



Attitudes Toward Same-Sex Marriage, Polyamorous Marriage, and Conventional Marriage Ideals Among College Students in the Southeastern United States

Gayle Kaufman¹ · Alex Aiello¹ · Camryn Ellis¹ · D'Lane Compton²

Accepted: 4 March 2022

© The Author(s), under exclusive licence to Springer Science+Business Media, LLC, part of Springer Nature 2022

Abstract

This study examines the idea that attitudes toward marriage are liberalizing in the US in the face of federal recognition of same-sex marriage legislation by examining attitudes toward conventional marriage ideals, same-sex marriage, and polyamorous marriage. It draws on a sample of liberal arts college students ($n = 330$) in the southeastern United States as a representation of a cohort more flexible to change and greater social tolerance. Findings indicate shifts away from conventional marriage and toward marriage as more inclusive of same-sex couples. At the same time, less than half support polyamorous marriage. Unsurprisingly, religious students are more likely to support conventional marriage ideals and less likely to support same-sex marriage and students with conservative political ideology are less likely to support same-sex marriage or polyamorous marriage. In particular, the negative impact of political ideology on these attitudes is stronger for men and straight students. Women are more likely than men to support same-sex marriage. LGBTQ students are less likely to support conventional views of marriage and more likely to support polyamorous marriage than heterosexual students. While college students today have entered adulthood in the age of marriage equality, and are accepting of same-sex unions, students indicate more mixed feelings about what marriage encompasses, the value of marriage, and whether to support polyamorous marriage.

Keywords Marriage attitudes · Same-sex marriage · Polyamorous marriage · Polyamory · Religion · Politics · LGBT contact

✉ Gayle Kaufman
gakaufman@davidson.edu

¹ Department of Sociology, Davidson College, Davidson, NC 28035, USA

² Department of Sociology, University of New Orleans, New Orleans, LA 70148, USA

Introduction

While marriage rates have fallen in the US over the past few decades (Curtin & Sutton, 2020), marriage norms remain relatively stable and institutionalized (Cherlin, 2020). However, attitudes toward marriage and what marriage means may be in a moment of flux as they appear to have liberalized. For example, attitudes toward same-sex marriage have changed more rapidly and more broadly than other public attitudes in the US (Rosenfeld, 2017). Support for recognition of marriage between same-sex couples increased sharply in the 1990s (Adamczyk & Liao, 2019), was more favorable than unfavorable by 2010 (Baunach, 2012) and gained majority approval by 2014 (Compton, 2015; Twenge & Blake, 2021), shortly before the US Supreme Court ruling that made marriage equality a reality for all in the US. A majority of Americans now support marriage between same-sex couples and other LGBT legal protections (Kaufman & Compton, 2020), with the latest Gallup poll showing 70% approval (McCarthy, 2021).

Evidence from the US and Europe suggests that the legalization of same-sex marriage may increase support of marriage equality and decrease prejudice against lesbians and gay men (Hooghe & Meeusen, 2013; Kazyak & Stange, 2018). Yet, many still question the legitimacy of LGBT families and consider LGBT families as a threat to “family values” (Haines et al., 2018). Nevertheless, younger generations of Americans and college students in particular have more positive attitudes toward marriage between same-sex couples (Rosenfeld, 2017; Woodford et al., 2012), with almost universal acceptance among Americans aged 18–34 years old (McCarthy, 2021). Today’s college students have grown up as the “gay marriage generation” (Hart-Brinson, 2018). Overall, today’s college students have grown-up in a different, more tolerant and friendly social climate for same-sex marriage and LGBT issues (Brown-Saracino et al., 2021).

Furthermore, while there is now abundant literature on attitudes toward same-sex marriage, there is more limited research on attitudes toward conventional marriage ideals and polyamorous marriage. Some polling suggests mixed views regarding marriage, where 39% of Americans agree that marriage is becoming obsolete and yet two-thirds are optimistic about the institution of marriage (Pew Research Center, 2010). On the other hand, there is low but increasing support for polygamy, which Gallup added to its polling in 2003. There has been a recent increase in the percent of US adults who say polygamy¹ is morally acceptable from 7% in 2010 to 20% in 2020 (Newport, 2020). However, recent research on polyamory or consensual non-monogamy often focuses on non-marital relationships without asking about marriage between three or more people (Cohen & Wilson, 2017).

Amidst changing attitudes, two areas of remaining contention are religion and politics. In particular, Evangelical Protestants and Republicans still lag in support for same-sex marriage (Pew Research Center, 2019). However, young adults are less likely to identify as Republicans or religious (Pew Research Center, 2018). On the

¹ Between 2003 and 2010, Gallup measured polygamy as “one husband has more than one wife” while wording changed in 2011 to indicate “a married person has more than one spouse”.

other hand, increasing numbers of Americans have a family member or close friend who is LGBT, and this contact is associated with support for same-sex marriage (Cox & Kamboj, 2017). Not surprisingly, younger people are more likely to have LGBT friends and family (Lewis, 2011) and younger people's attitudes are more influenced by this contact (Becker & Scheufele, 2011). At the same time, we have very little information about the predictors of attitudes toward polyamorous marriage. This study seeks to address this gap, while also considering attitudes toward conventional and same-sex marriage.

We make two major contributions to the literature, first in our focus on polyamorous marriage and second in our focus on attitudes toward conventional marriage. Our study also addresses a dearth in LGBT attitudinal research (Jones, 2021). We ask: How do religion and politics influence marriage attitudes? How do LGBT family and friends influence attitudes? How do gender and sexual orientation mediate these relationships?

Attitudes Toward LGBT Individuals and Same-Sex Marriage

Herek (2009) defines sexual stigma as “stigma attached to any nonheterosexual behavior, identity, relationship, or community” (p. 67). Regardless of personal identities or attitudes, heteronormativity—the assumption that heterosexuality is natural—devalues individuals who are not heterosexual, and this extends to relationships and behaviors, such as same-sex marriage (Bartholomay, 2018). Further, heterosexism, a form of structural sexual stigma, creates and reinforces power differentials through the existence of sexual stigma in social institutions (Herek, 2009). This was evident in laws against same-sex marriage as well as the lack of non-discrimination laws until recently. It has also been evident in public opinion.

While attitudes have shifted toward being more supportive of LGBT individuals and same-sex marriage, there are differences in support of individuals who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender and their rights to marriage and adoption. For example, public opinion across 23 countries generally shows more negative views of gay men than lesbians (Bettinsoli et al., 2020). Based on a survey of college students in the southeastern US, Helms and Waters (2016) find that attitudes toward bisexual men were least favorable, followed by gay men, with no difference in attitudes toward lesbians and bisexual women.

Further, American public attitudes show more favorable views of gay men and lesbians than of transgender people (Lewis et al., 2017). Even when public opinion is generally supportive of marriage rights for gay and lesbian couples, based on research in Australia and Norway, there may be less support for gay and lesbian parents (Morse et al., 2007) and LGBT adoption rights (Hollekim et al., 2012). There is more support for lesbian couples raising children than for gay male couples raising children (Webb et al., 2017), perhaps because gay men are seen as less suited to adopting children (Crawford & Solliday, 1996). Yet, some small-scale studies of college students in both Australia and the US find favorable views of gay and lesbian parents (Camilleri & Ryan, 2006; Massey, 2007). We review literature on

religion and attitudes, politics and attitudes, and gender, sexuality, LGBT contact and attitudes.

