WITH LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR SOME

by

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ABSTRACT

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This thesis identifies trends in attitudes toward LGBT civil rights from 1973 to 2012; however, the main purpose is to examine public attitudes toward marriage equality in the United States in 2006. Based upon the 2006 General Social Survey (GSS), this study uses cross-tabulation and chi-square tests as well as multivariate ordinal logistic regression to examine relationships between support for marriage equality and political views (party affiliation, political ideology), religiosity (spirituality, religiosity, belief application, religious activities, attendance), media consumption (TV hours, news source), LGBT contact (in general, at work, in family, in neighborhood, in voluntary organizations), and social demographic characteristics (gender, age, education, household income).

Overall, findings support existing literature as females, younger individuals, and those who have higher education are more supportive of marriage equality. Liberal and spiritual individuals are more likely to support marriage equality while those who are religious, apply religious beliefs to their daily lives, and attend church more frequently are more likely to oppose marriage equality. There is a very little relationship between support for marriage equality and

media consumption. Among the contact variables, only those individuals who have LGBT

contact in voluntary organizations are supportive toward marriage equality. It is hoped that

LGBT social movement organizations will benefit from these findings to formulate advanced

strategies for mobilization.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

vi

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

LIST OF TABLES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In my thesis, I examine public attitudes toward marriage equality in the United States in 2006. Marriage equality is a term that refers to marriage afforded to persons of all sexual orientations and gender identities; it is also known as same-sex marriage or same-gender marriage (HRC 2012). I use data from 1972 – 2010 from the General Social Survey (GSS) to examine changes in public attitudes towards LGBT civil rights. My focus, however, is on support for marriage equality in 2006. Ordinal regression is used to examine the relationships between support for marriage equality with political identity and ideology, religiosity, media exposure, and intergroup contact in 2006 while controlling for social demographics.

After 25 years, marriage equality remains at the center of political and religious debates as a controversial topic for those who oppose it while the right to marry is considered a vital necessity to LGBT families. Marriage equality is not a federal law. Same-sex marriage was first legalized in Massachusetts on May 17, 2004. Currently, nine states (Massachusetts, Connecticut, Iowa, Vermont, New Hampshire, New York, Washington, Maryland, and Maine) and the District of Columbia have legalized marriage equality. Thirty-one states have banned same-gender marriage[1] with constitutional amendments (Procon 2012). Currently, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) couples cannot marry in 41 states.

LGBT represents a shortened acronym of LGBTQIA (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersexual, Ally). The University of California, Berkeley (N.d.) defines lesbian as, "A woman attracted to a woman." Gay is defined as, "Men attracted to men. Colloquially used as an umbrella term to include all LGBTIQ people." Bisexual is defined as, "A

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[1] Some states use the term "same-sex" rather than "same-gender" (National Conference of State Legislatures 2012).

person who is attracted to two sexes or two genders, but not necessarily simultaneously or equally." This was once defined as a person who is attracted to both sexes or genders, but there are not only two sexes or two genders. Transgender is defined as a gender identity rather than a sexual orientation that encompasses someone whose psychological self differs from social norms and expectations of the biological sex they were born with. Due to the different levels of femininity and masculinity, some transgender individuals are "MTF" (male to female) or "FTM" (female to male) (UC Berkeley N.d.).

UC Berkeley (N.d.) defines queer as, "An umbrella term to refer to all LGBTQI people. A political statement, as well as a sexual orientation, which advocates breaking binary thinking and seeing both sexual orientation and gender identity as potentially fluid." Someone who identifies as queer may also experience, "…complex set of sexual behaviors and desires. For example, a person who is attracted to multiple genders may identify as queer." However, many older LGBT people have a negative connotation with the term "queer" has been used in a hateful manner against them so they are reluctant to embrace this label. Intersexuality is defined as, "A set of medical conditions that feature congenital anomaly of the reproductive and sexual system. That is, intersex people are considered in-between, born with "sex chromosomes," external genitalia, or internal reproductive systems that are not considered "standard" for either male or female." An ally is defined as, "Someone who advocates for and supports members of a community other than their own. Reaching across differences to achieve mutual goals." Lastly, pansexual is defined as, "A person who is fluid in sexual orientation and/or gender or sex identity;" otherwise known as the ability to have an attraction to all sexual orientations and gender identities (UC Berkeley N.d.).

According to the U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO) (2004), the United States Code contains 13 major categories of rights associated with the federal institution of marriage. The H.R. 3396, Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) does not allow same-gender couples to marry,

resulting in same-gender couples being denied a total of 1,138 statutory provisions in determining the attainment of benefits, rights, and privileges, including:

1) Social Security and Related Programs, Housing, and Food Stamps (including adoption and family violence services)

2) Veterans' Benefits (including burial benefits, employment rights, and insurance benefits)

3) Taxation (including tax deductions, tax credits, compensation, and estate taxes)

4) Federal Civilian and Military Service Benefits (including employment rights, insurance benefits, and family care/child care programs)

5) Employment Benefits and Related Statutory Provisions (including workforce investment systems, public health, and welfare)

6) Immigration, Naturalization, and Aliens (including sponsor's affidavit, exclusion, welfare, and public benefits)

7) Indians (including health care, land consolidation, and housing assistance)

8) Trade, Commerce, and Intellectual Property (including national housing, aid to small business, and consumer credit protection)

9) Financial Disclosure and Conflict of Interest (including agricultural credit and investment programs)

10) Crimes and Family Violence (including domestic violence, higher education resources and student assistance, and violent crime control)

11) Loans, Guarantees, and Payments in Agriculture

12) Federal Natural Resources and Related Statutory Provisions

13) Miscellaneous Statutory Provisions (including strengthening and improvement of elementary and secondary schools, bilingual education, and foreign relations)

Understanding people's attitudes toward marriage equality is important because 1) people's attitudes can set the parameters in which elected officials can act and 2) the lack of marriage equality has real implications for people and families throughout the life course. Some examples of implications pertain to the inability to obtain spousal benefits, family resources, housing, adoption, immigration, health care benefits, inheritance, and property. As society negotiates the meaning of family, LGBT families struggle with feelings of self-worth, non-acceptance, and inequality. As many religious conservatives defend the traditional definition of marriage between a man and woman, others argue that marriage is a civil right. Heterosexism[2] is an ongoing phenomenon that reinforces prejudice through negative beliefs and attitudes according to stereotypes (Cooley 2009). Heterosexist hegemony controls politics, religion, and the media.

Additional negative attitudes involving feelings of fear towards LGBT people can be interdependent with heterosexism. Eldridge, Mack, and Swank (2008:40) define homophobia as irrational "hatred, fear, or dislike of homosexuals." UC Berkeley (N.d.) defines biphobia as "The irrational fear and intolerance of people who are bisexual" and transphobia as "Fear or hatred of transgender people; transphobia is manifested in a number of ways, including violence, harassment, and discrimination." These types of attitudes are prevalent throughout public opinion polls in the United States.

In the following chapters, I discuss trends in LGBT attitudes including public opinion toward marriage equality. Chapter Two reveals trends in American attitudes toward LGBT rights from 1973 to 2012. Chapter Three is a literature review evaluating four broad concepts that affect public opinion: religiosity, political views, media consumption, and LGBT contact exposure. Social demographic variables are also discussed. Chapter Four contains my description of the 2006 General Social Survey (GSS) data, the measurement of variables, and

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[2] A discriminatory practice or prejudiced attitude toward homosexuals, inflicted by heterosexuals (Merriam-Webster 2012).

bivariate and ordinal regression methods. Chapter Five presents the results of my bivariate analyses and ordinal regressions. Chapter Six is the discussion and conclusion for this thesis, including the meaning of these relationships, implications, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2

PUBLIC OPINION AND CIVIL RIGHTS: TRENDS FROM 1972 TO 2012

In this chapter, I examine trends in attitudes toward civil rights from 1972 to 2012.

Although I focus on same-gender marriage later, I examine a range of attitudes now, such as

prejudiced and tolerant opinions toward LGBT people, families, and celebrities. The purpose of

this chapter is to provide some context so that we can better understand public attitudes in 2006

toward same-gender marriage. In other words, where are we now and how did we get to where

we are? I begin by discussing existing research that focuses on changes in attitudes of same-

gender marriage. I also briefly identify and discuss major events that shaped public opinion

through three distinct phases: (1) stonewalled, (2) fear and backlash: AIDS crisis, and (3)

liberalization in the 1990s to the present. Finally, I analyze data from the General Social Survey

(1972 to 2010), regarding attitudes towards civil rights for homosexuals, atheists, communists,

and militarists. My purpose is to provide context rather than a detailed history.

<u>2.1 Stonewalled</u>

In the 1950s, the media and religious groups labeled homosexuals as "perverts"

(Stachurová 2009:50). In the 1960s, culture, literature, art, music, and film began to evolve into

new styles. Cultural changes contributed to the introduction of alternative lifestyles, through

hippies, the Civil Rights movement, women's liberation, and the invasion of the British band,

The Beatles. In 1962, the premier of a film named *Advise and Consent* was based on the

Pulitzer Prize-winning novel featuring an amateur Senator with a homosexual past. In 1965,

Bob Martin was the first openly gay student who admitted to a university (at Columbia

University). In 1967, *The Advocate began* publishing a local newsletter in Los Angeles, written

by the activist group PRIDE (Personal Rights in Defense and Education) (Pearson Education 2012). Gay bars also became legal (Stachurová 2009).

A brutal, anti-gay backlash revolted against the legalization of gay bars, allowing gay men to gather legally and freely. On June 28, 1969, police raided the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar in New York City, which caused riots to break out and the arrest of gay patrons. This marked a new era for the LGBT rights movement. Conservative media outlets (e.g. *New York Post, Daily News*) portrayed the events negatively as liberal newspapers (e.g. *New York Times, Village Voice*) presented the riots in a positive way (Stachurová 2009). For example, homosexuals were labeled as aggressive and violent agitators by conservative media outlets versus liberated and justified victims by liberals to millions of television viewers, readers, and radio listeners. The first established radical newspaper was named *Gay Sunshine.* Another named, *GAY,* achieved a 20,000 readership with its first copy and quickly became the most popular gay newspaper during that time. During this transformation, the public became more aware of issues that LGBT people faced, humanizing them in a positive way (Stachurová 2009).

Homosexuality was labeled as a mental health disorder by the American Psychological Association (APA) and Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM) until 1973 (Eldridge, Mack, and Swank 2008). Throughout the 1970s, LGBT people were seen more in television and films, such as the *Phil Donahue Show*, *An American Family*, and *Sunday, Bloody Sunday.* Political figures, such as Anita Bryant and John Briggs, dominated the media with their anti-gay initiatives, based on traditional, religious values. Their anti-gay initiatives were mostly defeated and eventually disappeared from the media as they soon became viewed as extremist bigots in the 1970s (Stachurová 2009).

Fear towards homosexuals existed in America, and negative attitudes toward homosexuals remained stable from 1970 to 1977. Mass opinion, however, changed between the 1980s and 1990s (Yang 1997). Most adults in America continued to embrace negative attitudes toward same-sex behavior, although poll data reflect a favorable increase over the

past thirty years (Eldridge et al. 2008). From the earliest polls forward, the majority of citizens oppose the recognition of marriage equality (Brewer and Wilcox 2005). Many Americans still view marriage equality as a threat to traditional families, which clashes with their religious beliefs. Public opinion has shifted with significant events, portrayed by the media (Brewer and Wilcox 2005). Although attitudes toward LGBT people have become more positive over the past 25 years, targeted LGBT public policies continue to face opposition (Avery, Chase, Johansson, Litvak, Montero, and Wydra 2007).

The General Social Survey revealed, however, that Americans have not wanted to prevent gays and lesbians from obtaining civil rights and liberties since the 1970s (Olson, Cadge, and Harrison 2006). Avery et al. (2007) state Americans who believed gays and lesbians should have equal employment rights increased from 56 percent to 86 percent from 1977 to 2002. The authors reviewed the historical trend of Americans who supported the legalization of same-gender relationships, which has increased to 52 percent in 2002 from 43 percent in 1977. Olson et al. (2006) suggest attitudes regarding the morality of homosexuality liberalized from 1973 to 1976, and grew conservatively between 1976 and 1990. The Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (AIDS) epidemic may have contributed to the shift in conservative views due to ignorance, fear, and religious faith.

<center>2.2 Fear and Backlash: AIDS crisis</center>

Fear towards homosexuals escalated to a historical level during the AIDS crisis. According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the AIDS epidemic in America began in 1981 (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services N.d.). By the end of the year, 121 gay men out of 270 reported cases had died. In 1982, The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) estimated that "tens of thousands of people were affected" by AIDS. By 1984, The National Cancer Institute found that retrovirus HTLV-III, particularly the human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), caused AIDS. In 1985, an Indiana teenager named Ryan White who contracted AIDS when he was treated with contaminated

<center>7</center>

blood products for his hemophilia spoke out publicly against the AIDS stigma when he was denied entry back to his middle school (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services N.d.).

On July 25, 1985, Rock Hudson announced in a press release that he had contracted AIDS, which elevated awareness of the disease dramatically (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services N.d.). On October 2, 1985, Rock Hudson became the first well-known celebrity to die from AIDS. Shortly after, we began to see movies addressing the topic, although not to the extent as in the 1990s. In 1986, the movie, *My Two Lovelies,* featured Mariette Hartley, who questioned her sexuality after her husband passed away. She then had an affair with a woman (Pearson Education 2012). Later in 1987, major developments were made in medicine. Retrovir, also known as Zidovudine or Azidothymidine (AZT), was the first U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved treatment for HIV/AIDS. Also, the U.S. government approved $30 million in emergency funding for AZT, laying the groundwork for the AIDS Drug Assistance Program (ADAP) (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services N.d.).

According to Stachurová (2009), when AIDS was finally reported through the media, gay men endured public marginalization and condemnation due to hysteria of the unknown. Gay men were denied medical attention, forced to leave restaurants, and people would refuse to shake their hands. Hostility grew rapidly towards gay men. The anti-gay organization, called the Moral Majority, was founded in 1979 and demanded the prohibition of gay bars, gay bathhouses, and blood donations by gay men. The Moral Majority called AIDS a punishment from God. LGBT people were considered a threat to traditional American families and children. Homosexuals were perceived as promiscuous, diseased, and contagious by the public, and they became marginalized within the media. Various AIDS activist groups and organizations were established to fight negative stigmas, offer critical resources, and create awareness (Stachurová 2009).

Yang (1997) determined that in the 1980s, a large stable majority (75 percent) supported the distribution of AIDS educational pamphlets even if the gay lifestyle was presented

as unacceptable. Ninety percent of respondents agreed that their gay friend or associate could give them AIDS. Half of respondents felt the fear of AIDS caused unfair discrimination while the other half did not. A majority believed the AIDS epidemic initiated homophobic bigotry rather than sympathy for homosexuals. There has been a decrease in hostility and rejection as well as an increase in overall acceptance towards LGBT people since 1984; however, people continue to report lacking a personal knowledge and a relationship with LGBT people (Cooley 2009).

In 1985, activist Cleve Jones[3] conceived the idea for The AIDS Memorial Quilt while organizing the annual candlelight march, honoring the 1978 assassinations of San Francisco Supervisor Harvey Milk and Mayor George Moscone. Jones had learned about 1,000 San Franciscans losing their lives to AIDS (The NAMES Project Foundation 2011). He asked marchers to write the names of loved ones lost to AIDS on placards, and he placed them on the wall of the San Francisco Federal Building. Jones said it reminded him of a patchwork quilt. By 1987, Jones teamed up with the NAMES Project Foundation, and they organized the world's largest community art project. People from all over America sent panels honoring loved ones who lost their lives to AIDS. In 1987, the Quilt was first displayed at the National Mall in Washington, D.C. while activists participated in the National March on Washington for Lesbian and Gay Rights. The Quilt took up the size of a football field, including 1,920 panels, and half a million people came to visit the Quilt that weekend. By the end of the 1988 national tour, the quilt was made of 6,000 panels. The AIDS Memorial Quilt was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989 (The NAMES Project Foundation 2011).

<u>2.3 Liberalization in the 1990s</u>

Governmental and organizational programs evolved in response to the crisis during the 1990s. Demographic and cultural transformation occurred from 1990 to 2001 (Olson et al. 2006). Eleven percent of respondents felt same-gender couples should have the right to marry

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[3] Cleve Jones is an activist, well known, for his community organizing and campaign partnership with San Francisco's first openly gay City Supervisor, Harvey Milk (The NAMES Project Foundation 2011).

in 1988; whereas 69 percent opposed marriage equality. From 1988 to 2004, there was a shift towards greater support for marriage equality (Olson et al. 2006). By 1992, the leading cause of death among American men between the ages of 25 to 44 was AIDS (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services N.d.). Panic began to dissipate in the 1990s as homosexuals were liberated from many of the negative stigmas associated with the disease of HIV/AIDS, and I expect the media played a major role in this transition.

On November 7, 1991, Earvin "Magic" Johnson, an American basketball star, announced he was HIV - positive. His announcement was a significant turning point for the way people viewed AIDS. He began to create awareness and shared his testimony through media outlets, and he continues to educate as an avid spokesperson for people with HIV/AIDS (WorldPress 2011). On December 22, 1993, Maslin with the *New York Times* reviewed the movie, *Philadelphia*, starring Tom Hanks as an AIDS victim who fights immense bigotry and sues his former firm for wrongful termination. Denzel Washington played the homophobic boss. Hanks was commended for a "Brave, stirring, tremendously dignified performance as a man slowly wasting away." Washington was considered "Very fine as the small-minded shyster who becomes a crusading hero, has the better role." Overall, the film conveyed urgency of the AIDS epidemic.

How did attitudes toward homosexual behavior evolve over the years? Eldridge et al. (2008) reference the General Social Survey (GSS) results from the 1970s and 1980s, which found about two-thirds (67 percent) of respondents considered same-sex behavior "always wrong." In 1996, this declined to 56 percent. They also argue that 71 percent of American respondents from a survey in the early 1990s felt same-sex relations between adults were always wrong while 40 percent felt gays should not be allowed to teach in universities or colleges. The researchers show that gains in acceptance occurred in the 1990s. A 1996 *Newsweek* poll also revealed two-thirds of the respondents felt marriage equality would go against their religious faith (Brewer and Wilcox 2005).

We continue to see an increased media presence of LGBT people during this period. In 1997, Ellen DeGeneres appeared on *Oprah Winfrey* and came out as a lesbian. A couple of months later, Oprah Winfrey played Ellen's therapist on *Ellen* for the "Coming-out" episode (Pearson Education 2012). The NBC series named *Will & Grace* was about a gay man and Jewish woman living as roommates in Manhattan. This series debuted in September 1998 and throughout eight years, they won 16 Emmys (Pearson Education 2012).

The trend toward tolerance, however, was not without tragedy and conflict. On October 12, 1998, a gay student by the name of Matthew Shepard was tortured and killed in Laramie, Wyoming. This tragedy instilled a wave of fear among LGBT people, because this was a reminder to the public that LGBT people continue to be targets of violence and harassment. Later, Matthew's mother, Judy Shepard, launched a campaign to create awareness, and the media enhanced the success of disclosing the message of hope and justice to America. According to Brewer and Wilcox (2005), a trend from 1988 to 2004 indicates greater support among American citizens towards marriage equality; however, no dramatic trend exists towards support since the 1990s. By 2004, individuals who agreed with marriage equality rose to 30 percent, while individuals who disagreed decreased to 54 percent (Brewer and Wilcox 2005).

