BEYOND DEPENDENT AND INDEPENDENT: 
LEADERSHIP IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT IN AN ACHIEVEMENT-ORIENTED CONTEXT

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BEYOND DEPENDENT AND INDEPENDENT:

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ABSTRACT

Higher education in the United States has a unique opportunity to educate students to practice leadership to address complex problems. A limited number of universities bear the label “elite” as a result of highly selective admissions criteria, cost, age, and position in popular national rankings. Additional scrutiny of these institutions leads to questions about the nature of “leadership” taught implicitly and explicitly to students. For these institutions, explicitly incorporating values into the underlying model of student leadership development may address concerns about the individually-enriching privilege conferred on those who attend an “elite” institution. Deeper understanding about the ways that students conceptualize themselves as leaders and practitioners of leadership can further this objective. It is in this context that this thesis seeks to explore the process of student leadership identity development for students attending an “elite” university.
This grounded theory research study examines the ways in which traditionally-aged undergraduate students at Georgetown University develop a leadership identity. The Leadership Identity Development (LID) theory and model proposed by Komives, Longerbeam, Owen, Mainella and Osteen in 2005 and 2006 provides a framework to understand the ways in which students develop a leadership identity grounded in a construction of leadership as “relational,” or empowering, ethical, inclusive, purposeful and process-oriented (Komives, Lucas and McMahon 2013). At the heart of the model is a shift from role-centric to process-centric understanding of leadership and an expanding capacity to understand oneself in relationship to others in the practice of leadership. This study was crafted through narrative analysis and grounded theory construction based on interviews conducted with ten students identified to be practicing relational, values-based leadership at Georgetown University.

From this inquiry three major findings emerge. First, social location and social identities matter to those who hold leader roles and progress towards understanding themselves as practicing leadership with others. Second, the LID theory and model is a useful framework for understanding leadership identity development in this population of students; multiple stages and all five categories were represented in student responses. Finally, students in Stage Three, Leader Identified modes of thinking describe their view of self in relation to others in achievement-oriented terms. This orientation was conceptualized as a filter that students may apply to their view and recounting of leadership experience. More inquiry into this condition is needed to determine if this filter is detectable in all stages or in all categories. Limitations to the study and suggestions for future research are included.
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I have been enrolled in the Doctor of Liberal Studies program for about half of my career in the Division of Student Affairs at Georgetown University, and it was this sense of purposeful work that led me to want to explore the theoretical foundations of leadership identity in the first place. My colleagues in the division have been cheerleaders, meaning-makers and thought partners throughout the entire process. My current and former colleagues in the Center for Student Engagement who share similar
language and lenses have been steadfast supporters as have the many Hoya friends across campus who celebrated the milestones and offered support during periods of fatigue, bewilderment or both. I could not have accomplished this without the confidence, encouragement and role-modeling of Dr. Jeanne Lord, my supervisor and mentor.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

If everyone is a leader, does that mean that no one is?¹

Each year at new student convocation, university leaders address the incoming class and their families by commending the work and accomplishments that led to their matriculation and provide wisdom to guide them in the days ahead. Many of these speeches acknowledge the sacrifices that students have made to arrive at this moment and the measures of achievement that signify their success. Yet inherent in this message is the notion that each individually high achieving student is now joining a community of other, similar high achievers. They enter a resource rich environment and are invited to explore their passions with purpose. In looking around they begin to regard those who have made a parallel journey and received the same opportunity: admission to a community of similarly motivated and driven emerging adults. The mechanisms by which they arrived here are called into question - are these the same mechanisms which will make them successful? Their identities as young leaders led them to this point, can they still claim to be leaders as they start the journey through college? And what about all these others around them - if everyone is a leader, what does that mean for each of them?

One of the great paradoxes of leadership underscores the need to examine more closely the interaction between leadership and identity. In this question, assumptions

¹ This question was cited and discussed as a perennial paradox of leadership during a conversation between the student leadership scholar Susan Komives and Myles Surrett, host of the Student Leadership Programs Knowledge Community podcast sponsored by the National Association of Student Personnel Administrators in the June 19, 2017 episode. It can be found on Soundcloud https://soundcloud.com/user-606900324-709612745 and was accessed on March 8, 2018.
abound about individualism, relationship, influence and mutuality. Leadership as a concept is often studied by scholars in myriad fields, and yet disciplinary divides, misaligned definitions, and ambiguous constructs make efforts to share conclusive knowledge about leadership challenging, mysterious or at worst, suspect. However, as the world grows increasingly complex and the problems facing humankind become more urgent, the ability to marshal and apply creativity, cooperation, and excellence in service of common good seems essential. For this, leadership is required.

But what is meant by leadership? To attempt to define leadership is to enter into a complex debate that elicits a variety of responses based on the values and disciplinary constructs from which a scholar approaches the field (Rost 1991; Day, Harrison and Halpin 2009; Cronin and Genovese 2012; Uhl-Bien and Ospina 2012). Management and industrial organization scholars will necessarily prioritize a different set of leadership themes than will social psychologists, philosophers, military or political scientists (Rost 1991; Dugan 2017; Genovese and Cronin 2012). Probing the concept of definition further, attention must be paid to the differences between leadership theory and leadership practice, between leadership training and leadership education, and between leader development and leadership development (Dugan 2017; Genovese and Cronin 2012; Komives et al. 2011). Seeking to explore the construct of leadership means necessarily limiting it based on population, context and purpose.

A rich subfield of leadership scholarship has emerged around the development of leadership in college students, particularly in the population of traditionally-aged students, those between the ages of 18-24 years old who matriculate shortly after completing high school (Astin and Astin 2000; Pascarella and Terenzini 2005). The
interest in leadership among college students presumably stems from the notion that higher education provides opportunities to structure and develop leadership skills, abilities, values and efficacy in students, in concert with a process designed to foster complex problem solving, critical thinking, effective written and oral communication, and an overall orientation to learning (Komives et al. 2011; Owen 2015; Mezirow 2000). In tandem, these cognitive skills are desirable outcomes both for students of higher education, and for developing leaders. While the general process of higher education lends itself to inquiry about its role in fostering leadership development and identity development in students, further examination of the type of higher educational environment further complicates this picture (Astin 1996; Hu and Kuh 2002).

Just as it matters to understand the population in leadership research, so too does the context matter. For decades, research on college student development focused on students in particular educational contexts, namely the institutional environments characterized by their historic role in educating the American privileged class (Thelin 2004; Trow 2006). As the landscape of American colleges and universities grew more crowded, distinctions in institutional type were amplified. Institutional rankings took hold in the popular culture, most notably illustrated by the rise of U.S. News and World Report’s annual publication, which emerged in the 1980s (Meredith 2004, 444-5). Higher education in the United States became, for better or for worse, conditioned by ranking institutions according to measures of prestige and competitiveness (Owings, Madigan and Daniel 1998). This has given rise to focused attention on the characteristics and value of higher education in the “elite” institutions which attract so many applicants, often at great cost. Understanding this context as the backdrop for
traditionally-aged college students is important to any inquiry into these students’
experience. Similarly, there are parallels between the privileged context of elite private
higher education and the construct of leadership in its pre-examined state, as both are
imbued with privileges. Elite higher education assumes that meritocracy is the premise
on which admission and student success is based (Liu 2011) and constructions of
leadership implies that those deemed “leaders” are assumed to be capable and ready to
leading. Deconstructing context and construct are central to this thesis.

Speaking personally, I was drawn to this topic for several reasons, one of which
was a nagging question regarding students’ perceptions of themselves within a context of
high achieving others. Having participated in the aforementioned new student
convocation ceremony countless times, I have come to contemplate these questions of
leadership in community in both real and abstract terms. Based on the work I do as a
leadership educator in co-curricular contexts, I wondered whether and how individual
students negotiated their sense of leadership identity in relation to others, when they
might perceive their peers as being active, competent leaders in their own
right. Recognizing that late adolescents and emerging adults are highly referential
toward their peer group (Arnett 2001; Twenge 2017), I was curious if that sense of
persistent awareness of and referencing others extended to leadership practices, and if so,
how did that impact students’ sense of themselves as leaders? Did they feel competitive?
Insecure? Self-confident? Assured in their identity as leader? From a different angle,
relational constructions of leadership define leadership as involving others, so does the
necessarily social nature of leadership indicate that students will easily work together?
STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The paper that follows is concerned with understanding leadership development in college students; specifically, I seek to explore the process by which students at Georgetown University develop a leadership identity and come to understand themselves as practicing leadership within a system. This inquiry is based on the framework of the Leadership Identity Development (LID) theory and model introduced in 2005 by Komives, Longerbeam, Owen, Mainella and Osteen that posits development along specific categories through recognizable stages. The theoretical foundations of the theory and model will be presented, along with additional discussion of related concepts, such as the underlying definition of leadership, assumptions about constructions of identity, the consideration of leadership as identity, consideration of relational constructions of leadership, and the integration of these constructs within the context of elite higher education. I will also address the ways in which I came to this field of inquiry and the method by which I seek to study and understand this phenomenon.

RESEARCH QUESTION

This study seeks to understand how students make meaning of their leadership experiences in order to develop a sense of themselves as leaders, and as individuals practicing leadership. I seek to understand the ways in which students perceive and describe the practice of leadership with others in the context of their experience at Georgetown University. Embedded in this overarching research question are subordinate questions, including:
1. What are the patterns in Georgetown University students’ descriptions of their identity as leaders or practicing leadership, and do these patterns align with the stages and categories identified in the Leadership Identity Development theory and model? Are the LID theory and model useful tools in discerning leadership identity development in students at Georgetown?

2. How do students describe their view of themselves in relation to others with regard to their leadership identity? Do students reference others in understanding leadership practice for themselves?

3. Do students understand leadership as an inclusive process, and how do they describe this assessment of leadership?

The thesis that follows traces my inquiry through these questions and seeks to nest both the questions and responses with regard for the underlying values that contextualize and ground these concepts. This introduction provides an overview of the discussion regarding how students at Georgetown University come to apprehend themselves as leaders and practitioners of leadership within a system, including consideration for the LID theory and model at the heart of the study, the backdrop of literature that informs these questions, and the ways in which I set out to learn directly from students what it means to them to be leaders, to practice leadership, at Georgetown.

LEADERSHIP IDENTITY DEVELOPMENT THEORY AND MODEL

Leadership Development in College Students

In 2005 after several years of research, the scholarly team of Komives, Longerbeam, Mainella, Owen and Osteen addressed a critical gap in the literature of
college student leadership development, the question of how leadership or leadership identity develops over time (Komives et. al 2005, 2006, 2009). Prior studies had examined the representation of student leadership through considerations of the knowledge, values, and skills that students demonstrate when enacting leadership (Kouzes and Posner 1987, 2008; HERI 1996; Komives et al. 2011; Dugan 2017).

Empirical data from the then-nascent Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership (MSL) had begun to inform the broader understanding of student leadership development by examining inputs, environments and outcomes from a vast array of institutions to show links between student characteristics, their experiences, their identities, and the types of programs they engage in (Dugan and Komives 2007, 2010; Dugan, Kodama, Correia and Associates 2013). The MSL centered on a leadership model based in seven core leadership values organized by individual, group and community dimensions (HERI 1996). The outcomes of a process-based model of leadership were commonly recognized in higher education scholarship circles as notably relevant for students in particular, namely the Social Change Model of Leadership Development (HERI 1996). This growing landscape of literature and theory related to student leadership development pointed toward substantive growth in the exploration and understanding of what constituted student leadership and who demonstrated increases in these leadership values, based on identities, experiences, and institutional environments (HERI 1996; Dugan and Komives 2007, 2010; Dugan, Kodama, Correia and Associates 2013; Komives et al. 2011). It indicated a clear need for more information as to how the complex interaction of knowledge, values, and skills positioned students to engage in and enact leadership, particularly the type of leadership that emphasized collective, process-based relationships.
and de-emphasized positional hierarchy (Dugan, Kodama Correia and Associates 2013; Dugan and Komives 2007, 2010; Komives et al. 2011). This provided a strong context for the introduction of the Leadership Identity Development grounded theory and stage-based model.

The Leadership Identity Development (LID) theory sought to address the question of how students develop a leadership identity in the context of the social experience of working purposefully toward change. Central to the theory is the definition of leadership as relational, namely empowering, ethical, inclusive, purposeful and process-oriented; in this construction leadership exists in relationships between individuals, rather than in the individuals themselves (Komives, Lucas and McMahon 2013; Komives et al. 2005, 2006, 2009).

Using the grounded theory methodology to formulate this theory and the subsequent applied model, the research team collected data through semi-structured conversations with participants. From these conversations the research team generated a set of influential categories and stages of development that frame the development of relational leadership for students in college (Komives et al. 2005). More information about the theory and a model is presented in Chapter Two, and a figure representing the model stages and categories is presented in Appendix A.

**LID Categories**

Coding the data collected in student interviews produced an overarching category **Developing a Leadership Identity** under which five supporting categories were identified. These categories were organized and presented as: **Broadening View of**
Leadership; Developing Self; Group Influences; Developmental Influences; and Changing View of Self with Others (Komives et al. 2005). Each category was supported by a set of properties describing the three or four elements comprising it. Following establishment of categories, the LID research team sought to organize the theory according to stages that described increasingly complex understanding and a shift from subjective to objective perspective in understanding one’s relationship to leadership identity.

LID Stages

The stages demonstrate the student’s growing understanding of the depth and complexity of leadership as a process (Komives et al. 2005, 2006). The six purported stages are: 1) Awareness, 2) Exploration/Engagement, 3) Leader Identified, 4) Leadership Differentiated, 5) Generativity, 6) Integration/Synthesis (Komives et al. 2005, 2006). A graphic representation of the LID model is presented in Figure 1 in Appendix A. Thorough discussion of LID categories and stages is presented in Chapter Two.

Following the development of the LID theory, an applied model operationalized the progressive stages of growth in each category in concert with a deepening understanding of the phases involved in stage progression and the manner by which students may transition through the stages (Komives et al. 2006). Later, the research team would revisit the constructs again to explore the challenges associated with developing and applying the model to practical contexts (Komives et al. 2009).

Values Orientation
In many ways, the study of leadership is the study of values that motivate humans to work together toward specific ends. What is meant by leadership and how it occurs is a function of how it is defined; variations lead to different mechanisms of enactment and outcomes (Burns 1978; Dugan 2017; Hunt 2004; Northouse 2015; Rost 1991). The history of leadership theory can be understood in terms of shifting values that undergird collective action. A partial explanation of the history of leadership theory presented in Chapter Two traces the evolution of leadership values from their construction and attribution at the individual level to the collective level. A discussion of leadership at the most basic level is an examination of values: what is prized, honored and held up as laudable ways to achieve goals, and for whose benefit. Recent scholarship advanced by Dugan (2017) asserts that any inquiry into leadership must take a critical perspective towards these underlying values and ask how the construct of leadership may have been used in the past to maintain systems of inequality and contribute to oppression and marginalization. The LID theory and model espouse explicit values for student leadership identity development; in this model, leadership is empowering, ethical, inclusive, purposeful and process-oriented. To consider the ways in which these tools may be practically applied within the specific context at Georgetown requires closer examination of how the institutional environment may work in concert with or counter to LID values.

**Subjectivity and Objectivity**

At the heart of this inquiry about leadership identity in college students are questions about the nature of relationship and the shift between subjectivity and
objectivity in human apprehension of the other. In interviewing students about their leadership values, practices and behaviors I heard much about how they think about themselves in relation to others and how they make sense of these relationships. This apprehension of self and other, subject and object, is a significant matter in this study.

LID theory draws upon the work of psychologist Robert Kegan in crafting development as a set of stages characterized by periods of stability and periods of disequilibrium (Komives et al. 2005, 2006). Kegan describes “Orders of Consciousness” - similar to stages - used to organize, make sense of, and draw meaning from the experience of the self in the world (Kegan 1994). As one gains experience and encounters periods of disequilibrium, the framework used to make meaning of the world becomes insufficient in accomplishing these cognitive needs, and thus shifts to become one part of a larger system. This shift represents the idea that the self as meaning maker reorients to become part of a larger system of meaningfulness, thus becoming object of consideration, understood in a larger system of meaning making. The order of consciousness is disrupted, and the subject adjusts to see himself as object within the expanded system (Kegan, 1994). This concept of shifting orders of consciousness and expanding capacity for understanding self and other in more complex ways informs other theories of human development, such as the reflexive practice of self-authorship (Baxter Magolda 2009). In the LID theory and model, this shift underscores the particular transition when students encounter the change from role-based constructions of leader to process-based considerations of leadership, necessitating the careful regard for the other in their construction of self.
Another way in which subject and object are joined in the self and other relationship is through the construction of selfhood advanced by Martin Buber. This conception of selfhood presents a philosophical grounding for apprehending the leader to leadership shift, as it emphasizes mutually transformative relationality over subjective transaction or experience. While a full treatment of Buber’s I-Thou philosophy of selfhood is beyond the scope of this inquiry, some discussion of his orientation of self and other may prove useful to the understanding of relationality as it relates to leadership identity among students. More context for this philosophical grounding is presented in Chapter Two.

Identity

The question of the relationship between leadership and identity is of increasing interest to those who study leadership in order to fully understand the assumptions embedded in the discussion of leadership and identity. Scholars of varying disciplines have approached the question of identity - what constitutes an identity, how is it manifest, is the construct of a durable, singular identity consistent over time a valid construct able to be studied? - with different lenses and assumptions (Jones and McEwen 2000; Korsgaard 2009; Leary and Tegney 2012; Torres, Jones and Renn 2009). Any inquiry into understanding identity must necessarily be delimited and defined with specificity.

As this inquiry addresses questions about the phenomenon of college students identity development in the realm of leadership, it is important to consider questions that
underpin conceptions of identity development, leadership as a component of identity development, and the manner in which these phenomenon occur for a defined population with a common experience, namely traditionally-aged college students engaged in the learning process (Abes, Jones and McEwen 2007; Astin and Astin 2000; Jones and McEwen 2000; Pascarella and Terenzini 2005; Dugan and Komives 2007, 2010; Komives et al. 2005, 2006, 2009). Further, this inquiry will benefit from a review of literature that addresses the institutional context in which college students experience and participate in leadership in order to better define the aspect of inquiry. As qualitative research seeks to understand a phenomenon in greater depth, but not necessarily with broad generalizability, the literature supporting each aspect of this line of inquiry is considered as useful context, not simply regarding the results that various studies put forward, but also how questions are formulated and which assumptions are made (Charmaz 2006; Cresswell 2013; Tracy 2013).

Absolute, positivist and binary models fall short of providing the strongest foundation from which to understand a complex concept like identity, particularly when considering a human behavior and experience that occurs in the context of identity, such as leadership (Charmaz 2006; Tracy 2013; Parry 1998). Inquiries and conceptualizations of leadership that seek to advance an argument that leadership is an identity, embedded in the human experience most often, and rightfully, assert notions of both self-determination and relational recognition in defining the phenomenon of leadership and it's process of development.

**Context: Elite Higher Education**
The landscape of higher education in the United States is growing increasingly complex, and the questions surrounding access, preparation, desired outcomes, and resources demonstrate a fraction of the issues facing scholars, educators, administrators, and consumers. This is a popular conversation; Weissberg observed “pessimism about the state of higher education is a venerable tradition.” (2011, 220). The last two decades have seen a rise in research into the challenges facing American higher education. Some lament the purported lack of learning taking place in American institutions (Arum and Roksa 2011) or question whether evaluative tools are focused on the right measures of learning (Brownell and Swaner 2010; Campbell 2018; Campbell, Dortch and Burt 2018). Some question the assumptions underlying the traditional structure of associates, bachelors, masters and doctorate degrees (Sellingo 2013; Carey 2015). Some highlight the contrast between an aspiration of higher education – providing resources that effectively reduce inequality among members of different social classes – with a real and perceived impact that higher education in some contexts may increase or maintain inequality through maintaining social stratification (Armstrong and Hamilton 2013; Rivera 2016; Liu 2011; Alon and Tienda 2007). Some synthesize a myriad array of problems – rising costs, declining indicators of learning, potential for technological disruption, bureaucratic obstacles – and propose radical solutions (Bowen, Kurzweil and Tobin 2005; Arum and Roksa 2011; Sellingo 2013; Carey 2015; Bruni 2015). The debate about the state of American higher education continues, fueled by the serious questions of cost, access, quality, outcomes, and ultimately, purpose.

Critiques of higher education in popular press are also concerning, as journalists, politicians and others explore many perceived failings of institutions of higher education.
Polemics written for a popular audience like Deresiewicz’s 2014 *Excellent Sheep* take aim specifically at traditional, high prestige institutions as failing to live up to their ideals and contributing to a vacuum in challenging work, critical thinking, and leadership. Recent critiques have lodged specific concerns about the assumptions undergirding the type of leadership advanced by elite higher education. Cain asserts “Many students … read ‘leadership skills’ as a code for authority and dominance, and define leaders as those who ‘can order other people around’” (2017). Warner (2017) adds: “Academia in general, and elite academia in specific, has very little to offer when it comes to modeling genuine leadership. The most successful academics are not leaders, but competitors, and their prize is prestige.” While these missives may have been written for a popular audience without the heft of research to substantiate these claims, there is reason for concern. Recent data shows that perceptions of higher education vary based on one’s political party, with Republicans taking a more negative view of colleges and professors than Democrats (Pew Research 2017; accessed March 31, 2018); this is alarming given that one of the most complex problems in American society is how to bridge ideological divides among a polarized populace.

Considering the challenges raised in both scholarly and popular press, it is incumbent upon those in academia to make positive assertions about the value and intention of post-secondary education. Preparing students to lead in the face of complex challenges could be a clearly articulated and valued outcome, if focused on specific leadership outcomes (Astin and Astin 2000; Dugan, Kodama, Correia and Associates 2013; Dugan and Komives 2007, 2010; Hu and Kuh 2002; Komives, Lucas and McMahon 2013). In order to respond to these critiques, more insight is needed into the
phenomenon of leadership development and leadership identity development among students in high prestige university environments.

**Positionality**

I have come to this research after more than fifteen years professionally engaged in the co-curricular experience of Georgetown university students. As an advisor to various iterations of student groups, I have had the opportunity to bear witness to spectacular accomplishments and utter failures, which, in my belief, have little value without the concomitance of reflective engagement and introspection on behalf of the individuals and groups who create them. Against the backdrop of an elite institution, I have observed students who assume all the responsibilities and burdens of the role of leader, yet eschew the label. Similarly, others claim authority and position without building relationships that allow for substantive pursuit of stated goals; these enterprises are almost never sustained beyond the interests of the originator.

Students at Georgetown claim the identity of “leader” relatively easily, as the opportunity to matriculate depends in some part on their ability to inhabit this role and substantiate it through evidence of involvement and participation. The subsequent development and experiential learning about the nature of leadership and the interdependence required to accomplish sustainable success is uniquely conditioned by the elite institutional environment that Georgetown provides. In seeking to understand this phenomenon, my own lived experience as an advisor and facilitator of meaningful conversations has raised more questions than answers.
While scholars of qualitative research in higher education caution against the pitfalls of “backyard research” (Glesne & Peshkin 1992), the conditions of student leadership at Georgetown University bear more formal inquiry using the tools and resources of modern scholarship. In the section titled Methodology, I address the potential risks associated with conducting research within a community in which I primarily occupy another role. Beyond a deeper understanding of the departure between creating and sustaining organizations, the study of LID in the context of an elite institution affords the chance to forge new insights into the intersection of two privileged concepts in an era in which the call is clear to dismantle and examine the processes that bestow advantages unfairly based on social identity (Dugan 2017; NCLP 2018). As the concepts of leadership and elite higher education have entwined and informed each other from the admission process to institutional purpose, exploring them in tandem allows for more thorough interrogation of their mutual impact.