Religion and Attitudes

Religious affiliation is a key part of many people's identities. As college students depart from home for the first time, they have the opportunity to decide for themselves with what religion they would like to affiliate and the extent to which they want to participate. Religious beliefs have a strong impact on people's social and political attitudes, particularly attitudes towards LGBT people. In fact, Olson et al. (2006) find that religious affiliation is a stronger predictor of attitudes about same-sex marriage than other demographics. Previous research shows that stronger religious and spiritual affiliation is correlated with negative attitudes towards LGBT individuals (Smith-Osborne & Rosenwald, 2009).

Both religious affiliation and religiosity are important predictors of attitudes. Certain religions may teach more restrictive views of gender and sexuality (Legerski & Harker, 2018). Fundamentalist Protestant Christianity is correlated with the strongest negative attitudes towards LGBT people (Worthen et al., 2017). Non-Protestant Christians are shown to have more favorable attitudes than Protestants (Olson et al., 2006). In addition to religious affiliation, religiosity, or the degree to which one is involved with religion, is another important predictor of marriage attitudes. Those who are more religious have stronger negative attitudes about same-sex marriage (Twenge & Blake, 2021; Whitehead, 2010). In particular, those who have more biblical literacy and more frequent worship attendance hold more LGBT prejudices and negative attitudes towards LGBT marriage (Sherkat et al., 2010; Worthen et al., 2017). At the same time, young adults with greater religiosity are more likely to have positive and favorable views of the institution of marriage (Shimkowski et al., 2018).

Politics and Attitudes

One of the strongest predictors of support for LGBT rights is political ideology (Schwartz, 2010; Woodford et al., 2013). Even as other groups have shown increasing support for same-sex marriage, political conservatives have been slower to support these rights (Sherkat et al., 2011). Political attitudes are often shaped before adulthood and may rely on socialization, parental participation, and broader world-views rather than direct experience (Cicognani et al., 2012; Sears et al., 1980).

Previous research shows that Republicans are more likely than Democrats to oppose same-sex marriage (Baunach, 2012; Sherkat, 2017), and this has been the case most recently with Trump supporters (Kaufman & Compton, 2020), who hold more traditional views of masculinity that emphasize heterosexuality (Pascoe, 2017). Likewise, those with politically conservative views tend to have more negative views of gay, lesbian, transgender, and nonbinary individuals and rights (Pearte et al., 2013; Perez-Arche & Miller, 2021). In addition, those who hold conservative political views are more likely to oppose same-sex marriage than those with more liberal views (Armenia

& Troia, 2017; Becker & Scheufele, 2011; Sherkat et al., 2011). A wide variety of samples, including college students (Grigoropoulos, 2018; Woodford et al., 2013; Worthen et al., 2017) and graduate students (Dessel & Rodenborg, 2017; Smith-Osborne & Rosenwald, 2009), show this pattern. On the other hand, those who show political interest and hold a more liberal political ideology are more supportive of same-sex marriage (Lee & Hicks, 2011).

Gender, Sexual Orientation, and LGBT Contact

In general, women are more likely than men to hold positive views of LGBT individuals and LGBT rights (Hicks & Lee, 2006; Jones et al., 2018; Riggs & Sion, 2017) and less likely to show homophobia, transphobia, or non-binary stigma (Konopka et al., 2020; Worthen, 2021). While college women hold more positive attitudes than college men toward gay and bisexual men, there is no gender difference in attitudes toward lesbians and bisexual women (Helms & Waters, 2016). Women also show more affirming attitudes toward LGBT policies about military and marriage compared to men (Dessel & Rodenborg, 2017). In early scale development, Lannutti and Lachlan (2007) find that women are more supportive of same-sex marriage than men across college and non-college samples. This finding has been reproduced at the state level (Brumbaugh et al., 2008), national level (Armenia & Troia, 2017), and in other countries (Grigoropoulos, 2018). Women are more supportive of same-sex parenting than men (Ioverno, 2018) and gender differences are larger in considering adoption compared to donor insemination or surrogacy (Costa et al., 2018). While there is limited research on attitudes toward polyamorous marriage, one study of college students in the US finds that men are more supportive of polygamy than women (Negy et al., 2013).

LGBT individuals are more liberal on a variety of political and social attitudes (Jones, 2021). Not surprisingly, those who identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual have more favorable views of same-sex marriage than heterosexuals (Sherkat, 2017) and are more supportive of consensual non-monogamy (Cohen & Wilson, 2017). In addition, lesbians and gay men are more supportive of same-sex parenting than heterosexual people (Pistella et al., 2018). Contact with LGBT acquaintances is associated with more positive views of LGBT individuals (DellaPosta, 2018; Lewis et al., 2017). Furthermore, those who personally know a transgender person have more positive attitudes and warmer feelings about transgender people (Barbir et al., 2017; Lewis et al., 2017; Tadlock et al., 2017). Contact with LGBT individuals is positively associated with support of marriage equality (Grigoropoulos, 2018). In particular, having gay friends or family members is associated with greater approval of same-sex marriage (Lee & Mutz, 2019; Rosenfeld, 2017). In addition, contact with same-sex couples and same-sex parents is associated with greater support for same-sex parenting (Vecho et al., 2019).

Present Study

Our study explored relations between gender, sexual orientation, LGBT contact, religiosity, political ideology, and attitudes toward conventional

marriage, marriage between same-sex couples, and marriage between three people. Although previous research has shown that men, heterosexual individuals, individuals with no/limited contact with LGBT family and friends, highly religious individuals, and politically conservative individuals have more negative attitudes toward same-sex marriage, there is a lack of research that examines attitudes toward polyamorous marriage along with broader views of marriage and same-sex marriage.

In the present study, we examined three attitudinal scales toward marriage. The first scale sought to consider broader views and values regarding marriage as a traditional institution in which marriage is monogamous, sacred, and forever. The second scale sought to measure attitudes toward marriage between same-sex couples, with consideration of the impact of same-sex marriage on the family and religious freedom. The third scale inspected potential support for polyamorous relationships, legal rights, and marriage.

Based on previous research, we hypothesized that Evangelical Protestants and those students who are more religious would show greater support for conventional marriage and less support for same-sex and polyamorous marriage. Additionally, we hypothesized that Republicans and those students who are more politically conservative would show greater support for conventional marriage and less support for same-sex and polyamorous marriage. We further hypothesized that women, LGBQ students, and students who have LGBT family or friends would show less support for conventional marriage and more support for same-sex and polyamorous marriage. Due to the potential for more nuanced findings, we also considered various interactions between gender, sexual orientation, religiosity, and political ideology.

Methods

Participants

Undergraduate students at a liberal arts college in the southeastern United States participated in the study. All students aged 18 years or older were eligible to participate. Almost all students at this institution are between the ages of 18 and 22. Research was approved by the Institutional Review Board, and participants remained anonymous. A link to the survey was sent to the entire student body in the fall of 2020.

