2016

The Relationship between Christian Religiosity and Heterosexism in the Southern United States

Patricia Hare
Walden University

Walden University

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

Patricia Hare

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee
Dr. Olga Carranza, Committee Chairperson, Psychology Faculty
Dr. Michael Johnson, Committee Member, Psychology Faculty
Dr. Chris Kladopoulos, University Reviewer, Psychology Faculty

Chief Academic Officer
Eric Riedel, Ph.D.

Walden University
2016

Abstract

The Relationship between Christian Religiosity and Heterosexism

in the Southern United States

by

Patricia R. Hare

MA, Walden University, 2012

BS, University of Phoenix, 2010

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Clinical Psychology

Walden University

August 2016

Abstract

The internalization of heterosexism places lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) individuals at disproportionately higher risks of depression and self-destructive behaviors. For LGB Christians, this phenomenon is often exacerbated. Although literature on heterosexism has increased, little research has examined more insular, religious environments. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between Christian denominational religiosity and heterosexism and to compare the degree of religiosity and heterosexism between members of 5 Christian denominations and between same-sex sexuality perspectives in the southern United States. Guided by the attribution theory, a correlational, cross-sectional survey design was used to analyze degree of religiosity and heterosexism among 225 self-identifying Christians as measured by the Religiosity Measure and Attitudes Toward Lesbians and Gay Men Scale. A Pearson Correlation revealed a large, positive relationship between religiosity and heterosexism. Two ANOVAs revealed significant differences in degrees of religiosity among denominations and same-sex sexuality perspective, in addition to significant differences in degrees of heterosexism among denominations and same-sex sexuality perspectives. Implications for positive social change center on illuminating the effects of heterosexism in insular environments, which may contribute to the understanding of heterosexist ideology including heteronormative assumptions that are replete throughout the United States, including mental health professions. Moreover, LGB Christians may particularly benefit from understanding the variability and distinctions within denominational religiosity, such that denominational choices become evident and viable options.

The Relationship between Christian Religiosity and Heterosexism in the Southern United States

by

Patricia R. Hare

MA, Walden University, 2012

BS, University of Phoenix, 2010

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Clinical Psychology

Walden University

August 2016

Dedication

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to my precious mom, Carolann Bradford Cotlow. Mom, thank you for never wavering in your support. You endured my rants and stood by my side in my most trying moments. I attribute my success in academia and my understanding of social inequality to my childhood. No matter how low life would drag us down, we always emerged emboldened. And for that, I am forever grateful. Thank you for your unconditional love. Most important, thank you for being an amazing mom and nana.

Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge my loving husband, Grant, and our three boys: Gavin, Adam, and Justin. Thank you for making me a better human being. To my precious children: Everything I do, I do in the hope of making you proud. Thank you for being patient, supportive, and "quiet" so many times throughout the years as I struggled to complete my doctorate. I know it wasn't easy. Also, I realize my advocating for the gay community comes at a cost, but fighting for the basic liberties of others is indeed a wise investment. I hope you will all strive to contribute to the well-being of others and always find the beauty in our wonderful world. I love you all more than sunshine!

I would also like to extend my deepest gratitude to my "dream team" dissertation committee: Dr. Olga Carranza and Dr. Michael B. Johnson. Dr. Carranza changed my perception of society, via challenging me to examine my own privilege and recognize the cyclical impact of social hierarchy and inequality. Dr. Johnson, by virtue of "being" obliterates the longstanding notion that wit, common sense, and intelligence are mutually exclusive. I thank them both for giving me the autonomy to delve into my research while keeping a protective and watchful eye. Their patience and support have proven unparalleled and I simply cannot image a more formidable duo. It has been an honor and privilege to work with them both and include their names on my dissertation. Throughout my career, I will no doubt benefit from their mentoring.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