Chapter Organization

This thesis intends to explain the argument for using the LID theory and model to examine closely the impact of the elite institutional context on the leadership identity development of students at Georgetown, with particular attention to the category of the Changing View of Self in Relation to Others. In Chapter Two, I will offer a review of the literature related to the various issues and conditions presented in this thesis. I will present more detailed information about the LID theory and applied model in order to explain their utility and value in addressing the constructs under scrutiny. I will ground this inquiry in conceptual frameworks about leadership and identity, and provide some
history of student development theory and leadership development theory to contextualize these questions.

Chapter Three provides an explanation of the methodology behind this study, with specific insight into Grounded Theory technique. This methodology provides a tool to generate theory based on the collection of narrative data from interviews with students, but requires careful and intentional consideration of the construction of meaningful data through choices around sampling, interview format, coding procedures, and analysis (Charmaz 2006; Cresswell 2013; Tracy 2013). Chapter Four presents the themes, categories and concepts reflected in the data, as well as analysis as to their meaning and relationship to the Leadership Identity Development theory. This chapter also provides focused examination of the impact of the elite status of Georgetown University with regard to the students’ conceptions and projections of leadership identity. Chapter Five presents discussion of the implications and limitations of the study, and offers questions for future inquiry.

The trajectory of scholarship on leadership has led to new ways of thinking about this much-studied phenomenon. Scholarship has moved in the direction of expanding access to the phenomenon of leadership, and challenging traditionally held views in favor of principles that hold more egalitarian value (Dugan 2017). There is potential for similar benefit in exploring the intersection of one presumed elite construct – the notion of leadership itself – with another, namely the elite institution of higher education, particularly as it may frame a deeper understanding of students’ understanding of their interdependence and mutually-affecting relationships with others. I intend to use the LID theory as a mechanism to explore more deeply students’ conceptions of leadership.
development particularly within the context of this institution, their role in the
relationships that it necessitates, and their claim to the identity that it offers.
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

INTRODUCTION

To understand the phenomenon of how students at Georgetown develop a leadership identity and what influences may apply requires a review of several conditions and constructs. First, understanding the context in which this process is situated merits an overview of the landscape of contemporary higher education and the role of highly selective, elite universities. Next, in making claims that position leadership as an “identity,” some consideration of the philosophical foundations of identity must ground the discussion. Identity development is an essential developmental process for college students; the literature of college student development theories will demonstrate the centrality of this concept to the larger discussion about leadership. Next, it will be important to review the myriad theories of leadership, particularly grounding those theories that position leadership as identity, and leadership as relational. Finally, this chapter concludes with an overview of the Leadership Identity Development theory and model, as that is the framework undergirding the research discussed in Chapters Three, Four and Five.

DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this inquiry it is important to define several concepts and constructs.

**Elite higher education:** Defined as colleges or universities that meet the following criteria: inclusion in the U.S. News and World Report list of Top 25 National/Research Universities; admit less than 20% of their applicants; participate in the Consortium on
Financing Higher Education (COFHE), a voluntary membership association and “think tank” for private colleges and universities committed to meeting full demonstrated financial need of applicants. (COHFE website, http://web.mit.edu/cofhe/index.html, accessed March 28, 2018). This definition is supported by Trow’s (2006) construction of elite higher education.

**Identity:** For the purpose of this inquiry, identity is defined using Oyserman, Elmore and Smith’s (2012) definition,

> Identities are the traits and characteristics, social relations, roles and social memberships that define who one is. Identities can be focused on the past - what used to be true of one, the present - what is true of one now, or the future- the person one expects or wishes to become, the person one feels obligated to try to become, or the person one fears one may become. Identities are orienting, they provide a meaning-making lens, and focus one’s attention on some but not other features of the immediate context. (69)

**Leadership:** For the purpose of this inquiry, leadership is defined using the Relational Leadership Model purported by Komives, Lucas and McMahon (2007), as this definition was designed from research and practical work with college students, and is a key construct in the Leadership Identity Development theory and model. Relational Leadership is defined as: “a relational and ethical process of people together attempting to accomplish positive change” (Komives, Lucas and McMahon 2013 74).

**Traditionally aged college students:** The population of students most likely to attend elite higher education in the American tradition, this group is defined as young or emerging adults aged 18 - 24 who matriculate in institutions of higher education shortly upon finishing secondary education (Astin 1993). Currently, these are students born between 1996 - 2000; scholars are beginning to publish social science research on this demographic, referring to them as Generation Z or the iGen population. Although
research on generational trends abounds, for the purpose of this inquiry I will refer most often to the work of Jean Twenge (2017) as she bases her work on data sets drawn from college student respondents.

“ELITE” HIGHER EDUCATION

What makes an institution as “elite?” In colloquial terms, this descriptor is often applied to institutions that are expensive, historic, private, highly selective in their admissions criteria, and perceived to present a challenging learning environment. (Owings, Madigan and Daniels 1998; Meredith 2004; Bruni 2014; Campbell, Dortch and Burt 2018). Anecdotally, some would assert that they confer a powerful sense of identity on those who attend (Patel 2018). Forming a general understanding of the context of elite higher education is important to understanding the potential contextual role in supporting and fostering student leadership.

Cost

Many of the private universities in this categorization belong to the Consortium on Financing Higher Education, an association of private universities who share several defining characteristics, chief among them the explicit commitment to meet full demonstrated financial need of admitted students (COHFE 2017). This association implies a recognition that the intersection of high cost and high selectivity of such institutions requires both policies that enable high achieving students to attend despite the prohibitive published tuition rate, and a responsibility to share data to maintain the utility of this reference group (COFHE 2017). Institutional age is another factor contributing to the notion of elite higher education. Many, though not all of the institutions on U.S.
News and World Report’s list of “Best National Universities” are private universities founded in the pre-Revolutionary period of American history, or in the first fifty years of the new nation (Thelin 2004), establishing a link between age and prestige.

Admission

An important delineator of elite universities is the highly selective admissions process and the fact that the “elite” identifier is assigned in part by the ratio of those who wish to attend versus those who are offered admission. Most universities in the U.S. News and World Report ranking of the top “National Universities” report acceptance rates of between 5 – 15% of applicants (U.S. News and World Report 2017). The frenzy caused by this publication of relativist university rankings has led to a rise in published responses decrying the negative outcomes associated with such widespread attention on a small number of “elite” institutions; the most aptly titled among these responses is Frank Bruni’s 2015 popular treatise, Where You Go is not Who You’ll Be: An Antidote to the College Admissions Mania. Bruni builds a case against participating in the highly selective admissions process by emphasizing the faulty assumptions used to rank highly complex institutions in comparison to one another, and amplifying the voices of the experts within the institutions – deans of admission, university leaders – who criticize the rankings process and the educational assumptions that have resulted (Bruni 2015).

Career Outcomes

Another factor that amplifies the need for closer examination of elite higher education is the alignment with other outcomes, such as career placement. Recent research indicates that potential employers from competitive, high-paying, or high-profile
industries “see hiring as an extension of their gold-plated brands, and . . . tend to recruit only from the very top of the college rankings” (Sellingo 2016, 215). Rivera (2016) traces the way that elite university environments contribute to continued social stratification through perpetuation of separation through the career placement process. She describes the role that presentation of “leadership experience” has in the process; the most desirable and successful applicants are recognized for demonstrating “leadership” in college through holding positions in student organizations, athletic teams and other organized groups (96-100). Liu (2011) finds similar outcomes in examining the myth of meritocracy in some institutions of higher education.

**Critique**

Scholars continue to critique elite higher education on several fronts, chief among them the claim that universities live up to the mission of fostering meaningful learning (Arum and Roksa, 2011). Campbell Dortch and Burt (2018) challenge the measures assumed to promote deep learning through institutional rigor, particularly the types of rigor that are not evaluated through traditional assessments; they consider as one factor the impact of “high prestige” universities. Deresiewicz (2014) constructs an argument that elite universities have abandoned their purpose of preparing students for lives of meaningful inquiry in favor of pursuing short term commodified outcomes that prioritize personal gain over community benefit. Recent reviews of the intersection between student leadership and elite higher education go so far as to assert that the individual student qualities that elite higher education prizes – as demonstrated through admission –
or fosters – as demonstrated through career placement – should not be misconstrued as “leadership.”

Questions arise in response to this critique regarding elite universities’ focus on leadership. Among the most pressing are those that examine the underlying assumptions of student leadership. How do students in these environments discuss, describe and construct leadership? Are the problematic effects of elite higher education working at cross purposes from the conditions that foster values-based relational leadership? In other words, is there theoretical and practical support for Cain’s (2017) claim that elite universities lead to “bad” or problematic leadership?

IDENTITY

Constructions of Identity

Seeking to understand selfhood and identity is a boundless task. Scholars from many disciplines approach this endeavor by differentiating self, self-concept, and identity, and seeking to describe the composite intersecting factors - traits and characteristics, relationships, social roles and group memberships - that define who a person is and how one sees oneself in the context of lived experience (Oyserman, Elmore and Smith 2012). One of the many threads in the discussion about identity is the consideration of both how one sees oneself - reflexivity - and how one is seen and understood by others (Leary and Tangney 2012). For the purpose of this inquiry, very limited consideration will be given to outlining assumptions of identity construction.

Understanding identity as a socially constructed phenomenon is relevant to this particularly inquiry into the leadership identity development process among college
students, and is not meant to exclude other ways of understanding identity. Apprehending
the vast landscape of body of work on the study of identity leads to the recognition that
tracing threads across disciplines is nearly impossible. Delimiting the relevant criteria
and assumptions is essential. Critical and important work has made great contributions to
the field in terms of reflexive construction of selfhood. For example, the philosopher
Paul Ricoeur advanced thinking about narrative construction of identity through pursuit
of self-recognition through attestation, memory, and projection, subject to the effects of
time (Ricoeur 1992, 2005). A psycho-social approach to narrative construction of
identity is offered by Baxter Magolda in her work on self-authorship (2009).

Recognizing the many ways to approach the study of identity is critical to understanding
the scope and limitations of the claims made regarding the nature of leadership identity.

In seeking to understand relationality as a core property of identity, and therefore
of leadership identity, the philosophy of Martin Buber in the landmark text I and Thou
(1970, Kaufman translation), may offer some theoretical grounding. Buber’s premise is
the differentiation of relationality and mutual human connection from other lived
experience, posited as the only way to fully actualize one’s identity. This construction
offers an ideal that may illuminate the claim of relationality as a premise of leadership,
and provides an example of transcendent human encounter. Similarly, allusions of a
subject/object shift are invoked that call to mind Kegan’s orders of consciousness, and
the underlying premise of progression through LID stages. In discussing this philosophy,
I will use Buber’s language of “man,” gendered terminology which is meant to apply, in
this treatment, to any human subject.
Buber establishes a framework for human identity through relationality premised on differentiating the “I-It” world from the “I-You” world. The I-It world is distinguished by the predominant experience that man has of others in daily life (55), and of institutions (95), in which he engages in surface level encounter, and in which his subjectivity limits these interactions to the realm of experience (56-60). Buber contrasts this with the I-You world, in which interactions between the self (I) and the other (You) transcend experience. He asserts, “those who experience do not participate in the world. For the experience is “in them” and not between them and the world” (56). This is meant to establish the regular and pervasive limitations of human interaction which constitute much of daily life, and which stand in contrast to the establishment of true encounter, or relation to the other, the You (62).

In Buber’s I-You world of relation, “the You is unmediated” (62). It is through true and full presence with another that man participates in this transcendent encounter (63). Entering into the I-You relationship is held up as the path to actualization (81). Human encounter is mutual and unrestrained (60-61) and the reciprocal nature of relation is central to this encounter (67). Most importantly, it is through the I-You realm that full humanity and selfhood is achieved. Buber proffers “man becomes an I through a You.” (80).

While the I-It realm is the most common, the I-You realm of true human encounter is most desirable and offers the prospect of full humanity. Buber asserts “the innateness of the longing for relation is apparent even in the dimmest stages” (77). The I-It world is posited as the world of alienation and anxiety (121), and the I-You realm offered as the realm that accommodates both relation with God and relation with the
human other, You (123 - 129). This realm of relation also accommodates the unique differentiation of the individual, without sacrificing it to the true encounter. “In the perfect relationship, my You embraces my self without being it; my limited recognition is merged into boundless being recognized” (148). The I-You encounter theorized by Buber has implications for the consideration of the construction of identity both on its own and in the context of leadership. Accepting the relational cast of identity also coheres to the premise of leadership as relational and co-constructed, existing not in the practice or exchange between individuals but in the creation of encounter between them.

The point of invoking Buber and asserting the value of I-You encounter in the context of leadership identity development with college students is not to prescribe this realm as a precondition for or foundation of leadership practice. Practical considerations would suggest that students’ lived experience, central to Buber’s I-It realm, is the developmentally appropriate focus of their attention. However, in considering the social nature of selfhood and identity, the need to recognize the value of the subject-object shift in human development and the divergent perspectives about relational leadership, Buber’s philosophy offers a helpful perspective in connecting this thinking to other disciplinary realms. This attention to subjectivity and the possibility for transcendence foreshadows the value of Kegan’s shifting orders of consciousness to the theory of leadership identity development. To best understand the foundational nature of Kegan’s Orders of Consciousness, it is helpful to situate this theory in the context of identity development theory for the college student population.

**Identity Development in College Students**
An area of considerable inquiry into identity formation is in the field of college student development, with origins in the fields of human development, psychology and sociology (Jones and McEwen 2000; Torres, Jones and Renn 2009). This aspect of the field draws heavily from social science approaches to the study of identity (Erikson 1959; 1994), but examines specifically the impact that higher education may have on the formation of self-concept and understanding of the self as a social being (Torres, Jones and Renn 2009). Consideration for the contributions of the field of human ecology led to increased recognition of the mutually influential interaction of the individual and the environment (Bronfenbrenner 1979; Bubolz and Sontag 1993).

A foundational theory about the developmental tasks of college students advanced by Chickering (1967) later in conjunction with Reisser (1993) proposed a set of “vectors” of development to address the important dimensions of student growth and learning. These trajectories include: 1) developing competence, 2) managing emotions, 3) moving through independence to interdependence 4) developing mature interpersonal relationships, 5) establishing identity, 6) developing purpose, 7) developing integrity. This theory of student development was captured fully in the text Education and Identity, which locates the notion that a central tenet and purpose of higher education is to facilitate and foster student development along these intra- and inter-personal trajectories. This theory is particularly relevant to this discussion, as the construction that posits dependence, independence and interdependence as a central task of student development in higher education emerges as the pathways in the category of Changing View of Self in Relation to Others in the Leadership Identity Development theory and model (2005, 2006).
Postmodern Influence on College Student Identity Research

In the late twentieth century, as the influence of postmodernism grew more pervasive, assumptions about the “truth claims” of certain stocks of knowledge led to greater inquiry into the truth claim assumptions embedded in some of the earlier, positivist constructions of identity. This led to emerging identity development theories that examined the experiences of specific populations outside of the traditional White, male norm, such as women (Gilligan, 1982; Belenkey, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule 1986, 1997; Josselson 1996), racial and ethnic groups (Helms 1992) and LGBTQ individuals (Cass 1979, 1990). Out of these inquiries grew the increased recognition that identity involves one’s personal beliefs about the self in relation to social groups - groups based in commonality of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, ability and other characteristics - and the ways in which one expresses those relationships (Torres, Jones and Renn, 2009).

Increasing awareness among scholars about the diversity of the population and about the interaction between an increasingly diverse population and the environment laid the foundation for deeper questions into the assumptions at the heart of scholarly knowledge about human development in general and college student development in particular, which led to diversification and cross-disciplinary adoption of theories to include Critical Race Theory (Harris 2012), Queer Theory (Halperin 2003), Feminist Theory (Hesse-Biber 2006) and others that challenged the very assumptions of inquiry as being inextricable from the systems of power, dominance and oppression that centers some identities and marginalizes others (Dugan 2017; Dugan and Turman 2018).
Increasing use of postmodern and poststructural ways of constructing knowledge about the experience of college students has led to greater attention to the concept of intersectionality, or the recognition that social identities are multi-layered and exist within systems of power and privilege (Crenshaw 1991). Jones and McEwen posited a Model of Multiple Dimensions of Identity (MMDI) (Jones and McEwen 2000), later reconceptualized in partnership with Abes (2007) to advance the notion that identity is comprised of core dimensions, e.g. race, class, gender, sexual orientation, social class, and also contextual influences like peers, family, norms, stereotypes and other conditions. Abes, Jones and McEwen advanced the idea of a Meaning-Making filter that influences self-concept and self-construction integrating students’ capacity for making meaning as a central function of intersectional integration. Conceptualizing Meaning-Making as a filter through which experience and identity are interpreted is a useful construct with utility in considering the process of leadership identity formation among students at Georgetown.

**Cognitive Developmental Theory: Kegan’s Orders of Consciousness**

Much consideration of the cognitive development of college students grew from the disciplines of human development and psychology, and gave rise to the field of student affairs in both research and practice. William Perry (1970, 1994) is credited with being a founder and leading contributor to this scholarship, but others have contributed in many significant ways (see: Astin 1993; Astin and Astin 2000; Pascarella and Terenzini 2005; Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh and Whitt 2005, 2010; King and Kitchener 1994). A full treatment of cognitive development theory is beyond the scope of this inquiry, but one
theory stands out as central to full understanding of the ways that students construct a leadership identity relative to the Leadership Identity Development theory and model, Kegan’s Orders of Consciousness theory.

Kegan introduced the theory of Orders of Consciousness in his 1982 work *The Evolving Self*, and expanded on the understanding of adult development through this framework in his follow up, *In Over Our Heads: The Mental Demands of Modern Life* as a central mechanism by which to “look at the curriculum of modern life in relation to the capacities of the adult mind” (5). Kegan’s theory addresses the development of consciousness with concern for its practical application.

The organization of “Orders of Consciousness” are devised to demonstrate the cognitive shifts that take place as a person develops which drive cognitive functioning and inter- and intra-personal relationships. As humans develop cognitively, they progress through stages characterized by greater and more finely tuned differentiation of subject and object – self and other - which are embedded in the process of assembling practical, lived experience and making abstractions and generalizations from these. The cognitive shift reflects a function of continued self-apprehension that allows the person to gain deeper insights into the self, including distinguishing those elements of selfhood with permanence from those that are contextualized or result from lived experience and encounter with other.

Adolescents, according to Kegan, are predicted to be shifting from second to third order of consciousness, in which their differentiation of self is contextualized by the roles and expectations of others, primarily peers, family and other authority figures, but moves toward abstraction as they develop a sense of self that is based on the developmental goal
of more autonomous existence in a more abstract society. The practical experience for these adolescents is characterized by more complex relationships with a growing multitude of “others” – peers, authority figures – and the necessity to evaluate the roles and expectations placed on the self by others, in relation to one’s self concept.

This recurring and ongoing shift between subject and object is the act of deepening and developing the third order of consciousness toward greater abstraction, and results in the student emerging with a more durable sense of selfhood, accompanied by insights about their sense of values, purpose, preferences, and beliefs. According to Kegan’s theory, while more complex orders of consciousness follow in later adulthood leading to systematized organization of these values and beliefs in relation to others, the “curriculum” of youth characterized by increasingly complex relationships and contextualization of self in a greater social order, results in the deepening shift between subject and object, self and other.

Several scholars have built upon Kegan’s ideas of shifting orders of consciousness. For the sake of this inquiry, it helps ground the Leadership Identity Development model and theory. Understanding the landscape of leadership development theory helps situate LID as a framework that unites orders of consciousness and selfhood within the larger landscape of leadership theory.

LEADERSHIP

Leadership and Identity

The literature on leadership theories has seen exponential growth in the post-industrial era, as scholars from a range of disciplines and traditions have sought to better
understand the characteristics, influences, and conditions that promote human behavior to affect growth and change. Recent scholarship addresses the foundation of leadership theory and study altogether; in applying critical perspectives, Dugan and collaborators (2017) challenge scholars from all disciplines to confront the biases inherent in established leadership theory to unearth the ways in which perpetuating certain narratives and ignoring others contributes to inequality in traditions that so often claim to aim to rectify and correct it. The following section can only give cursory treatment of the vast and wide ranging scholarship on leadership, and seeks to narrow the review to the aspects of leadership scholarship that are most relevant to this research. Substantive treatment of the Leadership Identity Development theory and model is presented as that theory is the framework by which my research is best understood.

**History of Leadership Theories**

In many ways, the story of leadership theory development is the story of the evolution of the values that undergird the philosophy of leadership, or how people experience and engage others to accomplish change. The shift in values from the early days of leadership theory to the present day is an exercise in understanding the relationship of people to process and of process to larger social change.

The history and evolution of leadership scholarship is best understood as incorporating clusters or “families” of theories connected by a common emphasis or condition (Komives et al. 2011). According to Dugan (2017) theories represent sets of ideas proposed in formal or informal ways about a particular phenomenon - in this case, leadership development among college students - and may be accompanied by models
that describe, illustrate or graph the relationship of these ideas to one another and to the central phenomenon. Theory, taxonomy and framework may be empirically tested or not; this becomes important when considering the utility and perhaps the biases embedded in theories as they are applied to different groups, circumstances or conditions (Dugan 2017). Over recent history, clusters of leadership theories reflect a shift from industrial models to postindustrial models, differentiated by changing emphasis from person-centered to process- and system-centered constructs.

*Industrial Leadership Families*

Leadership in the industrial age, beginning in the mid-1800’s through the start of the twentieth century, focused on leader-centric notions of leadership (Komives, et. al 2011). The families of thought during this period reflected a trajectory starting with the “Great Man” theory that leaders were born with predetermined characteristics designed to position them with power and influence (Komives et. al 2011; Komives, Lucas and McMahon 2007). Other leader-centric theories followed including Trait Theory, which shifted the emphasis from the notion of predetermination by birth, to determined by characteristics. Leaders were thought to reflect a set of superior traits or characteristics deemed essential for leading. Similarly, the person-centered view gave rise to Behavioral Theory which emphasized the behaviors, actions or attitudes that leaders employed in working with others. Following Behavioral Theory, Situational Theory emphasized the complicating role of context in determining claims to leadership, asserting that leader success is impacted by the situation or context in which leader behaviors are enacted, and
leadership is valued based on leader ability to assess situations and aptly apply appropriate behaviors (Komives et al. 2011).

The families of theories that emerged from the industrial age vary in the emphasis that they place on leader characteristics, behaviors, and aptitudes across different situations, but they are united in their view of leadership as centered in the person enacting leadership (Komives et al. 2011). Considering the social and political history in the United States during the time these theories were developed, it is clear that they drew from assumptions based on the world view and social location of those in positions of influence and power, namely White, cisgender, heterosexual, professional men (Komives et al. 2011; Dugan 2017). Following the 1978 publication of James MacGregor Burns’ groundbreaking text *Leadership*, constructions of this phenomenon came to consider multiple ways that leadership was enacted, practiced, and by, for and with whom and under what conditions (Komives et al. 2011).