The final sample consisted of 330 respondents. The sample was predominantly white (73%), reflecting the demographic composition of the student body, and women (70%), reflecting an overrepresentation that is consistent with studies that show women college students have higher survey response rates (Porter & Umbach, 2006). While a majority of respondents (65%) identified as heterosexual, the remaining 35% identified as either gay, lesbian, bisexual, questioning, or queer. The majority of respondents reported no religious affiliation, followed by mainline Protestant and then Catholic. The majority of respondents (58%) identified as Democrats while 22% identified as Independent and 6% identified as Republican.

Procedures

The authors created a survey on Qualtrics. Participants received an email that described the study as a project on attitudes toward marriage, parenting, and LGBT rights. Participants were asked to click on a link to complete the survey. Respondents were informed that their participation was voluntary and that they could choose not to answer any question and/or quit the survey at any time. At the end of the survey, respondents had the option of clicking on a separate link in order to enter their name for a chance to win one of five \$20 gift cards.

Measures

Attitudes Toward Conventional Marriage

Our three dependent variables were based on attitudinal scales. The first scale considered *support for conventional views of marriage* and was based on three statements: “Marriage should always be monogamous,” “Marriage should be forever,” and “Marriage is a sacred institution.” Responses ranged from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). A scale was created by summing responses to the three and dividing by three to keep the original scale (Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.824$).

Attitudes Toward Same-Sex Marriage

The second scale measured *attitudes toward same-sex marriage* and was based on three statements: “Marriage should be between a man and a woman,” “Same-sex marriage undermines the meaning of the traditional family,” and “The legalization of same-sex marriage jeopardizes religious freedom.” Responses ranged from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). All statements were reverse coded so that higher values indicate disagreement and thus greater support for same-sex marriage. A scale was created by summing responses to the three and dividing by three to keep the original scale (Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.838$).

Attitudes Toward Polyamorous Marriage

The third scale measured *support for polyamorous marriage* and was based on two statements: “I think that committed relationships with more than two individuals should have the same legal rights as married couples” and “I would support marriage between three people.” Responses ranged from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). A scale was created by summing responses to the two and dividing by two to keep the original scale (Cronbach’s $\alpha = 0.866$).

Gender, Sexual Orientation, and Race

Respondents were asked, “what is your gender?” and could answer man, woman, non-binary, or other (with a space to write in). Only six individuals indicated they were non-binary or another gender and thus were excluded from analysis. Therefore, we measure gender with a dichotomous variable where 1 indicates *woman*. Respondents were asked, “what is your sexual orientation?” and could choose straight/heterosexual (65.2%), gay (2.7%), lesbian (7.8%), bisexual (13.0%), questioning (6.1%), or other (5.1%). Most of those who indicated other wrote that they preferred the term queer. We created a dichotomous variable where 1 indicates *LGBQ identity* (gay, lesbian, bisexual, questioning, queer, other).² Respondents were asked their race/ethnicity and could choose one of more of the following: American Indian or Alaska Native, Asian/Asian American, Black/African American, Hispanic/Latinx, Middle Eastern or North African, Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander, White, or other. Due to the small numbers in each racial/ethnic group, we created a dichotomous variable where 1 indicates a *person of color (POC)*.

LGBT Family and Friends

In order to identify relationships with LGBT individuals, respondents answered the following four yes/no statements: “I have a family member who identifies as lesbian, gay, or bisexual,” “I have a close friend who identifies as lesbian, gay, or bisexual,” “I have a family member who identifies as transgender,” and “I have a close friend who identifies as transgender.” Those who indicated yes to either of the first two statements were coded as 1 for *having family or friend who is LGB* and those who indicated yes to either of the last two statements were coded as 1 for *having family or friend who is trans*.

Religious Affiliation and Religiosity

Religious affiliation was measured with the question: “What is your religious affiliation?” Responses included no religion, Catholic, Mainline Protestant, Evangelical Protestant, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, and other religion. We created a series of dummy variables for no religion, Catholic, Evangelical Protestant, and other religion (combining Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, and other), with Mainline Protestant as the reference category. We also included a measure of *religiosity* as identified by the question, “How religious are you?” on a scale of 0 (not at all) to 10 (extremely).

² We use the label “LGBQ” in this case because we are looking at sexual orientation and comparing those who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or queer with those who identify as straight or heterosexual. Due to small numbers, we were unable to look at trans students in our gender comparisons.

Table 1 Attitudes toward marriage

Attitudes toward conventional marriage (percent who agree/strongly agree)	
Marriage should always be monogamous	42.4
Marriage should be forever	37.4
Marriage is a sacred institution	41.5
Attitudes toward same-sex marriage (percent who disagree/strongly disagree)	
Marriage should always be between a man and a woman	81.4
Same-sex marriage undermines the meaning of the traditional family	86.0
The legalization of same-sex marriage jeopardizes religious freedom	94.0
Attitudes toward polyamorous relationships/marriage (percent who agree/strongly agree)	
I think that committed relationships with more than two individuals should have the same legal rights as married couples	47.0
I would support marriage between three people	43.9

Political Party and Political Ideology

Political affiliation was measured as a series of dummy variables for Republican, Independent, and other (including Green and Libertarian), with Democratic as the reference category. We measured *political ideology* with the question, “What is your political ideology?” on a scale of 1 (very liberal) to 10 (very conservative).

Method of Analysis

In the first set of analyses, we compare means for support for conventional marriage, support for same-sex marriage, and support for polyamorous marriage across gender and sexual orientation. In the second set of analyses, we show results from OLS regression models of the three attitudinal scales. In supplementary analyses, we test interactions between gender and religiosity, gender and political ideology, sexual orientation and religiosity, and sexual orientation and political ideology. Graphs are included to illustrate the significant interactions.

Results

Preliminary Analyses

Table 1 shows descriptive results of our three marriage attitude scales. Most respondents did not support conventional views of marriage. Less than half of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statements about marriage being monogamous (42%), forever (37%), and sacred (42%). As expected for students entering college post-marriage equality, the responses to the attitudinal statements about same-sex marriage showed an overall positive view of same-sex marriage. Over three-quarters of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed

Table 2 Descriptive statistics and t test results for marriage attitudes by gender and sexual orientation

Variable	Support for conventional marriage (possible range = 1–5)		Support for same-sex marriage (possible range = 1–5)		Support for polyamorous marriage (possible range = 1–5)	
	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
Women	3.00	0.93	4.70	0.55	3.43	1.05
Men	3.39	1.20	4.02	1.13	2.80	1.20
<i>t</i>	2.69		– 5.22		– 4.23	
<i>dfs</i>	283		284		285	
<i>p</i>	0.008		0.000		0.000	
LGBQ	2.45	0.86	4.81	0.53	3.98	0.89
Straight	3.42	0.97	4.35	0.90	2.90	1.07
<i>t</i>	8.72		– 5.47		– 9.19	
<i>dfs</i>	289		290		291	
<i>p</i>	0.000		0.000		0.000	

that marriage should always be between a man and a woman and that same-sex marriage undermines the meaning of the traditional family. Nearly all disagreed or strongly disagreed that the legalization of same-sex marriage jeopardizes religious freedom. Despite the support for same-sex marriage, respondents held mixed views of polyamorous relationships and marriage. Less than half of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that committed relationships between more than two people should have the same rights as married couples (47%) or would support a marriage between three people (44%).