Moyer, Finley, and Soifer (2001:163) stated Vermont and other states extended more than 300 benefits to same-sex couples in 2000, such as "child custody and visitation, medical decisions and family leave, estate inheritances, and tax breaks – available under state law to married couples." In the same year, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that the Boy Scouts of America could continue the ban against gay males (Moyer et al. 2001). The 2000 Kaiser Family Foundation poll and the 2003 Pew Research Center for the People and Press found that the majority of America was in agreement that traditional families were undermined by allowing a federally recognized marriage between two consenting adults of the same gender. The majority-protected heterosexual privilege continued (Brewer and Wilcox 2005).

According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (N.d.), U.S. Secretary of State, Colin Powell, reaffirmed that HIV/AIDS in the United States was a national security threat in 2001. The next year, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the initial HIV diagnostic test tool with a 99.6 percent accuracy rating with the ability to produce results in less than 20 minutes. This decreased the number of HIV/AIDS diagnoses. In 2004, the U.S. Congress authorized $350 million for the United States President's Emergency Program for AIDS Relief (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services N.d.).

As our government evolved to address the needs of those inflicted with HIV/AIDS, society's opinions also transpired towards tolerance. Between 2000 and 2004, for the first time, support for civil unions outweighed support for marriage equality. In July 2003, the Supreme Court overturned sodomy laws[4] in 13 states (Avery et al. 2007). In the Hawaii Supreme Court's decision in *Baehr* v. *Lewin*, the state had no compelling interest in prohibiting same-sex couples the right to marry. In 2004, Pew's poll reported that 58 percent were closely following marriage equality as a result from the 2003 *Goodbridge v. Massachusetts Department of Public Health* decision. After *Goodridge* v. *Department of Health* (2003) legalized same-gender marriage in Massachusetts, intolerant Protestants ignited an anti-gay movement, which prohibited marriage equality in numerous state constitutions (O'Brien 2005). In 2004, the American public became mindful of the threat posed by the legalization of marriage equality as the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts passed legislation allowing marriage equality (Gaines and Garand 2010).

According to Munroe (2008), the 2004 Pew Survey found that nearly 58 percent of Americans believed that having freedom to pursue one's life goals is more important than

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[4] "Sodomy is a "crime against nature". Sodomy laws generally criminalize oral or anal sex, between consenting adults even in the privacy of their homes. As recently as the early 1960s, all 50 states had some sort of criminal law that outlawed consensual sodomy. Even though many of these laws target both heterosexual and homosexual acts, they are often selectively enforced only against homosexuals. Sodomy is also referred to as buggery "(U.S. Legal., Inc. 2012).

assuring no one is in need. In 2004, marriage equality was not a particularly important

campaign concern for the majority. The majority has sustained with support for inheritance

rights, Social Security benefits, property rights, and health insurance benefits for same-gender

spouse since 1994 (Brewer and Wilcox 2005). Does this support have any relation to the

advancement of LGBT individuals in the media? In 2005, Heath Ledger and Jake Gyllenhall

starred in the film, *Brokeback Mountain,* featuring two gay cowboys in a relationship, and it won

three Oscars (Pearson Education 2012). Debuts in 2009, such as *Glee* and *Modern Family,*

expose realities and experiences of gay people of various ages and backgrounds, and both

shows have won several awards (Pearson Education 2012). In the midst of inclusivity in

television programming, public opinion now accepts a biological explanation for homosexuality,

veering away from the environmental theory (Avery et al.2007).

During this social transition, politics also evolved. In 2008, marriage equality was added

to the ballot initiative in California, keeping marriage equality alive on the political agenda. LGBT

communities across the nation continue to wait for a final verdict on California's Proposition

Eight from the Supreme Court in late 2012 (Gaines and Garand 2010). Eleven years after

Matthew Shepard's death, President Obama signed the Matthew Shepard Act in 2009,

extending federal resources and protections to those who suffer hate crimes based upon sexual

orientation and gender identity. On December 22, 2010, President Obama signed the repeal of

Don't Ask, Don't Tell (DADT) into law, allowing homosexuals to serve openly in the military. For

the first time in presidential history, President Barack Obama recently endorsed marriage

equality, and he was re-elected November 6, 2012. As medical treatment for HIV/AIDS

progresses, attitudes toward marriage equality also improve. A massive milestone in the battle

against HIV/AIDS occurred in July 2012 when the FDA approved the first drug to reduce the risk

of HIV (The New York Times 2012).

According to Gallup, by 2006, 58 percent of Americans opposed marriage equality

while 39 percent approved marriage equality (Saad 2006). In comparison, The Gallup Poll found

by 2010, about 52 percent of Americans no longer had a moral opposition to LGBT relations, while 43 percent of Americans felt such relations are wrong (Saad 2010). In 2011, 56 percent of Americans agreed same-sex relations are morally acceptable. In addition, 48 percent of Americans felt marriage equality should not be a valid law, which is up from 45 percent in 2011 (Newport 2012). By 2012, 54 percent of American adults agree same-sex relations are morally acceptable, and 42 percent believe same-sex relations are morally unacceptable (Saad 2012; Lee 2012). By 2012, The Gallup Poll discovered that about 50 percent of Americans believe same-gender marriage should be a law, which is down from 53 percent in 2011. Although attitudes have trended more favorably over the last 25 years, opposition still remains a reality for the LGBT social movement.

For example, Brewer and Wilcox (2005) mention that a series of state initiatives have failed between the 1980s and 1990s as well as the 1996 and 2012 congressional vote to pass the federal Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA) to protect LGBT people from being discriminated and wrongful terminated based upon sexual orientation and gender identity within the workplace. According to the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) (2012), LGBT individuals are not federally protected against employment discrimination, and it remains legal to wrongfully discriminate based on sexual orientation in 29 states and gender identity in 34 states. Therefore, LGBT people are not protected from being discriminated within the workplace and are terminated, denied promotions, and experience harassment. It is 2012, and Congress has still failed to pass this ENDA partly because of ongoing heterosexism, homophobia, and transphobia. In 2007, controversy sparked when protections for transgender individuals were offered within the ENDA legislation. As a result, gender identity was removed, but the Senate failed to act (Jacobson 2009). It is important to remember that congressional outcomes are a result of public opinion and voter participation.

In summary, public opinion shifted dramatically during the 1980s AIDS crisis as well as the 1990s liberalization period. Politics and government policies, religiosity, media coverage,

and personal contact with LGBT people played a role in shaping attitudes toward LGBT people and LGBT rights. For the purpose of comparing differences between attitudes towards LGBT civil rights, the next subsection describes trends from 1972 to 2010 in a variety of LGBT related attitudes using data from the GSS.

2.4 Trends in LGBT Attitudes: Evidence from the GSS, 1972 to 2010

I analyze data from the GSS from 1972 to 2010. I focused on attitudes toward extending basic civil rights to homosexuals, atheists, communists, and militarists, including 1) speaking in public, 2) teaching in colleges and universities, and 3) removing books favoring each category from the library. Questions (see Appendix A) regarding these civil rights were consistently asked between 1972 and 2010; therefore, these attitudes were trended for purposes of comparing level of support and opposition to several target groups. Questions regarding homosexuals were asked beginning in 1973. Atheist and communist questions began in 1972. Questions regarding militarists were asked beginning in 1976. Interestingly, opinion polls from 1963 to 1996 demonstrate that the majority of people support the idea of equal rights; however, many of these people oppose action to ensure these rights (Cooley 2009).

Figure 2.1 reflects the trends of attitudes for allowing homosexuals, atheists, communists, and militarists to make speeches in the community. Overall, favorable attitudes have increased since the 1970s. However, there is some indication that attitudes toward atheists to speak and teach have become more negative since about 2005, and attitudes towards communists to speak have become more negative since 2004. Between 1973 and 2010, support for homosexuals rose about 25 percent from 61 percent to 86 percent. Over the past 30 years, the increase in favorable attitudes was twice as large for homosexuals compared to the other three categories.

Figure 2.2 focuses on whether homosexuals, atheists, and militarists should be allowed to teach in a college or university. Communists were not included in the teaching diagram because the GSS question for this group was written differently (instead of asking "Should such

a person be allowed to teach in a college or university, or not" rather, the question was presented as "Suppose he is teaching in a college. Should he be fired, or not?"). Between 1973 and 2010, favorable attitudes toward atheists and militarists rose about 20 percent. Supportive attitudes toward homosexuals increased by about 36 percent from 47 percent to 83 percent, despite the fact that support was already higher for this group. Therefore, civil rights for gays and lesbians are viewed more favorably by twice the amount of respondents.

Figure 2.3 focuses on whether respondents favor removing books from the public library if written by homosexuals, atheists, communists, and militarists. Attitudes favoring the removal of books written by homosexuals in public libraries declined from 44 percent to 21 percent from 1973 to 2010. Opinions toward atheists, communists, and militarists improved by10-15 percent while homosexuality improved about 23 percent. Support doubled for gays and lesbians.

Overall, attitudes regarding civil rights for homosexuals have increased by about 23 to 45 percent from 1973 to 2010. In summary, support for extending basic civil liberties to homosexuals, atheists, communists, and militarists have increased from 1970s to 2010. Support for gays and lesbians has always been a bit higher for this group compared to the others. Next, I examine attitudes that favor marriage equality. How do these attitudes compare to the three civil liberties: to speak, to teach, and to be allowed library books? What are the trends for tolerance toward marriage equality?
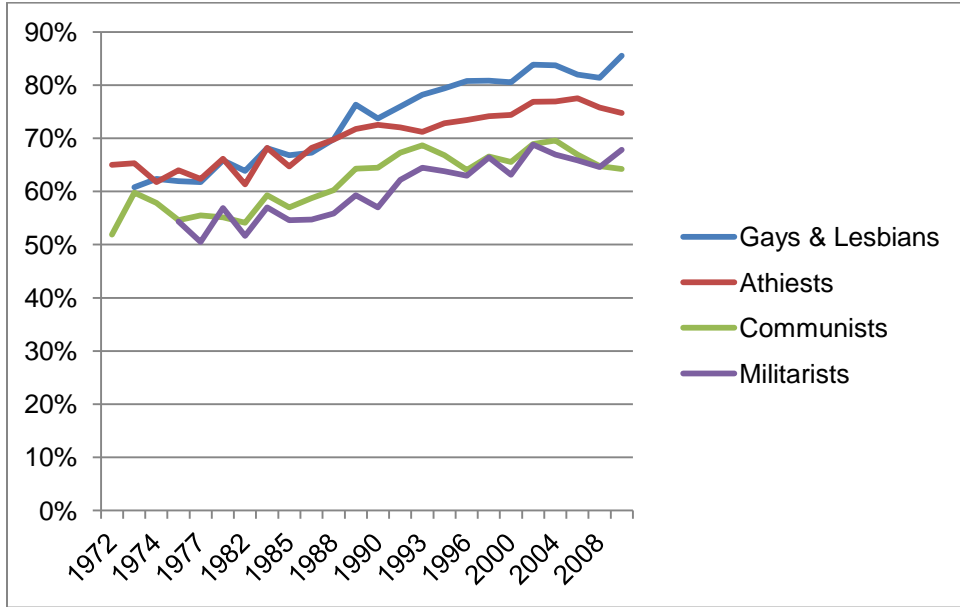
Figure 2.1 Percent Allowing Homosexuals, Atheists, Communists, and Militarists to Make a

Speech in the Community
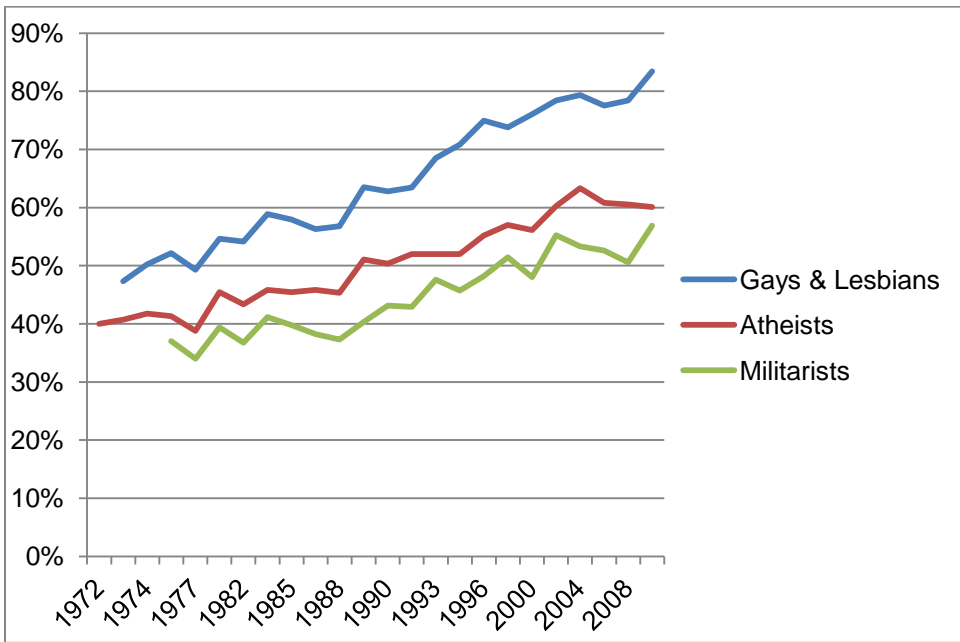
Figure 2.2 Percent Allowing to Teach in a College or University
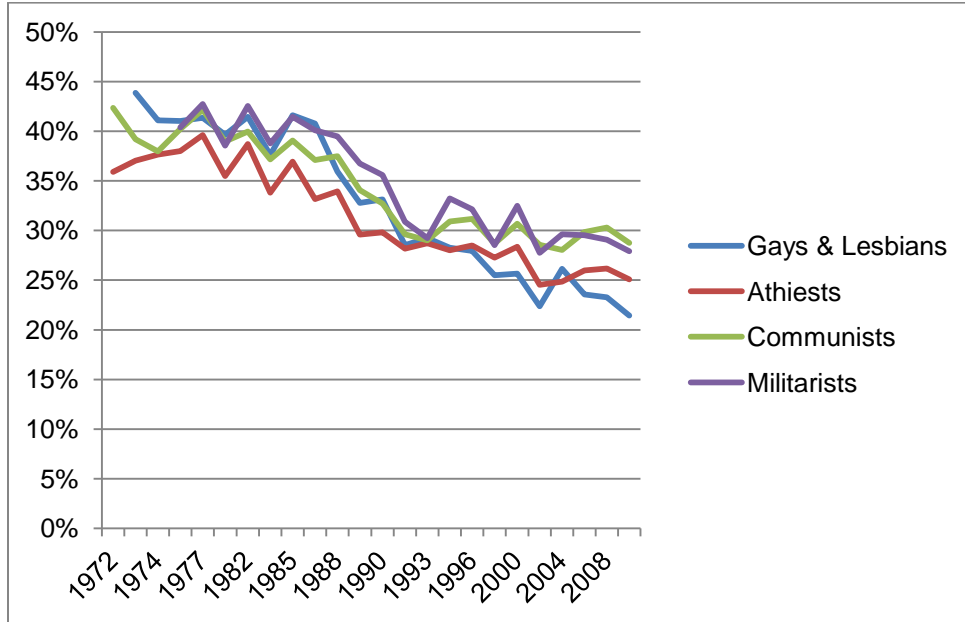
Figure 2.3 Percent in Favor of Removing Books from the Public Library that Were Written by Homosexuals, Atheists, Communists, and Militarists

The question of whether homosexual couples should have the right to marry one another is only available in the 1988, 2004, and 2006 waves of the GSS. In Figure 2.4, tolerance increased because attitudes to allow marriage equality have increased from 12 to 27 percent from 1988 to 2006. Attitudes to not allow marriage equality have decreased from 73 to 51 percent from 1988 to 2006. The number of respondents who are undecided have remained relatively the same from 15 to 14 percent between 1988 and 2006. Overall, favorable attitudes are rising for homosexuals to be afforded civil rights, including the right to speak, teach, have books about homosexuality in public libraries, and to marry someone of the same gender. At this rate, same-gender marriage may be closer to reality as public opinion evolves toward support as tolerance is growing at a faster rate than intolerance.

According to Newport (2012), by 2012, about 50 percent of Americans believe marriage equality should be a law, which is down from 53 percent in 2011. In addition, 48 percent of

Americans felt marriage equality should not be a valid law in 2012, which is up from 45 percent in 2011 (Newport 2012). To retrospectively review back to 2006, 58 percent of Americans opposed marriage equality while 39 percent approved marriage equality (Saad 2006). When this 39 percent is compared to 85 percent of Americans who approve of homosexuals having the right to give a speech in the community and teach in a college or university, then it is reasonable to ask why is there about a 50 percent gap in attitudes toward these civil rights for LGBT people? Why is there opposition for same-gender marriage? Since the opposition of LGBT civil rights is currently sitting at 48 percent, then the LGBT social movement, working to pass a public policy to legalize same-gender marriage has a ways to go in the fight. What explains the diversity in opinions? In other words, who is more likely to support marriage equality?

Although I am not able to explain the changes over time with my data, I speculate the rationale for the decline in opposition is primarily due to the decline in organized religion. From 2010 to 2012, Americans who identified as religious fell from about 83 to 68 percent while about 16 to 32 percent are not religious (The Pew Forum on Religion and Public life 2010, Newport 2012). About a third of Americans claim they seldom or never attend church. Less than 25 percent of Americans attend church two to three times per month. Three-quarters of Americans, who are members of churches, are not showing up at all (Shook 2012). However, I do not think spirituality and religiosity are always comparable. People can be spiritual and not relate to religion.

Perhaps political perspectives play a role in the polarization between the Far Right (extremely conservative) and the Far Left (extremely liberal). I believe it is reasonable to assume independents and moderates are less concerned with social issues. Media has a tendency to exaggerate news coverage of liberal and conservative frameworks of public policies (e.g. DOMA). Furthermore, the trend of rising support for marriage equality may be correlated to the increase of LGBT roles and characters in mainstream television programs. As the public is

subjected to more LGBT realities, then perhaps they are more open to having LGBT friends or speaking to LGBT neighbors. If this is the case, then homosexuality becomes less of an abstract, moral issue and more of a real, critical human rights issue, based off compassion. I also feel old prejudices are dying off slowly through enlightenment and by the elderly passing away. Perhaps females are more tolerant towards LGBT rights because females continue to also face opposition from the Religious Right. Educated individuals have a proclivity to understanding the effects of human rights violations. However, this may pertain to specific studies, such as liberal arts, urban and public affairs, and/or social work. I believe capitalism is deeply entrenched into society so that greedy elites and many bureaucrats dominate minorities, such as LGBT people, for purposes of oppression and wealth.