Current iterations of person-centered theories continue to focus on the competencies, aptitudes, behaviors and practices of individuals engaged in leadership, from a much more egalitarian lens. Theories such as Emotionally Intelligent Leadership (Shankman, Allen and Haber-Curran 2015), the Leadership Challenge Model (Kouzes and Posner 2012), and Strengths-based Leadership (Buckingham and Clifton 2001; Rath and Conchie 2008) emphasize the aptitudes, qualities and skills practiced by individuals in the service of leadership (Dugan 2017). These theories in particular have the additional appeal of practical application through personal assessments designed to foster self-knowledge; one can understand the appeal of prescriptive approaches to a complex
phenomenon like leadership, especially in assessing one’s entry and aptitude in it's practice (Dugan 2017).

*Post-Industrial Leadership Theory Families*

By introducing the concept of leader-follower relationship as central to the process of leadership, Burns opened the field of leadership scholarship to new ways of apprehending and conceptualizing this phenomenon (Burns 1978; Komives et al. 2011). The groups of theories that followed increasingly emphasized leadership as process and recognized not simply the role that actors - leaders and followers - played in this process, but also the values, systems, and situational impacts at work. Transformational theories, like that proposed by Burns, emphasized the relationship between leaders and followers, and the impact that leaders can have on transforming followers into leaders through motivation and intent (Burns 1978; Komives et al. 2011). This family of approaches, also known as Reciprocal, may still emphasize roles and positions in relation to the enactment of leadership, but places greater emphasis on the process and mutual influence of leadership, centers the social conditions of leadership; and values the role of followership. This created conditions that would lead to the dismantling of the preconceptions that had previously entitled some as leaders at the exclusion of others (Komives et al. 2011; Dugan 2017).

Along with Reciprocal Theories, Systems Theories introduced new ways of understanding leadership in the post-industrial, information based age. This family of theories emphasizes the increasing complexity of the systems in which leadership occurs, and examines the influence of systemic conditions like organizational culture, structure
and context as central to the experience of leadership, de-emphasizing the influence of individual actors or relationships between and among individuals (Komives et al. 2011).

**Research on Leadership and Identity**

Scholars from many disciplines examine the conceptual and practical relationship between leadership and identity. Van Kippenberg, van Knippenberg, De Cremer and Hogg (2004, 2005) offer a review of the landscape of research into leadership and identity and call attention to the increasing work on the interplay of leaders and followers, the incorporation of theories of fairness and the role of leader self-concept. In the dialogue among important factors in leadership development, some scholars choose to focus on developing leaders, emphasizing the person-centered nature of leadership. Day, Harrison and Halpin synthesize research and generate theory foundational to this line of scholarship with the intention of advancing best practice in leader development (2009) with attention to aspects of cognitive, moral, identity and learning development.

Scholars from a variety of disciplines research the relationship between leadership and identity and cast these in varying terms. Haslam, Steffens, Peters, Boyce, Mallett and Fransen posit a social identity approach to leadership development that emphasizes stages of readying, reflecting, representing, realizing and reporting among allied health workers in Australia (2014). Yeagher and Callahan (2016) examine the foundations of an emerging leader identity among college-aged students from the lens of developing leaders for the work force, and posit a model emphasizing the emergent themes of: developing relationships with others; leading by example; developing authenticity; and being motivated to lead. Uhl-Bien and Ospina (2012) seek to advance the dialogue
among scholars of relational leadership. In engaging scholars with varying theoretical frames they seek to uncover the ways in which seemingly incommensurable paradigms of relationship can be engaged effectively to link entity perspectives with constructivist perspectives in understanding how leadership in relationship occurs and what it means for practice.

**Relational Leadership**

In response to the nature of power imbalance embedded in the Reciprocal family of theories, Relationship-centered theories like the Leadership Identity Development theory, sought to refocus the concept of leadership on the relationship among those involved in it's practice, in the spirit of mutuality and under a set of affirmative conditions. Within this family of theories are both entity perspectives which focus on individuals’ capacities to engage in group processes (Dugan 2017) and constructivist perspectives that emphasize the co-creation of knowledge and practice under the leadership mantle as a wholly social process (Ospina and Uhl-Bien 2012). The dialogue between proponents of these perspectives illustrates the value of both defining paradigms and recognizing the assumptions embedded in them, and finding ways to converse across paradigms to advance knowledge of both the construct at hand -- relational leadership -- and also the nature of interdisciplinary scholarship (Ospina and Uhl-Bien 2012; Dugan 2017). The study of relational leadership demonstrates the precision by which the phenomenon is studied and the disciplinary lenses that inform its use and utility among scholars and practitioners.
Relational constructions of leadership also give rise to understanding the value of adapting leadership theory for specific purposes and populations. The Relational Leadership Model introduced by Komives, Lucas and McMahon in 1998 and updated in 2013 was designed specifically for a college student population, likely as a way of advancing an intentional set of values in relation to leadership in order to establish strong foundations in emerging populations of leadership practitioners. The tenets of the Relational Leadership Model emphasize that leadership is inclusive, empowering, ethical, inclusive, purposeful and process-oriented (Komives, Lucas and McMahon, 2007; Komives et. al 2011). Establishing these principles in a specific context allows students to apprehend this notion of leadership from the perspective of those that may encounter and practice it from traditional systems that emphasize positions, roles and hierarchies (Dugan, 2017).

**Leadership Theories for College Students**

Certain theories of leadership have been adapted or developed specifically for college student populations. This could be a result of trends emerging in the late twentieth century on the role of higher education in developing leadership competency among students to address increasing complexity and challenge in the world (Komives et al. 2011). This trend anticipated by a few years the demographic shift that resulted in the Millennial Generation entering college around 2000, the largest cohort of the population to do so (Howe and Strauss 2003; Twenge 2017). By this time, an increasing number of theories of leadership development directly for and about college students meant the
inclusion of more empirically- and philosophically-grounded approaches for exploring leadership in curricular and co-curricular contexts.

While many leadership theories could be taught to undergraduate students, particularly in disciplinary contexts like business education, a few theories emerge for their particular use. Servant Leadership, a theory first promoted by Robert Greenleaf in the 1970s, was unique in its inversion of the leader-follower relationship, asserting a values-based approach to leadership and promoting a set of leader characteristics that countered the dominant narrative of command-and-control style embedded in conventional wisdom of the time (Komives et al. 2011; Dugan 2017; Greenleaf 1970, 1977). Use of this model with college students in faith-based institutions in particular made use of the parallel to the practices of religious figures (Komives et al. 2011).

Another theory commonly used with college students is the Leadership Practices Inventory, a person-centered theory based on a model drawn from leaders in multiple industries that encouraged use of five practices to motivate, inspire, share, challenge and celebrate group efforts toward change (Kouzes and Posner 1987, 2002; Komives et al. 2011). The Leadership Practices Inventory offers a pragmatic approach to balancing leadership competencies to effectively motivate and mobilize teams.

Perhaps most notably, the Social Change Model of Leadership Development was developed by scholars in higher education to organize constructs supporting leadership at the individual, group and community level (HERI 1996). Organized around seven core values, the Social Change Model (SCM) has been widely adapted to college student leadership curricula, programs, and assessment tools, most substantially the International Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership, the most expansive study of college student
leadership practices based on inputs, environments, and outcomes (Dugan and Komives 2007, 2010; Dugan, Kodama, Correia and Associates 2013). While the Social Change Model and the Multi-Institutional Study of Leadership provide theoretical grounding and rich data on the values and outcomes associated with college student leadership, they did not address the process by which leader roles and leadership comes to be incorporated into students’ habitual practice while in college, in other words, how students form a sense of themselves as leaders within systems. In many ways these theories paved the way for the studies that led to the Leadership Identity Development theory and model that emerged in the mid 2000’s.

**Critical Perspectives in Leadership Theory**

Leadership scholarship and research has begun to evolve toward incorporating critical lenses that call attention to the dominant voices who have been in positions to construct ideas about leadership (Dugan 2017; Dugan and Turman 2018; Williams and Komives 2018). Knowing and critically evaluating the social location of both leadership scholars and practitioners is essential to dismantling the systems that perpetuate unjust distribution of power and authority. However, it would be shortsighted to ignore the impact of privileged institutions and systems like elite higher education because of the role they play in fostering conceptions of leadership and in imbuing students with both tools and opportunities to enact those concepts.

In seeking to examine the assumptions embedded in the evolution of leadership theory, Dugan applies a critical perspective to differentiate “the story most often told” (xvii) from the historical realities of representation and omission. He begins with the
assertion that notions of leadership must begin as a value-neutral proposition, seeking to
decouple the idea that historically leadership is “good,” and “valuable” because what has
been defined as such has only been done so from the perspective of those with power to
claim the mantle of “leadership.” As current constructions of leadership point toward
more inclusive, relational, process-based approaches, Dugan points out that the practice
of leadership in those terms has always been in existence over the course of time when
other notions of traits and behaviors favored different constructions of leadership. The
approach taken by Dugan (2017) in deconstructing, reconstructing and regrouping
leadership theory for increased applicability has implications for understanding the
parallel to elite institutions and what may be learned from studying this phenomenon
within that particular context.

**Leadership Identity Development Theory and Model**

The Leadership Identity Development Model proposed by Komives, Longerbeam, Owen, Mainella and Osteen (2005; 2006; 2009), purports a stage model of increasingly
integrated identity as a leader with demonstrated understanding of the relational, fluid
and values-driven aspects of leadership. This model is uniquely suited to illuminate the
college student experience as it was developed from research on qualitative data that
grounds the theory in the expressed experiences of student identified at multiple stages of
the leadership identity development process. The model purports a set of stages in the
development of one’s identity as a leader. Progression through the stages is represented
by narrative accounts of leadership experience in demonstrating evolved and integrated
understanding of leadership (Komives, Longerbeam, Owen, Mainella, & Osteen, 2006).
There is innovative thinking and substantive value in the LID theory and model in that it posits the evolution and growth of leaders through a series of stages. This theory more accurately reflects the nature of leadership as developmental and evolving, consistent with models of human development and formation; individuals are able to manage and reflect increasingly complex processes – synthesis, analysis, action – as a result of making meaning of their experience and deepening their self-understanding. The limitation from this theory comes from the difficulty of practically applying its levels and stages. Scholarship and study of leadership in the higher education setting lends itself well to apprehending students’ developmental stages but it requires intentional application of resources towards this goal.

**Leadership Identity Development Theory**

In constructing the LID theory, scholars generated a grounded theory to propose the manner in which students develop an increasingly complex identity as leaders, or individuals practicing relational leadership, defined as empowering, ethical, inclusive, purposeful and process-oriented. Central to the theory is the concept that individuals can generate, reflect and adopt an identity relative to the process of leadership, not simply to the role of leader within an ordered system of leadership roles. Occupying a role as a leader is not a necessary precondition to adopting an identity as one who practices leadership. Although the stage based model positions leader identification as a stage preceding leadership differentiation, the two are not mutually exclusive. Upon reaching the stage of leadership differentiation, students understand and make the distinction between both occupying the role of leader (or perceive others as occupying those roles),
and practicing leadership. The theory emphasizes the fostering of leadership identity as asserting the essential nature of leadership as process-based.

In LID theory, Developing a Leadership Identity is formulated as the central category, and five subordinate categories are posited to explain how students persist towards the core category. The supporting categories are:

A. **Broadening View of Leadership.** This category represents the ways in which students’ constructed increasingly expansive and complex models of what constitutes leadership. Demonstrating increasing complexity, participants expressed that leadership was rooted in: External Other, in Positions or Roles, in Non-Positional roles, and finally in Process.

B. **Developing Self.** This category represents the ways that students perceive themselves in relation to their understanding of leadership. The properties associated with this developing sense of self are: Deepening Self-Awareness, Building Self-Confidence, Establishing Interpersonal Efficacy, Applying New Skills, and Expanding Motivations.

C. **Group Influences.** This category represents the ways that groups and membership in groups conditioned students’ development of a leadership identity. Properties associated with this category are: Engaging in Groups; Learning from Membership Continuity, and Changing Perceptions of Groups.

D. **Developmental Influences.** The category of Developmental Influences recognizes the ways that external others and context influence students’ development of a leadership identity. Properties of this category include: Adult Influences, Peer Influences, Meaningful Involvement, and Reflective Learning.
E. *Changing View of Self with Others.* This category represents the interaction between the categories of Developing Self and Group Influences, to demonstrate how students evolve in their claim to a leadership identity. This category posits three pathways or ways that view of self changes with regard to others: Dependent, Independent and Interdependent. When regarding leadership as position based, students were thought to assume a dependent or independent pathway with regard to others. When regarding leadership as process-based, they were thought to assume an interdependent pathway with regard to others.

The properties in each category allude to the ways in which the theory was translated to a stage based model representing increasingly complex understanding of leadership identity predicated on a subject/object shift that ordered students’ understanding of self in relation to others.

**Leadership Identity Development Model**

Following the construction of the LID theory, the research team posited a model to organize the relationship of increasing complexity in identity components relative to one another and suggest the conditions that led to transitions and progress through the stages. Development occurs in each identity category. Stages Three and Four are posited to include both Emerging and Immersion phases to represent the processes of transitioning into and out of each stage in sequence. The model suggests six progressive stages of development.
1. **Stage One: Awareness.** Students recognize that leadership is occurring and are exposed to conceptions of leadership. Leaders are seen as authority figures and the self is seen as uninvolved.

2. **Stage Two: Exploration/Engagement.** Students begin to experience leadership and may be activated within systems as members or participants. Adults play a critical role by influencing students’ development of identity through leader and participant roles and by encouraging adoption of leadership practices.

3. **Stage Three: Leader Identified.** Students are aware of leadership in the context of positions and roles. Students have conceptions about leadership based on the responsibilities of the leader, and construct their own identity in relation to the idea of positionality, either as leader (occupying a role) or follower (not occupying a role). This stage assumes distinct properties in each category of leadership identity development. Students are presumed to have either a dependent or independent pathway in their understanding of self in relation to other. Dependent pathway assumes student sees self as a follower, dependent on a leader/other. Independent pathway assumes the student sees self as a leader acting independent of follower/other.

4. **Stage Four: Leadership Differentiated.** Students make distinctions between leader positions and leadership processes. They begin to understand leadership as involving multiple agents and informed by but not dependent upon roles. They demonstrate increasing complexity in their understanding of relationships between individuals in the practice of leadership and reflect that leadership can be
practiced by those who do not hold traditional roles in a group. Interdependence is identified as the pathway that connects individuals in the process of leadership.

5. **Stage Five: Generativity.** Students demonstrate an ability to generalize their commitments and care for others beyond the confines of the specific group and context. They demonstrate increased meaning-making capacity in relationship with others, and begin to see the work of the group in the context of time, giving consideration to transition and sustainability.

6. **Stage Six: Integration/Synthesis.** Students incorporate sense of self in the process of leadership with increasing permanence. They are able to generalize capacity for leadership to more diverse contexts and continue to draw meaning from understanding and practicing leadership in interrelated systems.

A graphic representation of the Leadership Identity Development Model is presented in Appendix A.

In considering the utility of the LID model in understanding how leadership identity is fostered and supported among students in college, it is important to consider the practical assumptions within the theory. Most traditionally-aged college students come to college with hierarchical views of leadership that would suggest Stage Two, Awareness, or Stage Three, Leader Identified constructions of leadership (Komives et al. 2006). Similarly, it is unclear how quickly students move through the stages given variations in experience and relationships; while certainly possible that students would express Stage Five, Generativity, and Stage Six, Integration/Synthesis attitudes, beliefs and behaviors, the Stage Three/Stage Four transition is assumed to be the most important to a traditionally aged population of students and is most commonly observed in studies.
that seek to apply this theory. Finally, following the presentation of the theory and model, Komives et al. (2009) initiated a discussion of the challenges associated with the application of the theory and model, which have served to enrich the scholarly discussion of leadership identity development in college students and guide future research.

**Research based the LID theory and model**

Scholars have increasingly used the LID model to illuminate the ways in which students in various contexts develop a sense of themselves as leaders, practicing leadership, within the higher educational context. Wagner (2011) sought to validate the LID model stages and found evidence to support claims to differentiated stages of dependent, independent and interdependent pathways that align to Stage Three and Stage Four of the LID model. Rocco (2017) investigated the factors that influenced advanced stages of leadership identity development with a post-college population and found evidence that a number of contributing factors, including leadership learning immersion experiences, peer facilitation experiences and academic courses had transformative effects that contributed to earlier adoption of advanced stage leadership identity development (133). Additionally, Rocco found that social identity development processes influenced development of leadership identity in those holding advanced stage leadership identities (127). Gonda (2007) explored applicability of the model with early- and mid-career adults and found evidence to suggest a variation in the way that these participants experience and describe the key transition from Stage Three to Stage Four transition proposed by Komives et. al (2005, 2006) in the original LID research for those who undergo this transition later in life, outside of the college context.
Research has also considered both the characteristics of students and the environment, and also the questions of developmental progress along the LID stages in relation to other developmental factors. Onorato and Musoba (2015) used the LID model to examine the experiences of Hispanic women in the context of a Hispanic Serving Institution, and found variations in student orientation to adopting and labeling aspects of leadership identity development perhaps as a result of cultural influences. Renn and Bilodeau (2005) examined LID with a population of students who identify as LGBTQ and concluded that involvement with identity based organizations and activism was found to be a catalyst for leadership identity development. Renn and Ozaki (2010) examined leadership identity development among students in leadership roles in campus identity-based organizations and found that students progress through distinct pathways in their leadership and social identity development, either “parallel” in which these identities are distinct, or “merged” in which they are integrated. Sessa, Ploskonka, Alvarez, Dourdis, Dixon and Bragger (2016) sought to understand how students’ leadership identity development may interact with their constructive development, or the processes by which they connect understanding of leadership with leadership identity and their constructive identity, or capacity to make meaning of knowledge. Sorenson, McKim and Velez (2016) examined leadership identity development among students enrolled in a leadership minor and concluded that this experience impacted students’ leadership identity development in negotiating the key transition between Stage Three and Stage Four.
Most research using LID has sought to evaluate the theory and model with regard to a specific population of students or a specific higher education experience. It is my intention to contribute to the landscape of this literature.
CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

The Leadership Identity Development (LID) theory and model provide tools to understand more deeply the process by which students develop a leadership identity in college (Komives et al. 2005, 2006, 2009). This thesis seeks to add to the body of knowledge about leadership development in college students, particularly within the context of a highly selective, private institutional environment. The extant literature on this topic, particularly examinations of the LID model, offers a framework for understanding the development of leadership identity among students with regard to categories of development, but may include gaps or variations due to participant or contextual differences. The potential for variation is an opportunity to further understand the phenomenon of leadership identity development and the LID model categories and stages with greater depth and richness.

The original study in which the LID model was hypothesized and presented was generated based on students at a public flagship university in the mid-Atlantic, and originated nearly twenty years ago; since this time, the student experience has been impacted by substantial shifts in modern life, notably the proliferation of personal technology and social networks (Twenge 2017). The extant research on this topic has sought to examine the validity of the model itself (Wagner 2011), consider its applicability and relevance for students who share a common social identity (Renn and Ozaki 2010; Renn and Bilodeau 2005; Onorato and Musoba 2015), consider the effects of interventions on development (Sorenson, McKim and Velez 2016) and consider advanced stages of leadership development (Gonda 2007; Rocco 2017). More research is
needed to further explore the use and implications of this model in understanding the student experience in varying contexts.

**Qualitative Research**

This analysis follows the tradition of qualitative research dating back to the origin of the form. It incorporates principles that speak to the unique and illuminating role that research into the human experience, as represented through narrative accounts, can play in deepening understanding. As a researcher, I sought to create trusting, non-judgemental relationships with each participant in order to elicit full, honest and detailed accounts of their leadership experience, attitudes and practices (Wertz et al. 2011). Such relationships started with the overview of the principles of confidentiality and measures taken to protect the students’ identity, and continued as I sought to appropriately recognize but limit the role relationship that might have existed between the students and me outside of the research context. While it is impossible to fully neutralize the effect of the existing roles that influence my relationship with students outside of this study, that role also allowed for a more nuanced understanding of the context in which students practice leadership and a shared language about the structures, organizations and trends that substantiate their work.

In addition to approaching the subject-researcher relationship with full regard for the students’ honest, lived experience, this project followed the established principles of qualitative research through both data collection and analysis methods. The emphasis on students’ first person, subjective experience was enhanced by a search for cultural and interpersonal variation (Wertz et al. 2011). By collecting data over two separate
interviews, I allowed students to reflect on the subject matter discussed and share any
new insights, questions, observations or concerns. Similarly, by sharing transcripts of the
interviews with students, I accounted for new insights or interpretations of their accounts
and verified that the information shared represented their views and experience
accurately. During analysis, I employed the practice of constant comparison both
between interviews from the same student, and also between students, allowing for
insights into the ways in which certain constructs or themes were manifest in different
accounts (Charmaz 2006; Tracy 2013). This cyclic, iterative process of analysis
grounded in decades of practical research in multiple disciplines with varying research
agendas, represents an extension of the qualitative research method that centers the
human experience via relationship, emphasizes meaningfulness, and offers tentative
insights into the common manifestations of interrelationship between the functions of
attention to self and attention to other inherent in the process of forming a leadership
identity.

In this chapter I seek to provide an explanation of the theoretical grounding for
this inquiry and a detailed account of my methodological choices. I include information
about participant identification, the process of data collection and coding, and my
analytical tools including measures taken to fortify trustworthiness. However, as this
inquiry initially stems from the questions that drive my daily professional experience as a
co-curricular leadership educator, it is important to first acknowledge my positionality
within the system that informs the process that follows.

**Positionality**
Since 2001 I have occupied a role at Georgetown University which provided me with inspiration for this research and which offers a vantage point from which I can observe the knowledge, values and behaviors that characterize students as relational leaders, potentially possessed of a leadership identity. As an advisor to student organization leaders through the Center for Student Engagement, I have worked with hundreds of students in their efforts to develop skills, grow and refine organizations, and make meaning of their experiences. Because of this experience and role, I am both a subject matter expert in the expression of student leadership identity, and a researcher seeking to interrogate the theory that drives the academic understanding of this phenomena. As Merriam (1998) acknowledges, in qualitative research the researcher is the tool of data collection and analysis. It is, therefore, essential to be explicit in the acknowledgement of my positionality, and take measures to ensure that the inquiry is grounded in established, well-regarded practices of qualitative research.

**Theoretical Lenses**

*Social Constructivism*

Continued exploration of the LID theory and model assumes a social-constructivist approach to understanding the human experience. Social constructivism asserts that humans develop in social contexts embedded in relationships and social roles, and knowledge is created within the context of this connected experience (Charmaz 2006; Cresswell 2013; Jones, Torres & Arminio 2014). The use of a social constructivist model belies the underlying assumption that identity is constructed over time, exists within the context of human relationships, and relies upon both discourse and reflection (Merriam,
Research conducted from a social-constructivist lens must consider the ways in which individuals confer meaning and value on their relationships and the conclusions they draw from these relationships about their personal identity and roles (Charmaz 2006; Cresswell 2013).

**Hermeneutics**

The basis for this theoretical framework also relies on a hermeneutical approach to understanding human experience. The hermeneutical approach is concerned with the meaning that individuals assign to their experience, and asserts that “reality is not merely the way things appear; rather it is created by communication among persons, a process known as intersubjectively constituted [depending on and contributing to] historical, political and social context” (Schubert 1986, 182). Assuming a hermeneutical perspective implies that the underlying question of meaningfulness will be brought to the surface, and that iterative interpretation of experience is well-suited to a social, discursive context (Wertz et al. 2011). The combined lenses of social constructivism and hermeneutics naturally lead to the use of a grounded theory method of research, focused on the lived experience of students, and conducted through the social experience of interviews and reflective discourse.