Table 2 shows descriptive statistics and results from independent sample t-tests comparing attitudes by gender and sexual orientation. Comparisons by gender indicated that women were significantly less likely than men to support conventional views of marriage though the means showed that both women and men hold neutral views, on average. On the other hand, women were significantly more likely than men to support both same-sex marriage and polyamorous marriage. While both men and women support same-sex marriage, on average, that support is stronger among women. Meanwhile, means suggested that men slightly disagree with polyamorous marriage while women slightly agree with polyamorous marriage, on average. Comparisons by sexual orientation indicated that LGBQ students were significantly less likely than straight students to support conventional views of marriage, a difference of one point on a five-point scale. On the other hand, LGBQ students were significantly more likely than straight students to support both same-sex marriage and polyamorous marriage. Again, while there was general support of same-sex marriage, LGBQ students, on average, agreed with polyamorous marriage while straight students were neutral.

Table 3 Parameter estimates for the regression models of attitudes toward marriage

Variable	Support for conventional marriage			Support for same-sex marriage			Support for polyamorous marriage		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>
Woman	−0.172	0.121		0.429	0.093	***	0.274	0.147	
LGBQ	−0.309	0.133	*	0.039	0.101		0.576	0.160	***
POC	0.028	0.122		−0.173	0.094		0.087	0.148	
Have family or close friend who is LGB	−0.223	0.081	**	0.165	0.062	**	0.260	0.099	**
Have family or close friend who is trans	−0.056	0.112		0.032	0.086		0.142	0.136	
Religion (vs. Mainline Protestant)									
No religion	0.028	0.173		−0.391	0.133	**	−0.071	0.210	
Catholic	0.242	0.163		−0.077	0.125		0.026	0.198	
Evangelical protestant	0.513	0.210	*	−0.852	0.161	***	−0.456	0.255	
Other	−0.214	0.212		−0.172	0.167		0.122	0.258	
Religiosity	0.112	0.023	***	−0.102	0.018	***	−0.050	0.028	
Political party (vs. Democrat)									
Republican	0.333	0.231		−0.569	0.178	**	−0.631	0.282	*
Independent	0.262	0.135		−0.264	0.104	*	−0.370	0.164	*
Other	−0.212	0.169		−0.119	0.129		−0.099	0.205	
Conservative political ideology	0.044	0.024		−0.042	0.018	*	−0.077	0.029	**
Constant	2.994	0.220	***	4.885	0.168	***	3.051	0.267	***
Adjusted R ²	0.457			0.538			0.381		

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

Predictors of Attitudes Toward Marriage

Table 3 shows results from OLS regression models of the three attitudinal scales. As hypothesized, religious affiliation was significantly related to support for conventional marriage and support for same-sex marriage. Evangelical Protestants were significantly more supportive of conventional marriage (scoring 0.51 points higher on this 5-point scale) and significantly less supportive of same-sex marriage (scoring 0.85 points lower on this scale), relative to Mainline Protestants. An unexpected finding was that respondents who indicated that they had no religious affiliation scored an average of 0.39 points lower on the same-sex marriage scale than Mainline Protestants, showing that respondents with no religious affiliation were less supportive of same-sex marriage than Mainline Protestants. Above and beyond religious affiliation, religiosity, or one's degree of religious involvement, had a significant negative relationship with all three of the attitude scales.

As hypothesized, both political party and conservative political ideology showed significant relationships with marriage attitudes. Republicans were

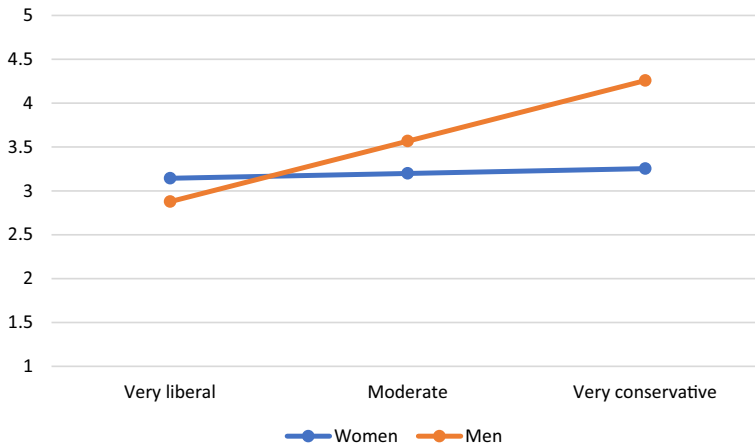


Fig. 1 The association between political ideology and attitudes toward conventional marriage by gender

significantly less likely than Democrats to support same-sex marriage or polyamorous marriage, scoring 0.57 and 0.63 points lower, respectively. Those with an Independent political affiliation show a similar pattern as they were significantly less likely to support same-sex marriage or polyamorous marriage compared to Democrats. Even controlling for political party, conservative political ideology had a significant negative relationship with support for same-sex marriage and support for polyamorous marriage.

Contrary to bivariate findings, there was only a significant association between gender and support for same-sex marriage. Women were more likely to support same-sex marriage, scoring 0.43 point higher on this scale than men. Controlling for other factors, there was no significant association between gender and support for conventional marriage or polyamorous marriage.

Those who identify as LGBQ were significantly less likely to support conventional marriage, scoring 0.31 point lower than their heterosexual counterparts. On the other hand, LGBQ students scored 0.58 points higher on support for polyamorous marriage than heterosexual students, a significant difference. Interestingly, there were no significant differences between LGBQ and heterosexual students in their attitudes toward same-sex marriage.

Having a close friend or family member who is LGB was significantly related to attitudes. Those who have a close friend or family member who is LGB were significantly less supportive of conventional marriage and significantly more supportive of same-sex marriage and polyamorous marriage than those who do not have a close friend or family member who is LGB. Interestingly, having a family member or friend who is trans had no significant effect on attitudes.

In separate analyses, we tested interactions between gender and religiosity, gender and political ideology, LGBQ status and religiosity, and LGBQ status and political ideology in each of our regression models (see Appendix for full tables). For ease of interpretation, we present visual representations of significant interactions in Figs. 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. Regarding support for conventional marriage, there were

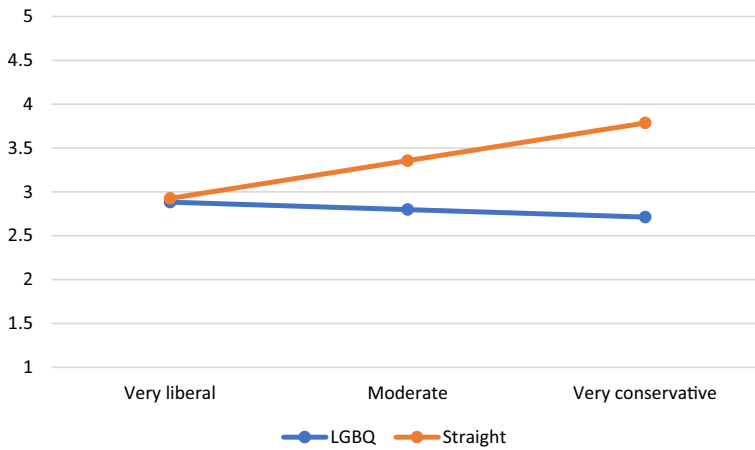


Fig. 2 The association between political ideology and attitudes toward conventional marriage by sexual orientation