For example, many business owners or corporate leaders favor Republican fiscal policies because, historically, the majority of America, including the wealthiest, are prioritized over lower to middle-class and minority Americans. The fiscal trickle-down approach affects social programs for minorities, including LGBT people. I assume if people with higher household incomes benefit more from conservative proposals and policies, then people with higher household incomes would adopt conservative views towards homosexuality. However, the possibility of individuals with lower incomes and lower education levels may lead to opposition of same-gender marriage. Therefore, social conservatism and fiscal conservatism may not overlap.

This project is dedicated to providing an analysis into who is more likely to support marriage equality in 2006. The trends show us how far we have come and where we currently are. I cannot explain the significance in attitudes with my data as I am purely speculating. I will try to determine who is more likely to support marriage equality in 2006 (most recent wave of GSS data available for all considered variables). By understanding who is more likely to support marriage equality, the LGBT social movement will have an improved ability to develop tactics for making sociopolitical change (including the ability to impact public policies) on target audiences.

I will examine political views, religiosity, media consumption, LGBT contact exposure, and social demographic controls, such as gender, age, education, and household income. However, first I will provide information from literature on each of my variables.
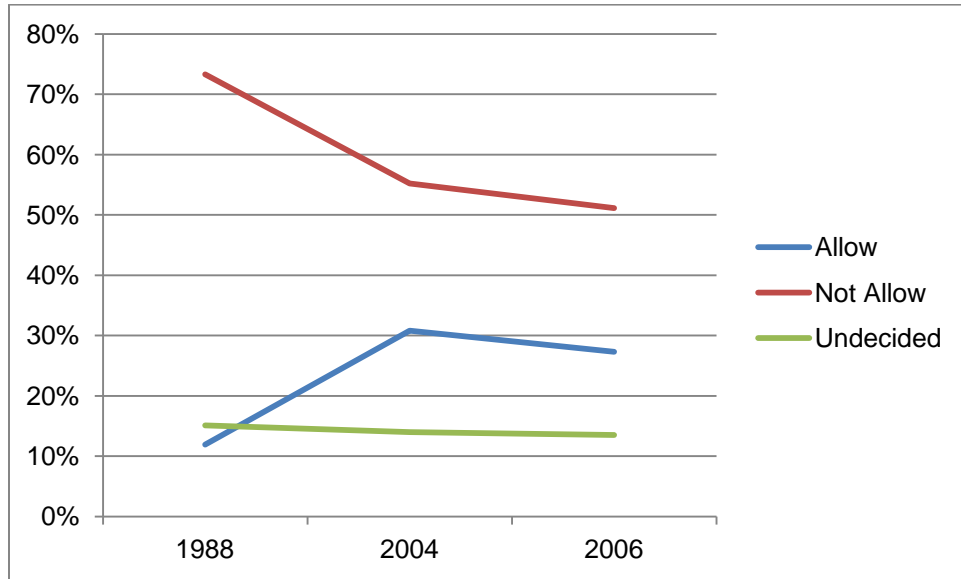
Figure 2.4 Attitudes Toward Same-Sex Marriage

CHAPTER 3

SOURCES OF ATTITUDES TOWARD MARRIAGE EQUALITY

In this chapter, I discuss social forces that shape people's attitudes toward marriage equality. I focus on four factors: religiosity, political views, media consumption, and LGBT contact exposure. I conclude by summarizing the expected relationships between support for marriage equality and the major concepts.

3.1 Religiosity

Shapiro (2012) defines religion as, "Often about who is in and who is out, creating a worldview steeped in us against them." Spirituality rejects this divisiveness and accepts unity. "Religion is often about loyalty to institutions, clergy, and rules," and "Spirituality is about loyalty to justice and compassion," said Shapiro. Religion is centered on a god, but spirituality assists in the make-up of godliness. The two should not work against each other, rather in unity. Shapiro (2012) said, "Religion at its best is spirituality in community." According to The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life (2010), 78.4 percent of Americans were Christians, 4.7 percent were other religions, and 16.1 percent did not claim a religion. According to Newport (2012), 40 percent of Americans classify themselves as very religious, 28 percent as moderately religious, and 32 percent as nonreligious.

How is public opinion affected by religion? Schwartz (2010) argues religiosity is one variable that affects attitudes towards LGBT people. More religious individuals hold negative attitudes against homosexuals and same-gender marriage because religious institutions apply influential discourse and condemn homosexuality when shaping attitudes because of literal translations of religious doctrines and texts rather than symbolic interpretations. This feeds into morally-charged and highly cohesive political congregations and communities, similar to

22

grassroots Super Political Action Committees (PACS). Deeply religious social networks are enmeshed into their congregations and are less tolerant of homosexuality. Sociopolitical perspectives are influenced by the consensus of the congregation (Olson et al. 2006). Johnson and Tamney (1984:183) argue conservative religious groups that comprise the Christian Right support a "Moral Majority" that reinforces traditional and biblical values in hopes of making America a Christian country, despite the Constitutional right of religious freedom. Johnson and Tamney concluded three independent sources for inoculating the Moral Majority: (1) domination of politics with Christianity, (2) persuasive, religious television, and (3) maintaining the status quo through fundamentalist and traditionalist attitudes while resisting change, including a traditional attitude of marriage (Johnson and Tamney 1984).

Morally-charged religious institutions apply influential discourse, based off Biblical beliefs, which shapes attitudes to condemn homosexuals. According to O'Brien (2005), a conflict between church and state exists as evangelicals organize within the anti-gay movement, affecting public opinion and public policy. Courts often implement conservative, Christian values protecting their First Amendment Religious Right to oppress others when all religious and non-religious beliefs should be considered. Conservative religious voters greatly influence public policy making in determining civil rights protections for LGBT human beings (Lax and Phillips 2009). Indirect effects on public policy involve elected officials satisfying interest groups and conservative religious voters, and Religious Right and oppositional elites vote according to anti-gay ideologies. Religious conservatives are over-represented during population shifts, shaping public policy and directly influencing public opinion and the structure of state governments. Conservative religious interest groups dominate inclusive policies for LGBT people (Lax and Phillips 2009).

Reverend Phil Snider's speech on gay rights at the Springfield City Council meeting on August 13, 2012 emphasized that many pastors have used the exact same discourse about condemning LGBT people as pastors used to endorse segregation and slavery of African

23

Americans through sermons and messages to their congregations (Sieczkowski 2012). People who identify as spiritual, however, lean liberally towards acceptance of marriage equality (Coakley 2011). Coakley (2011:112) suggest a "seismic shift" is occurring in churches, a shift from a traditionalist approach to viewing homosexuality as a "disorder" or sin to a more liberal perspective of inclusiveness for gays and lesbians. Those who are liberal and spiritual argue for acceptance of same-gender relationships, based upon equal "rights" or "the pursuit of happiness" (Coakley 2011:112).

According to The *Huffington Post* (2012) slideshow presentation, marriage equality extends beyond politics and into spiritual and religious livelihoods. The spiritual perspective of marriage relies on inclusivity rather than segregation because sexual orientation should be irrelevant. Those who are spiritual support marriage equality and use descriptive terms like "God's grace," "commitment," "unity," "mutuality," "trust," and "fidelity" when speaking about their same-gender love. According to *NPR*, Hagerty (2012) argues there is a split between liberal Christians and conservative Christians regarding attitudes toward marriage equality; however, they read the same Bible. Liberal Christians feel Jesus would celebrate committed, loving same-gender couples. Conservative Christians feel this type of tolerance towards same-sex marriage is "non-Biblical," "sinful," "unnatural," and "detestable" (Hagerty 2012; Cooley 2009). Battles about homosexuality are fought in religious institutions; however, all religions are not unified in opposition to LGBT rights, such as marriage equality (Olson et al. 2006).

Evangelical Protestants have mostly conservative opinions about homosexuality (Olson et al. 2006). Evangelicals vote conservatively for the most part. Evangelical Protestants agree that religion should have a place in public debates in politics and other public matters (Ellison, Acevedo, and Ramos-Wada 2011). Religious and sociopolitical liberalism and conservatism certainly differ. According to Stellway (2005), conservative Christians view God as a supernatural power who is perfect in behavior and wisdom. Knowledge and science are considered foolish, and man's nature is sinful. Divine forgiveness is needed for overcoming sin

and failure. Liberal Christians focus on God's natural ability to love, and integrity as well as creative potential are emphasized rather than man's shortcomings. Christian liberalism is positively associated with sociopolitical change and with political party preference (Stellway 2005). Tradition is challenged when the needs of people are not being met. Stellway (2005) found that Christian conservatism and sociopolitical status are connected to conservative political preference, and Christian liberalism and sociopolitical status are connected to liberal political preference. There are several Christian organizations and denominations that proudly support LGBT members, as well as support the ordination of LGBT to positions of leadership (O'Brien 2005). Some examples of affirming churches include Unitarian Universalist, Epicscopal, United Church of Christ, United Methodist Church, Lutheran, non-denominational, and others (Gay and Christian Resources 2012).

Many LGBT people report having strong religious faith among "open and affirming congregations" (Oswald and Lazarevic 2011:375). Cherlin (2004) argues that the institution of marriage has transitioned twice within the Twentieth century involving more complex cohabitating unions and the emergence of marriage equality. First, personal choice and self-development expanded. Second, the symbolic significance became more prestigious and marked personal achievement. Families are evolving through re-marriage and same-gender marriage, distancing from the traditional institution or Biblical definition of marriage. Sullivan-Blum (2006) suggests that Christian denominations in America debate the legitimacy and repudiation of marriage by using naturalizing discourse. Liberals and evangelicals compete for the social power when debating same-gender marriage. LGBT Christians refrain from the competing discourses as they feel their sexual orientation is beyond their control, and others embrace a sense of personal agency.

Ellison et al. (2011) suggest that the impact of liberalization on social attitudes of Catholics over the past twenty years is attributed to spiritual truth and social policy as they emphasize gracious communities over moral and sexual deportment. Eldridge et al. (2008)

suggest Biblical beliefs are correlated with a negative relationship among literalism and homophobia, and other significant variables are found more influential than conservative religious beliefs when various and dynamic social forces collide. Olson et al. (2006) state that one of the most significant moral issues camouflaged at the polls is same-gender marriage.

A considerable amount of literature examines religion and public opinion regarding LGBT people. Religiosity is measured by religious affiliations, beliefs, and behaviors when researching tolerance toward traditional morality and homosexuality. Americans who confess concern for moral issues generally oppose LGBT rights. Jews and liberal Protestants typically hold liberal or secular attitudes. Catholics and moderate Protestants are generally tolerant (Olson et al. 2006). Protestants typically vote and participate according to liberal views (Ellison et al. 2011).

According to Whitehead (2010), attribution theory proposes that by attributing other's behaviors pertaining to the outcome of internal and external factors helps to control and predict their environment. Therefore, people may develop condemning attitudes towards LGBT people based upon the application of oppositional Biblical scriptures about homosexuality or sermons from God-fearing pastors. Behavior is perceived as either controllable or uncontrollable. People who have controllable behaviors exhibit personal responsibility. Individuals apply these attributed responsibilities to a particular individual or group and perceive them more negatively by stigmatization. Therefore, for people who believe homosexuality is a choice, then individuals assume that LGBT people are in control and accept responsibility to the orientation of choice. These people who feel homosexuality is a choice are less likely to support same-sex unions. Individuals who believe homosexuality is derived from natural or biological forces tend to support LGBT rights or same-sex unions. Attribution theory is supported by previous studies investigating attitudes toward homosexuality. Haider-Markel and Joslyn (2008) found that the strongest predictor of support towards same-sex unions is "attributions" of the cause for sexual orientation (Whitehead 2010:65). Whitehead (2010) found that controllability is correlated with

negative attitudes toward LGBT people and lack support for LGBT rights. The researcher also found that attribution of beliefs was the strongest predictor of attitudes towards LGBT people and rights.

Church attendance and religious participation expose people to religious institutions. Evangelicals commit themselves to Biblical authority and their faith through a theological connection of Bible reading, Bible Studies, prayer, and church attendance (Munroe 2008). Munroe (2008) suggest that moral values acquired through religious authority and text contribute to political and religious attitudes that oppose same-sex marriage. Also, conservative Protestants have higher levels of church attendance than other religious groups. Since Evangelicals have the proclivity to attend church more often than other denominations of Christians, then they are more likely to be exposed to other church members and/or pastors, which increase the chances of internalizing values of Evangelical subcultures. Religiosity is a key component in the development of political attitudes while respecting partisan preferences towards social and economic issues (Munroe 2008).

According to Whitehead (2010), religious behavior was measured by attendance, which contributed to the negative relationship between Protestants and marriage equality. Church attendance leads to greater exposure to institutional culture and internalization or perhaps they attend more because they agree with the message. By testing religious beliefs, behavior, and affiliation while controlling for attribution of beliefs presented a significant role in understanding attitudes toward marriage equality and civil unions (Whitehead 2010). Whitehead (2010) argues that conservative Christians who frequently attend church and take the Bible literally have angry images of God as well as indulge in the mostly condemning views of homosexuality. Religious affiliation affects opinion towards marriage equality. Non-Protestants have a proclivity to support same-gender unions and marriage equality. Evangelical Protestants are more likely to strongly oppose marriage equality and same-gender unions. Evangelical Protestants elicit unfavorable

opinions because of their views toward the cause of homosexuality as well as reinforced

religious traditions (Whitehead 2010).

Conservative attitudes are correlated with frequency of attendance (Schwartz 2010).

Attendance at religious services is a powerful predictor of attitudes about homosexuality (Olson

et al. (2006). Schwartz (2010) argues that the second strongest predictor for support of LGBT

adoption and marriage equality was attendance at religious services as people who rarely or

never participate in religious services had more positive attitudes than individuals who

consistently attend religious services. Regular participation in religious services is correlated

with affirming acceptance for homosexuals rather than same-gender marriage (Schwartz 2010).

Ellison et al. (2011) suggest religious affiliation, practice, and beliefs affect attitudes

toward same-gender marriage and other public policies. They argue that those who attend

Mass less typically care more about spiritual practices than rigid, orthodox Catholic doctrines.

Also, conservative Protestant denominations worry that the institution of marriage is at risk

because of the "gay agenda," liberalism, and secularism and try to reinforce traditional family

norms and values (Ellison et al. 2011:39). Todd (2010) concluded that frequency of religious

participation and attendance affect social justice attainment. Associations were strong between

the frequency of religious participation and social capital bonding within liberal church

congregations (Todd 2010). Those who attend church weekly and Literalists who participate in

Bible studies, typically reading the Bible literally, are less likely to support marriage equality

(Dutwin N.d.) Therefore, those who attend church services regularly and participate in religious

activities have a propensity to oppose marriage equality. Also, those who attend church

regularly and integrate politics with religion typically oppose marriage equality (Ellison et al.

2011).

In summary, individuals who are spiritual are more likely to support marriage equality as

religious people generally oppose marriage equality. However, Protestants and non-Protestants

are more accepting of LGBT rights than evangelical Protestants. Attribution of beliefs can

28

negatively affect attitudes towards LGBT people and LGBT rights when behaviors are perceived as controllable. This pertains to assuming responsibility of choosing homosexuality. Generally, church attendance and participation in religious activities are also correlated to negative attitudes towards LGBT people and same-gender marriage.

<div align="center">3.2 Political Views</div>

There are differences, sometimes polarizing, between political parties on the issue of marriage equality because Democrats tend to support LGBT rights, including marriage equality, and Republicans generally oppose LGBT rights, including marriage equality. Each political party is influenced by liberal and conservative political ideologies and platforms as well as religious and spiritual views. People internalize political positions of parties or gravitate to parties with same positions because of common goals, shared interests, and political ideologies. Political party and voting behavior are indicators of sociopolitical liberalism and conservatism.

Kukathas (1987) refers to ideology as a system of symbols and signs in a world of conflicting ideas through an asymmetrical distribution of power and resources. Ideology is composed of two attributes: adoption of self-reflection and preservation of critical concepts, which are associated with relativism and hermeneutic circles. Political ideologies contain different perspectives in support for equality. Values, beliefs, attitudes, and life experiences contribute to discourse pertaining to same-gender marriage and are sociologically rooted in religious and political ideologies. The continuation of liberalization of attitudes toward marriage equality is likely attributed to mainstream cultural construction (Hart-Brinson 2010). Support for marriage equality is ideologically plausible in terms of "egalitarian gender relations, tolerance for homosexuality, a non-procreative and companionate definition of "marriage," and a pluralistic understanding of "family" (Hart-Brinson 2010:34). Conservative ideologies oppose marriage equality to preserve traditional gender roles of patriarchy and submissive wives, dominant authoritarian control over LGBT people, and protect heterosexist families from homosexual influence.

<div align="center">29</div>

Kukathas (1987) considers liberalism as a single tradition, composed of four shared elements: individualism, egalitarianism, universalism, and meliorism. First, an individualist philosophy asserts moral primacy against social collectivity. Second, an egalitarian philosophy affirms equal moral status to all people. Third, a universalist philosophy affords moral unity for humankind as a whole with important historical associations. Last, a meliorist philosophy embraces corrigibility and improvability of all political organizations and social institutions. Kukathas (1987) classifies conservatism as rationalism; however, a strand of rationalism is also found in liberalism. Nonetheless, conservatism proclaims skepticism of abstract individuality and generic humanity, in which individualism is a cultural accomplishment rather than a natural fact. Conservative philosophy evokes authoritarianism, loyalty, hierarchy, and order; compared to liberal terms of liberty, equality, and mankind.

The 2012 American National Election Studies (ANES) Time-Series Studies of political identification (1972 to 2004) described the relationship between ideological orientation and party identification as significant from 1972 to 2004 (Political Types 2012). Political ideology is not the same as party affiliation because each party contains supporters from various ideologies, from liberal to conservative. However, there are commonalities between party identification and political ideology. Seventy-five percent of those who affiliate with Republican views also lean conservatively. In comparison, those who consider themselves Democrats lean liberally between 40 to 45 percent. Interestingly, the relationship between ideological orientation and party affiliation is stronger for Republicans. Last, Independents have a propensity to mirror national norms, especially in 2004, and they vote according to proportions: liberal (25 percent), moderate (45 percent) and conservative (30 percent) (Political Types 2012). This mirroring and socialization process is influenced by media exposure.

The 2012 ANES surveyed participants who identified from liberal-conservative orientation, based on seven categories: extremely liberal, liberal, slightly liberal, moderate or middle of the road (independent), slightly conservative, conservative, and extremely

conservative. Some indicated they "don't know". They found four intriguing trends. First, those

who identify as "liberal" have held steady at about 15 to 20 percent. Second, about 30 to 35

percent classify themselves as "conservative" since the mid-1980s. Third, moderates have

consistently remained at 25 percent from 1984. Last, the number of respondents that said "don't

know" have declined from 1990 (33 percent) to 2004 (20 percent) (Political Types 2012). This

finding is comparable to the 15 percent of 2006 GSS respondents who "don't know" with same-

gender marriage. Independent voters are not typically concerned with many social issues, such

as LGBT equality.