**Grounded Theory Methodology**

Grounded theory methodology was introduced by Anselm Strauss and Barry Glaser in 1967; its disciplinary roots are sociological, however since its introduction it has grown in usage and import and is now used in multiple disciplines including
psychology, anthropology, and education (Cresswell 2013; Charmaz 2006; Corbin and Strauss 2015). Grounded theory lends itself well to interdisciplinary study because it generates theory from the data itself; theory is not bound necessarily to existing constructs rooted in a single discipline (Charmaz 2006; Cresswell 2013). Theories generated through this method are additive to the existing knowledge about a topic or data set; rather than trying to disprove existing ideas about a subject, grounded theory seeks to generate affirmative concepts in an area based on and drawn from an existing set of data, in this case, narrative representations of experience (Cresswell 2013, Wertz et al. 2011). The experience of human subjects, when presented as first person accounts, is unlikely to be segmented by disciplinary constructs – i.e. psychological responses or social influences – therefore, a method that seeks to derive common themes from this data, unfettered by the limitations of disciplinary purity, can be more persuasive in generating applicable constructs that apply to the breadth of human experience (Charmaz 2006). Leadership scholars from different disciplines have argued in favor of grounded theory as a methodology particularly suited for inquiry into leadership studies, notably in the area of social influence (Parry 1998).

In utilizing grounded theory methodology for this inquiry into leadership identity development in students, I drew from extant literature and prior studies in selecting the characteristics of the applied method. Variations of grounded theory methodology generally indicate different underlying assumptions of the theoretical foundations of data gathered through narrative first person accounts (Wertz et al. 2011). Although held up as the primary iteration of grounded theory, the rigorous and highly structured methodology advanced by Glaser and Strauss (1967; Strauss and Corbin 1998), may assert positivist
claims that constrain exploration of a phenomenon, for example, leadership identity. The variation best suited for this inquiry is found in Charmaz’s purported model of grounded theory; this social constructivist approach resists positivist assumptions that assume an objective assessment of personal accounts in favor of a more fluid approach to data and analysis that better accommodates a postmodern perspective (Cresswell 2013). Charmaz’s (2006) approach to grounded theory methodology asserts an interpretive approach that centers credibility and truthfulness in the meaning making offered by participants (Cresswell 2013). The exposition into variations of grounded theory presented by Cresswell (2013), along with the pragmatic approach to qualitative research laid out by Tracy (2013), enhances Charmaz’s theoretical grounding and provided me with guideposts for data collection, evaluation, and representation.

Methods

This inquiry relies on the shared experiences of human subjects and therefore was submitted for and received approval from the Institutional Review Board at Georgetown University. Throughout this process measures were established that both offered protection for the participants from potential risks associated with participation and established important aspects of trustworthiness of data. Participants each signed consent forms, agreed for interviews to be recorded and transcribed, and were informed that they would be assigned a pseudonym for the purpose of data reporting. Even with these measures in place to protect anonymity it is possible that student identities will be discernable because of the unique nature of their experiences. It was nearly impossible to mask the details of their stories and maintain accuracy in their experience.
Participant Identification

Identifying appropriate participants for this research was the first step in establishing that the themes, categories and connections inferred from the data reflect accurately the constructs presented in the original LID theory and model, in order to make relevant comparisons to the influence of a uniquely defined institutional environment on this process. Initially, it was important to ensure that the participants reflected the relational leadership through beliefs, values and actions; to do this effectively required referrals from others in unique positions to observe student behavior and understand their motivations.

To identify appropriate participants, I sought nominations from institutional agents who hold positions in which they serve as advisors, coaches, and instructors to students, which provide them a vantage point from which to observe students’ interactions with each other. Such professionals work in departments including the Center for Social Justice, the Athletics Department, Campus Ministry, Performing Arts, the Center for Student Engagement, the Center for Multicultural Equity and Access, Residential Living, and other similar units. Additionally, faculty members who teach leadership development courses in academic units or regularly incorporate group projects into their pedagogy were also a source of insight into which students most reliably and consistently reflect the characteristics of relational leadership, namely leadership that is “inclusive, ethical, purposeful, and process-oriented (Komives, McMahon and Lucas 2013, 22). The nomination process included the need to provide an explanation or example of the student’s leadership style and experience. Through this process I
emphasized that positionality - the occupation of a designated role within an organization, such as team captain or organization president, was not a prerequisite or requirement of relational leadership.

**Sampling Strategy**

Purposeful sampling is the process of identifying “information rich cases” that demonstrate the particular criteria under observation and allow for in-depth examination and analysis of the phenomenon in question (Merriam 1998). In the case of my research, that phenomenon is evidence of the development of a leadership identity and consideration for the influence of institutional environment in that process. Students identified by nominators were asked to complete an initial survey with demographic and logistical information and provide their definition of leadership. Definitions were reviewed and compared with the aspects of relational leadership in order to identify the students aptly suited for this inquiry. Two peer reviewers also reviewed the definitions provided by students to confirm that each student’s definition of leadership reflected aspects of relational leadership as defined by Komives, McMahon and Lucas in the Relational Leadership Model (2013). Twenty students were nominated. Eighteen students completed the interest form and submitted definitions for review. Finally, ten students were selected for participation based on their responses. Each student was compensated with a $25 gift card at the conclusion of the second interview.

**Participant Identities**

This study was based on interviews conducted with ten students from Georgetown University, a large, highly selective, private, Catholic and Jesuit university in an urban
area in the mid-Atlantic. Students ranged in age from nineteen to twenty-two years old, and had completed two, three or four years of undergraduate education. Two participants had recently graduated and, at the time of the interviews, were beginning full time employment. Of the ten students, five identified as male and five as female. One identified as queer; five identified as heterosexual, and four did not discuss their sexual orientation. One student identified as an international student with dual citizenship from both the United States and a South American country; the other students grew up mainly in the United States. Most had grown up in one primary location. They hailed from a range of geographic areas: one each from Massachusetts, Illinois, Alaska, Nevada and New York; two from Texas and three from California. One student spent formative years in both California and Texas. One student identified as undocumented, spending formative years in the United States after immigrating with his family. This student’s undocumented status provided a strong sense of identity and a context for practicing leadership among his peers.

Six participants identified as White, while one identified as African American, two as Latinx/o, and one as Asian Pacific Islander. Two students identified as Catholic, and one as “agnostic Christian.” The others did not discuss their faith tradition, which is notable given that they attend a faith-affiliated university. One student identified as “a traditional conservative,” one identified as supporting “progressive causes” and many others did not signal their political affiliation, although they did discuss leadership or activism associated with a variety of politicized causes. Two students identified as being first generation in their families to attend a university.
Participant Experiences

The students had a range of leadership roles and associations as undergraduates. One had competed with a varsity athletic team for two years; another competed with the ballroom dance team. Two students had served as Resident Assistants for three years each. Eight students discussed leadership in relation to the student organizations with which they were affiliated and held elected positions of responsibility. These groups ranged from the long-established debating society, groups that support cultural affiliation or identity, politically-oriented groups, and groups that gave tours of campus. Four students discussed leadership in relation to their student employment position and the associated responsibilities for supervising other students through those roles. Three students held roles that were both paid student employment positions and leadership roles with responsibility for organizing immersive experiences for others students. Two students were involved in student government; one student was associated with several student groups and university run programs that focused on local community engagement and advancing educational justice for underserved youth. Academically, all students were in good standing; one of the two graduated students had been the valedictorian of her graduating class in her undergraduate school. All students participating in the study reflected on multiple group affiliations or contexts when considering their leadership involvement or experiences in college.

Data collection

Data collection took place through interviews with participants. Each participant was asked to participate in two interviews. The first interview focused on the student’s
process of coming to understand the concept of leadership, experience working in groups, and reflections of his or her self-knowledge and self-recognition through this experience. The second interview focused on the continued reflection upon these early and critical events, and greater exploration into the student’s identification of leadership behaviors in herself and in others. The second interview also focused on the meaning the student derived from these experiences, the self-knowledge that emerged as a result, and the connection of these experiences to the concept of “leadership” both in the student’s past experience and in their future aspirations. In both interviews, I asked questions about the institutional environment and to what extent the student expected that his or her experience would be similar or different in a different environment. Interview protocols are provided in Appendix C.

Participants were offered a choice between online interviews using Zoom conferencing technology or on-campus in person interviews. Mediated interviews allowed for video and audio engagement, but relied upon both the student and myself having consistent, uninterrupted wireless connectivity. In two cases, the lack of consistent connectivity resulted in disruptions to the audio and video feed, slowing the interview progress. On campus interviews were conducted in a resolvable conference room in the library. This location provided an environment generally free from distractions and without the accoutrements of campus life, such as photographs or views of campus spaces that could trigger or influence student reflections.

Interviews were conducted during the summer and early fall semester. Typically, summer is a period when students are not actively engaged in campus leadership efforts, however in some cases the student participants were planning programs that took place
immediately prior to the start of the fall semester. Students whose leadership identity
drew largely from their on-campus employment were not employed in those roles during
the time of the first interview, due to the natural cycle of on-campus employment.
Summer is a natural transition period; early fall is a period of high activity for many
undergraduate students. This time frame for a student’s first interviews allowed each
participant to reflect on the leadership experiences that had influenced her over the recent
past.

The time frame of the second interview - late summer and early fall - allowed
participants to consider the transition into new roles or how they would re-engage in
positions or with groups for the upcoming year. Three participants were heavily involved
in creating and leading immersive pre-orientation programs with incoming students; these
experiences provided fodder for framing students’ reflections on their own identity
development as leaders, as they had been deeply engaged both in the process of
leadership education, and also in the process of supporting the transition of new students
into the university community. Additionally, two participants who had recently
graduated had both started full time employment with Georgetown University, allowing
for a shift in considering their changing positions from students to employees in
relationship to the institution. The timing of the interviews provided a natural foundation
for reflection about the positions and roles through which participants practiced
leadership, and how these roles provided connections to the larger institutional context.

Interviews lasted between 45 minutes and two hours each. The duration of the
interview depended on students’ responses to the questions. Participants provided both
written and verbal consent to allow for audio recording of each interview. The interviews
were semi-structured. Questions were drawn from the protocols used in the original LID study, but interviews were constructed to be open such that I could ask questions based on a participant's response and probe more deeply into lines of thinking. While the standards of confidentiality and measures taken to protect a student’s identity were discussed in the context of the consent form, in many cases, during the interview, information would be disclosed about an incident, individual or event about which I had additional information based on my professional role at Georgetown. In those cases, during the midst of the interview, I offered affirmation that I would take precautions not to conflate information disclosed in the interview into matters raised in my professional work. This is an example of the ways in which qualitative research may be influenced by the role of the researcher.

All participants consented to be recorded for the purpose of deep inquiry into their responses. Interviews were audio- or video-recorded and later transcribed. I employed a transcription service for three interviews; in all other cases I transcribed the audio files personally. Printed transcripts were reviewed, coded, and analyzed for themes and categories. Throughout the interview and transcription process, I took notes on the material provided by the student, in order to connect experiences to themes and categories. I wrote memos upon the conclusion of each interview. While transcribing audio files I took notes on my observations and reactions. During the process of coding I wrote notes and memos after each segment of 10 pages of review. This process of “constant comparative analysis” emphasizes the ongoing examination of the data to consider the expression of themes and the interrelationship between the data and the emergent theory.
In analyzing and considering student reflections about leadership experienced and practiced in their co-curricular roles, the presence of additional knowledge about the organizations and contexts in which they are engaged is impossible to separate from the specific information disclosed by students. In responding to this condition, it was my intention to use the fact of additional information and context to help frame my consideration not of the conclusions or assessment of students’ leadership practices, but of the assumptions and questions that lead to analysis of this phenomenon in the first place. Prior knowledge as a researcher is valuable insofar as it highlights the potential for assumptions and value claims on not on the veracity of student accounts, but on the plausibility of the conditions (Charmaz 2006).

Coding

After conducting interviews, written transcripts were created using audio recordings of each interview. From the written transcripts, I first conducted open coding on each sentence or similarly distinct segment of a students’ reflections. This resulted in 3414 unique codes. Throughout the open coding process, I wrote memos on my observations and sought to link themes or concepts between the unique codes generated in the initial coding stage. These codes were combined into one list and reviewed for frequency and relationship between open codes. Because of the large number of open code phrases and variations on themes, this stage was useful for discerning overall themes in openly generated codes, but not for tabulating frequency of codes. Use of non-traditional tabulation methods like word clouds were used to deepen the review of phrases, terms and other modules of assessment. During this phase I reviewed each
memo I had written following interviews and throughout the transcription and open
coding process in an effort to identify themes in student accounts of working with others
to accomplish goals.

Following open coding, I reviewed each transcript a third time in a process of
axial selective coding, using the axis “Achievement.” In this phase, I specifically sought
segments of student reflections in which students’ referenced critical events or incidents,
or reflections that referenced interaction with others or in groups. Because a central part
of my inquiry related to the impact of the environment on students’ development of a
leadership identity, I coded any student observations about the institutional environment
or groups that reflected the characteristics of the environment. Additionally, because my
inquiry was also concerned with students’ sense of leadership identity in relation to
others, I selectively coded segments of data in which participants discussed interactions
with other peers within the university community. In an effort to heed Tracy’s (2013)
cautionary advice regarding open coding, I included focusing thought exercises
throughout my second and third reviews of the data to consider the central role of the
research question and the connection between student reflections in each stage. Finally,
after discerning emergent themes from the coded reflections, I reviewed the data and
codes again in the context of the categories identified in the original LID study, to discern
patterns that illustrate or vary from the initially identified categories. The process of
sorting and resorting data into varying categories, both emergent and established,
represents one way in which the constant comparative method of qualitative data review
allowed for connections to be made between student accounts that link to overarching
themes supporting the research questions posed through this inquiry (Charmaz 2006).
Thematic Analysis

Following the coding process, I sought to evaluate the themes described in student accounts of personal experience and meaning relative to both the existing LID model categories and to other emergent constructs. Because this inquiry is partially focused on student identity in relation to their understanding of others, I sought to examine the ways in which they described experience interacting with others in a leadership capacity and embedded in a particular environment. Throughout their retelling of accounts of leadership, students described many phenomena reflective of the categories of the LID model, and in terms that demonstrated both Stage Three, Leader Identified, and Stage Four, Leadership Differentiated thinking. I conducted analysis through the sorting and resorting of coded data, continuous review of interview memos, and reflective contemplation of my understanding of the phenomenon of student leadership identity from a professional vantage point. This thematic analysis, discussed at length in the following chapter, reinforces notions of the categories and stages of development presented in the original LID study, and offers new insights into the contemporary ways that students recall, make meaning of, and understand leadership identity situated in the context of relationships with others, at a particular institution.

Trustworthiness

While constructs like validity and reliability may be critical to positivist, qualitative research methodologies, qualitative research in an interpretivist tradition requires consideration for data trustworthiness and close consideration of the nature of
the participant experience in constructing meaning from personal accounts. Scholars of qualitative research methodologies recommend using multiple techniques to ensure trustworthiness of data (Robert Woods Johnson Foundation, accessed March 23, 2018; Cresswell 2013). The strategies I employed to verify data collected include: member checking, peer review and debriefing, and clarifying researcher bias.

Multiple approaches to data verification help ensure accuracy and trustworthiness of data collected. Using a member checking strategy seeks to ensure that study participants are offered the opportunity to review and respond to the accounts provided in the interviews after the fact. Separating the interviews over a six week period allowed for triangulation, by giving students time to consider the first conversation and make clarifications or provide additional reflections at the start of the second interview (Cresswell 2013). Additionally, after concluding both interviews, I provided students with the written transcripts and invited their comments, clarifications or other feedback or interpretation of the conversation. Providing opportunities for research participants to reflect and comment ensured that the transcribed data represented their words and narratives with some accuracy.

Second, incorporating the perspective of a peer reviewer at both the point of selecting participants and in reviewing their transcripts and my analysis allowed for an informed outsider perspective of the observed phenomenon and my interpretation. The person in this role formerly worked at Georgetown University ten years prior; she is familiar with the institutional context and the landscape of student leadership opportunities and trends. She has a PhD in counseling and personnel services and conducted her dissertation research on student leadership trends. She is very familiar
with both leadership scholarship and the multiple theories underlying college student
development. She was given access to interview transcriptions, interview and
transcription memos, and analysis review; she provided feedback on the thematic analysis
both in writing and through conversation. This peer debriefing opportunity was
invaluable to me in seeking to consider the data from multiple angles and understand the
meaningfulness of student experiences in creating their sense of themselves as leaders
and as practitioners of leadership.

Finally, I sought to increase data credibility and trustworthiness by examining my
biases and perspectives as a research practitioner within this educational
context. Researcher reflexivity has long been an established component of qualitative
research, but in recent years it's importance has grown in response to increased awareness
of the power that research can have in creating accepted narratives and maintaining or
challenging systems and institutions (Cresswell 2013; Dugan 2017). Reflecting on my
motivations, assumptions and biases has been a part of my discernment process
throughout the anticipation, preparation and execution of this project. These
considerations are presented in the introduction to this paper and in the chapters that
follow through data analysis and consideration for implications. Participating in this
project as a professional leadership educator in the student affairs tradition has helped
inform my research questions, approach and mindset, and I anticipate that this experience
conducting research will inform my professional practice in deep ways.
CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS

This research uses the Leadership Identity Development theory and model to discern how students expand their understanding of leadership as a process and locate themselves in this process. To consider this fully I will present my findings in three parts. As it is critical to address the myriad identities students hold particularly as they impact social location, I first present data to support the many ways that leadership identity intersects with other identities, including social identities that may impact a student’s social location. Second, I examine the ways student reflections support and uphold LID model structure, stages and categories. Finally, I present data to suggest the presence of achievement-orientation among students situated in both individual student attitudes and also in the greater institutional context. I have conceptualized this orientation as a filter that students apply to condition and make meaning of their experiences.

The LID model emphasizes the interaction and overlap between the categories at each developmental stage, reflecting that these processes are interrelated and mutually inform how students develop a sense of self as part of a system of leadership. The critical developmental shift occurring between Stage Three, Leader Identified, and Stage Four, Leadership Differentiated, is complex and non-linear. Students may reflect Stage Four thinking but describe experience in terms of Stage Three behaviors. Students in this study showed primarily elements of both Stage Three and Stage Four thinking; in some areas, Stage Five, Generativity thinking was also detected.

SOCIAL IDENTITIES
Before examining how LID theory emerges from the accounts of students practicing leadership at Georgetown, it is important to address the ways in which myriad aspects of identity, particularly social identities, influence this inquiry. As recent scholarship underscores, surfacing the manifestation of student identities and the ways their experience as people in systems of privilege, social dominance and oppression, and other hierarchical environments is essential to this process (Dugan 2017; Dugan and Turman 2018; Williams and Komives 2018). The system in which the participants in my study exist as students - traditional undergraduate higher education at an elite, private, religiously-affiliated university - could be seen to represent an archetype of social stratification and hierarchy (Trow 2006; Liu 2011); this informs the ways in which the concept of “leadership” is experienced and how students make sense of their beliefs, knowledge, and practices. This must also be accompanied by the recognition of my identities as a White, upper-middle class, professional, highly educated, cisgender woman who has held a position of authority in relation to the student engagement and student organization context at the university in which these students learn and enact leadership.

For reference, data in this and following chapters cited from interview transcripts is denoted as (Interview Number/Transcription Page Number). For example, a quote from the twelfth page of the transcript of Michael’s second interview would be referenced as (2/12).

Minority Identities

The ways in which students in my study shared insights about and reflected upon their intersecting identities and the ways those identities shaped their leadership varied
greatly. The Model of Multiple Dimensions of Identity (Abes, Jones and McEwen 2007; Jones and McEwen 2000) is particularly useful in considering the various dimensions of students’ identities that emerged through their reflections. Social identities connect individuals to groups of commonality (Hogg 2001) and often include aspects of race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, country of origin, citizenship status, language, religion and other salient dimensions of their selfhood. The question posed to students to collect demographic information was, “Please share any identities that are important to you.” Some students were very familiar with the practice of naming and claiming these identities and shared one or more aspects of themselves that connect them to others. Two students in particular were disinclined to the framework of the request to share social identity characteristics. One student responded with a series of questions to clarify what was meant by the term “social identities.” A second student said “pass,” implying a dismissal of the question. This illustrates the spectrum along which many students seek to tease out and understand the aspects of themselves that influence how they experience and understand their world.

Consistent with research from other scholars (Arminio et al. 2000; Abes, Jones and McEwen 2007; Jones and McEwen 2000; Renn and Bilodeau, 2005), often the identities that reflect minority status in a particular context were the ones most salient or easily identifiable to students. This illustrates the concept of social location, or the ways in which one’s concurrently held and intersecting identities combine to create an experience that reflects varying levels of position, power, and privilege in relation to the place one occupies in the world at a particular moment in time (Dugan 2017). Students’ accounts of their social identities and the ways these identities impact their understanding
of leadership demonstrate varying degrees of awareness and understanding. For Simone, social identity is central to her practice of leadership. She identifies as a queer, Asian American woman who was adopted into her family; in Simone’s words, she practices “identity-based leadership” which means to her that leadership is practiced within the community that affirms her queer womanhood. She recalls participating in a diversity-focused pre-orientation program before matriculating at Georgetown, which she credits with deeply impacting her leadership efficacy:

[It gave] me the confidence to connect to this community. [It] affected my confidence in even running for a position on the board as a freshman my first semester. So I think all those things prepared me but that I really wanted to reconnect to that community and I saw leadership as a really foundational way to do that. (1/4)

Social identities are embedded in her leadership, and she views leadership as essential to integration into the community that affirms her identity.

For Morgan, an African American man from a working class socio-economic background, social identity also figured prominently in his discussion of his leadership experience. He recalls anticipating his matriculation to Georgetown, “Identity was a big part for me coming in, my racial identity . . . I figured that would influence a lot of my involvement” (1/5-6). He recounts learning about and planning for leadership in college, and encountering information from a study that demonstrated that

[St]udents of color engaged with clubs and activities that usually relate back to something that benefits our community, like our racial identity . . . which can corner me and other folks into these different positions, or influence the routes that we do take to leadership, to pursue more of an activist or social justice corner, compared to other folks.” (1/31)

It is clear that, for Simone and Morgan, two students who hold identities that are significantly minoritized in the context of an historic, religiously-affiliated,
predominantly White institution, their practice and understanding of leadership is complicated by their experience of the world. Inherent in their reflections are the ways in which they have directed their leadership practices to specific spheres, namely those in which their identities are affirmed. A critical view of this observation would lead one to question if that condition - applying their leadership to spheres that directly reflect and impact those who hold these same minority identities - was voluntarily chosen and if they experience this as a limitation. One wonders whether they might wish to practice leadership in other spheres with other peer groups who do not hold the same identities, and how that might be received by others. All of these questions indicate the need for a critical theoretical lens towards the formation of student leadership identity and how this may vary for students who hold different social locations. Combined with the act of recounting their leadership experiences to a White woman with positional privilege, there are clear filters that have undoubtedly influenced the perception of leadership identity development and the ways in which students make meaning of their leadership practice within this community.