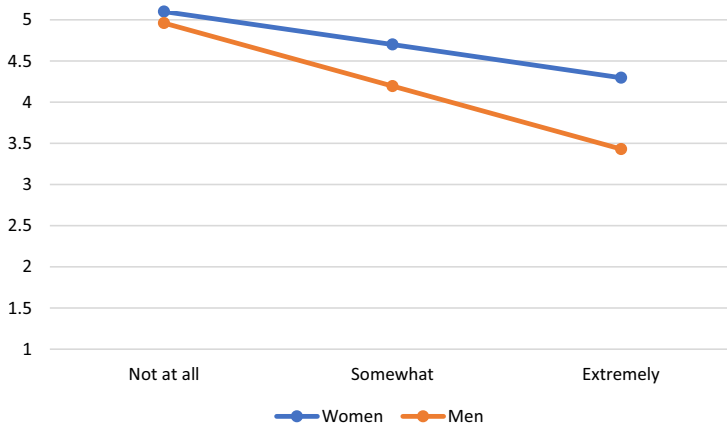


Fig. 3 The association between religiosity and attitudes toward same-sex marriage by gender

two significant interactions: gender and political ideology and sexual orientation and political ideology. These interactions indicated that the positive effect of conservative political ideology had a greater impact on men than women (see Fig. 1) and a greater impact on straight individuals than LGBQ individuals (see Fig. 2). While women and LGBQ students' support for conventional marriage ideals did not vary much by political ideology, men and straight students showed increasing support for conventional marriage with more conservative political beliefs.

Regarding support for same-sex marriage, there were two significant interactions: gender and religiosity and gender and political ideology. These interactions indicated that the negative effects of religiosity and conservative political ideology had a

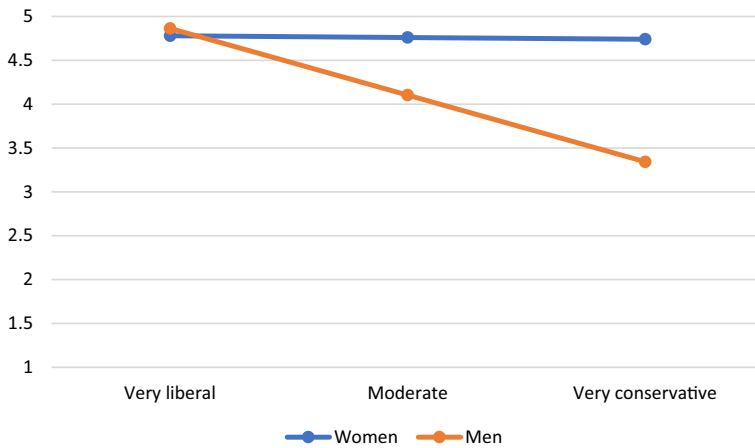


Fig. 4 The association between political ideology and attitudes toward same-sex marriage by gender

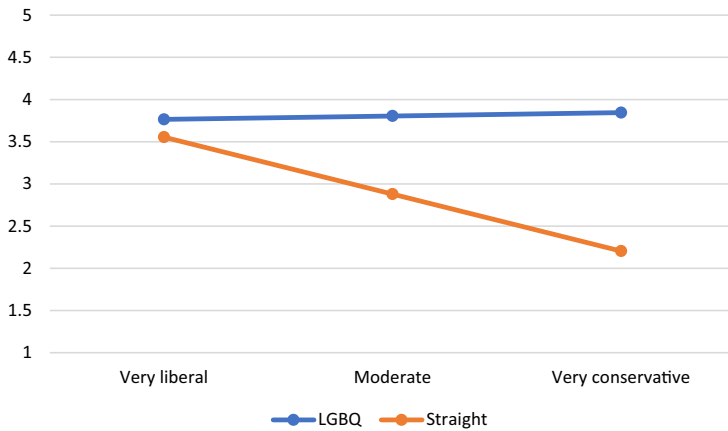


Fig. 5 The association between political ideology and attitudes toward polyamorous marriage by sexual orientation

greater impact on men than women (see Figs. 3 and 4). Figure 3 shows that religiosity had a negative impact on women and men's support for same-sex marriage, but this effect is stronger for men. Figure 4 shows that women's support for same-sex marriage did not vary by political ideology, whereas men's support for same-sex marriage decreases with more conservative political ideology. The only significant interaction in the model of attitudes toward polyamorous marriage was between sexual orientation and political ideology (see Fig. 5). While LGBQ individuals' support for polyamorous marriage remained steady across political ideology, straight individuals' support for polyamorous marriage decreased with more conservative political ideology.

Discussion

An overwhelming proportion of college students in our study supports marriage equality with very few seeing same-sex marriage as a threat to family or religion. A majority of these students do not support conventional views of marriage as more question marriage as being monogamous, forever, and sacred. At the same time, students are split on whether polyamorous marriage should be legal or polyamorous relationships should have similar legal rights as marriage. These findings suggest that marriage is an enduring institution but one that may be open to changing expectations. Our research also considered the potential association between religion, politics, LGBT contact, and marriage attitudes.

First, religiosity is an important factor in marriage attitudes. On the one hand, religious students are more likely to support traditional views of marriage and not think of it as an outdated institution (Shimkowski et al., 2018). On the other hand, religious students are less likely to support same-sex marriage, which is consistent with both anti-LGBT prejudice and more limited views of who can marry (Smith-Osborne & Rosenwald, 2009; Worthen et al., 2017). These patterns also hold for Evangelical Protestants, who are significantly more supportive of conventional marriage and significantly less supportive of same-sex marriage relative to Mainline Protestants. This is consistent with previous research that shows particularly strong negative views of LGBT people among Fundamentalist Protestant Christians (Worthen et al., 2017). Highly religious individuals may also consume religious media, which often includes anti-LGBTQ messages (Perry & Snawder, 2016).

Second, political views and party affiliation are significantly associated with marriage attitudes. Those who identify as Republican or Independent and those with more conservative political views are less supportive of same-sex or polyamorous marriage than Democrats or liberals, respectively. This is consistent with previous research that indicates more opposition to same-sex marriage among conservatives (Armenia & Troia, 2017; Becker & Scheufele, 2011), including college students (Grigoropoulos, 2018; Worthen et al., 2017), and these groups may be slower to change their attitudes (Sherkat et al., 2011). Republicans are particularly likely to hold more traditional views of marriage (Baunach, 2012; Sherkat, 2017), and these views continued with Trump supporters (Kaufman & Compton, 2020).

