification of an Approved Protocol Form. Changes in this study cannot be initiated without IRB approval, except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants. When the study closes, complete the appropriate portions of the IRB Study Closure Form.

Should you need to submit any further correspondence regarding this proposal, please include the above application number.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,

Carpanato T. Myles, MSM, CIM, CIP
Director of Research Compliance & Research Compliance Officer
Office of Research Compliance

February 22, 2017

Jessi Hitchins
Department of ELPTS
College of Education
The University of Alabama
Box 870361

Re: IRB # 12-OR-213-R5 "Policy, Gender, and Sexuality: LGBTQ+ Higher Education Employees and Policing Policies"

Dear Ms. Hitchins:

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board has granted approval for your renewal application. Your renewal application has been given expedited approval according to 45 CFR part 46. Approval has been given under expedited review category 7 as outlined below:

(7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

Your application will expire on February 21, 2018. If your research will continue beyond this date, complete the relevant portions of the IRB Renewal Application. If you wish to modify the application, complete the Modification of an Approved Protocol Form. Changes in this study cannot be initiated without IRB approval, except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants. When the study closes, complete the appropriate portions of the IRB Study Closure Form.

Should you need to submit any further correspondence regarding this proposal, please include the above application number.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,

Stuart Usdan, PhD.
Chair, Non- Medical Institutional Review Board
The University of Alabama