**Invisible Identities**

Two students who hold salient “invisible” identities also reflect on the ways in which they experience those identities and practice leadership. Faith, a White woman from a working-middle class background, describes the process of learning about the definition of the identity of “first generation” college student - one whose parents or guardians did not complete undergraduate college degrees at all, or in a traditional time frame. For Faith, hearing this description prompted her to try on and ultimately adopt
this identity based on her family circumstances. She recalls, “it was almost like someone gave me . . . another identity that I didn’t even have before. And I still haven’t fully comprehended that” (2/16). Apprehending these mutable characteristics of her identity led Faith to consider the ways that assumptions and perceptions influence the ideas that others hold about her, and how this conditions her leadership identity. She recounts, “I’m just constantly proving people’s perceptions wrong. Or whenever it comes up in conversation, people are like . . . ‘I didn’t understand this aspect of who you are and how you operate’” (2/18). In integrating these different lenses through which she views herself, Faith concludes that the integration of social identities can be complicating, but can also encompass her sense of herself as a leader.

Santiago has also been prompted to think about the role that his social identities play in his practice of leadership. Santiago identifies as a first generation college student, a member of the Latinx community, and a member of the undocumented community. In the present historical, cultural and political context, his identity as “undocumented” is particularly salient, and has conditioned both his enactment of leadership at Georgetown and his sense of himself. It is important to note that this is an invisible identity; Santiago must disclose this identity, affirmatively claiming it, in order to for this to be recognized by others as a critical part of who he is and how he experiences his world. He recounts:

Whenever I say I'm undocumented, I never really say ‘I'm undocumented.’ I say ‘I'm a member of the undocumented community.’ Which now that I think about it it's just a weird way to conceptualize it. I think it softens it a bit to say ‘I'm a member of this community, and I'm a member of this community because of this experience’ (1/8).

He links this identity very clearly to his practice of leadership, stating “I know that the most important leadership that I’ve taken on is being an advocate for myself and my
community, the undocumented community” (1/14). Similarly, this is but one of
Santiago’s multiple identities, and it leads him to think about how the intersection of his
social identities and his social location influence his understanding and practice of
leadership. He offers this cautionary reflection “I don’t want to start thinking about the
fact that people like me because of the things I’ve had to overcome, [or that one might
think] ‘Oh, look at Santiago, he’s come this far. I feel somewhat bad for him but I feel
somewhat grateful that he’s been able to overcome these obstacles’” (2/12). This insight
reflects the concept that, for students at this stage of interpersonal development,
depending on the ways that their visible and invisible characteristics provide social cues
about who they are and how they operate in the world, the experience that they expect
that others have of them influences how they see themselves, how they manage their
identities, and how they represent and enact “leadership” toward specific ends.

Students holding majority identities, including White students, also apprehended
social identities as important to their understanding and enactment of leadership, and
consideration of their leadership identity. Holding a majority identity informed how
students made meaning of themselves in relation to others, and informed how they
considered leadership as a practice.

**Majority Identities**

For multiple students in this study, identity as a White person informed how they
experienced leadership in organizations and with others. Beth held leadership roles in
several organizations and programs aimed at social justice outcomes, particularly in
working with youth in the local Washington DC public schools, the majority of whom are
Black. Beth recounts vignettes from both her work with other Georgetown University students and the youth who participate in these programs in which her identity as a White person is interpreted by others as influencing the way she understands and practices leadership. She recounts,

I definitely have also found that, since I identify as White, that’s really hard sometimes in the spaces that I’m in. . . . and that there are leadership roles that I’ve applied for that I don’t necessarily fit as well. . . . I take diversity and making sure you can speak to experience as very important and I think that’s so serious. (2/5)

In seeking to make meaning of her aspiration to hold leadership roles in a program which serves mainly Black people, Beth seeks to understand and explore the impact of her identity as a White person, and is largely left with unresolved observations and lingering questions.

A different perspective is offered by Michael regarding the way that his identities inform his practice of leadership. He notes,

[I]f you asked my peers to like ascribe some identities to me, they would go with … ‘that is the White, conservative male perspective coming from Michael over there.’ And, the lengths and bounds of my conservatism can be described later and at length, but I think it's interesting in the context of leadership because we’re on a very liberal campus. (2/4)

Michael contextualizes his identity characteristics as both ascribed to him by his peers, and in contrast with his assessment of the overarching ideological climate of the university, which allows for some ambiguity as to whether he claims those characteristics for himself. Michael also proceeds to describe his experience participating in a university-wide committee considering the implications of the institution’s racial and social history, and implies - rightly so - that his composite identity is more complex than the ascribed characteristics that result from the social groups of which he is a part.
For contrast, gender identity was also a consideration for some students in their enactment of leadership. In describing her leadership style, Bella repeatedly used the word “mothering,” which she defined as bossy, directive and mature. She recounts, “Because I was naturally bossier, I naturally wanted to mother people. And I thought that I was helping them but the reality was they thought that I was just telling them what to do” (1/10). This is a notable description because use of a gendered term such as “mothering” might imply a style that is more nurturing or traditionally feminized, but Bella means this in the opposite sense. This struck me as an indication that assumptions about the influence of gender and leadership must be carefully considered and interrogated in the context of understanding students’ personal accounts of leadership identity development.

A contrasting example of apprehending the intersection of gender and leadership is illustrated by Arturo’s reflections. He recalls the experience of working in partnership with a female peer to lead a pre-orientation program for incoming students. In describing his experience partnering with her to organize and lead the group,

she would call them to attention twice and nothing would happen and then I would do it and they would finally do it [quiet down and pay attention]. But we were both very aware of that. At least understanding the dynamic was good so I made sure not to speak over her, I would always check with her, make sure that we were on good standing in that, you know, how the group or society perceived me or her didn’t affect the role that we had in the program. (2/3)

This is another example of a student apprehending the importance of social identities in how leadership is considered and sought, and ultimately how students engage others in the effort to practice leadership.
The point of considering the social identities and life conditions that students hold in the context of their development of leadership identities is not to merely name and order them in ways that highlight historical marginalization or privilege. Rather, it is to provide the foundation of understanding for critical analysis of the underlying questions that may influence students’ sense of themselves as leaders. Leadership identity is forged through the spheres where they practice leadership, their objectives and intentions, the ways they make meaning of these experiences and the perceptions that others have of them, and the integration of all of these dimensions; together these factors create layers of identity that infuse students’ self-concept. Similarly, the environment offers a way for each to consider his or her self-concept in relation to an institutional context. Each of these students has experience holding roles of responsibility and authority, working with peers to seek and effect change, and being perceived as one who embodies the role of “leader.” Using the LID theoretical framework and model, this research endeavor aims to uncover the ways in which these students reflect the stage progression and development along categorical themes in order to deepen the understanding of the application of the model in different contexts, and with a different group of students who represent complex and intersecting identities in their embodiment and enactment of leadership.

LID THEORY CATEGORIES

A driving question behind this inquiry is the manner in which students at Georgetown University reflect the LID model categories and stages in their development of a leadership identity. Based on analysis of student responses, the LID model remains a
useful tool to discern the process by which students at Georgetown conceptualize themselves as leaders, and demonstrate progression through stages toward increasingly process-based understanding of leadership. The following section examines the ways in which students’ reflections illustrate LID categories and stage-based thinking. For reference, the LID model illustration is presented in Appendix A. Tables presenting participant responses mapped to LID categories and stages are presented in Appendix B, Tables 1A - J.

**Developmental Influences**

As in the original LID study, the category of Developmental Influences provided an important backdrop against which students described their development of a leadership identity. The types of relationships, influences and conditions that impacted students were varied but reflected some distinct patterns, both in relation to the original theory and model, and among the participant responses themselves.

**Relationships**

Students recalled individuals and relationships that impacted their self-conception as one who could work effectively to accomplish goals. Interestingly, the ability to work effectively with others was not always articulated. In fact, two participants in particular shared self-doubt about their experience working effectively with others, acknowledging that they either prefer to work independently, or drew most leadership experience from solitary or self-directed projects prior to college. Beth recalled “I think I definitely have learned a lot about working with others. I don't think I was always good at working with others. ‘Cause I definitely like things to be a certain way. And I have a lot of trouble --
I've gotten so much better about it -- but I have a lot of trouble when things get mixed up. Or, my flexibility is not always the best” (1/4). All students recalled having adults - family members, teachers, coaches - encourage them and affirm their positive self-concept. Catherine summarized these observations, “I feel quite lucky to have people in my life who see me as capable. Who see my own potential” (2/12).

The role of other students in affirming students’ leadership identity was also notable. Peers played two main roles for participants; some peers served as mentors in fostering students’ sense of self-efficacy and connectedness while other peers were viewed as negative examples or cautionary models to participants’ development of leadership identity. For the purpose of relevance, all following examples focus on peer influences exclusively in the college context.

**Peer Influence**

Several participants named specific peers who played critical roles in influencing their leadership practice and efficacy. Four participants described the experience of having seniors reach out to them as entering freshman, in one case even before matriculating. Morgan highlights this encounter,

> I really appreciated him because we connected before I was even a student here at Georgetown. He was involved with a number of orgs on campus. . . . He just offered his support in my transition into my first year. And that's something that, like from him . . . I've done that to a number of other folks. I guess like paying it forward (1/23).

Arturo describes a similar experience of being identified by a senior who took initiative to invite him to coffee and discuss his leadership interests. He recalls, “And I felt we were--it was just chit chat, right? But it wasn't. I was there and he was like ‘What do you
want to accomplish at Georgetown?" (1/11-12). Students’ recollections of being mentored and, in turn, replicating this behavior by mentoring others evokes characteristics typical of Stage Five, Generativity in the LID model. It should be noted that this illustrates the non-linear and interconnected ways that students reflect the model’s stages by making meaning of experience in ways that demonstrate multiple stages coexisting at the same time.

Negative Peer Influence

Some leadership learning occurs through observing others and determining which practices are ineffective. Some participants shared accounts of observing leadership behaviors in others that they did not want to emulate. Bella describes a teammate on the varsity rowing team as “a bully” and recalls “from the beginning, it seemed like she was going to be the informal leader of the group;” she goes on to describe ways in which she was able to confront her teammate and influence the rest of the team, and concludes “I’ve dealt with girls like that my whole life. . . . I was willing to stand up when other people were being bullied. I know how terrible it feels, and no one deserves that” (1/16).

Simone recounts being a freshman on the leadership board of an organization and learning from the President, a senior, which attitudes and behaviors to avoid. This helped her consider and construct her own style:

I think one of my skills as a leader is just like, building rapport with people. And having people not hate you in general, which honestly, in general, I think that's been a problem with a lot of [the organization’s] leaders. [The past president] is the perfect example. He did more for the organization than anyone has ever done in the most recent years, but he's also hated by most people, especially current people in the group. (2/33)
Careful observations of others led students to clarify the attitudes and behaviors that they hoped to avoid as leaders. It also led many students to reflect on the public nature of leadership and conclude that as they observed others, they too were observed.

One of the impacts of the public nature of leadership brings the developmental influences into sharp focus as it begins to interact with another category, Developing Self. This is another sphere in which students may be inclined to name their fears, concerns or stresses related to leadership. Faith notes,

People assume a lot of things about me as a leader. They think I’m going to be Type A or that I’m going to be a stickler for the rules. Or that I’m not going to be understanding. … and I’m like ‘Where do you get that?’ What do I do that makes you think that? Because I would like to change that so that it's not meet giving off this perception [that] I’m not an understanding person (2/16-17).

Michael reflects,

I’m always curious, what do people think of me? And particularly, within the context of where I have a leadership role, or maybe we’re co-equals in a group or maybe someone else is the leader. . . . Because I think we should all take stock in how we’re perceived I think it could be useful in correcting a certain thing. Maybe we can do some much needed . . . self-regulation (1/27).

Faith and Michael note the value of attending to others’ perceptions in allowing for self-management and more fruitful leadership experiences. Simone however puts voice to a potential anxiety that students’ may have. She notes:

People can be terrible to each other sometimes. People can say you’re not doing a good job, or you’re oppressing people or you know, any of those kinds of things. So when you get that kind of negative feedback or you’re being told that you’re not serving the community well enough when it's something you really care about, those kinds of experiences can take a toll on you (1/16).

In Simone’s comment we hear the power that peer feedback can hold, and the fear or risk that students’ assume when they hold leadership roles in public ways. Similarly, Santiago
acknowledges the pressure of peer regard as well, “I would prefer people, just at this point, would allow me to go unnoticed . . . because it's a lot of pressure. Being a leader, it can be a little overwhelming” (2/30). Understanding student leadership identity development requires uncovering and acknowledging the difficulties and challenges faced by students in assuming these roles and making sense of those risks and demands.

**Broadening View of Leadership**

In the category of a *Broadening View of Leadership*, student reflections on past and current conceptions of leadership illustrate a shift in thinking of leadership as positional and leader-centric, to process-based and inclusive. Morgan reflects,

> What I thought leadership to be, in like being the top name on something and telling others what to do. And now I would say it's more, being more critical and honed in on self-work and self-reflection. . . . I think it's about being able to mobilize and connect folks, toward a common goal or common purpose. (2/17).

Santiago illustrates the shift in decoupling position from process, in stating “I consider someone a leader if they join an effort, not necessarily if they’re the person leading the effort. . . . You don’t have to be the one that’s spearheading the project to be a leader. You don’t have to be the president of an organization to be the leader. In fact, you can be the president of an organization and maybe not be the leader.” (2/22). This belies the depth required in unlinking position from process in a leadership identity, as it shows that both leadership as a process does not require a position, and that holding a position does not necessarily imply leadership. This comment reflects the shift from Stage Three, Leader Identified to Stage Four, Leadership Differentiated thinking.

Another factor in students’ development of a leadership identity was reflected in how they conceptualized the practice of leadership; in most cases this was characterized
by expanding their view of leadership to encompass varying practices and accommodate different skills. Michael summarizes this process, “I saw that leadership takes many forms and that, I think it led me to form my own opinions about the effectiveness and the effects that different types of leadership would have on organizations, would have on humans” (1/3). Michael demonstrates his expanding view of the levels of impact, differentiating groups from individuals. Santiago distinguishes between conceptual processes and transactional tasks. He reflects, “the leadership that . . . I’ve been a part of has been sharing my experiences with folks in authority, and so I’ve never had to do the other very significant part, which is all the groundwork that goes behind projects and organizing an event” (2/28). He shares this in conjunction with describing the process of learning skills and processes that allow him to conduct business on behalf of an organization, demonstrating that development may take place in multiple stages within a category, concurrently. By expanding their definitions of leadership, students accommodate levels of leadership that encompass concepts and processes in addition to skills, and make room for growth and learning in themselves, and room to collaborate with others.

Developing Self

A critical aspect of the Developing Self category as an influence on students’ development of a leadership identity, is the fostering of greater awareness of and confidence in their assessment of their identities, who they know themselves to be, and how assured they are of the qualities that define them. As they filter identity through the lens of leadership - the intentional engagement with others in efforts to effect change -
they come to know and understand themselves more fully. Expressions of this abound in student reflections on their specific processes of leading. Beth asserts, “I’m a very bubbly, happy, smiley person and I like to talk. . . . I don’t see myself as [tone change] ‘I’m in charge. This is how it works’” (2/29). Bella reflects, “I just naturally want to help, and my version of helping is to be a little bossy. To create structure where there doesn’t seem to be any” (1/2). Self-knowledge extends beyond attributes to skills, as well. Eric asserts, “I would say I feel naturally gifted in being able to observe people and to read people. . . . I try to be hyper-aware of people” (2/24). Deepening self-awareness orients students to their ongoing developmental tasks. Some students frame this self-knowledge in terms of what is reflected back to them from others. This sentiment is captured in Faith’s comment, “people tell me all the time that I’m extremely genuine and authentic” (2/41). Students’ deepening sense of self and construction of identity is both developmentally appropriate to their life stage and essential to the process of developing a leadership identity. While hard to imagine that they might encounter another in the Buberian style of timelessness and infinitude, it is clear that students seek recognition from others in how they act and lead.

**Group Influences**

*Affirming Group Experiences*

For students in my study, interpreting and assessing the influence of groups they were part of was an important part of understanding their sense of self as leaders. The assessments offered of group experiences were candid and encompassed both affirming and positive aspects of groups, and also frustrating or challenging aspects.
Recalling the original LID theory study, students in this research cohort considered aspects of groups that reflected a sense of place or “space” to find others. Simone reflected on the LGBTQ group that she joined and helped lead beginning her first year at Georgetown, “How do you create a space that’s supposed to be for all queer people, with the acknowledgement that queer people are very diverse and hold very different views, sometimes opposing views?” (1/5). As an RA, Faith described working with a team of RAs in her building “it was really interesting to try to work together to make this big community throughout the entire hall while still maintaining our own sense of identity and community on our own floors” (1/11). This forecasts another categorical theme of leadership identity development, Changing View of Self with Others. Faith’s observation that in the community, both the integrity of the individual community and the cohesion of the overall community are important and interrelated.

**Challenging Group Experiences**

Group interaction and influences also challenged student participants in many ways. Beth describes an experience as a leader in a group that lacked cohesion. While she valued the program, she recounts:

> It was a wonderful experience but a really hard experience, emotionally and physically. . . . My team, there’s some people who practice the idea of calling out, versus calling in. So if you’re wrong or you’re not completely with them on something, or you don’t know about something, it’s more like you feel like you’re getting yelled at for it instead of getting educated. (1/5)

Catherine recalls participating in a competitive dance team, “there’s a lot of pressure and stress. You see this person at their best shining moments, and also when they’re they most like, depleted. Just so tired, so stressed. . . . You see the complete best and the
complete worst” (1/13). Santiago describes the frustration associated with differing levels of commitment from group members, “I’m always like struggling with “why aren’t all thirty of us [members] involved? Why is it only fifteen of us?” (1/13). As these reflections illustrate, groups have substantive importance in the experience of students in both establishing a sense of community and providing the context for the enactment of leadership. Equally important is examining the ways that groups may provide contexts to understand problems, deficiencies, misalignments or frustrations that round out a student’s experience and provide contrast for the affirming and challenging aspects of the relational experience. As Komives et al. suggests (2006), continuity in groups across time, through positive and negative experiences, was more formative for students than joining groups for short periods of time or for surface level reasons.

Membership Continuity

Membership continuity is recognized as a key component of how group engagement influences the development of a leadership identity. Bella, Faith and Eric each reflected on the importance of holding manager roles with increasing levels of responsibility in their student employment contexts, and the confidence that continued knowledge and experience helped generate. Catherine describes the learning potential that comes from continued group membership. In considering her participation with the ballroom dance team, she observes, “when you’re around a lot of people who are good at doing something, and you are not as good at it, it gets you to do it in a way that’s quick and awesome” (1/16). Continued group membership offers both a landscape to practice, learn and adopt new skills, and also consider one’s role in relation to a group, in a manner
that evokes consideration of the subject/object shift central to Kegan’s (1994) construction of developmental stages.

Continued membership over time leads students to construct their participation in ways that position them as object in the group context. This is illustrated more directly when students consider the impact of NOT participating in the groups in which they are most invested. Eric offers, “the thing I think about is legacy. What is [my work with this group] going to mean? What are the stories going to be about me when I’m gone?” (1/39). The act of leaving the campus context either through study abroad or for summer break prompted two students to reflect on the shifting subjectivity of their developing leadership identity. Beth recalls,

[When I studied abroad] it was really weird to suddenly go from being on a campus where I do so much, and I’m known for doing so much, I have this position, to go somewhere and it was like ‘I can do whatever I want. And I can also not do anything, and there’s not that social pressure [to be involved].’ (1/16)

In these reflections, students’ considerations of how they are perceived by others point to the shift in thinking from self as subject to self as object inherent in Kegan’s (1994) stages of development. They also underscore the relational nature of identity embedded in the foundation of the LID theory, and evoke Buber’s (1970) construction of identity as activated in the transcendent relationship with another. These students consider their long term impact, which forecasts the aspects of further stages of leadership identity development, such as the need for group sustainability and permanence which prompts students to act in generative ways.

Group influences prompted students to reflect critically on their own participation and engagement with others towards purposeful ends. Some assumed a baseline positive
orientation toward group involvement. Catherine reflected, “I really enjoy doing things with other people. My mom says this thing about me which is definitely the case: ‘Catherine, with you, EVERYTHING becomes a group project!’” (1/2). Others reflect more ambivalent orientations to group work. Faith reflects,

I only do things that I have an interest in. . . . If I try it out and I decide it isn't for me, then I back out of it because I don't want to make myself look bad by not delivering on what they've seen me do in the past, but then I don't want to hinder anyone else in the organization or in the group, because if I'm not into it then I'm not going to give it my all, and things aren't going to get done to the best they can be. (1/13-14)

Reflected in these observations are both concern for group outcomes, and also concern for one’s self-image and perception by others.

Groups can also provide a context for intentional self-management and change. Michael reflects on the opportunity to work with a student government board, “I didn’t always make people feel that I had time for them. Didn’t really care what was going on in their life. So it was something that I tried to set out to fix” (2/7-8). Critical reflection about oneself combined with the opportunity to work with peers towards group outcomes is a key opportunity provided by the category of group influences; this effort foreshadows the category of Changing View of Self with Others.

**Changing View of Self with Others**

The LID theory positions the examination of leadership identity development as interrelated categories; perhaps none are so interrelated as the manner in which students’ sense of developing self encounters and is influenced by others to generate changes in the ways that students view themselves. This process seems so continuous to students’ lived
experience and embedded in their leadership enactment that it can be difficult to tease out these changes from the other categories. However, as this category is inherently connected to the development of college student identity formation, particularly in the seminal College Student Development theory purported by Chickering (1969) and Chickering and Reisser (1993), it is important to examine closely this category and the specific ways in which students reconcile their sense of identity as dependent, independent and ultimately interdependent with others.

“The biggest thing I’ve learned about leadership is that it's never about your personal goal” (1/10); in this observation, Faith alludes to the construction of leadership as essentially outside of one’s self. A necessary factor in enacting relational leadership is the recognition and engagement with the other. As some of the reflections cited earlier are demonstrative of group influences, students’ interactions with others reflect varying stages of interrelationship and lead to observations about the self in relation to others.

*Dependent, Independent and Interdependent*

The category of the *Changing View of Self with Others* offers clearer delineation between Stage Three and Stage Four conceptions. The LID model posits Stage Three development in this category as following a dependent path or an independent path. Stage Four development advances the notion of interrelationship by centering the interdependent ways in which students connect their leadership identity to others. The shift is often conceptualized by a precipitating incident that prompts new ways of thinking or changing relationships. Reflections by students in my study demonstrate that they perceive the role of others as both separate and differentiated, and interrelated, and
that the notion of their view of self in relation to other is complex even if they are not at the point of articulating interdependence.