Lax and Phillips (2009) suggest sub-national battles comprise a political mosaic in

regards to gay rights in legislatures, courtrooms, and Democratic campaigns. Both liberal and

conservative voter ideologies impact public policy. Conservative religious voters have achieved

blocking popular laws that extended civil rights protections to gays and lesbians (Lax and

Phillips 2009). According to Gaines and Garand (2010), Democrats tend to be more supportive

of same-gender marriage than Republicans due to ideological differences within the spectrum of

social issues people face, especially regarding traditional values. According to *The New York

Times*, Cooper (2012) indicates that for the first time in the history of the United States of

America, The Democratic Platform supported same-sex marriage and stated, "We support

marriage equality and support the movement to secure equal treatment under law for same-sex

couples." The Republican Platform supports the passage of constitutional amendments that ban

abortion and define marriage as "the union of one man and one woman." Both President Barack

Obama and Vice President Joe Biden have publicly endorsed marriage equality in 2012 while

stating LGBT people should not be banned from being afforded equal rights (Henry 2012).

Avery et al. (2007) argue that heterosexual candidates are more likely to be elected

than LGBT candidates. Decisions of voting populations sometimes result in restrictions for

LGBT candidates; therefore, LGBT issues are not handled with urgency. For instance, 2012

Republican Presidential Candidate, Mitt Romney, and running mate, Paul Ryan, endorse values

that support traditional marriage between a man and a woman and oppose same-gender marriage. Romney and Ryan elaborate on marriage as "more than a personally rewarding social custom. It is also critical for the well-being of a civilization. That is why it is so important to preserve traditional marriage" (Romney for President N.d.). This indicates that LGBT people do not deserve well-being as a part of civilization. This presents a core value of Republicans, which segregates and marginalizes LGBT people from the rest of society.

Politics of marriage, family, and sexuality have grown divisive within the last 30 years due to the mobilization of conservative and fundamentalist Evangelicals organizations. Older liberals and younger religious conservatives have the propensity to find middle-ground when discussing political and religious ideologies (Hart-Brinson 2010). As older generations die, they are replaced by younger adults with more liberal views due to cultural integration, media exposure and consumption, and diverse socialization. In regards to marriage equality, older conservatives exhibit negative stigmas toward homosexuality due to prejudiced discourse, gender roles, and moral values from religion (Hart-Brinson 2010).

Political ideology and educational attainment are both influenced by social and parental interaction between generational cohorts and other variables. Furthermore, political and emotional arguments about homosexuality, among students and parents as well as religious and non-religious individuals, involve cultural understandings of marriage in a positive manner, sharing a companionate understanding of marriage. This dynamic understanding is comprised of pragmatic centrism, individualization and independence, and cohabitation. The ideology of cultural common sense has increasingly dominated discourse regarding marriage. Therefore, same-gender marriage fits within this framework, and there is nothing to trigger hostile attitudes. This multi-dimensional perspective of marriage allows liberation from strict procreative, rigid religion, traditional family, and gender-differentiated norms and ideologies (Hart-Brinson 2010).

Public opinion directly affects public policy while minorities are granted less protections or rights through electoral processes. Liberal political views of voters generally support equal

rights for LGBT persons, including marriage equality (Schwartz 2010). Legalizing same-gender marriage is one of many public policies important to the LGBT social movement because families are directly impacted everyday (Lax and Phillips 2009). Liberals support LGBT civil rights, including marriage equality, and liberals generally consider those who oppose equality as bigoted or intolerant. Same-gender marriage is enmeshed in political rhetoric and lies at the core of a civil rights and cultural war. LGBT couples are denied 1,138 benefits, rights, and protections through the federally recognized institution of marriage because DOMA defines "marriage as only a legal union between one man and one woman, same-sex couples - even if legally married in their state - will not be considered spouses for purposes of federal law" (HRC 2012). This traditional definition of marriage continues to be reinforced by conservatives and the Religious Right. Conservatives typically label liberals who promote equality as secular or demoralized.

In summary, liberal and Democratic perspectives generally support marriage equality while conservative and Republican perspectives oppose marriage equality. I expect to see this variation within my study.

3.3 Media Consumption

Trends of LGBT exposure in the media have evolved within the last 50 years. Liebler, Schwartz, and Harper (2009) explain that LGBT people were ignored in print media from World War II to the early 1990s. Cooley (2009) references the study of Levina, Waldo, and Fitgerald (2000), which found visual media, in particular television, affected heterosexuals' attitudes toward LGBT people. People have more positive attitudes toward LGBT people when watching a television program with an LGBT character than individuals who did not. Exposure through media can improve attitudes towards LGBT people (Cooley 2009).

Li and Liu (2010:74) reflect on Clark's (1969) proposed "four stages of media representation for minority groups: non-representation, ridicule, regulation, and respect." They argue humanity has surpassed non-representation and ridicule and progressed into regulation

33

and respect within mainstream media, which reflects a change of culture in regards to perceptions of homosexuality. Some previous literature found prejudiced media, and unbalanced coverage have decreased within the last 50 years while prejudices against LGBT people sustained. However, marginalization within media coverage still continues today. According to Liebler et al. (2009), same-gender marriage is a complicated and controversial concern for journalists, which makes framing difficult, because of the sensitivity to various interest groups and diverse perspectives among groups and communities. Framing research has "neglected the relationship between media frames and broader issues of political and social power" (Liebler et al. 2009:57). Political goals are achieved depending upon the rhetoric of politicians from all sides. Biased coverage can be the result of high dependence of government official sources rather than factual evidence (Li and Liu 2010).

Farhi (2012) suggests that charges of media bias continue, but there is little to no evidence to support this notion over the past few decades. The Pew Research Center found in 2011 that 77 percent of respondents claimed to favor one-sided liberal or conservative views, compared to 53 percent in 1985. A "meta-analysis" of bias studies was conducted by David D'Alessio (2012). He found that conservatives actually favored the balanced approach of news reporting from networks that were considered "left-leaning" or liberal. He analyzed 99 studies of presidential election coverage from 1948 to 2008. Trends of bias tend to stay toward the middle because that is where most people fall (Farhi 2012). Furthermore, the illusion of increased media bias stems from more overtly partisan media networks available on the internet. However, left-leaning internet sites, such as Huffington Post and Daily Kos, are readily available just as more conservative organizations, such as Free Republic and Drudge (Farhi 2012). In addition, intolerant workplace environments prevented LGBT journalists from disclosing LGBT issues due to fear of discrimination until the outbreak of the Human Immunodeficiency Virus Infection / Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome (HIV/AIDS) crisis (Liebler et al. 2009).

Liebler et al. (2009) references Barnhurst's (2009) longitudinal study, which revealed National Public Radio's (NPR) has increasingly covered LGBT issues from 1992 to 2000; however, stories became shorter in length. As society evolves, television programs evolve with socially acceptable norms and interests that feed into the public. In 1998, the Emmy Award-winning series, *Will & Grace,* broke through social barriers and presented gay men as acceptable, dignified, funny, and humanistic. *Will & Grace* was one of the longest-running shows on network television, centered on a gay lead character in Manhattan, who lives with his heterosexual, female best friend who is Jewish (Common Sense Media, Inc 2012). According to *NBC Universal* (2009), between 2004 and 2005, *Will & Grace* gained 10 million viewers between adults of ages 18 to 49. This series was nominated for 73 Emmys, 27 Golden Globes, 17 SAG Awards, and 12 People's Choice Awards. In 2005, *Will & Grace* was tied as one of the most-nominated series and won the most number of Emmy nominations in one year with 15. *Will & Grace* was honored with eight GLAAD Media Awards as well as a list of other awards. Shows, such as *Ellen, Glee, Modern Family,* and *Normal Life* have sprouted and thrived since 2003. Ellen is also a multi-Emmy winner and currently in its 10th season. Therefore, television programs that include LGBT characters and hosts are popular among viewers.

Over the past decade, Americans have seen an increase in television shows that include LGBT characters. Television shows with LGBT characters improve attitudes toward LGBT people. Therefore, I want to know if the number of television hours consumed affect attitudes toward marriage equality. I also want to verify if political ideology of liberalism and conservatism are significant when examining the number of television hours.

The media plays a role in the development of attitudes. According to the Pew Research Center (2011), television consistently remains the most used source for both national and international news. However, the growth of the internet is gaining on television consumption for news, especially for younger people. The image of marriage and family affect television viewers' (of all ages) conceptions. Television can cultivate skewed opinions among heavy viewers due to

televised portrayals of different types of characters. Cultivation theory suggests that some people who consume television programs believe that real life is accurately depicted, which could lead to the formation of attitudes toward LGBT people and marriage equality, based off how LGBT people are presented on television (Netzley 2007).

Netzley (2007) found that only 7.5 percent of characters were gay in both network and cable television. More negative than positive statements were made towards gay people on television shows. Same-gender marriage was mentioned infrequently. Half of the gay characters were in romantic relationships, and gay characters spoke more positively about romantic relationships and sex. Furthermore, heavy television viewers exhibited less positive attitudes towards LGBT people and marriage equality, but heavy cable viewers held more positive attitudes toward LGBT people than heavy network viewers.

According to Purcell, Rainie, Mitchell, Rosenstiel, and Olmstead (2010), 46 percent of Americans receive their news from four to six ways. Online and offline sources of news are consumed by 59% of Americans. Internet is the third most popular news source, behind both local and national television. Fifty-one percent of social networking (e.g. Facebook) consumers receive their news online. Seventy-eight percent of Americans receive news by local TV, and 73 percent get their news from a cable station or national network, such as Fox News and CNN (Purcell et al. 2010).

On average, Americans spend 57 minutes each day consuming traditional media (TV, radio, newspapers) in 2012, which is about the same as in 2003 and is slightly higher than in 1996. An additional 13 minutes is spent getting news online (Waldman 2011). Of the Americans consuming news, 78 percent of adults watch television in 2010 (Pew Internet 2010). In addition, 73 percent watch national networks/cable, 61 percent are online, 54 percent listen to radio, 50 percent read local newspapers, and 17 percent read national newspapers (Waldman 2011). In 2011, television was the most popular source consumed for local news. On an average day, 78 percent of Americans received their local news on television – more than from

the internet, newspapers, or the radio. Viewership rates have declined over time as well as consumption rates for every other non-internet news sources; however, these sources remain higher than all other news sources (Waldman 2011). According to Pew Internet (2010), television viewing has remained stable over time.

According to Newman and Smith (2007), 45 percent of American adults reported watching a Christian television program, and 35 percent read monthly Christian periodicals. As mentioned previously, the Christian Right supports a "Moral Majority," responsible for instilling traditional and biblical values through persuasive, religious television (Johnson and Tamney 1984). The media is used by priests and pastors to influence communities to engage laypersons with religious rhetoric to engage and mobilize in a political manner (Ellison et al. 2011). Newman and Smith (2007:846) claim that "Both religion and mass media are politically important in the United States." The authors suggest that religious media, such as national television, press outlets, radio, and localized and online sources, captivate a large audience in America. Religious conservatives are more effective at presenting their message in the media than liberal Protestants (Anonymous 2000). The Barna Group (2005) confirmed that 46 percent of American adults listen to religious radio, and 23 percent choose, an estimated 17 million people, not to attend church services (Newman and Smith 2007). Religious media shapes political behavior in American society (Newman and Smith 2007). Newman and Smith (2007) conclude that about a quarter of the public report having relied on religious media when deciding who to vote for in 2000. When controlling for many religious and political variables, religious media users claims to have significantly felt closer to conservative George W. Bush and Pat Buchanan and distant from the liberal Al Gore, and were more likely to vote for Republican House candidates and George W. Bush.

Over time, the media has propagated negative stereotypes. These negative stereotypes have been induced by lack of information and education, causing negative attitudes (Cooley 2009). Media coverage of heteronormativity dominates over homosexual-inclusive stories.

Liebler et al. (2009:654) describe the "heteronormative" definition of marriage as hegemonic discourse and practice of heterosexuals constituting the compulsory and natural norms while claiming homosexuality as negative and binary. Heteronormative views dominate the polls and culture wars. Politics of sexuality in America is deep-rooted in animosity, prejudice, and social movements, which is reinforced by traditional gender roles and sexism.

The American Family Association (AFA) encourages American culture to refrain from endorsing same-gender marriage and solely support traditional marriage, and the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) is an advocacy group studying and lobbying for civil equality. Civil equality refers to granting to same-gender couples the same legal protections that heterosexual couples enjoy (Lannutti and Lachlan 2008). Liebler et al. (2009) found that both the AFA and HRC received thorough media coverage in 2004 and 2005, and they both are considered effective agenda builders. The AFA's frames reinforced heteronormative views of marriage. HRC did not spend much time on defining same-gender marriage, but they focused on neglect of affording civil rights to other tax-paying citizens (Liebler et al. 2009). Two organizations can diligently work towards two completely separate outcomes with media coverage, such as defending traditional marriage versus marriage equality.

According to Pew Internet (2010), news is pervasive, personal, and participatory for audiences as it is a social experience. Avery et al. (2007) argue that Americans are more likely to be concerned with legalities for LGBT people because of the prevalence of the subject in the media and in politics. American public opinion has shifted in support of civil unions, same-gender marriage, and other legal recognitions for same-gender couples. Schwartz (2010) states that media campaigns are used to explain the value of marriage for LGBT people with adopted children since these families face economic, legal, and social inequality, especially without the right to marry. Media campaigns are valuable when ballot initiatives propose banning same-gender marriage. Examining rationale for support and opposition to LGBT adopting children and

same-gender marriage, such as political ideology and religiosity, are important when designing media campaigns to raise support for such legalities.

In comparison, organizations such as Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD) and Boston College Media Research and Action Project (MRAP) work to enhance the effectiveness of presenting balanced stories of social change through mass media. GLAAD promotes culture-changing stories of LGBT individuals so that millions are moved and gain acceptance of LGBT people and their equal rights through newspapers, television, movies, radio, magazines, and blogs. GLAAD aims at transforming attitudes that create change through providing media resources and messages of advocacy against discrimination and homophobia. GLAAD empowers grassroots organizations and the LGBT social movement by increasing visibility of LGBT communities, LGBT leaders, and advocacy groups by changing hearts and minds in the attempt to secure full equality. MRAP collaborates with grassroots organizations in efforts to change negative stereotypes of communities. MRAP researches how the media influences public opinion and influences legislation. The media affects social change, and marginalized communities generally lack sufficient resources to overcome obstacles.

According to Hester and Gibson (2007), Lippmann (1922) proposes that a person's cognitive view of the world is determined by news media that serves as a window to this vast world. Researchers must take media effects and patterns into account when studying sociopolitical behavior, especially agenda-setting methodology incorporated into controversial public issues within national and local news media (Hester and Gibson 2007). Hester and Gibson found differences between agendas and coverage of national and local media. Dependent upon whether there are proposed state-wide or national amendments of same-gender marriage on the ballot, agenda-setting effects differ at the local and/or national level.

Li and Liu (2010) argue that the media play a significant role in shaping public opinion about marriage equality. Media coverage of marriage equality influences the public and public policy by discourse from community leaders and politicians, in particular, newspapers. National

news coverage assists in setting public agendas and exposes discussion on television and the internet. Media frames controversial issues from different perspectives, affecting discourse that guides how people think, reflect, understand, and learn. Nevertheless, homosexuals are more visible to more people. Debates continue over conflicting views of marriage equality, but fair and balanced coverage is necessary for credible media coverage. During the past two decades, the media augmented news about homosexuality while public opinion has gradually changed more favorably towards LGBT people (Li and Liu 2010). Interestingly, media was more effective than face-to-face contact for males in regards to having a more positive attitude towards LGBT people (Cooley 2009).

In summary, television is the predominantly used news source in America. Heteronormative domination is lessening as television programming and media coverage increase the coverage of LGBT people and stories. Religious television is consumed by 45 percent of American Adults, supporting a "Moral Majority" by the Christian Right. The Christian Right opposes LGBT rights, especially same-gender marriage. Furthermore, an increase in LGBT characters in the media as well as additional resources are growing for transforming attitudes toward LGBT people. Since media has the ability to impact people's attitudes, then examining the level of television consumption and types of news sources are important to consider. I am curious if one news source is more influential than others.

<div align="center">3.4 LGBT Contact Exposure</div>

3.4.1 In General

According to Lee, McCauley, Moghaddam, and Worchel (2004), Contact theory suggests that people develop more positive opinions when having regular contact while also experiencing favorable interactions with gays and lesbians and other groups, including other ethnicities, races, and other minority groups. Social contact can occur casually or formally in an occupation, residential neighborhood, recreational activity, religious organization or church, civic event, or political arena (Cooley 2009). Opposing viewpoints regarding same-gender marriage

are framed around the consideration of homosexuality as immoral versus believing in equal rights for LGBT people. Opposing discourse and attitudes are influenced by less personal contact with LGBT people (Hart-Brinson 2010). Attitudes toward marriage equality are affected by social networks, including contact and exposure with LGBT people, as well as the mass media (Hart-Brinson 2010). In addition, individuals who have regular contact with same-gender couples are more likely to develop tolerant attitudes for marriage equality (Gaines and Garand 2010). The reason for this relies on the social phenomenon of breaking down negative stereotypes and prejudices while building relationships as equals. Cooley (2009:47) quotes Stevens (1984), "Ignorance promotes prejudice." Basically, personal acquaintances overcome the social isolation from a particular group of people.

Overby and Barth (2002) state that heterosexuals who are well educated, politically liberal, female, and young tend to report more interpersonal contact; there is reciprocity between contact experiences and attitudes. Contact with LGBT human beings may be considered dependent upon: (1) a predisposition for tolerance, and (2) interaction opportunities with homosexuals, such as demographic environments. LGBT people are more likely to risk disclosing their sexual orientation to heterosexual people when expecting a positive response. Lee et al. (2004), also describe three major variables that have been referenced repeatedly over time as crucial determinants: 1) The status of equality or inequality among the different groups of people in contact, 2) Their competitive or cooperative interdependence while pursuing common goals, and 3) The absence or presence of social norms favoring intergroup contact. Intergroup hostility is either diminished or exacerbated depending upon the values of these variables in various situations, especially among diverse demographics. Lee et al. (2004) quoted Williams (1964), "Out of hundreds of tabulations, there emerges the major finding that in all the surveys in all communities and for all groups, majority and minorities, the greater the frequency of interaction, the lower the prevalence of ethnic prejudice" (Lee et al. 2004:75). In comparison, people may have less supportive attitudes toward LGBT people and LGBT rights

when exposed to them in the workplace or in a neighborhood due to the perception of a competitive conflict. My paper will examine if these types of attitudes exist toward LGBT people.

Consistent in previous literature, attitudes toward marriage equality were examined by three dimensions: (1) cultural endorsement, (2) personal contact exposure, and (3) civil equality (Lannutti and Lachlan 2008). Lannutti and Lachlan's (2008) study incorporate these three dimensions, but expanded on variables of cultural endorsement and public opinion. Interpersonal contact with LGBT persons is correlated to the comfortableness with homosexuality, and interpersonal relationships vary with contact with homosexuals. Age and social status are the biggest influential factors of connecting and interacting with best friends, school acquaintances, and siblings (Eldridge et al. 2008). Overby and Barth (2002) argue based upon Devine (1995), there are nine conditions necessary for contact exposure to have benefits, leading to tolerance: (1) interaction among participants inside and outside a contact situation are of equal status, (2) cooperatively interacting without competition, (3) institutional authority figure (e.g. parent, teacher) shows support, (4) increased levels of deep intimacy, (5) positive outcomes produced by interaction, (6) participants with similar competence interact, (7) non-stereotypical minorities participate, (8) participants share beliefs and values, and (9) contact with members of various minorities and diverse settings. Cooley (2009:16) considers an additional condition in which change must be supported by a community ("community" meaning neighborhood, school, workplace, and village).