This purpose of this study was to examine the influence of Christian denominational religiosity on attitudes toward homosexuality in the southern United States. The justification and utility of the study lie in exploring the resultant heterosexism and homophobic tendencies that increasingly place lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) individuals at risk of internalized heterosexism and psychological distress (Burks, 2011; McDermott, Roen, & Scourfield, 2008; Silenzio, Pena, Duberstein, Cerel, & Knox, 2007; Szymanski, Kashubeck-West, & Meyer, 2008). Moreover, because homosexuality still carries negative connotations because of its lengthy history of pathologization and stigmatization, those within the helping professions (i.e., healthcare, psychology, and psychiatry) may become better at mitigating heteronormative assumptions that in turn perpetuate stigma (Röndahl, Innala, & Carlsson, 2006).

This chapter consists of a succinct background of research examining perceptions of same-sex sexuality among individuals of various Christian denominations, and includes the justification and purpose for the study. Research questions, theoretical framework, and hypotheses are included along with a review of variables of measurement, a synopsis of the methodology, and corresponding operational definitions. The chapter concludes with limitations and delimitations of the study, and potential implications for positive social change.

Background

It is well documented in the literature that social group cues have a powerful influence on implicit and explicit attitudes (McConnell, Rydell, Strain, & Mackie, 2008). For the devout, religion plays a significant role in moral development (Mustea, Negru, & Opre, 2010). Personal religious affiliation and worldviews are commonly viewed as strong predictors of attitudes toward homosexuality (Adamczyk & Pitt, 2009). Frequently, certain facets of Christianity, classify homosexual behaviors as "ungodly," "impure," and "unnatural" (Adamczyk & Pitt, 2009). Because of these classifications, one's degree of religiosity, contact with biblical literature, and interpersonal interactions with like-minded people may promote anti-gay views (Adamczyk & Pitt, 2009).

Stance on Homosexuality by Denomination

No unified view of same-sex sexuality exists within Christianity (Woodford, Walls, & Levy, 2012) and because denominational teachings significantly influence adherents view of religion (Fuist, Stoll, & Kniss, 2012), it is important to investigate denominational positions on homosexuality within major Christian denominations. Research has demonstrated significant links to both positive and negative attitudes among individuals of various Christian denominations, in addition to important ways in which denominational doctrine and individual attitudes syncretize (Fuist et al., 2012; Woodford et al., 2012). These views are often thrust upon those who identify as either lesbian or gay via devout parishioners. The internalization of heterosexism has been shown to place LGB individuals at considerable risk of self-harm (Duarté-Vélez, Bernal, & Bonilla, 2010).

Summarization of Literature

Historically, same-sex sexuality has been pathologized and depathologized via various theocratic and secular influences (Drescher, 2010). Although the concept of sexual deviance once rested in a theological realm, psychiatry's influence in the early twentieth century casted homosexuality as a mental illness that culminated in increased scrutiny of those who identified as LGB (De Block & Adriaens, 2013). This social and historical construction depicted same-sex sexuality as a medicalized, ontological identity that gave rise to a distinct pathological population (Drazenovich, 2012). Although great strides have been made throughout the behavioral sciences to remedy this historical pathologization (Drazenovich, 2012), theocratic influence remains a powerful predictor of attitudes toward homosexuality (Fuist et al., 2012).

Christianity rests on the foundational teachings of Jesus Christ; yet, the religion contains multiple denominations with varying doctrinal positions. Fuist et al., (2012) found that denominational religiosity significantly influences parishioner's attitudes toward homosexuality and that denominational stances on homosexuality range from welcoming and affirming to exclusionary and condemnatory. Of the latter Christian denominations, many publically oppose same-sex initiatives, and some actively engage in efforts to proscribe homosexuality (Soule, 2004; Woodford et al., 2012).

The debate over homosexuality exists on a global scale, and public opinions about same-sex attraction vary substantially. The United States, Netherlands, Belgium, and Canada sanction same-sex marriage, whereas the same act in most African nations is not only illegal but unfathomable (Adamczyk & Pitt, 2009). The polarizing and divisive

nature of these debates can cultivate homophobic or heterosexist worldviews that often carry profound implications for those who identify as LBG (Swank, Eldridge, & Mack, 2006).