Students shared observations of their changing view of self in relation to others in ways that prompt close examination of how they position themselves in relationship. Faith asserts, “I’m still not fully used to other people perceiving me as that, without me having proven myself as a leader” (2/35) and goes on to say that it's important to her to “[be] sure that people know that I’m serious about what I do, and hopefully being able to have that, keep having an impact on people in a positive way through my leadership” (2/38). This sequence implies that her self-concept is both centered in her own (independent) assessment and self-identification as a leader, and also centered in the aspiration that she is understood in this way by others. Arturo poses this as an imagined conversation between himself and others, “People have asked me ‘how do you know you’re a leader? How do you judge yourself?’ ‘How do you know you’re a good person?’ And I’m always like ‘well, because other people tell me that I am’” (1/8-9). Arturo seems to seek others’ input as a validation exercise, but does not indicate that he reciprocates. Yet, his assessment is dependent not in his construction of leader as other - he claims the role and identity for himself - but in the validation that others’ regard offers him. This demonstrates a variation in the dependent-independent dichotomy of Stage Three thinking. Another version of this complication is echoed in Michael’s description of a problematic aspect of leadership to him. He recounts:

I think there’s a close relationship between this whole making a difference thing, and the conversation around conspicuous altruism and volunteerism and the general conversation around accolades and praise and all that. I think that almost anyone who is engaged in the “good works” in life and all that will always be met with just varying degrees of, you know, suspicion from others. It’s like, you
know, are you in this for the good and the making a difference? Or because making a difference brings you X, Y, and Z? (1/20)

In considering the potentially motivating effects of service and leadership, Michael gives voice to the concern that others’ regard of one’s leadership is conditioned by intention or aim, and that self-motivation for accolades or praise is possibly inextricable from this motivation. Other students acknowledge the power of recognition from others. Catherine recalls being called a leader and “recognizing that I feel that sense of another person’s affirming me. I think that is really powerful. I feel that the person is appreciating me and what I’ve done” (2/24). Beth honestly names the power of recognition, “I think recognition is very important. And sometimes I struggle when I’m not recognized for what I’ve been doing. And so when someone says like ‘wow, you’re doing a really good job’ or ‘you can do this,’ that makes a big difference” (1/25). This observation suggests that there is complexity in the way students approach the acknowledgement of others which extends beyond dependence and interdependence to the apprehension of self-motivation and individual need. Faith shares a similar consideration in the very specific context of her role as an RA:

Usually at the end of the year, like that’s when I really see what a difference I actually made in any of my residents. People will kind of be like ‘I totally forgot to tell you that the advice you gave me really helped and just having you listen made me feel a lot better about it.’... And that always solidifies what they tell us in RA training, that you DO make a difference, even if there’s no one telling you that, you do, and you always are. (1/21)

Again, this reflection is offered without additional context about the impact that others have had on her in an interdependent manner, but it belies the idea that in understanding themselves as leaders, students are seeking feedback from others around them, perhaps separately from the ways in which they are impacting others in interdependent ways. The
transition from Stage Three to Stage Four thinking with regard to students’ changing view of self with others reflects the cyclical notion of development, that in this shift, students may revisit earlier stages in their thinking before they can fully adopt an interdependent view of leadership identity.

In considering the changing role of self in relation to others in chosen groups, students allude to the shifting nature of interrelationships. Simone reflects often on her relationships with others in the context of both the organization she has committed to, and the community of LGBTQ people and allies. She reflects, “leadership isn’t this singular thing that you take on by yourself. There’s lots of people engaged in this leadership work in some way that have the identities that you have” (1/14). She contextualizes this with the observation that “I’m someone who’s very dependent upon other people. I see that as a strength of mine, the reliance on other people. And I very much leaned on them” (1/12). While Simone uses the term “dependent,” the context in which she describes this aspect of self-awareness seems to imply interdependence as she contextualizes her thoughts about the role she plays in supporting others in the community. In the follow up interview, Simone reflects, “when I think about my leadership in those kinds of communities, it's very much about carrying the weight of that community on your shoulders and saying ‘look what we as a community can do’” (2/3). Morgan addresses this interrelationship by reflecting his thought process when approaching work with others. He states, “I really try to de-center myself when working with others, and focus on others . . . and that looks different for different folks, having different relationships with different folks on the team” (1/11). Morgan indicates that he considers both the interrelationship between self and other, and also the specificity of the
other, when engaging in the relationships that reflect his practice of leadership. Eric
takes a more conceptual approach to this interrelationship. He observes, “when you’re a
leader, you’re both the individual and the community. When you’re both the individual
and the community, you are what you are now, and you are what you are in the
future. You are both the present and the vision that you have” (2/28). As he ruminates
about the connected nature of individual and group, Eric considers the effects of time and
the impact of vision or collective future into the relationship, signaling his contemplation
of more interdependent conceptions of leadership identity. These students reflect
thinking more closely aligned to Stage Four conceptions of leadership, and may even
foreshadow Stage Five, Generativity thinking in planning for the long term success of
groups.

In its original representation, the LID category of Changing View of Self with
Others seems to offer contrasting strategies that align to stage delineations of
development along the path from dependence or independence toward
interdependence. In making meaning of their interrelationships with others and the ways
that these interrelationships inform their construction of leadership identity, students
display great complexity that belies the transitioning and dynamic nature of these
processes. Eric acknowledges this condition, “you need to be able to identify when the
situations are changed and be adaptable to them” (1/39) describing occasions when
dependence and interdependence shift. Morgan acknowledges the transitional nature of
his interactions with a group, “it's a phase that I’m in . . . stepping back so that others can
step up. Allowing others to grow” (2/30). Catherine sums up the changing nature of
development eloquently, “with leadership, when we consider ourselves a leaders, doesn’t
mean that we’re succeeding at that all the time. You know it's something that’s dynamic that we’re continually called to do” (1/44). Her use of the plural pronoun “we” and the present tense do not seem accidental; this is an on-going communal commitment in Catherine’s eyes. Her account echoes Stage Four construction of leadership identity as rooted in process, dynamic and evolving, impacted not only by the individuals and groups, but also by the conditions and context that calls for leadership.

ACHIEVEMENT ORIENTATION

A third result from my study is the pattern that emerged in the way students discussed leadership practice, experience and understanding that reflects their awareness of and orientation to achievement. This condition is particularly notable in the shift from Stage Three, Leader Identified to Stage Four, Leadership Differentiated thinking. In this shift, students begin to recognize the possibility that the constructs of leadership that prepared them for matriculation to a high prestige institution are not the same ones that will benefit them through college. As students made sense of this institution and their place within it, they wrestled with how this striving mindset compared to their experience, their sense of self, and the environmental context.

Experience

A stark example of achievement orientation is found in Bella’s reflection on the influence of her parent in constructing a view of leader roles.

I was very much raised with ‘You’re either a leader or a follower, and if you’re a follower, you’re the weaker of the two.’ And that’s not entirely true, because there are many instances where followers also make a significant impact on the outcomes of something. . . . I still want to be a leader. I still feel like I will be
most successful if I’m in a leadership role. Both in the sense of I feel like my personality is better served for that and I feel like I will have more power, and therefore be more successful. But there’s nothing wrong with being a follower. (1/22-23)

This is an extreme expression of both Stage Three Leader Identified framing and achievement orientation cast in terms of desirability, power and success. It also reflects the interplay between categories, specifically Developmental Influences and Broadening View of Leadership. In another example, Michael asserts, “Everyone can engage in leadership. I once saw it as this exclusive club that you have to have the right stuff to be admitted to. Now I think everyone can be admitted to it.” (2/13). Although subtle, the language Michael uses in terms like “exclusive” and “admitted to” reflects a sense of restricted access to leadership and a process of submission and acceptance rather than empowered inclusion.

Moving through Stage Three to Stage Four thinking, students may still revisit the impacts of achievement orientation on the overarching leadership culture. As they begin to differentiate leadership from specific leader roles, they may still observe the impact of the resource intense environment. Michael recalls his time as one of three undergraduate student members on a high profile, university-wide committee, in which he served with tenured faculty, high ranking university leaders, and alumni on an initiative that received local and national attention. Of the experience he recalls,

This was a phenomenal group of people that was really encompassing of this diverse university community . . . and with that came some phenomenal credentials and titles and degrees and all that. And in the conventional sense of the word, [I was] just totally outgunned . . . there are ways in which, leadership in the context of this working group was probably [measured by the question] ‘did you help us lead from hypothesis to conclusion in terms of incorporating something into our official recommendations?’ There’s one part of that report that I did! And in that sense - get out! - I was a leader. (2/23)

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In Michael’s reflection one finds the sense of accomplishment that comes from both performing at a high level and also finding common cause with those whose credentials carry valuable currency in the economy of the academy. This reflects a positive disposition towards hierarchy and positionality, and also acknowledges that systems and environments provide inevitable context for understanding leadership identity.

In the achievement-oriented environment, students recognize that others have similar forces driving them to parallel or intersecting outcomes. Catherine captures this notion in her reflection about group project experiences,

Watching my peers take up those leadership roles, and in that funny way, vie for the leadership roles in group projects or discussions . . . it's neat to realize that yes, there are other people who have been doing this their whole high school careers too, and are super happy to do it now. And I can actually just take a back seat and be cool that someone else can just do that. (2/26)

Acknowledging achievement orientation in others prompts Catherine to reconsider the role that she plays in a group, the expectations that she has of others, the common experience they share, and the importance of modulating her participation to serve the group needs and outcomes.

**Sense of Self**

Achievement orientation was observed in students’ self-presentation as well, both in demanding a critical lens in their self-assessment and their consideration of their developmental needs. Beth observes “I think I’ve gotten better of being aware of how much space I’m taking up” (1/24) in thinking about her interactions with others. Morgan describes the paradox inherent in the competing impulses of “being humble and not being boastful, and making space for other folks to shine, [and] also owning the things that I do
and do well. I feel like there’s still a balance that I’m struggling with” (2/11). Arturo offers a prescriptive observation regarding his deepening awareness of himself as a leader, “I think it's important to be true to yourself. Be consistent, be congruent. Be the same person regardless of what position of power you’re in, in terms of how you talk to people, how you treat people, who you keep around you” (2/18). Students seemed to uncover aspects of their identities related to their leadership experience, evaluate those aspects to determine how they align to the student’s sense of self, and consider the meaning or implications of that self-knowledge as it relates to their relationships to others.

Part of what students allude to in the shift from leader to leadership is the shifting orientation from role to process, and, specifically, their apprehension of roles and role relationships. Students expressed a range of views on the orientation to the roles as expressions of leader identity and as vehicles for leadership. Faith frames the issue this way, “It's an interesting dynamic of leaders on this campus because there are so many people who were leaders in high school, who now have to take a step back and not be a formal leader.” (3/39). In this comment she reflects a Stage Three conception of the finite nature of positions as imposing constraints on the practice of leadership.

An alternate view can be seen in the presentation of leadership as isolating. Some students wrestled with the notion of leadership led to their separation from others. Four students among the participant cohort named “isolation”, “loneliness” or “distance from others” as an outcome of holding a leader position. Eric reflects:

When you get into leadership positions, particularly at Georgetown, it can be isolating in a lot of ways. For (some) clubs . . . there are applications to get in. . . . But once you get up into the leadership of those clubs, that's even more exclusive.
It kind of makes it even worse when you get into a leadership position, to feel disconnected from other people. (2/1)

He proceeds to make the connection between holding a high profile position among students and feeling isolated, stating, “that’s where the loneliness comes in. [Others] will see [the role] first. And depending on how much of a relationship you have outside of that, it can be hard to just hang out with people and be friends.” (2/7). This reflects an assumption about the perceived trade off students in Stage Three may make between holding a leader role and fostering friendships. Another outcome of encouraging the transition from the Stage Three reliance on role-based constructions of leadership to Stage Four process orientation may be in promoting social connectedness to the benefit of students’ emotional well-being.

The shift toward Stage Four, Leadership Differentiated thinking can also turn students away from the notion that there are finite opportunities for leadership, toward more inclusive and participatory processes. This is captured in Arturo’s rumination, “I’m thinking about ‘Do I need to be something or someone [i.e. hold a position] in order to be able to do this?’ and I’m leaning towards no. Maybe that’s because I’ve already held leadership positions . . . or I feel like I could still be able to do it. But it would be helpful to have a title sometimes” (2/24). He reflects emergent thinking with regard to the necessity of a role or title, and draws on an increasing sense of efficacy given his past experience and also his understanding of the system of influence. Stage Four thinking is more fully captured in Catherine’s reflection about the meaning of the term ‘leader’ and its relationship to the term ‘leadership.’ She states, “that notion of: you’re right there
with those people. It's not like ‘I’m a this, they’re a this, and this is how it goes.’ There’s none of that. It’s much more like ‘I’m doing this thing with these people’” (1/40).

**Context**

Nearly each participant in my study remarked on specific ways that Georgetown University undergraduate student culture and context influenced their understanding and experience of leader and leadership. Faith summed up one common view that “the environment, definitely if you’re not careful, can influence you in a very negative way. Because everyone is so used to achieving, and then coming to Georgetown where everyone seems to be achieving all the time. Like all day, every day, someone's doing something great.” (1/24). The highly competitive admission which students negotiated in order to matriculate in the first place, combined with the sense of pervasive achievement, was present in her experience and framing. Santiago echoes the implicit weight of leveraging involvement for continued achievement. He reflects:

> You sort of feel that you have to get involved because it's part of Georgetown, part of the desire to get a good paying job, get into a good grad school. So you want to make sure that you’re well-rounded. But then, I like to think that somewhere along that trajectory, you lose sight of the resume building aspect and you just fall in love with the work you do. (2/21)

Along with the individual impact of the achievement-oriented environment, students experience the social impacts. Many students acknowledge that a system of applications, interviews and other selective processes serve as gates to leadership opportunities, and leadership experiences are often the primary path to community. Simone describes, “A lot of leadership tends to be application based, at least
at Georgetown. … For a lot of clubs, you don’t just walk into it. You can’t be part of it without applying.” (2/18-20). The social capital associated with membership in groups impacts students’ identities in myriad ways. Morgan recalls,

Social interactions and social groups are heavily arranged around clubs. . . . I cannot count the number of times when you’re meeting someone and [they ask] your name, your school, your major, and ‘Oh, what do you do?’ It's the general expectation that everyone is supposed to be involved in a certain number of clubs and have some type of position in that (2/14)

These reflections cast a shadow on the ways in which students apprehend leader roles, leadership development and their place in that system; they must be considered when examining the developmental shift from Stage Three to Stage Four thinking.

Properties of Achievement Orientation

Being Perceived

Kegan (1994) posited that, in progressing through orders of consciousness, individual differentiation precedes development; students must first understand their separateness and uniqueness before synthesizing into a more developed, integrated whole. The LID model authors posit this differentiation/synthesis component as a “crisis” that leads to development and progression along the stages of the model, notably in Stages 3 and 4 (Komives et al. 2009, 23). The properties associated with achievement orientation may offer clues to the type of crises that prompt development through the stages. For example, the property of “Being Perceived” represents the ways that students recognize their presence in the leadership landscape is seen by others, and draws an awareness to how they may be perceived or even evaluated by others. This could impact how others approach them to participate in a group or initiative, or seek to align and
mentor them. It may lead some students to attend to their impact on others. Recognizing that they are “Perceived” on campus is one way that students demonstrate awareness of their interrelationship with others in the context of leadership at Georgetown.

Mattering

Some students spoke about the sensation of “Mattering” in the context of their relationships with others and with groups. When discussing the feeling of mattering, some students acknowledged it’s import in affirming their commitment to an organization or a specific community, such as Simone’s connection to the LGBTQ community. Others, like Faith, took stock in the reliance on others to tell her that she had an impact on them through her role as an RA. The sensation of being designated as important or valuable to a group or process by someone outside of oneself was an affirming experience; the students who described the sensation of “Mattering” in their view of self in relation to others connected that sensation to their leadership participation with others.

Social Capital

Lin defined social capital as “investment in social relations with expected returns” (2008, 34). In this case, I invoke the term to describe the merits that accrue to students as a result of their roles or group affiliations on campus. Social Capital may be seen as a significant way of achieving in the context of students’ work with peers. Social Capital as a property of Changing View of Self with Others implies that students’ views of themselves and of others are influenced by the informal value assigned to involvement and group affiliation. Students in my study refer to this in direct and indirect ways.
relative to the culture of Georgetown clubs. Some students also indicated the ways in which Social Capital negatively accrues for those in authority roles; for example, Bella, in discussing leadership in the context of her management role with an office on campus states, “I've kind of realized especially with 20 year olds, it's very much a popularity contest. It's not necessarily what's best for [the employer]. It's more, who's the most popular, who has the most friends. Who is the most well-liked. And it's definitely not the management staff.” (2/21-22). In making sense of themselves in relation to others, students in my study alluded to the perceptions of Social Capital, both of themselves and of others.

**Competing for Roles**

Perhaps the most overt form of Achievement Orientation discussed in relation to students’ views of self in relation to others involved the sense of competition that many perceived with regard to leadership opportunities and roles throughout campus. As a property of Achievement Orientation, Competing for Roles implies that there is scarce opportunity for involvement or that certain roles are so attractive and value-laden that many would seek to occupy them. Students discussed competing to hold roles through elections, applications, and being selected by those with authority to appoint participants. In many cases, students within organizations create the conditions that lead to the idea that competition is required, sometimes without merit. Simone shared a story off-handedly about a student who tried several times to join the executive board of the LGBTQ organization, and yet while this person was not successful at attaining one role, another role was left open because of lack of interest. The property of Competing for
Roles encompasses the notion that striving for scarce resources in the form of leadership opportunities impacts students’ views of themselves in relation to others, and that competition within the system of leadership must be apprehended or negotiated. Combined, these properties create the conditions that comprise the proposed “Achievement Orientation” filter, which appears to be a component of Stage Three apprehension of the category Changing View of Self in Relation to Others.

The achievement-oriented environment defines one aspect of the institutional culture and implies possible success measurements, largely tied to Stage Three constructions of leadership identity. There are reasons to be cautious about this phenomenon that point to the need to understand it more completely. First, it seems clear that achievement-orientation may be misaligned with, if not counter to, relational constructions of leadership that value empowering, ethical, inclusive, purposeful, process-oriented leadership practice. Next, achievement orientation may be necessary in pursuing the curricular measures and benchmarks of success in college, but it is not clear that it benefits co-curricular learning or leadership practice in the same way. Additionally, in students’ comments there are allusions to the stress, isolation and self-doubt that may be fostered by achievement orientation. Additionally, for those students who demonstrate thinking at more progressed stages of leadership identity development, achievement orientation appears to have dissipated. For example, Catherine, most emblematic of Stage Four thinking, offers her view of the value of leadership centered in process. She states, “[Leadership is] that notion of continual learning. You know, leadership is something we’re actively doing. It's not like I become it and I am done. It's
not like some kind of noun that we just are, we take on the label of leader and that’s what it is. It's much more dynamic than that.” (1/41). This is important context against which to consider students’ development of a leadership identity.
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This study led me to wonder how students at Georgetown University developed an identity as leaders and persons practicing leadership within a high prestige institutional context. I posited the Leadership Identity Development (LID) theory and model as useful tools to organize this inquiry. From interviews with students I constructed coded units of data that suggested three main findings. First, students were inclined to invoke other aspects of their identity in considering their development of a leadership identity. These other aspects of identity were most often social identities, or those ways that students see themselves as members of groups that share characteristics or experiences. Second, in describing their understanding and practice of leadership within the context of Georgetown University, students in my study reflected on all five categories of the LID theory and model, and most often expressed thinking characteristic of Stage Three and Stage Four of the model. Some reflected both stages simultaneously, indicating that they were undergoing the subject-object shift in their understanding of self as practitioner of leadership within a larger, interconnected group of practitioners. Finally, in describing their views and experiences related to the category of Changing View of Self in Relation to Others, students reflecting Stage Three thinking in this LID category seemed to indicate that achievement orientation influenced how they viewed themselves in relation to others. In examining that data further, I propose the concept of an Achievement Orientation filter that students apply to their experiences when discussing their changing view of self in relation to others, a critical category of how they develop a leadership
identity. I propose that this filter has four primary properties and I consider the implications of Achievement Orientation with regard to students’ development of a leadership identity. Finally, I suggest implications for this assertion, limitations to this study, and question for future inquiry.

**Influence of Social Identity**

Current research asserts that social identities exist within systems of unequal power in societal contexts and that privileges may accrue unequally to those within the system (Arminio et al. 2000; Dugan 2017; Torres Jones and Renn 2009). This is important context to this inquiry, as students accrue privilege from the mere fact of being students at an elite university (Campbell and Dortch 2018). They may also accrue privilege from being regarded as “leaders” within this system, but may also experience differing levels of privilege based on their social identities within the system (Arminio et al. 2000). Acknowledging their social identities in discussing how they apprehend and make sense of their leadership identities took different forms. Some students like Simone and Santiago share directly how social identities conscripted their leadership identity into specific arenas, in service of particular aims. Other students such as Morgan, described how their social identities aligned with their leadership goals, or, like some White students, how their majority social identities needed to be negotiated in some of the groups in which they took part. Uncovering an aspect of identity like being a first generation student helped Faith see a parallel to uncovering an identity as a leader within a system. Even students who were less inclined to examine the effects of their social identities in relation to their leadership identity - notably Bella and Michael - referenced
ways that social identity emerged as part of their practice of leadership. From this study I conclude that social identities are an important part of the lived experience of leadership for students, and future inquiries into the use of LID theory as a tool to understand leadership identity development in college students should include consideration of the intersection of leadership identity with salient social identities.

**LID Theory and Model**

First proposed in 2005, the Leadership Identity Development (LID) theory and model sought to explain how students develop a sense of themselves as leaders practicing a specific form of ethical, empowering, inclusive, purposeful, and process-oriented leadership. Grounded in psychologist Robert Kegan’s theory of orders of consciousness (1994), it purported stages of development that led students from awareness to positional understanding to process understanding, and to generativity and synthesis. Progression through Stage Three, Leader Identified to Stage Four, Leadership Differentiated, is of particular interest to those engaged in leadership study and practice with traditionally-aged college students. The LID model takes an explicit stand on the values embedded in leadership and the ways in which leadership might be positioned to be both accessible and inviting to individuals but ultimately focused on the engagement of many toward a shared, positively-oriented goal. It fills a void in its effort to explain the process of leadership identity development for college students, and it builds on other models like the Social Change Model in claiming “what type” of leadership is most desirable in college students. Since then efforts to ground the LID model through a validation study (Wagner 2011), explore it's constructs of advanced leader development (Gonda 2007;
Rocco 2017), understand its application with specific populations of students (Renn and Bilodeau 2005; Renn and Ozaki, 2010; Onorato and Musoba, 2015) and understand its interaction with other cognitive functions (Sessa et al. 2016) have contributed to further exploring the value the model offers in understanding this phenomenon among students. One intention of my research was to contribute to the application and understanding of LID with college students in a high prestige university environment to explore if and how these students might vary in their progression or representation of the categories or stages.

LID theory proved a useful tool in exploring students’ experiences and meaning-making of leader and leadership identity in college. In their responses, students reflected each of the five categories of the LID model: Broadening View of Leadership, Developing Self; Group Influences, Developmental Influences; and a Changing View of Self with Others. Through retelling stories, describing significant experiences, and ruminating on unresolved questions, students offered rich insights into the ways that they make meaning of themselves as holding leader roles, and practicing leadership behaviors in conjunction with others in the larger context of Georgetown University. Most students in my study reflected thinking at Stage Three, Leader Identified, or Stage Four, Leadership Differentiated, or a combination of both. Reviewing, transcribing, coding and analyzing student responses offered opportunities to learn critical insights into the ways that they developed a sense of themselves as leaders in multiple contexts and the steps that led them through that identity construction. The LID model proved a helpful tool in bringing theory to practical application in this particular form of human development.
Achievement Orientation

In seeking to understand how students at Georgetown develop a leadership identity as part of a process by which they come to see leader roles as distinct from their pursuit of practicing leadership in community with others, I have detected a pattern in how students understand themselves in relation to others that may offer some deeper insights into this process. The LID theory posits that in Stage Three, Leader Identified, students assume either dependent or independent orientations to others as they make meaning of leadership opportunities and the necessary presence of groups, and that as students’ progress through the stages of the model, they increasingly adopt an interdependent position towards working with others. Early responses from students in my research cohort hinted that the distinctions between the orientations of dependence and independence, and the way each led into interdependence were perhaps not so clear, and left room for the possibility that other factors influenced students’ orientation through this stage. In seeking to understand the specificity of experience that leads students to progress through these stages at Georgetown, I identified a condition that merits further attention and inquiry, that of the Achievement Orientation filter that may impact students’ changing view of self in relation to others.