Hodson, Harry, and Mitchell (2009) found individuals who are considered right-wing authoritarians or persons who identify as heterosexuals exhibited significantly fewer negative attitudes toward gay and lesbian human beings with increased contact, positive contact, and direct and indirect friendships. High authoritarians are usually prejudiced towards homosexuals; however, the researchers revealed that rigid and conservative persons with strong prejudices against homosexuals failed to avoid friendships with gays and lesbians, which suggests forming friendships improves attitudes. Avery et al. (2007) describe authoritarianism as a critical

component in affecting attitudes toward LGBT persons. Authoritarians use social dominance to

retain traditional social order. According to Avery et al. (2007), individuals with the most

negative attitudes toward gays and lesbians have proclivity to be politically conservative and

most likely have limited to no contact exposure with gays and lesbians. Values are derived from

parents, family, friends, religion, neighborhood, and socioeconomic groups. Members of these

ingroups use the term "we" when identifying familiarity or common relatedness (Cooley 2009).

Interaction with LGBT people at school, at work, in neighborhood, and in family can enhance

knowledge and a connection with LGBT people, which decreases negative attitudes because

heterosexist individuals would not voluntarily choose to interact with homosexuals (Cooley

2009).

In summary, contact exposure in general can have a positive effect on attitudes toward

LGBT people, dependent upon various conditions and demographic variables. It will be

interesting to examine attitudes toward marriage equality among those who have general

contact with LGBT acquaintances in comparison to those who have contact at the workplace, in

family, in neighborhood, and in voluntary organizations.

3.4.2 In the Workplace

Interaction with LGBT people at work can decrease negative attitudes (Cooley 2009).

Professional trainings that involve personal contact and media develop the effectiveness of

diversity trainings, resulting in the change of dynamics in medical, corporate, retail, and legal

workplaces. This provides more affirming environments for LGBT people in the workplace

(Cooley 2009). As negative attitudes toward LGBT people decline, one can expect negative

attitudes toward marriage equality would also diminish. Novak, Feyes, and Christensen (2011)

argue that employment elicits opportunities to form new relationships with coworkers through

interaction. This could apply to groups of people, in which someone would not typically

associate with in daily life, such as LGBT people. Culture of a workplace has the potential to

promote social integration, which could overcome segregation. Employment policies that

prohibit discrimination and affirm acceptance, diversity, and inclusivity enable an environment for co-workers to accept LGBT peers.

Redmond and Barkauskas (2012) claim group interaction within the workplace is essential in order to prevent or minimize group conflict. Conflict can derive from differing priorities, competition, and needs. Competition can be threatening if both groups are competing versus two groups working together towards a common goal. An example of competing groups could include right-wing authoritarians versus liberal homosexuals. Organizations can suffer if individuals are alienated. Therefore, organizations that promote engagement and inclusivity can reduce stereotypes, discrimination, and prejudices. Without the federal protection of non-discrimination in the workplace for LGBT people, it is difficult for LGBT people to be open about their sexuality to co-workers and supervisors without the fear of wrongful termination or discrimination. Until LGBT people are federally protected, the likelihood of increased contact exposure remains low.

In summary, interaction with LGBT people in the workplace can decrease negative opinions and stereotypes. Therefore, interaction within the workplace may affect attitudes towards marriage equality, particularly, decrease the attitudes supporting a heterosexist idea of marriage.

3.4.3 In Family

The most common type of question regarding contact exposure relates to whether or not respondents have any friends, family members, or acquaintances whom they know are gay (Overby and Barth 2002). Therefore, exploring contact exposure with LGBT people is important in determining tolerance towards same-gender marriage. Interaction with LGBT people in family can cultivate relationships and decrease negative attitudes toward homosexuals (Cooley 2009). A family provides food, shelter, love, attention, and gifts. These rewards ensure love and loyalty to parents (Cooley 2009). Therefore, if a parent is lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender, then it is likely that loyalty remains constant. This would increase supportive attitudes rather than

44

unsupportive attitudes towards LGBT people and LGBT attitudes (Cooley 2009). In contrast, a pre-teenager or teenager may resent his or her LGBT parent, depending upon treatment from peers at school, at church, in family, or some other type of organization.

Muse, Baunach, and Burgess (2003) found that negative attitudes toward LGBT people decrease when having a close friend or family member who is LGBT, even more than when having a distant friend or coworker who is LGBT. Oswald and Lazarevic (2011) argue that lesbians are likely to live near their families when siblings and parents are supportive. Local families can be strengthened by promoting the visibility of LGBT people because previous research has concluded that children with lesbian mothers tend to have an improved well-being when they have relationships with other children with lesbian mothers. Also, children with lesbian mothers generally have contact with grandparents and other relatives (Oswald and Lazarevic 2011).

According to Overby and Barth (2002), contact exposure has a strong effect on attitudes. As more LGBT people "come out of the closet,"[5] more heterosexuals will realize they have LGBT friends and/or family members and evolve with a perspective that humanizes and personalizes members of the LGBT community, which reduces fear and prejudice. Moreover, heterosexuals will be more inclined to support equal human rights protections for homosexuals, including the right to marry. Homophobic behavior is reduced through interaction, thus inducing tolerance.

In summary, research has shown increased contact with LGBT family members decreases negative attitudes toward LGBT people. I would like to know if this phenomenon extends to tolerant attitudes toward marriage equality.

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[5] Term meaning to recognize one's sexual orientation, gender identity, or sex identity, and to be open about it with oneself and with others" (UC Berkeley Gender Equity Resource Center N.d.).

3.4.4 In the Neighborhood

According to Census data, same-gender households are integrated in every U.S. county because same-gender couples, who have children, primarily reside in less urbanized counties. Many LGBT families are allured to residential communities that offer family-oriented amenities (Oswald and Lazarevic 2011). Oswald and Lazarevic (2011) argue that many LGBT families have emotional connections with their residential communities in both urban and rural environments. Individuals are more likely to have a strong connection to environments that provide personal continuity, security, and opportunity for personal advancement. Attachments between family and community are often intertwined in nonmetropolitan environments. Oswald and Lazarevic (2011) found that lesbian mothers rated 10 percent of their communities as supportive. Urban settings afford many socialization options for LGBT people to, including more anonymity in public. Furthermore, same-gender couples are more likely reside in racially diverse neighborhoods in comparison to heterosexual couples. Nonmetropolitan environments allow for more daily socialization with family, friends, strangers, and acquaintances (Oswald and Lazarevic 2011).

Interaction with LGBT people in a neighborhood can decrease negative attitudes towards homosexuals through the opportunity to connect outside of one's social circle (Cooley 2009). Values can be derived from people within a neighborhood, which increase familiarity or common relatedness among neighbors (Cooley 2009). Therefore, having LGBT neighbors within a community can increase support for LGBT people through interaction. I expect having one or more LGBT neighbors will lead to individuals having positive attitudes toward marriage equality. LGBT attachment to residential communities has been largely understudied in social science.

A strong predictor of community attachment is frequency of contact with an immediate family member. The quality of contact with lesbians is not significant, but the quantity of contact between lesbians and family (e.g. siblings, parents) is significant (Oswald and Lazarevic 2011).

When a neighborhood or community is made aware of the issues LGBT people face, then tolerance becomes a reality. Interestingly, the attachment lesbian mothers have with their residential communities strengthen when they place little importance on their religious faith. Lesbian mothers who are highly religious may be less attached to their residential neighborhoods because of anti-LGBT religious sentiment. Therefore, interaction between the community and lesbian mothers can be low if a community is highly religious (Oswald and Lazarevic 2011).

In summary, interaction with LGBT families in both rural and urban communities is likely to increase positive attitudes toward LGBT people and LGBT rights. Attitudes toward marriage equality may improve when having contact with at least one LGBT person in a neighborhood.

3.4.5 In Voluntary Organizations

Intergroup conflict theory suggests negative attitudes are reinforced by negative interactions between members of competing groups. Furthermore, threat theories argue that members of the majority feel threatened by individuals of a minority (Gaines and Garand 2010). Intergroup friendships incorporate optimal benefits through contact, and positive emotions are engaged by friendships over time (Hodson et al. 2007). Hodson et al. (2007) argue that friends of friends benefit from friendship, in which negative outgroup attitudes are decreased with an ingroup friend and outgroup friendship. The indirect nature of these types of friendships evoke less threat while providing normative information about favorable outgroup attitudes as well as reducing outgroup prejudices. The authors elaborate that recent studies identify outgroup mediators that reduce intergroup anxiety, improve self-other overlap, enable personal disclosure, and fear less personal and collective threat. Cooley (2009) indicated that outgroup characteristics include age, gender, sexual orientation, race, and religion.

Hodson et al. (2009) also discovered less negative intergroup opinions among prejudice-prone individuals are associated with increased friendships. Therefore, friendship

plays a critical role in reducing prejudice and increasing as outgroup empathy is increased. More favorable attitudes are reported with a single direct friend or a couple of indirect friends within a voluntary group. When working with LGBT people within a voluntary organization, teamwork is usually involved in sharing similar interests when acquiring specific goals and causes. Therefore, more positive attitudes evolve from this type of association and socialization.

In summary, positive interactions with LGBT people within a voluntary group can improve attitudes toward LGBT people. Therefore, I expect those who have contact with LGBT people will support marriage equality.

3.5 Social Demographic Control Variables

Olson et al. (2006) argue that recent polls demonstrate public opinion and the effects of demographics, such as education, gender, and age, on public opinion pertaining to homosexuality. Monroe (2008) suggests income, gender, education, and geographic region affect social and political attitudes; however, income is a stronger factor than religion when determining social and political attitudes. Gaines and Garand (2010) indicate that research is limited in rationale for explaining demographic differences. However, scholars have usually found liberals, Democrats, women, whites, urban dwellers, and highly educated people to be more inclined to support marriage equality, which have drawn from dynamics of the struggle for LGBT equality, women's rights movements, black civil rights, and minority civil rights.

According to Schwartz (2010), existing research agrees that attitudes toward LGBT people can be predicted by gender. Female respondents view homosexuals more positively than male respondents. My theory for this gender gap is due to the fact that women have historically endured sexist opposition from conservative men, and they can relate to similar opposition to LGBT people. Gaines and Garand (2010) intertwine gender and sexual orientation and suggest the attempt to legalize marriage equality and the attempt to achieve women's equality is a commonality as they both face a patriarchal marriage framework, in which males are the dominant figures and have the ability to oppress both women and LGBT people.

48

Therefore, feminists, people who believe that men and women are equal, tend to support same-gender marriage. Lannutti and Lachlan (2008) agree that both college and non-college women hold more positive attitudes toward marriage equality. Schwartz (2010) found that both males and females oppose marriage equality, but more females supported adoption for same-gender parents. Older Americans are generally less supportive of LGBT rights and are more politically conservative than younger Americans (Schwartz 2010). Historical prejudice exists among the older generation.

Schwartz (2010) suggests education predicts public opinion regarding LGBT rights. Higher levels of education are correlated with more positive attitudes. Gibson and Tedin (1988) explain that education is a strong social determinant predictor of tolerance because education leads to exposure to socially and culturally diverse environments, which enables tolerance. Another reason is due to leftwing targets of intolerance. Income, age, religiosity, and race receive quite a bit of attention, but education consistently remains the most significant factor in determining attitudes toward LGBT people and LGBT rights. Higher income and higher education tend to correlate with each other, which leads to greater acceptance of LGBT people (Burnett and Salka 2009).

Social attitudes toward marriage equality and economic attitudes toward income inequality and welfare programs are influenced by moral values imbued through religion. Both attitudes toward social issues and economic conservatism overlap (Munroe 2008). Despite altruistic values of Jesus, many Evangelicals support economic conservatism due to self-interest rather than community interest due to a flawed and pessimistic view of human nature, created by the lack of intellectualism and trust. Protestants favor capitalistic ideologies while favoring tax cuts, reduced regulations, cuts in government spending rather than socialist ideologies to improve conditions of people who are less fortunate. The Roman Catholic Church has used terms, such as the "undeserving poor" (Munroe 2008:45). These intolerant terms are not limited to Catholics. Although same-sex marriage is difficult to connect to economic

conservatism or income, religious people may vote for a political party dependent upon moral views rather than economics or vice versa. Economic attitudes are more correlated with socio-economic status (SES) than religious views (Munroe 2008). Therefore, I expect those with higher household incomes or SES to hold conservative views towards marriage equality.

In summary, research indicates that gender, age, education, income, political ideology, religiosity, media, and contact exposure are critical when evaluating attitudes toward homosexuals and LGBT rights. Demographic variables, including gender, age, education, and income, are used as control my variables when analyzing religiosity, political views, media consumption, and contact exposure with LGBT people in relation to supportive attitudes toward marriage equality.

3.6 Hypotheses

Based on the literature review, I have several expectations. First, support for same-gender marriage will be affected by social demographic variables, such as gender, age, education, and household income. In particular, I expect females and the educated will have more tolerant attitudes as age and household income have a negative effect on support. Second, political views will have a relationship with marriage equality. Conservative and Republican perspectives are also predicted to be less tolerant as liberal and Democratic perspectives are expected to be more supportive for marriage equality. Third, respondents who are religious will have less supportive attitudes for marriage equality, except for spirituality. I expect those who consider themselves spiritual will favor marriage equality. However, respondents who classify themselves as religious, participate in religious activities, attend church services, and agree they carry their religious beliefs in life, will have less tolerant attitudes toward same-gender marriage.

Fourth, media consumption is related to attitudes towards marriage equality. I will examine both frequency of exposure and differences due to media source. It is difficult to determine a relationship between support for marriage equality and media consumption without

50

evaluating content - that is, if what is consumed is liberal or conservative. Questions on content were not available in the 2006 GSS sample. Lastly, LGBT contact exposure is expected to positively influence support for same-gender marriage. All LGBT contact with acquaintances in general, at the workplace, in the family, in the neighborhood, and in a voluntary organization, are expected to have a supportive relationship with marriage equality.

CHAPTER 4

DATA, MEASUREMENT, AND METHODS

In this chapter, I describe my data, measurement, and methods for this project. The main purpose is to explain how I measure independent variables derived from Chapter Three.

4.1 Data

Although I used General Social Survey (GSS) Data from as early as 1972 in earlier chapters, I focus my analysis on data from 2006. Only this year includes measures of contact as well as important political, religious, media, and control variables. I use a weight in analyzing the data. Weighting is necessary in order to draw a conclusion about the United States population using this data. With this weight, these data are nationally representative. The final sample size (N) for the main analyses is 1,619. Unfortunately, all variables were not available for this many cases, so I run additional on smaller subsets of cases in order to include important contact and media-related variables.

4.2 Measurement

Appendix A contains a list of the 2006 GSS questions in this study. I measure attitudes toward marriage equality with one question, "Do you agree or disagree" with whether "homosexual couples should have the right to marry one another?" I recode each item from the level of strongly disagree, disagree, neutral, agree, to strongly agree. I select missing data for my dependent and independent variables. My dependent variable (DV), support for marriage equality, is conveyed in my bivariate tables of basic relationships with my independent variables (IV) without controls. I include two political variables: party identification and political ideology. Party identification is measured by dummy variables including Democrat, Republican, and Independent (the reference category). Political ideology is also measured by dummy variables including liberal, conservative, and independent (the reference category).

52

I include five religious variables: spirituality, religiosity, belief application, religious participation, and church attendance. Spirituality is measured by dummy variables including very spiritual, moderately spiritual, slightly spiritual, and not spiritual (reference group). Religiosity is measured by dummy variables including very religious, moderately religious, slightly religious, and not religious (reference group). Belief application is a term to describe carrying or applying religious beliefs into dealings in life. Belief application is measured by dummy variables including strongly agree to apply beliefs, agree to apply beliefs, disagree to apply beliefs, and strongly disagree to apply beliefs (reference group). Participation in religious activities was originally categorized as: never, less than once a year, about once or twice per year, several times a year, about once a month, 2-3 times per month, nearly every week, every week, several times a week, and once a day. Original variables for church attendance was originally categorized as: never, less than once a year, once a year, several times a year, once a month, 2-3 times per month, nearly every week, every week, and more than once a week.

I include two media exposure variables: television (TV) hours and news sources. The variable, TV hours, was collapsed into categories: 0-1, 2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8 thru 24. I also include news source. Original categories include newspapers, magazines, the internet, Books/Printed Material, TV, radio, family, friends/colleagues, and other. I focus on newspapers, internet and other since few people selected "other" variables: magazines, books/printed material, radio, friends, family, friends/colleagues, and other. TV was the reference group.

Personal contact with LGBT people is identified for the effects on acceptance for marriage equality. The five original categories are: 0, 1, 2-5, 6-10, more than 10 for LGBT acquaintances at work, in family, in neighborhood, and voluntary organizations. I selected missing data including: Don't know, Inapplicable, and Not answered.

All of these social forces are studied with social demographic controls when measuring support for same-gender marriage. Gender is divided between male and female. Age is measured in years: 18 thru 29, 30 thru 39, 40 thru 49, 50 thru 59, 60 thru 69, and 70 thru 89.

Education is measured in years: 0 thru 12, 13 thru 16, and 17 thru 20. Lastly, household income

is recoded into five categories: $284.25 thru $6,395.625, $7,816.875 thru $12,080.625,

$13,501.875 thru $18,476.25, $21,318.75 thru $25,582.50, and $31,267.50 thru

$159,292.273065.

<div align="center">4.3 Methods</div>

I begin by examining bivariate cross-tabulation tables and chi-square tests to examine

basic relationships without controls. Second, I use multivariate ordinal logistic regression to

examine the effects of media, political, religious, LGBT contact, and control variables on support

for marriage equality. Ordinal logistic regression is appropriate because my dependent variable

is ordinal and has five categories that are ranked.

Next, I describe the measurements of my multivariate tables of basic relationships with

controls. Three tables use stepwise ordinal regression on attitudes toward marriage equality as

there were not enough cases to run all independent variables in one table due to the structure

of ballots in the GSS. Four models are included within the first table. The first model uses

ordinal regression for only social demographic variables (gender, age, education, and

household income). The second tests political views: political affiliation and political ideology.

The third model consists of religiosity questions regarding: spirituality, religiosity, belief

application, religious activities, and church attendance. The fourth model steps in all social

demographic, political views, and religiosity variables.

The second table contains six models. The first model examines media consumption

(TV hours) only. The second model steps in social demographics, political views, and religiosity

with TV hours. The third model analyzes news sources (newspaper, internet, other) only as

television is the reference group. The fourth model steps in social demographic variables, and

the fifth model adds political views. The final model adds social demographics, political views,

and religiosity with news sources.

The third table incorporates five models, in which all include social demographic controls, political views, and religiosity. Each model adds each type of LGBT acquaintance into each model, based off knowing at least one: 1) In general, 2) At work, 3) In family, 4) In neighborhood, and 5) In voluntary organizations. Each model examines each type of contact separately due to the number of missing cases because each question was not asked for all respondents in the 2006 GSS.