Third, gender and sexual orientation are important factors in shaping attitudes. Gubernskaya's (2010) research suggests this gender difference may have widened over the last decades of the twentieth century. Women are more likely to support same-sex marriage, which is consistent with women's greater affirmation of LGBT rights (Dessel & Rodenburg, 2017; Jones et al., 2018; Riggs & Sion, 2017). Our research further shows that women's support for same-sex marriage is less affected by religiosity and conservative political ideology than men's attitudes, suggesting that the broader acceptance that women show for same-sex marriage may have become part of their worldview. A new finding is that there is no significant association between gender and support for polyamorous

marriage. This is inconsistent with Negy et al.'s (2013) finding that men are more supportive than women of polygamy. However, their study used the term “polygamy” while our study avoids this more gendered term by asking about marriage between three people. It also may be due to an incomplete understanding of polyamory as men are more accepting of extramarital sex than women (Labrecque & Whisman, 2017). Further, those who identify as LGBQ are significantly less likely to support conventional marriage and more likely to support polyamorous marriage than heterosexual students. Yet, we found no significant differences between LGBQ and heterosexual students in their attitudes toward same-sex marriage. While previous research shows more favorable views of same-sex marriage among those who identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual (Sherkat, 2017), our research may indicate an overall wide acceptance of same-sex marriage with more divisions concerning polyamorous marriage.

Fourth, having a close friend or family member who is LGB is related to marriage attitudes. Those who have a close friend or family member who is LGB are less supportive of conventional marriage and more supportive of same-sex marriage and polyamorous marriage. Contact with LGBT acquaintances is associated with more positive views of LGBT individuals and greater support of marriage equality (DellaPosta, 2018; Grigoropoulos, 2018; Lewis et al., 2017). Overall, those with college degrees are more likely to have LGBT family, friends, and co-workers, and these connections are associated with more support for same-sex marriage and LGBT rights (Lewis, 2011). Indeed, one of the biggest factors in the marked increase in support for same-sex marriage has been more gay and lesbian individuals coming out and thus more people having gay and lesbian friends (Rosenfeld, 2017).

This study is not without limitations. First, the sample of college students surveyed are educated and have grown up in a more LGBT friendly social climate and may thus hold more liberal attitudes toward marriage than the general population. At the same time, this study was conducted in the south, a region that has been less tolerant toward the LGBT community and issues that affect their lives. There, however, is a lack of research on LGBT issues and the south (Stone, 2018). This study's findings speak to some of the gaps regarding LGBT life in the south and assumptions related to how southern inhabitants may view LGBT individuals, and their access to marriage. Second, our measures of attitudes toward polyamorous marriage need further testing. There is still a lack of understanding of polyamory among the general public (Hutzler et al., 2015), and there is little research that focuses specifically on attitudes toward polyamorous marriage. Future research should examine these attitudes among diverse samples.

Social and Policy Implications

The findings in this study suggest social and policy implications. First, it is likely that attitudes toward marriage will keep shifting. College students, including those in the current study, are more closely aligned with the younger generations that appear to be driving the shift identifying as LGBT at higher rates than those in older cohorts (Brown-Saracino et al., 2021). We know that at a societal level, increasing

education, declining religiosity, and more contact with LGBT individuals are associated with greater support for same-sex marriage over time (Lee & Mutz, 2019). In addition, younger, more educated individuals are unlikely to become less supportive of same-sex and polyamorous marriage given the tendency for liberalization in LGBT acceptance over time (Patrick et al., 2013). Marriage is likely to persist as a desired institution, but we may also expect more inclusive notions of marriage.

Second, attitudes may have implications for policy and law. Some opponents of same-sex marriage noted the possibility that the legalization of same-sex marriage would lead to multiple-partner marriage. Polyamorous families and marriage allow for the decentering of heterosexual families (Sheff, 2011). Our findings suggest more tepid attitudes toward polyamorous marriage than same-sex marriage. Yet, a substantial minority would support marriage between three people. Perhaps growing up with broader notions of gender and sexuality, more LGBT friends, and multiple models of same-sex marriage has broadened ideas about relationships and marriage. It is always a question whether public opinion shapes legal changes or vice versa (Kazyak & Stange, 2018), but we may be moving toward a queerer vision of marriage.

Appendix

See Table 4.

Table 4 Parameter estimates for the regression models of attitudes toward marriage with interactions

Variable	Support for conventional marriage						Support for same-sex marriage						Support for polyamory					
	Model 1			Model 2			Model 1			Model 2			Model 1			Model 2		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>p</i>
Woman	0.266	0.198		-0.153	0.120		0.146	0.135		-0.082	0.149		0.248	0.146		0.248	0.146	
LGBQ	-0.307	0.131	*	-0.043	0.181		0.050	0.099		0.038	0.097		0.211	0.217		0.211	0.217	
POC	0.040	0.120		0.056	0.122		-0.179	0.092		-0.185	0.090	*	0.047	0.147		0.047	0.147	
Have family or close friend who is LGB	-0.228	0.080	**	-0.202	0.081	*	0.147	0.062	*	0.170	0.060	**	0.232	0.098	*	0.232	0.098	*
Have family or close friend who is trans	-0.056	0.110		-0.041	0.111		0.044	0.084		0.031	0.082		0.120	0.134		0.120	0.134	
Religion (vs. Mainline Protestant)																		
No religion	0.029	0.170		0.012	0.171		-0.380	0.130	**	-0.390	0.127	**	-0.051	0.207		-0.051	0.207	
Catholic	0.262	0.160		0.230	0.161		-0.072	0.122		-0.100	0.120		0.042	0.195		0.042	0.195	
Evangelical Prot	0.523	0.207	*	0.517	0.208	*	-0.825	0.159	***	-0.865	0.154	***	-0.464	0.252		-0.464	0.252	
Other	-0.267	0.210		-0.191	0.211		-0.165	0.164		-0.100	0.161		0.089	0.256		0.089	0.256	
Religiosity	0.106	0.023	***	0.107	0.023	***	-0.153	0.025	***	-0.096	0.017	***	-0.043	0.028		-0.043	0.028	
Political party (vs. Democrat)																		
Republican	0.087	0.245		0.175	0.241		-0.483	0.177	**	-0.281	0.183		-0.411	0.292		-0.411	0.292	
Independent	0.246	0.133		0.217	0.135		-0.247	0.102	*	-0.243	0.100	*	-0.308	0.164		-0.308	0.164	
Other	-0.211	0.166		-0.266	0.169		-0.099	0.127		-0.121	0.124		-0.026	0.205		-0.026	0.205	
Conservative political ideology	0.138	0.041	**	0.086	0.031	**	-0.038	0.018	*	-0.152	0.031	***	-0.135	0.037	***	-0.135	0.037	***
Interactions																		
Woman x religiosity							0.072	0.025	**									
Woman x conservative	-0.127	0.046	**							0.148	0.035	***						
LGBQ x conservative				-0.103	0.048	*							0.143	0.058	*			
Constant	2.684	0.244	***	2.855	0.228	***	5.082	0.180	***	5.245	0.182	***	3.245	0.275	***	3.245	0.275	***
Adjusted R ²	0.474			0.466			0.553			0.574			0.396			0.396		

*** $p < 0.001$, ** $p < 0.01$, * $p < 0.05$

Funding This research was supported by the National Science Foundation and Nancy and Erwin Mad-drey professor funds that support Kaufman.

Declarations

Conflict of interest The authors have no interests to disclose.

Ethics Approval This research was approved by the Institutional Review Board at Davidson College.

Consent to Participate The authors included information about the study in an email and participants provided consent when clicking on the survey.