Gaps in Knowledge

In the last few decades, research has amassed regarding heterosexual attitudes toward same-sex sexuality (Swank et al., 2006). Yet, little research has explored the implications of religious fundamentalism and heterosexism. Even less research exists in the southern United States, regarding denominational influence (Barton, 2008). This study explored the relationship between Christian denominational religiosity and heterosexism, and compared the degree of religiosity and heterosexism among members of five Christian denominations in the southern United States.

Utility of Study

Because religious institutions hold a historical role in defining the moral dimensions of romantic and sexual relationships (Woodford et al., 2012), more research is needed to investigate the implications and prospective etiologies of denominational positions on homosexuality. Moreover, LGB populations often internalize homophobia and heterosexism, which places them at increased risk for suicidality and self-destructive behaviors (Burks, 2011). An apt elucidation is warranted given these risks, particularly in the helping professions whereby heteronormativity is frequently inadvertently promoted (Wieringa, 2012).

Data gleaned from this study may serve to mitigate heteronormative assumptions via the presentation of research evidence. Additionally, this study may provide valuable

information for clinicians working with LGB populations to understand more fully the role of denominational teachings on perceptions of same-sex sexuality and of the detrimental, yet often inadvertent, microaggressive behaviors that add to the plight of LGB clients. Moreover, this information might also be useful to church leaders interested in providing welcoming and affirming church atmospheres and providing models of support to LGB populations.

Problem Statement

Heterosexism is the institutional level of homophobia that encompasses an ideological system via favoring heterosexuality while simultaneously marginalizing, demeaning, and stigmatizing individuals with LGB sexualities or identities (Matthews & Adams, 2009). Although prevalent throughout the United States, heterosexism is heightened in small, conservative communities that espouse a more fundamentalist approach to religious doctrine (Barton, 2010). Internalized heterosexism has been correlated with psychosocial difficulties and delays in sexual identity development (Szymanski et al., 2008). Moreover, studies have shown that LGB individuals are at an increased risk of suicidality and self-destructive behaviors (Silenzio et al., 2007) that is disproportionally higher than their heterosexual counterparts (McDermott et al., 2008). Unequivocal evidence exists to assert heterosexism is not without consequence, and oftentimes its consequences are profound.

A growing body of research exists regarding heterosexual attitudes toward homosexuality (Swank, Frost, & Fahs, 2012). Political studies addressing opinions of gay rights, same-sex unions, and anti-gay initiatives add to this expanding field of research

(Swank et al., 2006). However, little research exists regarding the implications of religious fundamentalism and heterosexism. In more saturated fundamentalist regions, such as the Bible belt (i.e., a strip of southern states, such as Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, Georgia, and Alabama, whereby fundamentalist Christians hold a population majority and exert a powerful cultural and political influence), less research exists (Barton, 2010) and even fewer researchers have examined associations between discriminatory practices and geographical factors in heterosexism (Barton, 2012; Swank, Fahs, & Frost, 2013). Some studies assert notions of same-sex attraction are more positively viewed when individuals believe in a biological basis of homosexuality versus a chosen lifestyle (Lewis, 2009). Investigating denominational teachings helps elucidate heterosexism regarding the spectrum of fundamentalism and religiosity. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between Christian denominational religiosity, as measured by the Religiosity Measurement, and heterosexism, as measured by the Attitudes Toward Lesbians and Gay Men Scale (ATLG-R), and to compare degree of religiosity and heterosexism between members of five Christian denominations, and between same-sex sexuality perspectives (i.e., biologically-driven or a chosen lifestyle), in the southern United States.