CHAPTER 5

RESULTS

In this chapter, I describe results from my analyses of the 2006 GSS data. First, I examine bivariate relationships between support for marriage equality and political views (party affiliation, political ideology), religiosity (spirituality, religiosity, belief application, religious activities, church attendance), media (TV hours, news source), LGBT contact (in general, at work, in family, in neighborhood, voluntary organizations), and social demographic variables (gender, age, education, household income). Second, I use ordinal regression to examine these relationships with controls.

5.1 Bivariate Results

Beginning with my political variables in Tables 5.1 and 5.2, party affiliation and political ideology are both significantly related to opposing marriage equality, although Republican and conservative attitudes are more oppositional than Democrats and liberals. Beginning with those who are independents, 33.8 percent strongly disagree with marriage equality while 22.1 percent agree with marriage equality. Looking at party affiliation, 60.2 percent of those who are strongly Republican strongly disagree with marriage equality, and 43.0 percent of those not strongly Republican strongly disagree. In comparison, 28.1 percent of those who are not strongly Democrat strongly disagree with marriage equality, while 32.2 percent of those who are strongly Democrat strongly disagree with marriage equality. Regarding strong support for marriage equality, 23.8 percent are strongly Democrat, and 20.1 percent are not strongly Democrat. In contrast, only 5.9 percent of those who are strongly Republican strongly agree, and 11.5 percent who are not strong Republicans strongly agree. There is a definite split down the middle

as 32.2 percent of those who are strongly Democrat strongly oppose marriage equality, while

23.8 percent who identify as strongly Democrat strongly agree with marriage equality.

Therefore, more Democrats strongly oppose same-gender marriage than strongly support it.

However, there is less opposition from Democrats relative to Republicans.

A clear ideological divide exists for liberals and conservatives, because those who are

more conservative strongly disagree with marriage equality (66.2 percent of those who are

extremely conservative and 56.9 percent of those who are conservative strongly oppose

marriage equality). On the other hand, 34.4 percent who are slightly conservative and 32

percent moderate strongly oppose marriage equality. In comparison, 50 percent extreme

liberals, 31.6 percent liberals, and 22.1 percent slightly moderates strongly support marriage

equality. Interestingly, only 6.5 percent of those who are extremely conservative strongly

support marriage equality as 23.2 percent who are extremely liberal strongly oppose marriage

equality. In conclusion, those with conservative ideology generally oppose marriage equality as

individuals with liberal ideology support marriage equality.

Table 5.1 Support for Marriage Equality and Political Party Affiliation (2006). [a]

Support for Marriage Equality		Strongly Democrat	Not Strong Democrat	Independent, Near Democrat	Independent	Independent, Near Republican	Not Strong Republican	Strongly Republican	Other Party	Total
Strongly Disagree	Number	92	95	42	141	42	135	133	10	690
	Percent	32.20%	28.10%	18.90%	33.80%	31.30%	43.00%	60.20%	24.40%	35.00%
Disagree	Number	46	43	40	65	32	56	43	4	329
	Percent	16.10%	12.70%	18.00%	15.60%	23.90%	17.80%	19.50%	9.80%	16.70%
Neither	Number	18	50	41	68	15	45	14	6	257
	Percent	6.30%	14.80%	18.50%	16.30%	11.20%	14.30%	6.30%	14.60%	13.00%
Agree	Number	62	82	55	92	32	42	18	7	390
	Percent	21.70%	24.30%	24.80%	22.10%	23.90%	13.40%	8.10%	17.10%	19.80%
Strongly Agree	Number	68	68	44	51	13	36	13	14	307
	Percent	23.80%	20.10%	19.80%	12.20%	9.70%	11.50%	5.90%	34.10%	15.60%
Total	Number	286	338	222	417	134	314	221	41	1973
	Percent	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

a. Pearson's Chi-square=189.6, df=28, p<.05.

Table 5.2 Support for Marriage Equality and Political Ideology (2006). [a]

Support for Marriage Equality		Extremely Liberal	Liberal	Slightly Moderate	Moderate	Slightly Conserva-tive	Conserv-ative	Extremely Conserv-ative	Don't Know	Total
Strongly Disagree	Number	13	41	49	233	94	186	51	26	693
	Percent	23.20%	17.70%	21.70%	32.00%	34.40%	56.90%	66.20%	46.40%	35.10%
Disagree	Number	3	19	31	130	56	65	14	9	327
	Percent	5.40%	8.20%	13.70%	17.90%	20.50%	19.90%	18.20%	16.10%	16.60%
Neither	Number	2	20	38	115	47	27	1	8	258
	Percent	3.60%	8.70%	16.80%	15.80%	17.20%	8.30%	1.30%	14.30%	13.10%
Agree	Number	10	71	58	158	51	25	6	9	388
	Percent	17.90%	30.70%	25.70%	21.70%	18.70%	7.60%	7.80%	16.10%	19.70%
Strongly Agree	Number	28	80	50	91	25	24	5	4	307
	Percent	50.00%	34.60%	22.10%	12.50%	9.20%	7.30%	6.50%	7.10%	15.60%
Total	Number	56	231	226	727	273	327	77	56	1973
	Percent	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

a. Pearson's Chi-square=340.8, df=28, p<.05.

All of the religiosity variables are significantly associated with opposition to marriage equality (see Tables 5.3 through 5.7), although some relationships are stronger than others. The patterns for spirituality and religiosity, for example, suggest that those who are very spiritual and very religious are most likely to oppose marriage equality. People who report being less spiritual and less religious tend to oppose marriage equality to a lesser extent; of those who are not spiritual (21.7 percent) and those who are slightly spiritual (23.5 percent) strongly disagree with marriage equality. Therefore, those who are not very spiritual and slightly spiritual strongly disagree with marriage equality and have similar values to those who are not spiritual and agree with marriage equality (23.9 percent) and slightly spiritual (26.6 percent). Of those who are not spiritual (21.7 percent) and those who are very spiritual (46.1 percent), strongly disagreeing with marriage equality is 24.4 percent higher for being very spiritual instead of being not spiritual.

Notice, however, that of the people who describe themselves as not religious, 18.1 percent strongly disagree with marriage equality, but 57.2 percent of those who are very religious strongly disagree with marriage equality. In comparison, 31.4 percent of those who are not religious strongly agree with marriage equality, and 26.4 percent agree with marriage equality. Looking at spirituality and religiosity, 46.1 percent of those who are very spiritual and 57.2 percent who are very religious strongly disagree with marriage equality. In addition, 23.9 percent of people who are not spiritual and 31.4 percent of people who are not religious strongly support marriage equality. Results for applying beliefs in daily life are more similar for religiosity than spirituality because of those who apply their beliefs, and 53.1 percent of those who are very religious strongly disagree with marriage equality which is similar to the same levels as religiosity.

Both participation in religious activities and church attendance are similar in the fact that individuals who report the most frequent participation and attendance strongly disagree with marriage equality. For instance, 81.8 percent of individuals who participate in religious activities once a day and 71 percent of those who attend church more than once per week strongly

disagree with marriage equality. The rates of people who never engage in either are much weaker/lower. For example, 28.8 percent of those who never participate in religious activities, and 22.3 percent of those who never attend church also strongly oppose marriage equality. However, 23.1 percent who report never participating in religious activities and 21.9 percent who report never attending church agree when supporting marriage equality.

Overall, people who are more spiritual and religious are less supportive of marriage equality. Those who apply religious beliefs in life, participate in religious activities, and attend church services also disagree to strongly disagree with marriage equality.

Table 5.3 Support for Marriage Equality and Spirituality (2006).[a]

Support for Marriage Equality		Very Spiritual	Moderately Spiritual	Slightly Spiritual	Not Spiritual	Don't Know	Total
Strongly Disagree	Number	267	288	90	40	9	694
	Percent	46.10%	35.40%	23.50%	21.70%	52.90%	35.10%
Disagree	Number	91	144	69	23	2	329
	Percent	15.70%	17.70%	18.00%	12.50%	11.80%	16.60%
Neither	Number	46	120	58	33	2	259
	Percent	7.90%	14.70%	15.10%	17.90%	11.80%	13.10%
Agree	Number	86	154	102	44	3	389
	Percent	14.90%	18.90%	26.60%	23.90%	17.60%	19.70%
Strongly Agree	Number	89	108	64	44	1	306
	Percent	15.40%	13.30%	16.70%	23.90%	5.90%	15.50%
Total	Number	579	814	383	184	17	1977
	Percent	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

a. Pearson's Chi-square=97.6, df=16, p<.05.

Table 5.4 Support for Marriage Equality and Religiosity (2006). [a]

Support for Marriage Equality		Very Religious	Moderately Religious	Slightly Religious	Not Religious	Don't Know	Total
Strongly Disagree	Number	215	325	96	54	4	694
	Percent	57.20%	37.70%	22.20%	18.10%	44.40%	35.10%
Disagree	Number	73	153	66	35	2	329
	Percent	19.40%	17.80%	15.20%	11.70%	22.20%	16.60%
Neither	Number	28	117	76	37	1	259
	Percent	7.40%	13.60%	17.60%	12.40%	11.10%	13.10%
Agree	Number	33	172	105	79	0	389
	Percent	8.80%	20.00%	24.20%	26.40%	0.00%	19.70%
Strongly Agree	Number	27	94	90	94	2	307
	Percent	7.20%	10.90%	20.80%	31.40%	22.20%	15.50%
Total	Number	376	861	433	299	9	1978
	Percent	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

a. Pearson's Chi-square=244.511, df=16, p<.05.

Table 5.5 Support for Marriage Equality and Belief Application (2006). [a]

Support for Marriage Equality		Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Don't Know	Total
Strongly Disagree	Number	302	276	77	31	8	694
	Percent	53.10%	34.00%	21.20%	14.60%	34.80%	35.10%
Disagree	Number	97	146	59	26	1	329
	Percent	17.00%	18.00%	16.20%	12.30%	4.30%	16.60%
Neither	Number	37	139	53	23	8	260
	Percent	6.50%	17.10%	14.60%	10.80%	34.80%	13.10%
Agree	Number	66	164	104	53	3	390
	Percent	11.60%	20.20%	28.60%	25.00%	13.00%	19.70%
Strongly Agree	Number	67	87	71	79	3	307
	Percent	11.80%	10.70%	19.50%	37.30%	13.00%	15.50%
Total	Number	569	812	364	212	23	1980
	Percent	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

a. Pearson's Chi-square=265.1, df=16, p<.05.

Table 5.6 Support for Marriage Equality and Participation (2006). [a]

Support for Marriage Equality		Never	Less Than Once a Year	About Once or Twice a Year	Several Times a Year	About Once a Month	2-3 Times a Month	Nearly Every Week	Every Week	Several Times a Week	Once a Day	Total
Strongly Disagree	Number	249	38	81	70	54	56	35	95	5	9	692
	Percent	28.80%	24.40%	31.90%	37.40%	36.50%	47.90%	58.30%	57.20%	45.50%	81.80%	35.10%
Disagree	Number	127	25	46	34	30	22	10	33	2	0	329
	Percent	14.70%	16.00%	18.10%	18.20%	20.30%	18.80%	16.70%	19.90%	18.20%	0.00%	16.70%
Neither	Number	123	16	40	26	23	16	4	8	1	0	257
	Percent	14.20%	10.30%	15.70%	13.90%	15.50%	13.70%	6.70%	4.80%	9.10%	0.00%	13.00%
Agree	Number	200	48	47	30	26	12	7	17	1	1	389
	Percent	23.10%	30.80%	18.50%	16.00%	17.60%	10.30%	11.70%	10.20%	9.10%	9.10%	19.70%
Strongly Agree	Number	165	29	40	27	15	11	4	13	2	1	307
	Percent	19.10%	18.60%	15.70%	14.40%	10.10%	9.40%	6.70%	7.80%	18.20%	9.10%	15.60%
Total	Number	864	156	254	187	148	117	60	166	11	11	1974
	Percent	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

a. Pearson's Chi-square=140.4, df=36, p<.05.

Table 5.7 Support for Marriage Equality and Church Attendance (2006). [a]

Support for Marriage Equality		Never	Less Than Once a Year	Once a Year	Several Times a Year	Once a Month	Two to Three Times a Month	Nearly Every Week	Every Week	More Than Once a Week	Total
Strongly Disagree	Number	100	24	70	62	39	61	44	190	103	693
	Percent	22.30%	18.90%	26.00%	30.20%	27.70%	36.30%	46.80%	50.10%	71.00%	35.10%
Disagree	Number	69	17	41	34	23	31	20	70	24	329
	Percent	15.40%	13.40%	15.20%	16.60%	16.30%	18.50%	21.30%	18.50%	16.60%	16.60%
Neither	Number	64	14	48	34	20	20	8	45	4	257
	Percent	14.30%	11.00%	17.80%	16.60%	14.20%	11.90%	8.50%	11.90%	2.80%	13.00%
Agree	Number	98	47	66	48	30	33	16	43	9	390
	Percent	21.90%	37.00%	24.50%	23.40%	21.30%	19.60%	17.00%	11.30%	6.20%	19.70%
Strongly Agree	Number	117	25	44	27	29	23	6	31	5	307
	Percent	26.10%	19.70%	16.40%	13.20%	20.60%	13.70%	6.40%	8.20%	3.40%	15.50%
Total	Number	448	127	269	205	141	168	94	379	145	1976
	Percent	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

a. Pearson's Chi-square=268.7, df=32, p<.05.

Moving on to media exposure (see Tables 5.8 and 5.9), the number of television hours is not related to marriage equality, but news source is significantly associated with the opposition of marriage equality. Those who receive their news from books/printed materials (66.7 percent), television (36.9 percent), and family members (37.5 percent) strongly oppose same-gender marriage more than the other sources of news. Those who strongly support marriage equality get their news from magazines (50 percent), other sources (33.3 percent), and internet (24.3 percent) more than the other sources. Therefore, news source is affiliated with attitudes toward marriage equality.

Overall, individuals who receive their news from magazines, internet, and other sources have more favorable attitudes than those who get their news from books/printed material, television, and family members.

Table 5.8 Support for Marriage Equality and TV Hours (2006). [a]

Support for Marriage Equality		0 - 1	2 - 3	4 - 5	6 - 7	8 thru 24	Total
Strongly Disagree	Number	98	165	66	21	18	368
	Percent	38.30%	36.30%	36.30%	38.90%	42.90%	37.20%
Disagree	Number	43	82	28	9	5	167
	Percent	16.80%	18.00%	15.40%	16.70%	11.90%	16.90%
Neither	Number	29	47	25	8	3	112
	Percent	11.30%	10.30%	13.70%	14.80%	7.10%	11.30%
Agree	Number	35	91	42	9	10	187
	Percent	13.70%	20.00%	23.10%	16.70%	23.80%	18.90%
Strongly Agree	Number	51	70	21	7	6	155
	Percent	19.90%	15.40%	11.50%	13.00%	14.30%	15.70%
Total	Number	256	455	182	54	42	989
	Percent	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

a. Pearson's Chi-square=26.3, df=16, p>.05.

Table 5.9 Support for Marriage Equality and News Source (2006). [a]

Support for Marriage Equality		News-papers	Maga-zines	The Internet	Books Other Printed Material	TV	Radio	Family	Friends Colleag-ues	Other	Total
Strongly Disagree	Number	71	2	22	2	179	19	6	3	0	304
	Percent	33.60%	20.00%	19.10%	66.70%	36.90%	31.10%	37.50%	18.80%	0.00%	32.90%
Disagree	Number	32	0	19	0	79	11	5	1	2	149
	Percent	15.20%	0.00%	16.50%	0.00%	16.30%	18.00%	31.30%	6.30%	33.30%	16.10%
Neither	Number	31	2	14	1	67	9	2	3	1	130
	Percent	14.70%	20.00%	12.20%	33.30%	13.80%	14.80%	12.50%	18.80%	16.70%	14.10%
Agree	Number	44	1	32	0	98	9	2	7	1	194
	Percent	20.90%	10.00%	27.80%	0.00%	20.20%	14.80%	12.50%	43.80%	16.70%	21.00%
Strongly Agree	Number	33	5	28	0	62	13	1	2	2	146
	Percent	15.60%	50.00%	24.30%	0.00%	12.80%	21.30%	6.30%	12.50%	33.30%	15.80%
Total	Number	211	10	115	3	485	61	16	16	6	923
	Percent	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

a. Pearson's Chi-square=51.0, df=32, p<.05.

All types of contact with LGBT people have a significant relationship with support for marriage equality, except contact in a neighborhood (see Table 5.10 through 5.14). Overall, those who have little to no contact with LGBT people oppose same-gender marriage more than those who have contact with LGBT people. Regarding LGBT contact exposure in general, 50 percent of those individuals who have zero contact strongly oppose, and 37.8 percent who have contact with only one LGBT person strongly oppose marriage equality. In comparison, to 56.7 percent who know more than 10 LGBT people strongly agree with same-gender marriage. In general, 33.3 percent of respondents who know six to ten LGBT people agree with marriage equality.

Next, 46.7 percent of those who know zero and 32.3 percent who only know one LGBT person at work strongly disagree with marriage equality, while 45.5 percent who know six to ten LGBT people and 32.4 percent who know two to five LGBT people at work strongly agree with marriage equality. In regards to family members, 44.1 percent who know zero LGBT people and 29.2 percent who only know one LGBT person in the family strongly oppose marriage equality. In addition, 50 percent of respondents who know six to ten LGBT family members agree with supporting marriage equality. Lastly, 44.9 percent who know zero LGBT people and 33.3 percent who know more than 10 LGBT people in a voluntary organization strongly oppose marriage equality. In comparison, 33.3 percent who know more than 10 and 33.3 percent who know two to five LGBT people in a voluntary organization strongly support same-gender marriage.

Overall, support toward marriage equality exists among those who have contact with LGBT people in general, at work, in family, and in voluntary organizations. There was no relationship with contact in neighborhood.

Table 5.10 Support for Marriage Equality and General LGBT Acquaintances (2006). [a]

Support for Marriage Equality		0	1	2 - 5	6 - 10	More than 10	Total
Strongly Disagree	Number	98	17	32	6	5	158
	Percent	50.00%	37.80%	24.20%	25.00%	16.70%	37.00%
Disagree	Number	34	5	24	4	0	67
	Percent	17.30%	11.10%	18.20%	16.70%	0.00%	15.70%
Neither	Number	22	9	20	2	3	56
	Percent	11.20%	20.00%	15.20%	8.30%	10.00%	13.10%
Agree	Number	22	13	33	8	5	81
	Percent	11.20%	28.90%	25.00%	33.30%	16.70%	19.00%
Strongly Agree	Number	20	1	23	4	17	65
	Percent	10.20%	2.20%	17.40%	16.70%	56.70%	15.20%
Total	Number	196	45	132	24	30	427
	Percent	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

a. Pearson's Chi-square=84.8, df=16, p<.05.