The Achievement Orientation filter emerges as a way for Georgetown students to consider and discuss their view of themselves in relation to others. This filter applies primarily to the category of Changing View of Self with Others and infuses the category with additional properties that complement the pathways of dependence and independence that determine how students position themselves in groups or with
others. The four properties that I observed were: (a) Being Perceived; (b) Mattering; (c) Acknowledging Social Capital and (d) Competing for Roles. Coding tabulations for these properties are listed in Appendix C. Though if considered in this order these properties seem to indicate increasing intensity of regard for one’s sense of self in relation to other, I do not propose that they are progressive in any way, nor that a student would necessarily employ multiple or all of these filters in making sense of their role in relation to others, in the context of leadership process and practice. Further inquiry may shed more insight into these properties to determine if they could be constructed as related to one another in some sort of schema.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY

In seeking to understand the ways in which Georgetown University undergraduate students approach the formation of a leadership identity through the stages and categories of the Leadership Identity Development model, I hoped to gain insight that would provide suggestions both for current practice and future study. By proposing the presence of an Achievement Orientation filter detected in the LID theory category of Changing View of Self in Relation to Other, and describing the filter’s properties based on the data from the students in my research cohort, I will suggest interventions for addressing the impact of these conditions and offer questions that may lead to greater insights on the larger implications.

Implications of Achievement Orientation
I am cautious about offering judgment about the value of achievement orientation among students at Georgetown. It seems clear to me that there are ways in which approaching some objectives, tasks or problems with an achievement-oriented mindset would focus and hone a student’s progress towards meeting that goal. The approach to achieving styles offered by Lipman-Blumen (1996) suggests that adopting a certain approach toward goal achievement is the hallmark of practicing connective leadership. However, achievement cast in terms of social capital or competition for scarce resources in the form of leadership or involvement opportunities seems short sighted and may have detrimental effects on the larger landscape of student engagement. Students who perceive that there are limitations to opportunities for involvement, or that they will be judged on the ways they participate, the roles they hold and the organizations they join may miss out on the benefits of leadership practice and development. Students who contribute to these conditions by amplifying the properties of achievement orientation as they relate to, perceive, and interact with others in the landscape of leadership may be contributing to the delayed engagement and therefore the delayed development of others. Therefore, one of the primary interventions is to call attention to this Achievement Orientation filter and its properties, and seek to characterize the role it may play in individuals and in groups.

Another intervention strategy is to examine the properties of Achievement Orientation and discern the value that each has in positively affirming leadership identity development through the apprehension of others. Two properties - Being Perceived and Mattering - may offer important mechanisms by which to affirm participation in leadership as a process and encourage students to develop a leadership identity relative to
this process and community. Being Perceived and Mattering are related to one another in the sense that both position the student as object to others; one may be aware of how one is perceived by others. One may be aware of how one matters to others. In drawing attention to the sense of being object to others gaze, perception or value, the student is then aware of and may become liberated to exercise greater agency. If this meaning-making is accompanied by another person outside of the system - for example, a mentor or advisor - the student may be able to recognize the potential for a subject-object shift and develop liberation from the constraining parts of others’ view and embrace the more affirming parts, such as mattering to others. This type of intervention evokes Kegan’s (1994) shifting orders of consciousness in another context. It could signal an opportunity to enter into a transformative relationship with another in the Buberian sense. In turning away from subject/object construction and engaging in deeper recognition with another, there is no room for achievement-orientation, and there is possibility of transformative relationship as the foundation for a constructivist view of co-created leadership. This technique may be aspirational relative to the ways that students apprehend their view of themselves in relation to others, within a system marked by high prestige, but it merits acknowledgement.

Questions for Further Research

As this research was done in a particular context with a particular set of students representing participation in leadership roles and processes characterized by their demonstration of relational leadership, questions arise as to the presence of this phenomenon in other contexts and with other students. Future studies that interrogate the
LID model and assess the progression of students along the stages will certainly add to the body of knowledge about the continued construction of the purported categories and stages. Conducting this research with students attending other elite universities, or within specific communities characterized by high selectivity and scarcity of opportunity, such as honors colleges, would help generate more insight into the verifiable presence of an Achievement Orientation filter that students may apply to other settings, having made sense of it in the application and matriculation process. Further inquiry could be made into whether the Achievement Orientation filter applies to other categories of LID, such as Developing Self, or Broadening View of Leadership. Similarly, while I detected the presence of Achievement Orientation for students in Stage Three, Leader Identified, specific to the category of Changing View of Self with Others, more analysis could be made into whether this filter applies in different ways to participants in other stages of development.

Extending this line of inquiry, it would also be useful to know how the Achievement Orientation filter impacts a student’s development through Stage Three into Stage Four. I do not believe that sufficient analysis has been done from my data to offer a conclusive suggestion about the way in which achievement orientation is negotiated from Stage Three to Stage Four development.

Additionally, in offering this construction of Achievement Orientation as a filter applied to one aspect of students’ development of a leadership identity, the door opens to possible other types of filters. Other possible filters could be Faith-Informed, connecting to the institutional context as a faith-based institution or Professionally- or Experientially-informed, if an explicit purpose of the institution was to prepare students for a specific
type of post-graduate experience. Similar to the Meaning Making filter proposed by Abes, Jones and McEwen (2007), the suggestion of a filter implies variation in what may endure, pass through or be omitted in the process of making meaning, evaluating achievement, or constructing some other way of distorting experience. Imagining the presence of other filters in casting students’ understanding of self in relation to others offers possibilities for deeper understanding of the ways that context influences human relationships.

Greater Consideration for Student Social Identities

Another limitation of this inquiry and an opportunity for further study would be to investigate more fully the interaction of social identity and Achievement Orientation. Georgetown University was founded as a Catholic university for White men (Durkin 1964). Only in the last fifty to seventy years were members of other racial and ethnic groups, and women, admitted. Only ten years ago were the identities of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgendered or queer/questioning people affirmed by the institutional incorporation of a resource center designed to support and acknowledge these identities. Research into the effects of higher education shows that participating in this educational context with a set of complex identities, some of which are more institutionally affirmed than others, impacts the learning and development experience for students (Arminio et al. 2000; Astin and Astin 2000; Abes Jones and McEwen 2007; Vaccaro and Newman 2016; Torres, Jones and Renn 2009).

With this background in mind, it is notable that all students in my research cohort reflected on some aspect of achievement orientation, regardless of social identity and
particularly which identities might be affirmed or minoritized in the context of Georgetown University. However, the data provides ample opportunity in future studies to explore more deeply the nuances of how achievement orientation might be experienced for a student with varying social identities. This could be further explored both by inviting participation from more diverse groups of students, or by concentrating on a set of students who share a social identity that varies from the larger institutional historical context; for example, a study of LGBTQ identified students. Similar studies using LID at other institutions have led to useful contributions to the literature and understanding both of student development and of the utility of LID as a tool for understanding leadership identity development more broadly (Onorato and Musoba, 2015; Renn and Ozaki, 2010, Renn and Bilodeau, 2005).

**Researcher Reflexivity**

I have been contemplating the questions at the heart of this thesis for over fifteen years. I started thinking about the notion of leadership from the first person perspective as a developing adult myself. Like many emerging adults, I was not drawn to the title or label “leader,” and while I felt a deep responsibility to participate in my communities to varying degrees at for varying motivational reasons, I did not construct a vision of myself as a “leader” because of what that word evoked. After years of study and further inquiry, I have come to realize what a common narrative this is: people who contribute, who act and interact with others to effect change and strive towards purposeful goals, yet come reluctantly to the identity of “leader.” This is a central premise of Dugan’s (2017) recent text, and it arrives not a moment too soon.
I faced many questions. What does it mean to be a leader among a community of leaders? If each person selected to join a highly selective institution of higher learning has demonstrated leadership in order to attain that position, what do the relationships look like among students and within groups? Do leader-follower groupings naturally fall into place? Does competition emerge in the context of leadership? Is hierarchy naturally imposed, or are leaders naturally inclined to cooperate and share authority and influence regardless of position? Clearly there are no easy answers to these underlying questions, but they demonstrate the richness of the landscape with which to understand student leadership identity development in the context of a highly selective university environment like Georgetown University.

Achievement orientation is highly present in multiple ways in this inquiry. I am not immune from it. This effort to apply a scholarly lens to the practical work of co-curricular formation of students is in itself my effort to achieve. My curiosity about leadership development in college students, how it has shifted over time, how certain experiences might foster growth, the ways in which groups progress towards collective effectiveness – my understanding of all of these questions has grown from practical experience. Yet, in an effort to demonstrate expertise in a more recognized, authenticated manner, I seek to present this inquiry in the terms and language of the academy, in part to demonstrate that my insight transcends the practical sphere, and to demonstrate my scholarly credentials. To ignore the role that achievement orientation plays in this endeavor would undermine my claims to researcher reflexivity.
I posit the idea of Achievement Orientation as a type of filter that casts a set of conditions over the practice of leadership, the conceptions of those who enact it, and the context in which it is embedded. Filters are particularly apt for understanding this tool at this moment, among this group of people. Abes Jones and McEwen were prescient in their proposal of a “Meaning Making” filter in 2007. Social media platforms, particularly those most used by traditionally-aged students and youth in general - Instagram and Snapchat, according to recent polls (Pew Research 2018; Twenge 2017) - include filters as a standard aspect of photographic representations. Filters are overlays applied to photographs or other images. They range from simple functions, like changing full color images to black and white or sepia toned, to more complex ones, like blurring parts of the image and sharpening others to focus attention on specific features. Filters can change the mood or the perception of time, such as creating sunset lighting, or implementing a cast to change the perceived decade in which the photo was taken. Filters are ubiquitous; they change rapidly. At any given moment, Instagram offers 40 distinct filters that may be applied to an image to present the cast that most precisely matches the photographer’s mood. Recent Pew research (Pew Report March 1 2018) states that nearly 80% of Americans aged 18-24 use Snapchat regularly and are accustomed to applying filters to the images they project almost without realizing it. The use of social media platforms to present a self-image is the focus of a growing body of research and the impact of this increasingly frequent practice is of growing interest and concern (Twenge, 2017).

Achievement Orientation may exist in other ways that are not related to how students perceive themselves in relation to others. For example, in an individual way, Morgan and Santiago both pursue the achievement of reduced uncertainty. Morgan
describes being planful in his approach to involvement at Georgetown, in mapping out his preferred group affiliation and organizational roles. Santiago discusses the pressure of being undocumented, and the uncertainty that accompanies his status; advocacy is one way to combat the feeling of helplessness. Catherine employs an achievement orientation in her pursuit of excellence specifically as a dancer, but also in the presentation of her valedictory speech at graduation.

When I set out to conduct this research, like most qualitative researchers, I had a general idea of the questions that motivated me, but I also felt open to discovering what I might uncover. Now I know this is a debatable approach to qualitative research and grounded theory methodology in particular. Scholars disagree about the extent to which the literature should dictate the inquiry or whether the findings should direct the contextualizing of the data as the study comes together (Corbin and Strauss 2013; Charmaz 2006; Cresswell 2013, Holton 2008). I recognize that I was familiar with the LID theory and model before I started, and I was curious about how it might hold up when applied, nearly fifteen years after it was first proposed, in a time and context quite different from the one which gave rise to it. Tracy (2013) acknowledges that grounded theory often proceeds this way in practice.

LIMITATIONS

The limitations associated with a qualitative study are manifold. Given the small sample size, there is limited utility in generalizing the outcomes of this research beyond the conclusions which might be drawn about this particular group of students, at this
moment in time. However, the deep insights plumbed from students’ narrative accounts may be interpreted in conjunction with other insights into human experience and may be used to help inform future questions.

One of the clear implications of this inquiry is the importance of considering life history theory and time considerations in addition to environmental context when seeking to understand the leadership identity development of students. Considering the generational context in conjunction with the environmental context when seeking to understand leadership identity development is essential (Twenge, 2017; Strauss and Howe, 2003). Generational cohort analysis, including the developmental milestones that substantiate independence-seeking behaviors, social relationship behaviors, and leadership behaviors, can prove useful in aligning students’ lived experience to the developmental stages of the Leadership Identity Development model.

Considering this alignment over time offers another dimension through which to apply the model and theory, and a lens to identify relational implications embedded in the application of theory. By highlighting the ways in which social relationships gain increased importance in the application of LID theory to student experience, the lens of generational theory can uncover ways in which the value of LID theory expands to highlight important factors in students’ integrative development.

Another limitation of this research was my deliberate decision to examine the elite and highly selective aspect of the institutional culture, without examining all aspects, and notably the aspects of culture informed by institutional mission and Catholic and Jesuit identity. While undoubtedly Georgetown’s founding on the Catholic and Jesuit principles of higher education are infused in all parts of the institutional history and
mission, and in many parts of its culture, this aspect of influence on the student culture was not the specific area of focus for my study. This aspect of institutional mission likely influences how students make sense of their relationships with one another; one component of this, the call to be “men and women for others” is imbued in the spirit of Georgetown and inscribed on banners seen by all who walk the campus.

Clearly, the call to be men and women for others overlaps and informs the idea of how students view themselves in relation to others - it would be impossible to consider this developmental task of leadership identity development without acknowledging the Jesuit value that undergirds this question writ large. Yet, no student in my study invoked the notion of this particular value, nor other specific Jesuit values, with regard to their sense of self in relation to others under the guise of practicing leadership. This lens was not applied, nor did students voluntarily raise Jesuit values as informing their thinking toward their peers or within a system of co-constructed leadership and purpose. Three students - Arturo, Morgan and Michael - commented on the presence of Catholic or Jesuit values, and related them to their personal practice of understanding their own identity, practicing their faith, or questioning the role that these values have in the educational experience at Georgetown. Consistent with research that shows that contemporary undergraduate students are less inclined to identify with religious traditions or practice their faith while in college (Twenge 2017; Strauss and Howe 2013), it is not wholly surprising that for students in this study, faith and faith-based institutional values were not voluntarily surfaced as influencing students’ views of themselves in relation to others.
Challenge

One significant challenge in conducting this research was analyzing and coding data, particularly with regard to the LID framework. Many reflections offered by students were complex; they harkened to multiple categories simultaneously. An example of this is illustrated by Morgan’s comment: “It's a warm feeling to be able to see and hear the impact that you had on other folks. ... Or to hear folks say "the reason I stayed here through my first year was because I was a part of [this group]." (2/7-8). This comment reflects both his experience with a group - Category: Group Influences - and also the way the group is impacting his view of himself - Category: Changing View of Self with Others. Similarly, making determinations about which Stage students reflect was not always easy or clear. Consider the way in which Arturo’s following comment reveals his broadening view of leadership,

I definitely feel some people have it easier than others. We tend to value a lot of interpersonal relationships, interpersonal skills, people who are charismatic. If you don't have that, um, I think you can work on that or explore your other strengths to get to the same objective. But it requires more work than whatever this other person has to do. (2/7)

His explication of certain traits or behaviors implies Stage Three, Leader Identified constructions of leadership, yet naming the values of interpersonal relationship and interpersonal skills demonstrates acknowledgement of Stage Four, Leadership Differentiated thinking. As rich as student reflections are, most often they did not lend themselves to easy categorization between either the distinct categories or along the continuum of stage development. I hope that in my engagement of a Peer Auditor I have
mitigated the effects of my own subjective review of stages and categories. Like the initial LID study, future research of this type certainly benefits from multi-person team reviews of qualitative data.

CONCLUSION

From this inquiry three major findings emerged. First, social location and social identities matter to those who are holding leader roles and making their way towards understanding themselves as practicing leadership. They are conscious of the ways in which their multiple, layered and intersecting identities inform their adoption of the identity “leader” or “practitioner of leadership” within a system that values it. In the post-Dugan era, following the publication and dissemination of Leadership Theory: Cultivating Critical Perspectives (2017), any inquiry into leadership theory, practice or identity should incorporate greater inquiry into social identity, social location and the systems of power and privilege that lead to values-based assumptions about leadership identity and practice.

Second, as my research question posited, the Leadership Identity Development theory and model stages and categories were fully represented. Each of the five categories - Developmental Influences; Broadening View of Leadership; Developing View of Self; Group Influences; and Changing View of Self with Others - were illustrated by the reflections that students offered in broad ways. Similarly, students reflected primarily Stage Three, Leader Identified, and Stage Four, Leadership Differentiated ways of thinking, demonstrating that some had made the shift between
orders of consciousness to understand themselves as members of a system characterized by multiple agents acting in concert towards purposeful ends.

Finally, notable given the context in which this study was conducted, I detected the conditions of achievement orientation in many vignettes and responses shared by students, suggesting similarities between the way may approach leadership and the way they approached matriculation to a highly selective, elite institution. I fashion this orientation as a filter that students may apply to their view and recounting of leadership experience in part because it has qualities in common with a common use of filters in a milieu quite familiar to students: social media platforms used for self-representation.

Throughout my inquiry into the ways in which students develop a leadership identity in the context of their traditional undergraduate experience at Georgetown, I have been struck by the rich and varied experiences that they reflect upon to make meaning of their development, the ways in which they influence the institution in all its composite parts, and the way the institution influences them. The thrill of matriculating to Georgetown as an undergraduate is accompanied by the realization that in doing so, a student joins a community of others who are accustomed to achievement and prepared to embark on interconnected learning experiences that are both self-directed and other-dependent. Leadership is part of this journey.

Students develop their identities in myriad ways in college, including as practitioners and participants in systems of leadership. They enter these systems with positional notions of how to participate; through the process of engaging, they may come to see how the potential of the community is best leveraged when everyone feels agency
to participate and lead. As Faith reflected, “everyone is so used to achieving, and then [you come] to Georgetown where everyone seems to be achieving all the time. Like all day, everyday, someone's doing something great” (1/24). If everyone is a leader, does that mean everyone leads? Our challenge is to affirm that it does.
APPENDIX A