Purpose of the Study

The paucity of literature on heterosexism and Christian denominational influence in the southern United States guides the trajectory of this quantitative investigation. Research centers on quantifying religiosity and heterosexist attitudes. Moreover, the study examined the extent to which parishioners adhere or deviate from their

denominations overarching beliefs. Thus, the overarching purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between Christian denominational religiosity and heterosexism, and to compare the degree of religiosity and heterosexism among members of five Christian denominations in the southern United States. Moreover, data gleaned from examining the covariation between religiosity and same-sex sexuality perspectives (predictor variables) and heterosexism (criterion variable) was compared between religious denominations.

Research Questions

This study first examined the relationship between Christian denominational religiosity and attitudes toward homosexuality among parishioners in the southern United States. One's degree of religiosity and heterosexist worldviews were measured and correlated via two distinct surveys: A religiosity measure developed for the present study (Hare, 2015) and the ATLG-R (Herek, 1994) scale. The Religiosity Measure was used to determine participant's degree of religiosity and the ATLG-R scale was used to determine degree of heterosexism. Psychometric properties for both measures are provided in Chapter 3. Moreover, measures of heterosexism were compared between individuals of Catholic, Southern Baptist Convention, Methodist, Episcopal, and Jehovah's Witness Christian denominations. Therefore, given the analysis of heterosexist attitudes among individuals of different denominations, data offer quantifiable information pertaining to the relationship between religiosity and heterosexism.

This study focused on answering the following research questions:

1. Is there a significant positive relationship between religiosity and heterosexism?

2. Are there significant differences in degree of reported religiosity between religious denominations (i.e., Catholic, Southern Baptist Convention, Methodist, Episcopal, and Jehovah's Witness) and same-sex sexuality perspectives (i.e., biologically-driven or a chosen lifestyle)?

3. Are there significant differences in degree of heterosexism between religious denominations (i.e., Catholic, Southern Baptist Convention, Methodist, Episcopal, and Jehovah's Witness) and same-sex sexuality perspectives (biologically-driven or a chosen lifestyle)?

Hypotheses

Research Question 1.

H_0 *#1*: There is no significant relationship between religiosity and heterosexism.

H_1 *#1*: There is a significant positive relationship between religiosity and heterosexism.

Research Question 2.

H_0*#2a*: There are no significant differences in degree of religiosity between religious denominations.

H_1*#2a*: There are significant differences in degree of religiosity between religious denominations.

H_0*#2b*: There are not significant differences in degree of religiosity between same-sex sexuality perspectives.

H_1*#2b*: There are significant differences in degree of religiosity between same-sex sexuality perspectives.

H_0#2c: The direction and magnitude of differences (significant or not significant) in degree of religiosity between religious denominations does not vary across same-sex sexuality perspectives.

H_1#2c: The direction and magnitude of differences (significant or not significant) in degree of religiosity between religious denominations varies across same-sex sexuality perspectives.

Research Question 3

H_0#3a: There are no significant differences in degree of heterosexism between religious denominations.

H_1#3a: There are significant differences in degree of heterosexism between religious denominations.

H_0#3b: There are not significant differences in degree of heterosexism between same-sex sexuality perspectives.

H_1#3b: There are significant differences in degree of heterosexism between same-sex sexuality perspectives.

H_0#3c: The direction and magnitude of differences (significant or not significant) in degree of heterosexism between religious denominations does not vary across same-sex sexuality perspectives.

H_1#3c: The direction and magnitude of differences (significant or not significant) in degree of heterosexism between religious denominations varies across same-sex sexuality perspectives.

Additional information and details concerning denominational stances are located in Chapter 2.

Theoretical Framework

The attribution theory, which served as the theoretical framework for this study, explores how individuals make causal explanations in their efforts to understand human behavior (Kelley, 1973). This theory has been extensively studied and applied in psychological research to explain various perceived causes of human behavior (Murray & Thomson, 2009). The attribution theory asserts individuals attribute causes to behavior in an attempt to understand why others do what they do. The theory unfolds in three steps:

1. The individual observes or perceives a behavior.
2. The individual believes the behavior was intentionally performed.
3. The individual decides whether the behavior was forced (situationally determined) or not (biologically or intrinsically motivated).