References

- Adamczyk, A., & Liao, Y. (2019). Examining public opinion about LGBTQ-related issues in the United States and across multiple nations. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 45, 401–423.
- Armenia, A., & Troia, B. (2017). Evolving opinions: Evidence on marriage equality attitudes from panel data. *Social Science Quarterly*, 98, 185–195.
- Barbir, L. A., Vandevender, A. W., & Cohn, T. J. (2017). Friendship, attitudes, and behavioral intentions of cisgender heterosexuals toward transgender individuals. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Mental Health*, 21, 154–170.
- Bartholomay, D. J. (2018). What, exactly, are we measuring? Examining heteronormativity in relation to same-sex marriage. *Sociology Compass*, 12, 1–8.
- Baunach, D. M. (2012). Changing same-sex marriage attitudes in America from 1988 through 2010. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 76, 364–378.
- Becker, A. B., & Scheufele, D. A. (2011). New voters, new outlook? Predispositions, social networks, and the changing politics of gay civil rights. *Social Science Quarterly*, 92, 324–345.
- Bettinsoli, M. L., Suppes, A., & Napier, J. L. (2020). Predictors of attitudes toward gay men and lesbian women in 23 countries. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, 11, 697–708.
- Brown-Saracino, J., Compton, D., & Parker, J. (2021). Changing social context, queer recruitment panics, and the rise in LGBT identification in the U.S. *Contexts*, 20, 63–65.
- Brumbaugh, S. M., Sanchez, L. A., Nock, S. L., & Wright, J. D. (2008). Attitudes toward gay marriage in states undergoing marriage law transformation. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 70, 345–359.
- Camilleri, P., & Ryan, M. (2006). Social work students' attitudes toward homosexuality and their knowledge and attitudes toward homosexual parenting as an alternative family unit: An Australian study. *Social Work Education*, 25, 288–304.
- Cherlin, A. (2020). Degrees of change: An assessment of the deinstitutionalization of marriage thesis. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 82, 62–80.
- Cicognani, E., Zani, B., Fournier, B., Gavray, C., & Born, M. (2012). Gender differences in youths' political engagement and participation: The role of parents and of adolescents' social and civic participation. *Journal of Adolescence*, 35, 561–576.
- Cohen, M. T., & Wilson, K. (2017). Development of the consensual non-monogamy attitude scale (CNAS). *Sexuality & Culture*, 21, 1–14.
- Compton, D. R. (2015). LG(BT) families and counting. *Sociology Compass*, 9, 597–608.
- Costa, P. A., Carneiro, F. A., Esposito, F., D'Amore, S., & Green, R. (2018). Sexual prejudice in Portugal: Results from the European study on heterosexual's attitudes toward same-gender marriage and parenting. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, 15, 99–110.
- Cox, D., & Kamboj, H. (2017). How social contact with LGBT people impacts attitudes on policy. PRRI. <https://www.prri.org/spotlight/lgbt-pride-month-social-contact-gay-lesbian-transgender-individuals/>
- Crawford, I., & Solliday, E. (1996). The attitudes of undergraduate college students toward gay parenting. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 30, 63–77.
- Curtin, S. C., & Sutton, P. D. (2020). *Marriage rates in the United States, 1900–2018*. National Center for Health Statistics.

- DellaPosta, D. (2018). Gay acquaintanceship and attitudes toward homosexuality: A conservative test. *Socius*, 4, 1–12.
- Dessel, A. B., & Rodenborg, N. (2017). Social workers and LGBT policies: Attitude predictors and cultural competence course outcomes. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, 14, 17–31.
- Grigoropoulos, I. N. (2018). Attitudes toward same-sex marriage in a Greek sample. *Sexuality & Culture*, 23, 415–424.
- Gubernskaya, Z. (2010). Changing attitudes toward marriage and children in six countries. *Sociological Perspectives*, 53, 179–200.
- Haines, K. M., Boyer, C. R., Giovanazzi, C., & Galupo, M. P. (2018). “Not a real family”: Microaggressions directed toward LGBTQ families. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 65, 1138–1151.
- Hart-Brinson, P. (2018). *The gay marriage generation*. New York University Press.
- Helms, J. L., & Waters, A. M. (2016). Attitudes toward bisexual men and women. *Journal of Bisexuality*, 16, 454–467.
- Herek, G. M. (2009). Sexual stigma and sexual prejudice in the United States: A conceptual framework. In D. A. Hope (Ed.), *Contemporary perspectives on lesbian, gay, and bisexual identities* (pp. 65–111). Springer.
- Hicks, G. R., & Lee, T. (2006). Public attitudes toward gays and lesbians. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 51, 57–77.
- Hollekim, R., Slaatten, H., & Anderssen, N. (2012). A nationwide study of Norwegian beliefs about same-sex marriage and lesbian and gay parenthood. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, 9, 15–30.
- Hooghe, M., & Meeusen, C. (2013). Is same-sex marriage legislation related to attitudes toward homosexuality? Trends in tolerance of homosexuality in European countries between 2002 and 2010. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, 10, 258–268.
- Hutzel, K. T., Giuliano, T. A., Herselman, J. R., & Johnson, S. M. (2015). Three’s a crowd: Public awareness and (mis)perceptions of polyamory. *Psychology & Sexuality*, 7, 69–87.
- Ioverno, S., Carone, N., Lingardi, V., Nardelli, N., Pagone, P., Pistella, J., Salvati, M., Simonelli, A., & Baiocco, R. (2018). Assessing prejudice toward two-father parenting and two-mother parenting: The beliefs on same-sex parenting scale. *Journal of Sex Research*, 55, 654–665.
- Jones, P. E. (2021). Political distinctiveness and diversity among LGBT Americans. *Public Opinion Quarterly*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/poq/nfab030>
- Jones, P. E., Brewer, P. R., Young, D. G., Lambe, J. L., & Hoffman, L. H. (2018). Explaining public opinion toward transgender people, rights, and candidates. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 82, 252–278.
- Kaufman, G., & Compton, D. (2020). Attitudes toward LGBT marriage and legal protections post-Obergefell. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, 18, 321–330.
- Kazyak, E., & Stange, M. (2018). Backlash or a positive response? Public opinion of LGB issues after Obergefell v. Hodges. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 65, 2028–2052.
- Konopka, K., Prusik, M., & Szulawski, M. (2020). Two sexes, two genders only: Measuring attitudes toward transgender individuals in Poland. *Sex Roles*, 82, 600–621.
- Labrecque, L. T., & Whisman, M. A. (2017). Attitudes toward and prevalence of extramarital sex and descriptions of extramarital partners in the 21st century. *Journal of Family Psychology*, 31, 952–957.
- Lannutti, P. J., & Lachlan, K. A. (2007). Assessing attitude toward same-sex marriage. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 53, 113–133.
- Lee, H., & Mutz, D. C. (2019). Changing attitudes toward same-sex marriage: A three-wave panel study. *Political Behavior*, 41, 701–722.
- Lee, T., & Hicks, G. R. (2011). An analysis of factors affecting attitudes toward same-sex marriage: Do the media matter? *Journal of Homosexuality*, 58, 1391–1408.
- Legerski, E., & Harker, A. (2018). The intersection of gender, sexuality, and religion in Mormon mixed-sexuality marriages. *Sex Roles*, 78, 482–500.
- Lewis, D. C., Flores, A. R., Haider-Markel, D. P., Miller, P. R., Tadlock, B. L., & Taylor, J. K. (2017). Degrees of acceptance: Variation in public attitudes toward segments of the LGBT community. *Political Research Quarterly*, 70, 861–875.
- Lewis, G. B. (2011). The friends and family plan: Contact with gays and support for gay rights. *Policy Studies Journal*, 39, 217–238.
- Massey, S. G. (2007). Sexism, heterosexism, and attributions about undesirable behavior in children of gay, lesbian, and heterosexual parents. *Journal of GLBT Family Studies*, 3, 457–483.
- McCarthy, J. (2021). Record-high 70% in U.S. support same-sex marriage. Gallup. <https://news.gallup.com/poll/350486/record-high-support-same-sex-marriage.aspx>