Figure 1. Leadership Identity Development Model

Adapted from:
## APPENDIX B

Leadership Identity Development Theory Categories

Table 1A. Participant Stage Mapping: *Arturo*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Supporting Quote (Interview/Transcript Page)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broadening View of Leadership</td>
<td>Stage 3 Immersion/Stage 4 Emerging</td>
<td>I definitely feel some people have it easier than others. We tend to value a lot of interpersonal relationships, interpersonal skills, people who are charismatic. If you don't have that, I think you can work on that or explore your other strengths to get to the same objective. But it requires more work than whatever this other person has to do. (2/7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Self</td>
<td>Stage 4 Emerging</td>
<td>I'll be the one to step in and organize the group, I guess, and bring the group together. But not in a bossy way at all. A lot of times I am just a mediator. (2/9)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Influences</td>
<td>Stage 3 Immersion</td>
<td>(What I found important was) giving people leeway. Making sure that they recognize that even though I disagreed, I trusted them. So the trusting, I think, goes both ways. . . . It improved our personal relationships, they felt less inclined to hide things from me. It was a really good relationship. And they felt that I was on their team rather than sort of on top of them. (1/18-19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental Influences</td>
<td>Stage 3 Immersion</td>
<td>My parents talked about humility a lot. This concept of, it’s not everything about yourself, and even when you've got great accomplishments, it's not really your place to always be talking about them. (2/17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing View of Self With Others</td>
<td>Stage 4 Emerging</td>
<td>A lot of people that know me as maybe acquaintances or friends always think that I'm very nice, soft spoken, positive, and then people who know me very well ... are like &quot;Wow&quot;... like &quot;savage&quot; or very blunt. ... And I can be very honest in this setting, but I'm more careful in a public setting. ... And I don't think its hypocrisy or being two-faced, it’s just a different context. . . . It's a different delivery. (2/11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Stage</td>
<td>Supporting Quote (Interview/Transcript Page)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadening View of Leadership</td>
<td>Stage 3 Emerging</td>
<td>I'm a naturally bossy person. So when there's people that don't seem to ... that are confused, or don't really know what to do or what's happening or kind of are lost a little bit, I just naturally want to help. And my version of helping is to be a little bossy. To kind of create structure where there doesn't seem to be any. (1/2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Self</td>
<td>Stage 3 Immersion</td>
<td>As I've kind of developed my own leadership roles and the qualities that I find most important as I move forward, it's to not break the rules. It's to be completely honest, because if you're honest, people aren't mind readers and they're not going to know what you're thinking. (2/14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Influences</td>
<td>Stage 3 Immersion</td>
<td>I think the environment in a lot of my leadership positions has been … instead of encouraging and having conversations and being a little bit more confrontational, it’s been “Let's do it” if someone [else] can’t get it done. Which is not a great mindset to have. Because once you get to a certain position in a company or within a firm or whatever it is, if your lower level employee isn’t doing their job, as the CEO you can’t just do it for them. (1/30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental Influences</td>
<td>Stage 3 Emerging</td>
<td>I was very much raised with &quot;You're either a leader or a follower, and if you're a follower, you're the weaker of the two.&quot; And it wasn't ... my dad didn't mean that to be the way that I interpreted it, but it was just naturally the way that I kind of saw the situation. (1/22)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing View of Self With Others</td>
<td>Stage 3 Emerging (Independent)</td>
<td>(On motivation at work) I've kind of realized especially with 20 year olds, it’s very much a popularity contest. It’s not necessarily what’s best for (the employer). It's more who's the most popular, who has the most friends. Who is the most well-liked. And it's definitely not the management staff. (2/20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Stage</td>
<td>Supporting Quote (Interview/Transcript Page)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadening View of Leadership</td>
<td>Stage 3 Immersion</td>
<td>In most organizations, ... I think I too quickly moved up to the leadership role. When I started my sophomore year, I kind of had my head like I've accomplished everything I wanted to at this point. Because I was already a [Program] coordinator, I had been a [Pre-Orientation Program] leader, and I had gotten into the [Campus Service] society. I was like, there's nowhere else that I could really go. And that was frustrating in a way. (1/11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Self</td>
<td>Stage 3 Immersion</td>
<td>I think I've gotten better of being aware of how much space I'm taking up. But when two people want to both be in charge too much, and then there's a lot of clashing and things don't get done. (1/24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Influences</td>
<td>Stage 3 Immersion</td>
<td>I think I definitely have learned a lot about working with others. I don't think I was always good at working with others. Cause I definitely like things to be a certain way. And I have a lot of trouble. I've gotten so much better about it. But I have a lot of trouble when things get mixed up. Or, my flexibility is not always the best. (1/5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental Influences</td>
<td>Stage 3 Immersion</td>
<td>[Supervisor] was like &quot;you need to trust the team.&quot; And in my head I was like &quot;the team has failed me and not answered my emails or my questions. So why should I trust the team?&quot; (2/15)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing View of Self With Others</td>
<td>Stage 3 Immersion</td>
<td>[On reflecting on a challenging semester]: I had been a [Program] leader, and I love the program to death, but our leader team was not cohesive. And it was a wonderful experience, but it was a really hard experience emotionally and physically. ... My team, there's some people who practice the idea of calling out, versus calling in. So if you're wrong or you're not completely with them on something, or you don't know about something, it's more like you feel like you're getting yelled at for it instead of getting educated. (1/5)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1D. Participant Stage Mapping: *Catherine*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Supporting Quote (Interview/Transcript Page)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broadening View of Leadership</td>
<td>Stage 4 Immersion</td>
<td>There was a point when I decided that I didn't even want to apply for that position, and did not want to audition for that position. Because I realized with my own skills I would be more powerful on the field marching with everyone. (1/3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Self</td>
<td>Stage 4 Immersion</td>
<td>I guess like the question of what does it mean to be a leader. And that notion of: you're right there with those people. it's not like &quot;I'm a this, they're a this, and this is how it goes.&quot; There's none of that. it's much more like &quot;I'm doing this thing with these people.&quot; (1/40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Influences</td>
<td>Stage 4 Immersion</td>
<td>I really enjoyed doing things with other people. My mom says this thing about me, which is definitely deeply the case. &quot;Catherine, with you EVERYTHING becomes a group project&quot; (1/3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental Influences</td>
<td>Stage 4 Immersion</td>
<td>I still remember Sophia, when she took the position of attention. Just seeing how she did that. The quality of her posture there. I realized that she was the exemplar of what I want to embody. ... I wanted to be for others what Sophia had been for me. (1/4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing View of Self With</td>
<td>Stage 4 Immersion</td>
<td>I remember just trying to gather from everyone what they were interested in, what they were good at, what made someone excited. And to see if we could just divide the assignment in a way that they could all just do what they're excited about (1/6)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1E. Participant Stage Mapping: *Eric*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Supporting Quote (Interview/Transcript Page)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broadening View of Leadership</td>
<td>Stage 3 Immersion</td>
<td>When you get into leadership positions, particularly at Georgetown, it can be isolating in a lot of ways. For most clubs, not the ones I participate in, there are applications to get in. ... But once you get up into the leadership of those clubs, that's even more exclusive. It kind of makes it even worse when you get into a leadership position, to feel disconnected from other people. (2/1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Self</td>
<td>Stage 4 Emerging</td>
<td>You need to be able to identify when the situations are changed and be adaptable to them. You can't just rely on one person to do everything all the time. (1/39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Influences</td>
<td>Stage 4 Emerging</td>
<td>The thing I think about is legacy. What is [my work] going to mean? What are they stories going to be about me when I'm gone? And I can't control those stories, I can't put words in other people's mouths. (2/39)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental Influences</td>
<td>Stage 4 Emerging</td>
<td>[On teacher] She teased me a lot because she knew I could do a lot. She pushed me. She said I was haughty enough, like I knew what was right and what was wrong. (1/3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing View of Self With Others</td>
<td>Stage 4 Emerging</td>
<td>When you're a leader you're both the individual and the community. When you're both the individual and the community, you are what you are now, and you are what you are in the future. You are both the present and the vision that you have. (2/28)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1F. Participant Stage Mapping: *Faith*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Supporting Quote (Interview/Transcript Page)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broadening View of Leadership</td>
<td>Stage 4</td>
<td>The biggest thing I've learned about being a leader is that it's never about your own personal goal. (1/10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Self</td>
<td>Emerging</td>
<td>A lot of my residents ask me how I manage to get along with everyone on the floor because there's some people that I just can't stand or whatever, and I realize that that is my leadership style. I try to be impartial and not have any preconceived notions of who someone is, or what kind of person they are, or how they're going to work or operate before I get to know them. (1/18)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Influences</td>
<td>Emerging</td>
<td>[On working with different RAs in her building]: So it was really interesting to try to work together to make this big community throughout the entire hall while still maintaining our own sense of identity and community on our own floors. (1/10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental Influences</td>
<td>Emerging</td>
<td>The environment definitely, if you're not careful, can influence you in a very negative way. ... Because everyone is so used to achieving, and then coming to Georgetown where everyone seems to be achieving all the time. Like all day every day, someone's doing something great. (1/24)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing View of Self With Others</td>
<td>Emerging</td>
<td>[On the experience of leading as an RA]: Usually at the end of the year, like that's when I really see what a difference I actually made in any of my residents. People will kind of be like &quot;I totally forgot to tell you that the advice you gave me really helped and just having you listen really made me feel a lot better about it. And I can't, I don't know what I would do without you.&quot; A lot of people told me that as an RA. And that always solidifies what they tell us in RA training, that you DO make a difference. Even if you can't see it, even if there's no one telling you that, you do and you always are. (1/21)</td>
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</table>
Table 1G. Participant Stage Mapping: *Michael*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Supporting Quote (Interview/Transcript Page)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Broadening View of Leadership</strong></td>
<td>Stage 3 Immersion</td>
<td>I saw that leadership takes many forms and that, I think, it led me to form my own opinions about effectiveness and the effects that different types of leadership would have on organizations, would have on humans (1/3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stage 4 Emerging</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Developing Self</strong></td>
<td>Stage 3 Immersion</td>
<td>I think I just started to understand that these things that were just a part of my world were the ingredients of, you know, what it takes to assume a position of like executive leadership. To lead a group of people, and to, you know, help lead an organization. You have to be the one that is most literate in policies and history and procedure. (1/11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Group Influences</strong></td>
<td>Stage 4 Emerging</td>
<td>When I was a member of the group, I was more of a role player, while also being a leader, that was the time when I was most open minded and forming these different opinions. (1/26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Developmental Influences</strong></td>
<td>Stage 3 Immersion</td>
<td>I think about the people who were my peers, someone like Jack, who was three years my senior. I already had a sense of who I was as a human, but coming into contact with this person kind of reinforced &quot;this is really important.&quot; For him I think it was always the idea of empowering young people, the next generation. (1/14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Changing View of Self With Others</strong></td>
<td>Stage 4 Emerging</td>
<td>I think there's a close relationship between this whole making a difference thing, and the conversation around conspicuous altruism and volunteerism and the general conversation around accolades and praise and all that. I think that almost anyone who is engaged in the &quot;good works&quot; in life . . . will always be met with just varying degrees of, you know, suspicion from others. It’s like you know, are you in this for the good and the making a difference? Or are you in this because making a difference brings X, Y, or Z? (1/36)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1H. Participant Stage Mapping: *Morgan*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Supporting Quote (Interview/Transcript Page)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broadening View of Leadership</td>
<td>Stage 4 Immersion</td>
<td>What I thought leadership to be, in like being the top name on something and telling others what to do. And now I would say it's more, being more critical and honed in on self-work and self-reflection. ... I think it's about being able to mobilize and connect folks, towards a common goal or common purpose. (2/17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Self</td>
<td>Stage 4 Emerging</td>
<td>I guess identity was a big part for me coming in. My racial identity. Coming to Georgetown, so I figured that would color a lot of my ... or influence a lot of my involvement. (1/5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Influences</td>
<td>Stage 4 Immersion</td>
<td>[On working with groups of people and others]: I really try to de-center myself when working with others, and focus on others. ... And that looks different for different folks. Having different relationships with different folks on the team. (1/11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental Influences</td>
<td>Stage 3 Immersion</td>
<td>[On his family and community from home]: I received a lot of praise and accolades from my school, from family, and from church. I guess I feel like they leave no other room for failure or any room for much else, and I don't feel like folks acknowledge that. (It's like) &quot;You'll go to campus and shake things up, or whatever.&quot; (1/6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing View of Self With Others</td>
<td>Stage 4 Emerging</td>
<td>It's a warm feeling to be able to see and hear the impact that you had on other folks. ... Or to hear folks say &quot;the reason I stayed here through my first year was because I was a part of [this group].&quot; (2/7-8)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 11. Participant Stage Mapping: Santiago

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Supporting Quote (Interview/Transcript Page)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broadening View of Leadership</td>
<td>Stage 4 Immersion</td>
<td>I think know that he most important leadership that I've taken on is being an advocate for myself and for my community, the undocumented community. (1/14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Self</td>
<td>Stage 4 Immersion</td>
<td>I don't go into a space with the intention of, Oh, I'm having this conversation and by the end I'm going to be liked more by this person ... I just feel like that tends to happen. I don't go in with the intention of &quot;I have to go into this meeting and this person has to like me, and if they like me then they're going to help me get this done.&quot; (2/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Influences</td>
<td>Stage 3 Immersion</td>
<td>I was the co-chair [of a planning committee] and it was so much fun. It's the epitome of leadership because you have so many things that you have to take care of. . . . I think [our advisor] was always good with offering feedback. &quot;Okay, so you're going to facilitate a committee meeting, these are some strategies that you can implement. How can you check in to see how everyone's doing? What can you do? (1/11-12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental Influences</td>
<td>Stage 4 Immersion Stage 5 Generativity</td>
<td>[In working with an advisor and advocating on an issue]: I tell her &quot;oh, if you want me to go to this or if this is something that would help undocumented students, I won't do it unless another [member] comes with me. Because I'm very interested in the continuity. Because I remember when Clara used to bring me into the conversations. That's a really interesting leadership strategy. (2/6)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing View of Self With Others</td>
<td>Stage 3 (Independent)</td>
<td>I am very self-motivated. I always feel like I have to control every aspect of my life. And knowing that I have that expectation from other people even if they don't say it. The expectation that &quot;Oh, Santiago is going to do well regardless of what happens.&quot; (2/5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category</td>
<td>Stage</td>
<td>Supporting Quote (Interview/Transcript Page)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Broadening View of Leadership</td>
<td>Stage 4 Emerging</td>
<td>Leadership isn't this singular thing that you take on by yourself. There's lots of people engaged in this leadership work in some way that have the identities that you have. (1/14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Self</td>
<td>Stage 3 Immersion</td>
<td>I feel like one of the things I'm good at, especially one on one, is really connecting with people in some way. And I know I have that, and I think I prioritize that in my leadership. (2/36)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Influences</td>
<td>Stage 4 Emerging</td>
<td>People joke that I'm a very external processor. ... Especially with [the group conflict]. That entire leadership experience was processed through every single person around me. ... I wanted people to help me work through the difficult issues. Especially if they touched on identities that I didn't hold. ... I think all my leadership has been processed through other people. (1/12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental Influences</td>
<td>Stage 4 Emerging</td>
<td>Especially as I grew up, into college, and started finding these other leaders who I felt guided by in some way. I started to understand that this is also what leadership looks like and can do for people. (2/17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changing View of Self With Others</td>
<td>Stage 4 Emerging</td>
<td>I'm someone who's very dependent upon other people. I see that as a strength of mine. The reliance on other people. And I very much leaned on them. (1/12)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### APPENDIX C

Achievement Orientation Codes

Table 2. Changing View of Self with Others: Achievement Orientation Code Properties

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Property</th>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>No. of Code Occurrences</th>
<th>Sample In Vivo code (Interview #/Transcript Page #)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Being Perceived</td>
<td>Apprehending how one is known or recognized by others</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>Because I think we should all kind of take stock in how we’re perceived, I think it could be kind of useful in correcting a certain thing. That, maybe we’re projecting a sense of disingenuity (sic). (Michael, 1/27)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mattering</td>
<td>Feeling as if one is important and has significance within a group</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>When the [student government] campaign started, I was contacted and they were like providing me a list of freshmen ... and that was for me the first time that I felt like, all right, someone has identified me as someone that matters at Georgetown. (Arturo, 1/3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Capital</td>
<td>Perception that one gains value from being involved and recognized on campus</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Thinking about how social interactions and social groups are heavily arranged around clubs. ... I cannot count the number of times, when you're meeting somebody and they're like ... &quot;Oh, what do you do?&quot; It’s the general expectation that everyone is supposed to be involved in a certain number of clubs and have some type of position in that. (Morgan, 2/14)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competing for Roles</td>
<td>Perceiving that one has attained rare or scarce opportunities over others</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>A lot of things at Georgetown are super competitive, and so getting that leadership position is sort of a big deal. But that sort of got old for me when I felt like I had accomplished everything I needed to my sophomore year. (Beth, 2/31)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3. LID Model: Stage Three / Stage Four Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Stage Three, Leader Identified</th>
<th>Stage Four, Leadership Differentiated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Broadening View of Leadership</td>
<td>In most organizations, I think I too quickly moved up to the leadership role. When I started my sophomore year, I kind of had it in my head like I’ve accomplished everything I wanted to at this point. . . I was like, there’s nowhere else that I could really go. And that was frustrating in a way. (Beth, 1/11)</td>
<td>What I thought leadership to be, in like being the top name on something and telling others what to do. And now I would say its more being more critical and honed in on self-work and self-reflection. . . I think its about being able to mobilize and connect folks toward a common goal or common purpose. (Morgan, 2/17)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing Self</td>
<td>I think I just started to understand that these things that were part of my world were the ingredients of what it takes to assume a position of executive leadership. To lead a group of people and to help lead an organization. You have to be the one that’s most literate in policies and history and procedure. (Michael, 1/11)</td>
<td>I guess like the question of what does it mean to be a leader? And that notion of, you’re right there with these people. Its not like ‘I’m a this, they’re a that, and this is how it goes.’ There’s none of that. It’s much more like ‘I’m doing this thing with these people.’ (Catherine, 1/40)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Influences</td>
<td>I was the co-chair of (a planning committee) and it was so much fun. It’s the epitome of leadership because you have so many things that you have to take care of. And (our advisor) was always good with offering feedback. (Santiago, 1/12)</td>
<td>It was really interesting to try to work together to make this big community throughout the entire hall, while still maintaining our own sense of identity and community on our own floors. (Faith, 1/11)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developmental Influences</td>
<td></td>
<td>Changing View of Self with Others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<td>---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>I was very much raised with ‘You’re either a leader or a follower, and if you’re a</td>
<td>Especially as I grew up,</td>
<td>I am very self-motivated. I always feel like I have to control every aspect of my life. And</td>
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<tr>
<td>follower, and if you’re a follower you’re the weaker of the two.’ And my dad didn’t</td>
<td>into college, and</td>
<td>knowing that I have that expectation from others people, even if they don’t say it. The</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mean that to be the way that I interpreted it, but it was naturally just the way I kind</td>
<td>started finding these</td>
<td>expectation of ‘Oh, Santiago is going to do well, regardless of what happens.’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>of saw the situation. (Bella, 1/22)</td>
<td>other leaders who I</td>
<td>(Santiago, 2/5)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>felt guided by</td>
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<td></td>
<td>in some way.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>I started to understand</td>
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<td></td>
<td>that this is what</td>
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<td></td>
<td>leadership looks like,</td>
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<td></td>
<td>and can do for people.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>(Simone, 2/17)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I’m someone who’s very dependent on other people. I see that as a strength of mine. The reliance</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>on other people. And I very much leaned on them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Simone, 1/12)</td>
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</table>
APPENDIX E
Participant Interview Protocols

Leadership Identity Development Study Interview Protocols
Erika Cohen Derr
Doctoral candidate, School of Continuing Studies, Liberal Studies Program

PARTICIPANT INTERVIEW ONE

Introduction:
Hello and thank you for being here today. My name is Erika and I am a doctoral student at Georgetown University. I appreciate your participation in my study about leadership identity development. Our time today will be spent discussing your personal experience and your understanding or personal views on leadership.

I would like to raise two important logistical points about our time together today, and time that we may spend together in the future.

- First, your participation in this study is completely voluntary. If at any time you wish to stop the interview, please let me know. You may withdraw at any time without consequence.
- To help with my note-taking, I would like to audio record our conversations today. Only myself and my faculty advisors will be able to access the recordings. You have the option to decline from audio recording on the consent form.

[Review study overview and details on the consent form. Ask individual to sign.]

Demographic information:
I have some demographic questions I’d like to ask you.

- First, for record-keeping purposes only, what is your name?
You will have the chance to select a pseudonym to represent your responses for any papers, presentations or other representations of the study and its outcomes that may result from this research project.

Also, for demographic purposes, please answer the following:

- Age
- Institution
- Year in school (or years since you have graduated)
- Please share any social identities that are important to you? (Follow up: For example, race, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, socio-economic status, etc. List all the identities that you are comfortable including.)

1. The purpose of our first interview is to help me understand your experience with leadership. This is your story. Think about your first experiences with leadership and bring me up to the present about how you have become the person you are now. Consider the people, the groups, and the context that may have influenced you.

2. Tell me more about ___________.

Potential follow up questions:

3. Tell me more about specific experiences you had learning to work with other people? What did those various experiences teach you?

4. What about working with people different from you?

5. How did you begin to think of yourself as a person who could engage with others and get things done, or, to put it differently, a person who could “do” leadership? When did that start to happen? Tell me about that process.

6. How did you learn about being a member, participant or follower?

7. Were there models for you in learning this?
8. Did you process your various leadership experiences with anyone, like a parent or an advisor?

9. Did you learn about leadership in any formal way at this time, either through a class, training experience or other similar program?

10. Did anyone encourage you that you could make a difference? How did this happen?

11. How did the group experience impact your understanding of leadership?

12. In what ways did the greater environment or context influence you?

Thank you for your time again today. I will send you a written copy of the transcript for your review and any clarification or correction.

The second and last interview will focus on your views of leadership. Please let me know if you have any questions or need clarification about anything before the next session.

PARTICIPANT INTERVIEW TWO

In the last session we have talked about you and some things about leadership. Some of these questions may feel repetitive, but they may help to see if new thoughts have come to mind.

1. Were there other events or experiences or meanings that come to mind that we did not talk about last time? Tell me about those.

2. Tell me more about ___________________________ that you mentioned last time. [Review key events/experiences from the transcript that require more probing, with particular focus on the meaning of the key experience.]
3. What is the influence of things about your (like your race, gender, religion, sexual orientation) on your leadership? [Follow up with whatever aspect isn’t mentioned].

4. Do you believe you can influence change? What does it mean to you to be a change agent?

5. How do you view leadership differently now than when you first became aware of leadership?

6. What approach to leadership do you try to take now? What is your philosophy of leadership now?

7. What role do you believe ethical behavior and integrity play in effective leadership? Can you think of a time you were concerned about the ethics of a leader you were working with? What did you do? Has anyone ever challenged your ethics or integrity? Tell me about that?

8. When you think of all the things - people, experience, inner-focus, context - that helped you develop the views of leadership you hold now, what are most important to you?

9. In what ways was the greater context or environment important to you? Do you think your experience would have been the same in a different environment?

10. How would you describe the process since you were little of how your view of yourself as a leader has changed over time? How has this evolved? Summarize this for me as if it happened in steps or stages or some process.

11. What’s next for you? What are you working on to be an even more effective leader?

12. How do you react to people calling you a leader?
13. Is there anything else you would want to add about leadership or your experiences?

Thank you for your time and participation. Because you have taken the time to participate in both interviews I am providing you with a $25 gift card to the Tombs.

If you have any questions or wish to learn more about my research, you can contact me at any time at elc7@georgetown.edu.
APPENDIX F

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Georgetown University

Consent to Participate in Research Study

**INTERVIEW**

**STUDY TITLE:** Exploring Leadership Identity Development in College Students

**PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR:** Erika Cohen Derr  
**TELEPHONE:** 202/687-3704

**ADVISOR:** Jeanine Turner, PhD  
**IRB APPROVAL:** IRB #2017-0022

**INTRODUCTION**

You are invited to consider participating in this research study. Please take as much time as you need to make your decision. Feel free to discuss your decision with whomever you want, but remember that the decision to participate, or not to participate, is yours. If you decide that you want to participate, please sign and date where indicated at the end of this form.

If you have any questions, you should ask the researcher who explains this study to you.

**BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**

This study is being done in order to better understand the process of student leadership development in college. This study is designed to evaluate the applicability of a theoretical model that describes the processes people experience as they come to think of themselves as leaders, practicing a relational style of leadership that is process-oriented, inclusive, empowering, ethical, and purpose-driven. This research will help inform scholarly conversations about leadership development among college students, and may inform leadership development efforts in practical contexts.

**STUDY PLAN**

You are being asked to take part in this study because you are an undergraduate student at Georgetown University who has been identified as practicing leadership in a relational, inclusive, process-oriented manner. About ten subjects will take part in this study at Georgetown University.
If you decide to participate in this study, you will take part in two interviews. This interview should last around 90 minutes. The interview will take place at a time convenient to you in a classroom or other multi-purpose meeting room at Georgetown University. During the interview, you will be asked questions about your experiences and philosophies of leadership as well as your experience working with other people in groups.

You will be in the study for about four hours total, divided into two sessions over the course of up to six months. Each session should last approximately 90 minutes to two hours.

You will be informed of the researcher’s request to audio record and/or video record the interview for purposes of accuracy; however, you will have the right to decline being audio and/or video recorded. All participation will be voluntary and you may withdraw from participation at any time.

You can stop participating at any time. However, if you decide to stop participating in the study, we encourage you to talk to the researcher first.

**Risks**

There are very few risks associated with participating in this study.

It is possible, but unlikely that this study could cause emotional distress from having to answer personal questions. The researcher will try to reduce this risk by checking in with you about your emotional state and stopping the interview if you do not want to continue.

**Benefits**

If you agree to take part in this study, there will be no direct benefit to you. However, information gathered in this study may provide insight into the process of student leadership identity development and inform future leadership development programs or experiences.

**Confidentiality**

Every effort will be made to keep any information collected about you confidential. However, it is impossible to guarantee absolute confidentiality.

In order to keep information about you safe, steps will be taken to protect your identity and any copies of data shared through your interviews. You will have the opportunity to select a pseudonym for use in the written analysis of the study. You will have the opportunity to review the written transcripts for accuracy and to clarify meaning. The list of codes linking your name to your pseudonym will be kept separately from the transcript and electronic copies of the data.
Data, including questionnaires, transcripts, notes, and audio and video recordings, will be securely store on the Principle Investigator's computer and external hard drives. Computers and hard drives will be password protected to safeguard participant data. Hard copies of all data will remain in a locked file cabinet. All data will be destroyed (shredded or erased) after three years or when their use is no longer needed, whichever comes first.

If I write a report or article about this research project, your identity will be protected to the maximum extent possible.

Your name or other identifiable information will not be included in the thesis and any articles that result from this research project. Please note that, even if your name is not used in publication, the researcher will still be able to connect you to the information gathered about you in this study.

The Georgetown University IRB is allowed to access your study records if there is any need to review the data for any reason.

**Payment**

*If you complete both interviews, you will receive a $25 gift card to The Tombs or other local restaurant of your choosing.*

**Your Rights As A Research Participant**

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary at all times. You can choose not to participate at all or to leave the study at any point. If you decide not to participate or to leave the study, there will be no effect on your relationship with the researcher or any other negative consequences.

If you decide that you no longer want to take part in the study, you are encouraged to inform the researcher of your decision. The information already obtained through your participation will be included in the data analysis and final report for this study.

**Questions or Concerns?**

If you have questions about the study, you may contact Erika Cohen Derr at 202/687-4953 or erikacohenderr@gmail.com.

Please call the Georgetown University IRB Office at **202-687-1506** (8:30am to 5:00pm, Monday to Friday) if you have any questions about your rights as a research participant.
STATEMENT OF PERSON OBTAINING INFORMED CONSENT

I have fully explained this study to the participant. I have discussed the study’s purpose and procedures, the possible risks and benefits, and that participation is completely voluntary.

I have invited the participant to ask questions and I have given complete answers to all of the participant’s questions.

___________________________________________ ______________________
Signature of Person Obtaining Informed Consent Date

CONSENT OF PARTICIPANT

I understand all of the information in this Informed Consent Form.

I have gotten complete answers for all of my questions.

I freely and voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

Please indicate whether you agree to be videotaped or audio-recorded as a part of this study.

☐ YES  (If you change your mind about this at any point, please let the researcher know)
☐ NO

___________________________________________ ______________________
Participant Signature Date

Printed Name of Participant

Once you sign this form, you will receive a copy of it to keep, and the researcher will keep another copy in your research record.

Please indicate whether you agree to have your full name used alongside your comments in the final thesis and/or publication that results from this research.

☐ YES  (If you change your mind about this at any point, please let the researcher know)
☐ NO
☐ ALTERATION:
   Name or pseudonym to be used: ____________________________________________
   (e.g. first name only, initials only, random pseudonym, only work position/title, only institutional affiliation etc.)
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