Table 5.11 Support for Marriage Equality and LGBT Acquaintances at Work (2006). [a]

Support for Marriage Equality		0	1	2 - 5	6 - 10	More than 10	Total
Strongly Disagree	Number	64	10	19	0	4	97
	Percent	46.70%	32.30%	25.70%	0.00%	28.60%	36.30%
Disagree	Number	24	3	13	2	1	43
	Percent	17.50%	9.70%	17.60%	18.20%	7.10%	16.10%
Neither	Number	7	3	8	2	3	23
	Percent	5.10%	9.70%	10.80%	18.20%	21.40%	8.60%
Agree	Number	28	8	10	2	2	50
	Percent	20.40%	25.80%	13.50%	18.20%	14.30%	18.70%
Strongly Agree	Number	14	7	24	5	4	54
	Percent	10.20%	22.60%	32.40%	45.50%	28.60%	20.20%
Total	Number	137	31	74	11	14	267
	Percent	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

a. Pearson's Chi-square=37.3, df=16, p<.05.

Table 5.12 Support for Marriage Equality and LGBT Acquaintances in Family (2006). [a]

Support for Marriage Equality		0	1	2 - 5	6 - 10	More than 10	Total
Strongly Disagree	Number	101	14	7	0	0	122
	Percent	44.10%	29.20%	21.20%	0.00%	0.00%	38.90%
Disagree	Number	35	9	4	0	0	48
	Percent	15.30%	18.80%	12.10%	0.00%	0.00%	15.30%
Neither	Number	23	6	2	0	0	31
	Percent	10.00%	12.50%	6.10%	0.00%	0.00%	9.90%
Agree	Number	36	11	7	1	0	55
	Percent	15.70%	22.90%	21.20%	50.00%	0.00%	17.50%
Strongly Agree	Number	34	8	13	1	2	58
	Percent	14.80%	16.70%	39.40%	50.00%	100.00%	18.50%
Total	Number	229	48	33	2	2	314
	Percent	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

a. Pearson's Chi-square=30.3, df=16, p<.05.

Table 5.13 Support for Marriage Equality and LGBT Acquaintances in Neighborhood (2006). [a]

Support for Marriage Equality		0	1	2 - 5	6 - 10	More than 10	Total
Strongly Disagree	Number	82	9	9	0	1	101
	Percent	40.80%	37.50%	22.50%	0.00%	33.30%	37.50%
Disagree	Number	38	5	8	1	0	52
	Percent	18.90%	20.80%	20.00%	100.00%	0.00%	19.30%
Neither	Number	19	2	4	0	0	25
	Percent	9.50%	8.30%	10.00%	0.00%	0.00%	9.30%
Agree	Number	32	3	7	0	1	43
	Percent	15.90%	12.50%	17.50%	0.00%	33.30%	16.00%
Strongly Agree	Number	30	5	12	0	1	48
	Percent	14.90%	20.80%	30.00%	0.00%	33.30%	17.80%
Total	Number	201	24	40	1	3	269
	Percent	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

a. Pearson's Chi-square=13.7, df=16, p>.05.

Table 5.14 Support for Marriage Equality and LGBT Acquaintances in Voluntary Organizations (2006). [a]

Support for Marriage Equality		0	1	2 - 5	6 - 10	More than 10	Total
Strongly Disagree	Number	79	10	7	2	3	101
	Percent	44.90%	38.50%	12.30%	22.20%	33.30%	36.50%
Disagree	Number	30	5	11	1	0	47
	Percent	17.00%	19.20%	19.30%	11.10%	0.00%	17.00%
Neither	Number	15	4	6	0	1	26
	Percent	8.50%	15.40%	10.50%	0.00%	11.10%	9.40%
Agree	Number	32	3	14	2	2	53
	Percent	18.20%	11.50%	24.60%	22.20%	22.20%	19.10%
Strongly Agree	Number	20	4	19	4	3	50
	Percent	11.40%	15.40%	33.30%	44.40%	33.30%	18.10%
Total	Number	176	26	57	9	9	277
	Percent	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

a. Pearson's Chi-square=35.5, df=16, p<.05.

I found a significant association between all my social demographic variables and opposition to marriage equality, except there is no significance found in household income (see Tables 5.15 through 5.18). Most men (38.7 percent) strongly disagree with marriage equality while 32.3 percent of women strongly disagree with same-gender marriage. Comparatively, 13.2 percent of men and 17.3 percent of women strongly agree with marriage equality. This will be interesting to compare to my multivariate analysis. In relation to age, older individuals oppose marriage equality more than younger individuals. For example, 53.8 percent (ages 70-89), 35.4 percent (ages 40-49), and 25.3 percent (ages 18-29) strongly oppose marriage equality. Only 23.6 percent (ages 18-29) and 18.4 percent (ages 30-39) strongly agree with marriage equality while 24.4 percent (ages 18-29) and 22.9 percent (ages 30-39) agree with marriage equality.

Those who are more educated tend to oppose marriage equality less than those who are less educated. According to Table 5.17, 40.8 percent (grades 0-12), 32.8 percent (grades 13-16), and 24.1 percent (grades 17-20) strongly oppose marriage equality while 22.9 percent

(grades 17-20) strongly agree with same-gender marriage. In addition, 22.9 percent (grades 17-20) and 20.5 percent (grades 13-16) agree with marriage equality.

Overall, females are more supportive toward marriage equality than males. Younger individuals have more favorable attitudes than older individuals. Those with higher levels of education are supportive than those with lower levels of education. Household income has no relationship with attitudes toward marriage equality.

Table 5.15 Support for Marriage Equality and Gender (2006). [a]

Support for Marriage Equality		Male	Female	Total
Strongly Disagree	Number	332	363	695
	Percent	38.70%	32.30%	35.10%
Disagree	Number	140	189	329
	Percent	16.30%	16.80%	16.60%
Neither	Number	112	148	260
	Percent	13.10%	13.20%	13.10%
Agree	Number	161	230	391
	Percent	18.80%	20.50%	19.70%
Strongly Agree	Number	113	194	307
	Percent	13.20%	17.30%	15.50%
Total	Number	858	1124	1982
	Percent	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

a. Pearson's Chi-square=11.7, df=4, p<.05.

Table 5.16 Support for Marriage Equality and Age (2006). [a]

Support for Marriage Equality		18-29	30-39	40-49	50-59	60-69	70-89	Total
Strongly Disagree	Number	89	107	146	126	98	128	694
	Percent	25.30%	28.50%	35.40%	35.30%	40.50%	53.80%	35.10%
Disagree	Number	44	57	78	58	50	42	329
	Percent	12.50%	15.20%	18.90%	16.20%		17.60%	16.60%
Neither	Number	50	56	61	40	30	19	256
	Percent	14.20%	14.90%	14.80%	11.20%	12.40%	8.00%	12.90%
Agree	Number	86	86	78	79	32	30	391
	Percent	24.40%	22.90%	18.90%	22.10%	13.20%	12.60%	19.80%
Strongly Agree	Number	83	69	50	54	32	19	307
	Percent	23.60%	18.40%	12.10%	15.10%	13.20%	8.00%	15.50%
Total	Number	352	375	413	357	242	238	1977
	Percent	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

a. Pearson's Chi-square=103.6 df=20, p<.05.

Table 5.17 Support for Marriage Equality and Education (2006). [a]

Support for Marriage Equality		0-12	13-16	17-20	Total
Strongly Disagree	Number	344	291	60	695
	Percent	40.80%	32.80%	24.10%	35.10%
Disagree	Number	151	136	42	329
	Percent	17.90%	15.30%	16.90%	16.60%
Neither	Number	106	121	33	260
	Percent	12.60%	13.60%	13.30%	13.10%
Agree	Number	151	182	57	390
	Percent	17.90%	20.50%	22.90%	19.70%
Strongly Agree	Number	91	158	57	306
	Percent	10.80%	17.80%	22.90%	15.50%
Total	Number	843	888	249	1980
	Percent	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

a. Pearson's Chi-square=46.8 df=8, p<.05.

Table 5.18 Support for Marriage Equality and Household Income (2006). [a]

Support for Marriage Equality		$284.25 - $6,395.63	$7,816.88 - $12,080.63	$13,501.88 - $18,476.25	$21,318.75 - $25,582.50	$31,267.50 - $159,292.27	Total
Strongly Disagree	Number	83	69	71	56	80	359
	Percent	33.70%	34.00%	32.30%	27.90%	27.40%	30.90%
Agree	Number	46	31	29	39	51	196
	Percent	18.70%	15.30%	13.20%	19.40%	17.50%	16.90%
Neither	Number	31	28	39	23	42	163
	Percent	12.60%	13.80%	17.70%	11.40%	14.40%	14.00%
Agree	Number	46	40	45	48	71	250
	Percent	18.70%	19.70%	20.50%	23.90%	24.30%	21.50%
Strongly Agree	Number	40	35	36	35	48	194
	Percent	16.30%	17.20%	16.40%	17.40%	16.40%	16.70%
Total	Number	246	203	220	201	292	1162
	Percent	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%

a. Pearson's Chi-square=13.1 df=16, p>.05.

In summary, those who are more conservative and Republican oppose marriage equality more than liberals and Democrats. People who consider themselves more religious and spiritual oppose marriage equality as those who are less religious and spiritual are less oppositional. Individuals who receive their news from books/printed materials, television, and family are more opposed to same-gender marriage in comparison to those who read magazines, other resources, and the internet. Overall, respondents who know less LGBT people are more opposed to marriage equality than those who know more LGBT people. Men are slightly more opposed to same-gender marriage than women. Older individuals are less supportive of marriage equality than younger individuals. Lastly, those who are more educated are less opposed to marriage equality than those who are less educated. How do these relationships compare when variables are examined together?

5.2 Ordinal Regression Results

In the first ordinal regression table, four models evaluate support between marriage equality and social demographics, political views, and religiosity. I also examine support for marriage equality and social demographics, political views, religion, and media consumption within four models. Last, I analyze support for marriage equality and social demographic controls, political views, religiosity, and LGBT contact exposure within five models. The total number (N) of respondents was 1,619 in all the models; however, models contain different amount of missing cases. What are the trends?

The bivariate results largely support my basic hypotheses. It is possible, however, that the relationships are spurious. In order to better test my hypotheses, I must estimate multivariate regression models to control for other explanations. I present the basic results in several tables. First, I begin by looking at social demographics, political views, and religiosity and how they influence support for marriage equality. Second, I perform additional analyses to examine the effects of media and contact on support for marriage equality. Third, my analyses test how contact with LGBT people affects support for marriage equality. I present these additional models separately, because the media and contact variables are not available for the overall sample, only for a subset. The preliminary models 1-3 are used for the control variables, political views, and religion variables, which support the bivariate results.

Looking at model 4 in Table 5.19, the logged odds of supporting marriage equality are .501 units higher for women compared to men. I am 95 percent certain that in the population, the logged odds of supporting marriage equality are between .258 and .743 units higher for women compared to men. The odds of supporting marriage equality are 65 percent higher for women compared to men. To make this calculation for the different odds between females compared to males for the first variable in the table, I use the following formula= e^estimate (.501)=1.65 then minus 1=.65*100= 65 percent. With every additional year of age, the logged odds of supporting marriage equality go down by .009 units. I am 95 percent confident that in

the population, the support for marriage equality goes down by between .018 and .0008 units for every year of age. The odds of supporting marriage equality go down by .9 percent (e^-.009=1.009-1=.009*100 =.9percent) with every additional year of age. The odds of supporting marriage equality go up by 9.7 percent with every additional year of education.

In my final model, we can see that Democrats and Independents do not differ in support for marriage equality after controlling for the other variables. Also, there is no difference in support for marriage equality between Republicans and Independents after controlling for the other variables. The odds of supporting marriage equality are 2.5 times greater for liberals compared to independents. The odds of supporting marriage equality are 21.8 percent lower for conservatives compared to independents; however, the relationship is not quite significant (p=0.86). The odds of supporting marriage equality are two times higher for very spiritual individuals compared to those who are not spiritual. The odds of supporting marriage equality are 63.3 percent higher for moderately spiritual persons supporting marriage equality compared to those who are not spiritual. The odds of supporting marriage equality are 39.7 percent higher for slightly spiritual persons compared to the people who are not spiritual. The odds of supporting marriage equality are 62.7 percent lower for very religious persons compared to those who are not religious. The odds of moderately religious persons supporting marriage equality compared to those who are not religious are 37.1 percent lower. The odds of supporting marriage equality comparing slightly religious persons to people who are not religious are not statistically significant. The odds of supporting marriage equality is 65.9 percent lower for persons who strongly agree to apply religious beliefs compared to those who strongly disagree with religious belief.

Answering disagree is not statistically significant compared to answering strongly disagreeing regarding belief application. The odds of supporting marriage equality go down 14.4 percent across each category of attendance variable. Church attendance is 14.4 percent lower for supporting marriage equality based on attendance compared to those who do not attend

church. Regarding social demographics, both gender and education remain significant from Model 1 through Model 4. Also, liberal political views and religiosity (very spiritual, moderately spiritual, slightly spiritual, very religious, moderately religious, strongly agree to apply religious beliefs, agree to apply beliefs, and church attendance) remain significant when adding social demographic controls.

Overall, females and those with higher levels of education hold supportive attitudes toward marriage equality. Age almost has a relationship with marriage equality when adding the independent variables. Liberal ideology is found more supportive as conservative ideology is found almost less supportive. Those who are spiritual are more supportive as religious persons are less supportive. Individuals applying religious beliefs in life and attending church are found less supportive toward marriage equality.

Table 5.19 Ordinal Regression of Support for Marriage Equality on Social Demographics, Political Views, and Religiosity (2006). [a]

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	Logged odds	s.e.	Logged odds	s.e.	Logged odds	s.e.	Logged odds	s.e.
Social Demographic Controls								
Female	0.249*	0.114					0.501*	0.124
Age	-0.018*	0.004					-0.009†	0.005
Education	0.091*	0.020					0.093*	0.021
Income	0.000	0.000					0.000	0.000
Political Views								
Democrat			-0.027	0.107			-0.060	0.138
Republican			-0.486*	0.118			-0.233	0.156
Liberal			0.872*	0.116			0.916*	0.146
Conservative			-0.530*	0.111			-0.246†	0.143
Religiosity								
Very Spiritual					0.758*	0.213	0.693*	0.267
Moderately Spiritual					0.501*	0.196	0.491*	0.244
Slightly Spiritual					0.475*	0.198	0.334*	0.246
Very Religious					-1.177*	0.229	-0.987*	0.289
Moderately Religious					-0.579*	0.182	-0.464*	0.224
Slightly Religious					-0.217	0.171	-0.174	0.208
Strongly Agree to Apply Beliefs					-1.176*	0.214	-1.073*	0.266
Agree to Apply Beliefs					-0.897*	0.192	-0.662*	0.235
Disagree to Apply Beliefs					-0.495*	0.189	-0.172	0.230
Religious Activities					0.031	0.028	0.044	0.036
Attendance					-0.125*	0.026	-0.156*	0.033
* p < .05 † p < .10								
N	1077		1619		1597		1063	
.-2 Log Likelihood	3260.362		231.847		2989.749		3013.770	
Pseudo R²								
Cox and Snell	0.042		0.118		0.153		0.264	
Nagelkerke	0.044		0.123		0.160		0.276	
McFadden	0.014		0.040		0.053		0.098	

I examine media variables in Table 5.20. This is to test whether media consumption can be related to support for marriage equality. Based on Table 5.20, the first two models are based on only hours of television consumption, which, like the cross-tab, shows no significant relationship with marriage equality. Support for marriage equality based on news sources, such as the internet and other news sources compared to television, is statistically significant in the third model and partly in the fourth model. However,

support for marriage equality based on other news sources loses its significance when stepping in social demographic controls, political views, and religiosity in my fourth model. The odds of supporting marriage equality in the bivariate relationship, between internet consumption and the reference group, are not statistically significant. The bivariate relationships with support for marriage equality and age and education, appear to be spurious.

The fifth and sixth models show no significant relationships between news source consumption and support for marriage equality. Therefore, the relationship between news from the internet and other news and marriage equality is spurious when adding additional social demographic, political, and religion variables. However, gender, age, education, conservative ideology, religiosity (moderately spiritual, very religious, moderately religious, strongly agree to apply religious beliefs, church attendance) continue to trend as significant predictors for supporting marriage equality. Interestingly, participation in religious activities is found to have a supportive relationship with marriage equality, but no relationship was found in the last model.

Overall, females, younger individuals, and those with higher levels of education held supportive attitudes toward marriage equality. Liberal ideology is found more supportive with attitudes toward marriage equality. Those who are moderately spiritual are more supportive as moderately to very religious persons are less supportive. Individuals strongly applying religious beliefs in life as well as attending church are found less supportive toward marriage equality. Internet news source is found to have a supportive relationship with attitudes toward marriage equality. However, this relationship is spurious when adding the remaining variables.

Table 5.20 Ordinal Regression of Support for Marriage Equality on Media Consumption, Social Demographics, Political Views, and Religiosity (2006). [a]

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5		Model 6	
	Logged odds	s.e.	Logged odds	s.e.	Logged odds	s.e.	Logged odds	s.e.	Logged odds	s.e.	Logged odds	s.e.
Media Consumption												
TV Hours	-0.034	0.029	0.028	0.045								
News Source												
Newspaper					0.157	0.162	0.112	0.213	0.055	0.216	0.077	0.226
Internet					0.890*	0.204	0.564*	0.247	0.382	0.253	0.233	0.268
Other					0.526*	0.211	0.225	0.251	0.186	0.254	0.359	0.265
Demographics												
Female			0.556*	0.176			0.135	0.169	0.126	0.171	0.511*	0.186
Age			-0.007	0.006			-0.020*	0.007	0.126*	0.007	-0.014*	0.007
Education			0.114*	0.030			0.076*	0.033	0.078*	0.007	0.095*	0.036
Income			0.000	0.000			0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Political Views												
Democrat			-0.260	0.194					0.114	0.202	0.085	0.212
Republican			-0.378†	0.223					-0.330	0.224	-0.050	0.236
Liberal			1.053*	0.213					0.787*	0.212	0.829*	0.220
Conservative			-0.285	0.204					-0.567*	0.208	-0.347	0.218
Religiosity												
Very Spiritual			0.864*	0.377							0.697†	0.412
Moderately Spiritual			0.321	0.337							0.904*	0.381
Slightly Spiritual			0.220	0.334							0.711†	0.385
Very Religious			-0.481	0.413							-1.459*	0.431
Moderately Religious			-0.006	0.316							-0.883*	0.345
Slightly Religious			0.145	0.288							-0.587†	0.319
Strongly Agree to Apply Beliefs			-1.250*	0.385							-1.022*	0.410
Agree to Apply Beliefs			-0.805*	0.335							-0.525	0.373
Disagree to Apply Beliefs			-0.213	0.328							-0.131	0.352
Religious Activities			0.134*	0.054							-0.045	0.053
Attendance			-0.237*	0.046							-0.100*	0.050
* p < .05 † p < .10												
N	811		537		762		498		498		490	
.-2 Log Likelihood	192.506		1496.942		85.637		1527.429		1474.000		1356.910	
Pseudo R²												
Cox and Snell	0.002		0.286		0.029		0.057		0.157		0.311	
Nagelkerke	0.002		0.299		0.031		0.059		0.164		0.325	
McFadden	0.001		0.108		0.010		0.019		0.054		0.119	

I focus on contact in Table 5.21. LGBT contact exposure: (1) in general, (2) at the workplace, (3) in the family, and (4) in the neighborhood, do not have a significant relationship with support with marriage equality. However, people who have contact with LGBT people in voluntary organizations significantly support same-gender marriage, as seen in the fifth model. All of the following variables are significant in all five models. In my final model, the odds of those who have contact with LGBT people in voluntary organizations are 9.3 percent higher in support for marriage equality than those who do not have contact. Based on the contact hypothesis, the more contact a person has with a group, the more likely they are to align themselves with that group favorably. However, four contact variables is discovered as spurious for supporting marriage equality and only one contact variable is significant. Contact in voluntary organizations is statistically significant from other forms of contact exposure, since those who are deciding to volunteer contribute to organizations that are most likely to share their own attitudes and behaviors. Perhaps some of these voluntary organizations were LGBT organizations. Being in contact with LGBT people in general, at work, in family, or neighborhood can largely be involuntary. However, an individual has a significant amount of influence in deciding which voluntary organization to participate in.