- Morse, C. N., McLaren, S., & McLachlan, A. J. (2007). The attitudes of Australian heterosexuals toward same-sex parents. *Journal of GLBT Family Studies*, 3, 425–455.
- Negy, C., Pearte, C., & Lacefield, K. (2013). Young adults' attitudes toward polygamous marriage as a function of gender, attitudes toward same-sex marriage, and other sociopersonality constructs. *Marriage & Family Review*, 49, 51–82.
- Newport, F. (2020). Understanding the increase in moral acceptability of polygamy. Gallup polling matters. <https://news.gallup.com/opinion/polling-matters/313112/understanding-increase-moral-acceptability-polygamy.aspx>
- Olson, L. R., Cadge, W., & Harrison, J. T. (2006). Religion and public opinion about same-sex marriage. *Social Science Quarterly*, 87, 340–360.
- Pascoe, C. J. (2017). Who is a real man? The gender of Trumpism. *Masculinities and Social Change*, 6, 119–141.
- Pearte, C., Renk, K., & Negy, C. (2013). Explaining variation in relations among intrinsic religiosity, political conservatism, and homonegativity as a function of authoritarianism's three components: An expansion on recent literature. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, 10, 97–109.
- Perez-Arche, H., & Miller, D. J. (2021). What predicts attitudes toward transgender and nonbinary people? An exploration of gender, authoritarianism, social dominance, and gender ideology. *Sex Roles*, 85, 172–189.
- Perry, S. L., & Snawder, K. J. (2016). Longitudinal effects of religious media on opposition to same-sex marriage. *Sexuality & Culture*, 20, 785–804.
- Pew Research Center. (2010). The decline of marriage and rise of new families. <https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/2010/11/18/the-decline-of-marriage-and-rise-of-new-families/>
- Pew Research Center. (2018). Wide gender gap, growing educational divide in voters' party identification. March 20. <https://www.pewresearch.org/politics/2018/03/20/wide-gender-gap-growing-educational-divide-in-voters-party-identification/>
- Pew Research Center. (2019). Attitudes on same-sex marriage. May 14 <https://www.pewforum.org/fact-sheet/changing-attitudes-on-gay-marriage/>
- Pistella, J., Tanzilli, A., Ioverno, S., Lingiardi, V., & Baiocco, R. (2018). Sexism and attitudes toward same-sex parenting in a sample of heterosexuals and sexual minorities: The mediation effect of sexual stigma. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, 15, 139–150.
- Porter, S. R., & Umbach, P. D. (2006). Student survey response rates across institutions: Why do they vary? *Research in Higher Education*, 47, 229–247.
- Riggs, D. W., & Sion, R. (2017). Gender differences in cisgender psychologists' and trainees' attitudes toward transgender people. *Psychology of Men & Masculinity*, 18, 187–190.
- Rosenfeld, M. J. (2017). Moving a mountain: The extraordinary trajectory of same-sex marriage approval in the United States. *Socius*, 3, 1–22.
- Schwartz, J. (2010). Investigating differences in public support for gay rights issues. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 57, 748–759.
- Sears, D. O., Lau, R. R., Tyler, T. R., & Allen, H. M. (1980). Self-interest vs. symbolic politics in policy attitudes and presidential voting. *American Political Science Review*, 74, 670–684.
- Sheff, E. (2011). Polyamorous families, same-sex marriage, and the slippery slope. *Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, 40, 487–520.
- Sherkat, D. E. (2017). Intersecting identities and support for same-sex marriage in the United States. *Social Currents*, 4, 380–400.
- Sherkat, D. E., de Vries, K. M., & Creek, S. (2010). Race, religion, and opposition to same-sex marriage. *Social Science Quarterly*, 91, 80–98.
- Sherkat, D. E., Powell-Williams, M., Maddox, G., & de Vries, K. M. (2011). Religion, politics, and support for same-sex marriage in the United States, 1988–2008. *Social Science Research*, 40, 167–180.
- Shimkowski, J. R., Punyanunt-Carter, N., Colwell, M. J., & Norman, M. S. (2018). Perceptions of divorce, closeness, marital attitudes, romantic beliefs, and religiosity among emergent adults from divorced and nondivorced families. *Journal of Divorce & Remarriage*, 59, 222–236.
- Smith-Osborne, A., & Rosenwald, M. (2009). Exploring the relationship between religiosity and political ideology among social workers. *Journal of Religion & Spirituality in Social Work: Social Thought*, 28, 393–404.
- Stone, A. L. (2018). The geography of research on LGBTQ life: Why sociologists should study the south, rural queers, and ordinary cities. *Sociology Compass*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/soc4.12638>
- Tadlock, B. L., Flores, A. R., Haider-Markel, D. P., Lewis, D. C., Miller, P. R., & Taylor, J. K. (2017). Testing contact theory and attitudes on transgender rights. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 81, 956–972.

- Twenge, J. M., & Blake, A. B. (2021). Increased support for same-sex marriage in the US: Disentangling age, period, and cohort effects. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 68, 1774–1784.
- Vecio, O., Gross, M., Gratton, E., D'Amore, S., & Green, R. (2019). Attitudes toward same-sex marriage and parenting, ideologies, and social contacts: The mediation role of sexual prejudice moderated by gender. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, 16, 44–57.
- Webb, S. N., Chonody, J. M., & Kavanagh, P. S. (2017). Attitudes toward same-sex parenting: An effect of gender. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 64, 1583–1595.
- Whitehead, A. L. (2010). Sacred rites and civil rights: Religion's effect on attitudes toward same-sex unions and the perceived cause of homosexuality. *Social Science Quarterly*, 91, 63–79.
- Woodford, M. R., Atteberry, B., Derr, M., & Howell, M. (2013). Endorsement for civil rights for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people among heterosexual college students: Informing socially just policy advocacy. *Journal of Community Practice*, 21, 203–227.
- Woodford, M. R., Chonody, J., Scherrer, K., Silverschanz, P., & Kulick, A. (2012). The “persuadable middle” on same-sex marriage: Formative research to build support among heterosexual college students. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, 9, 1–14.
- Worthen, M. G. F. (2021). Why can't you just pick one? The stigmatization of non-binary/genderqueer people by cis and trans men and women: An empirical test of norm-centered stigma theory. *Sex Roles*, 85, 343–356.
- Worthen, M. G., Lingardi, V., & Caristo, C. (2017). The roles of politics, feminism, and religion in attitudes toward LGBT individuals: A cross-cultural study of college students in the USA, Italy, and Spain. *Sexuality Research and Social Policy*, 14, 241–258.

Publisher's Note Springer Nature remains neutral with regard to jurisdictional claims in published maps and institutional affiliations.