Overall, females, younger individuals, and those with higher levels of education hold supportive attitudes toward marriage equality. Liberal ideology is found more supportive with attitudes toward marriage equality as Republicans and conservatives nearly held a less supportive relationship with marriage equality. Those who are moderately and very spiritual are more supportive as moderately to very religious persons are less supportive. Individuals who strongly agree and agree with applying religious beliefs in life as well as attending church are found less supportive toward marriage equality. Individuals who have contact with LGBT people in voluntary organizations are supportive toward marriage equality.

Table 5.21 Ordinal Regression of Support for Marriage Equality on LGBT Contact, Social Demographics, Political Views, and Religiosity (2006). [a]

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4		Model 5	
	Logged odds	s.e.	Logged odds	s.e.	Logged odds	s.e.	Logged odds	s.e.	Logged odds	s.e.
Contact										
In General	0.035	0.040								
At Work			0.005	0.037						
In Family					0.117	0.082				
In Neighborhood							0.002	0.039		
Voluntary Organization									0.089*	0.042
Demographics										
Female	0.499*	0.124	0.501*	0.124	0.503*	0.124	0.500*	0.124	0.504*	0.124
Age	-0.009†	0.005	-0.009†	0.005	-0.009†	0.005	-0.009†	0.005	-0.009*	0.005
Education	0.092*	0.021	0.093*	0.021	0.092*	0.021	0.093*	0.021	0.093*	0.021
Income	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Political Views										
Democrat	-0.060	0.138	-0.060	0.138	-0.053	0.138	-0.060	0.138	-0.060	0.138
Republican	-0.227	0.156	-0.235	0.156	-0.238	0.156	-0.234	0.156	-0.258†	0.156
Liberal	0.918*	0.146	0.915*	0.146	0.900*	0.146	0.915*	0.146	0.897*	0.146
Conservative	-0.244†	0.143	-0.246†	0.143	-0.254†	0.143	-0.246†	0.143	-0.241†	0.143
Religiosity										
Very Spiritual	0.688*	0.268	0.690*	0.268	0.691*	0.267	0.693*	0.268	0.688*	0.268
Moderately Spiritual	0.484*	0.244	0.490*	0.244	0.491*	0.244	0.491*	0.244	0.499*	0.244
Slightly Spiritual	0.332	0.246	0.334	0.246	0.339	0.246	0.335	0.246	0.336	0.246
Very Religious	-0.983*	0.289	-0.985*	0.289	-0.976*	0.289	-0.987*	0.289	-0.961*	0.289
Moderately Religious	-0.457*	0.224	-0.463*	0.224	-0.458*	0.224	-0.463*	0.224	-0.465*	0.224
Slightly Religious	-0.169	0.208	-0.173	0.208	-0.166	0.208	-0.173	0.208	-0.171	0.208
Strongly Agree to Apply Beliefs	-1.065*	0.266	-1.073*	0.266	-1.088*	0.266	-1.073*	0.266	-1.086*	0.266
Agree to Apply Beliefs	-0.658*	0.236	-0.662*	0.236	-0.680*	0.236	-0.662*	0.236	-0.661*	0.235
Disagree to Apply Beliefs	-0.164	0.230	-0.173	0.230	-0.178	0.230	-0.172	0.230	-0.188	0.230
Religious Activities	0.044	0.036	0.044	0.036	0.042	0.036	0.044	0.036	0.047	0.036
Attendance	-0.157*	0.033	-0.156*	0.033	-0.155*	0.033	-0.156*	0.033	-0.161*	0.033
N	1,063		1,063		1,063		1,063		1,063	
.-2 Log Likelihood	3013.005		3013.748		3011.899		3013.768		3009.552	
Pseudo R²										
Cox and Snell	0.265		0.264		0.266		0.264		0.267	
Nagelkerke	0.277		0.276		0.278		0.276		0.279	
McFadden	0.098		0.098		0.098		0.098		0.099	

* p < .05   † p < .10

In summary, the only LGBT contact variable that has a significant relationship with marriage equality is voluntary organizations. Regarding social demographics, both gender and education remain significant from Model 1 to Model 5 in Table 5.21. In Table 5.21, age is almost significant (p=.50 to .58) in Models 1 through 4. Age has a significant relationship with supporting marriage equality in the fifth model. This is different from Table 5.19 as Model 1 started out with age as statistically significant and moving to Model 4 made it only significant at the p<.10 level. Age becomes significant when adding all variables, including LGBT contact exposure in voluntary organizations in Table 5.21. Also, liberal political views and religiosity (very spiritual, moderately spiritual, very religious, moderately religious, strongly agree to apply religious beliefs, agree to apply beliefs, and church attendance) remain significant when adding social demographic controls. In addition, the odds of most significant variables in the last model of Table 5.21 are comparable to the last model in Table 5.19. For both tables, with every additional year of age, the odds of supporting marriage equality decrease by 0.9 percent. In addition, the odds of supporting marriage equality go up by 9.7 percent with every additional year of education for both tables. The remaining variables with significant odds are quite comparable in percentages.

CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Discussion

In summary, I indicate discriminatory consequences LGBT families experience when denied benefits, rights, and privileges that heterosexual families obtain through the federal institution of marriage. I also provide a brief description of the various types of negative attitudes toward LGBT people. My second chapter examines trends in attitudes toward LGBT civil rights from 1973 to 2012 to provide a context of where we are now and how we got here. I discuss major events that shaped public opinion in three distinct phases: (1) stonewalled, (2) fear and backlash: AIDS crisis, and (3) liberalization in the 1990s to the present.

Chapter Three is a literature review comprised of social forces that shape people's attitudes toward marriage equality with an emphasis on four factors: religiosity, political views, media consumption, and LGBT contact exposure. Social demographic variables are also discussed. My fourth chapter described the 2006 General Social Survey (GSS) data that I use for my analysis. I describe my data, measurement of independent variables and social demographic variables, and ordinal regression methods for this project. In Chapter Five, I examine bivariate relationships between support for marriage equality and political views (party affiliation, political ideology), religiosity (spirituality, religiosity, belief application, religious activities, church attendance), media (TV hours, news source), LGBT contact (in general, at work, in family, in neighborhood, voluntary organizations), and social demographic variables (gender, age, education, household income). Then I use ordinal regression to examine these relationships with controls to identify spurious relationships.

Since same-gender couples are not afforded the federal right to marry, then LGBT families are denied 1,138 statutory provisions that determine the attainment of benefits, rights,

and privileges. Understanding people's attitudes toward marriage equality is important for two main reasons. First, people's attitudes can set the parameters in which elected officials can act. Second, the lack of marriage equality has real implications for people and families throughout the life course. Some implications pertain to the inability to obtain spousal benefits, family resources, housing, adoption, immigration, health care benefits, inheritance, and property. As society negotiates the meaning of family, LGBT families struggle with feelings of self-worth and acceptance.

As hypothesized and found in previous literature, support for marriage equality is affected by many social demographic variables, political views, religiosity, media consumption, and LGBT contact exposure. However, not every individual variable is significant as hypothesized. Gender, age, and education consistently hold a relationship with attitudes toward marriage equality, even while stepping in political views, religiosity, media consumption, and LGBT contact exposure. Females are more supportive toward marriage equality than men. Older people have less supportive attitudes toward marriage equality than younger individuals. Those with higher education levels exhibit more support than individuals with lower levels of education. No effects are found between household income and attitudes toward marriage equality.

Surprisingly, I found no significant difference between attitudes toward same-gender marriage among Democrats, Republicans, and Independents, when examining them along with the other variables. However, Republicans are nearly sharing less tolerant attitudes toward marriage equality. People holding a conservative ideology are very close to holding a less supportive relationship with marriage equality when controlling for social demographics, political views, religiosity, and personal contact exposure to LGBT people. Individuals with liberal ideology consistently hold supportive attitudes toward marriage equality, while conservative ideology really has no impact on attitudes toward marriage equality.

While examining religiosity, media consumption, LGBT contact exposure, and controlling for social demographics, the religious variables that are found to have a significant

84

impact on attitudes toward marriage equality include: spirituality, religiosity, belief application, participation in religious activities, and church attendance. Beginning with spirituality, those who identify as very and moderately spiritual exhibit more supportive attitudes toward marriage equality than those who are slightly or not spiritual. Overall, those who identify as very religious and moderately religious are less supportive than those who are slightly or not religious. In addition, individuals who strongly agree with applying religious beliefs in life were less supportive than those who disagree and strongly disagree to applying religious beliefs in life. Individuals who participate in religious activities are only supportive of marriage equality when adding TV hour consumption to social demographics, political views, and religiosity. Those who attended church consistently hold less supportive attitudes toward same-gender marriage.

It was found when controlling for gender, age, education, and income, individuals who consume news from the internet have supportive attitudes toward marriage equality. However, this relationship is found spurious when adding in the remaining political and religious variables. Last, the only LGBT contact exposure variable that has a relationship with marriage equality is in voluntary organizations, while examining social demographics, political views, and religiosity. Those who have contact with LGBT people in voluntary organizations hold more supportive attitudes toward same-gender marriage. Perhaps this may be attributed to more teamwork experiences while working toward a common goal with a common interest. Perhaps this commonality does not exist in the other types of LGBT contact.

Moving forward, I expect support for marriage equality will continue to increase because in 2012, about half of Americans support marriage equality as well as the Democratic Platform officially endorsed marriage equality. This is based on my finding that both liberals and Democrats were more supportive in 2006. However, in 2006, 58 percent of Americans opposed marriage equality while 39 percent approved marriage equality (Gallup 2006). Therefore, attitudes have jumped by about 11 percent since 2006. As more people are exposed to media, inclusive to LGBT individuals and families, then perhaps LGBT people will become less ambiguous and more humanized. As more LGBT people come out to family, friends, co-

workers, neighbors, peers within organizations, and in general, then perhaps this will lead to greater tolerance towards LGBT people and approval of LGBT rights, such as marriage equality.

LGBT social movement organizations may have an advantage to create positive change based upon the results of my analysis. By understanding the various social factors affecting public opinion, then activists have a more comprehensive erudition when organizing media campaigns; formulating messages to target audiences of social demographics, political affiliations, and religious groups; engaging and recruiting volunteers for events; motivating allies; and addressing proposed public policy. For example, the most effective news sources for media campaigns may be the internet and television. When formulating messages about LGBT causes, identifying target audiences will create the greatest impact, such as females, adolescents and younger adults, and college and university students. However, reaching beyond demographic lines is important but potentially less effective. LGBT inclusive messages within media campaigns will be most influential when targeted towards liberals and Democrats rather than conservatives and Republicans. Yet, Independents cannot be overlooked. Messages promoting LGBT causes, such as petitioning for marriage equality, will have a positive impact on those who consider themselves spiritual rather than religious. However, more liberal denominations and LGBT affirming churches will respond better to messages embracing LGBT inclusivity.

Challenges of engaging and recruiting volunteers for fundraisers, public demonstrations, and festivals may be overcome by innovative strategies promoted by friends (other news source) or the internet. Television advertisements and promotions on moderate to liberal network stations may be effective for LGBT campaigns. Social media is certainly a highly utilized tool that organizations use for mobilizing and planning. Motivating heterosexual allies to support and promote LGBT equality is pertinent to evoking further tolerance as discourse is powerful with family and social circles. LGBT people will need to humanize themselves in voluntary organizations by coming out and cooperatively engaging in teamwork activities with

heterosexual peers. Therefore, leaders within social movement organizations must implement creative marketing tactics that inspire more LGBT individuals to get involved in voluntary organizations of all kinds throughout communities. Addressing proposed public policy is critical for making positive change for LGBT people, whether this occurs at city council meetings, school board meetings, employer conferences, and/or Congressional hearings. Ergo, social movement leaders and participants must understand how to strategize for the most successful media campaigns to inform and engage the public composed of diverse social demographics, political affiliations, and religious groups. These strategies will contribute to the fight for marriage equality and beyond.

6.2 Limitations

Overall, implications of this study begin with the limitations of the GSS data as I was unable to determine my own survey questions, including the manner in which the questions were asked, such as refraining from labeling atheists as "dangerous." The 2006 GSS had few media questions available as well as had a limited number of respondents. I was unable to examine types of news, such liberal and conservative networks. Furthermore, 2006 was the most recent sample available with these particular variables. Ideally, I would have examined attitudes from 2010. I was unable to determine attitudes toward: causes of homosexuality, the repeal of DADT, whether LGBT people deserve equal rights, if LGBT people should be allowed to adopt children, or if individuals agreed with employment discrimination and termination of someone based upon their sexual orientation or gender identity. As marriage equality is legalized in more states or perhaps federally in the future, then sociologists may examine how attitudes continue to evolve from more sociological dimensions.

6.3 Conclusion

Future research should consider analyzing the differences among additional control variables, such as sexual orientation, gender identity, race, ethnicity, and geographic region. Analyzing these variations would evaluate multi-dimensional influential factors affecting tolerant attitudes. Unfortunately, some of these options were not available through the 2006 GSS

sample. Examining political participation, voting behaviors, and campaigning experiences may be beneficial, because engagement in political activities may strengthen the relationship between political views and support for marriage equality. Future research should also consider examining attitudes toward marriage equality and other LGBT rights and religious affiliation, missionary experience, spiritual activities, amount of praying or meditating, and how often an individual reads the Bible and if scriptures are taken literally or symbolically.

Researchers may also consider analyzing ideological types of news consumption, such as liberal and conservative media networks as this may contribute to amount of exposure of LGBT related stories. Identifying deeper, more meaningful experiences of respondents may be beneficial, by examining: living with a LGBT roommate, caring for a LGBT family member or friend, or losing a close LGBT loved one. To expand beyond marriage equality, sociologists may examine attitudes toward the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), which would outlaw discrimination and wrongful termination based upon sexual orientation within the workplace.

APPENDIX A

2006 GENERAL SOCIAL SURVEY QUESTIONS

The following 2006 GSS questions apply to social demographics.

1) Code Respondent's Sex.

2) Birth cohort of respondent.

3) Respondent's education.

A. What is the highest grade in elementary school or high school that (you) finished

and got credit for?

B. IF FINISHED 9th-12th GRADE OR DK*:

Did (you) ever get a high school diploma or a GED certificate? [SEE D BELOW.]

C. Did (you) complete one or more years of college for credit--not including

schooling such as Business College, technical or vocational school?

IF YES: How many years did (you) complete?

4) In which of these groups did your total family income, from all sources, fall last year

before taxes, that is? Just tell me the letter.

The following 2006 GSS question measure my dependent variable of tolerance.

1) Homosexual couples should have the right to marry one another. Do you agree or

disagree?

Tolerance of Civil Rights:

Answer options: 1) Allowed, 2) Not Allowed, 3) Do Not Know, 4) Not Applicable

A. Make a Speech in the Community:

1) And what about a man who admits that he is a homosexual? Suppose this admitted

homosexual wanted to make a speech in your community. Should he be allowed to

speak, or not?

2) There are always some people whose ideas are considered bad or dangerous by

other people. For instance, somebody who is against all churches and religion . . . If

such a person wanted to make a speech in your (city/town/community) against churches and religion, should he be allowed to speak, or not?

3) Now, I should like to ask you some questions about a man who admits he is a Communist. Suppose this admitted Communist wanted to make a speech in your community. Should he be allowed to speak, or not?

4) Consider a person who advocates doing away with elections and letting the military run the country. If such a person wanted to make a speech in your community, should he be allowed to speak, or not?

B. Teach in a College or University:

1) And what about a man who admits that he is a homosexual? Should such a person be allowed to teach in a college or university, or not?

2) There are always some people whose ideas are considered bad or dangerous by other people. For instance, somebody who is against all churches and religion . . . Should such a person be allowed to teach in a college or university, or not?

3) Consider a person who advocates doing away with elections and letting the military run the country. Should such a person be allowed to teach in a college or university, or not?

C. Book in Public Library:

1) And what about a man who admits that he is a homosexual? If some people in your community suggested that a book he wrote in favor of homosexuality should be taken out of your public library, would you favor removing this book, or not?

2) There are always some people whose ideas are considered bad or dangerous by other people. For instance, somebody who is against all churches and religion . . . If some people in your community suggested that a book he wrote against churches and religion should be taken out of your public library, would you favor removing this book, or not?

3) Now, I should like to ask you some questions about a man who admits he is a Communist. Suppose he wrote a book which is in your public library. Somebody in your community suggests that the book should be removed from the library. Would you favor removing it, or not?

4) Consider a person who advocates doing away with elections and letting the military run the country. Suppose he wrote a book advocating doing away with elections and letting the military run the country. Somebody in your community suggests that the book be removed from the public library. Would you favor removing it, or not?

The following 2006 GSS questions measure my independent variables.

Religiosity:

1) To what extent do you consider yourself a spiritual person? Are you . . .

2) To what extent do you consider yourself a religious person? Are you . . .

3) I try hard to carry my religious beliefs over into all my other dealings in life.

4) How often do you take part in the activities and organizations of a church or place of worship other than attending services?

5) How often do you attend religious services?

Political views:

1) Generally speaking, do you usually think of yourself as a Republican, Democrat, Independent, or what?

2) We hear a lot of talk these days about liberals and conservatives. I'm going to show you a seven-point scale on which the political views that people might hold are arranged from extremely liberal--point 1--to extremely conservative-- point 7. Where would you place yourself on this scale?

Media consumption:

1) On the average day, about how many hours do you personally watch television?

2) We are interested in how people get information about events in the news. Where do you get most of your information about current news events – newspapers, magazines, the Internet, books or other printed materials, TV, radio, government agencies, family, friends, colleagues, or some other source?

Contact with LGBT people:

1) I'm going to ask you some questions about all the people that you are acquainted with, meaning that you know their name and would stop and talk at least for a moment if you ran into the person on the street or in a shopping mall. Some of these questions may seem unusual but they are an important way to help us understand more about social networks in America. Please answer the questions as best you can.

    a. How many are you pretty certain are gay men or women?

2) Next, we are going to ask about people that you are acquainted with through work.

    a. How many are you pretty certain are gay men or women?

3) Next, we are going to ask questions about people in your family, including relatives and in-laws.

    a. How many are gay men or women?

4) Next, we are going to ask questions about people that you are acquainted with through your neighborhood.

    a. How many are you pretty certain are gay men or women?

5) Next, we are going to ask about people that you are acquainted with through schools, clubs, associations, or places of worship.

    a. How many are you pretty certain are gay men or women?

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