Ultimately, attributions derive from one's perceptions and interpretations (McArthur, 2011).

In the early 20th century, Fritz Heider (1958) first proposed the notion of attribution theory in his seminal book, *The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations*. Jones (1972) and Weiner (1974, 1985) further developed the theoretical framework, which has served as a substantial research paradigm in the behavioral sciences. Weiner (1985) applied the theory to achievement and classified attributions in distinct dimensions: locus of control, stability, and controllability. Locus of control relates to either external or

internal causes of behavior, whereas stability refers to the duration of behavior as either stable (permanent) or unstable (temporary). Controllability refers to whether or not causal factors can be regulated by an individual. Wood (2008) added a fourth dimension of specificity, which leads the observer to determine whether the event was a global occurrence or specific to the individual. Attribution theory posits that people have a natural tendency to ask why certain outcomes and behaviors occurred, particularly outcomes and behaviors that are perceived as unexpected, abnormal, or negative (McArthur, 2011). Attitudes about stigmatized behaviors, according to attribution theory, are influenced by perceived causes of those behaviors. For example, evidence suggests that individuals view same-sex sexuality more favorably when sexual orientation is perceived to have a biological basis rather than be environmentally triggered (Lewis, 2009).

Boysen and Vogel (2007) used attribution theory to undergird their study on the implications of biased assimilation and attitude polarization via learning about biological causes of homosexuality. Findings revealed that pre-existing attitudes served as somewhat of a filter when presented with the biological basis of homosexuality (Boysen & Vogel, 2007). Given that attribution theory posits behaviors perceived to be caused by biological forces— and therefore out of an individual's control—should be viewed more positively than controlled behaviors, this theoretical framework proved particularly appropriate for this project. From this perspective, those who conceptualize homosexuality as a chosen lifestyle are more likely to hold negative views concerning same-sex attraction (Lewis, 2009). This theoretical lens may prove helpful in contributing

to the understanding of heterosexism based on Biblical interpretations of homosexuality. Religious fundamentalism, for example, is an approach to religious study in which biblical literature is interpreted in its literal, rather than allegorical sense (Vincent, Parrott, & Peterson, 2011). These teachings are primarily vitriolic, labeling homosexuality as sinful, perverse, and immoral. Research questions that examine relationships between religiosity and heterosexism afford exploration with respect to religiosity and adherence to denominational teachings in the Southern United States.

Nature of the Study

This study employed a quantitative correlational research design, via a converged cross-sectional survey (i.e., the Religiosity Measure and the ATLG-R scale), as a means to explore the relationship between religiosity and heterosexism. Quantitative research has proven advantageous in elucidating various factors that influence attitude formation (Sweldens, Corneille, & Yzerbyt, 2014) as well as seminal work on the impact of religious doctrine (Vincent et al., 2011). The focus of religiosity and its relationship with heterosexism was consistent, and targeted exclusively less researched southern locations.

Variation in same-sex sexuality perspectives by denominational religiosity was examined via the Religiosity Measure, which incorporates literature on mediating roles of clergy cues and biblical interpretations. Participants consisted of 225 self-identified Christians affiliated with a specific Christian denomination (i.e., Catholicism, Southern Baptist Convention, Methodist, Episcopal, or Jehovah's Witness). Church leaders were contacted to obtain written permission to recruit potential participants via phone. Upon congregational approval, a recruitment flyer and subsequent consent form were

disseminated to clergy for distribution via email or flyer. The survey was available via Survey Monkey; therefore, all participants received a flyer containing a link with which they were instructed to initiate the survey. Data were examined across five denominations within Christianity. This quantitative analysis discerned the extent to which one's religious affiliation influences implicit and explicit worldviews and behaviors regarding same-sex sexuality.

Definitions

The following definitions serve to elucidate key terms employed throughout this study.

Heteronormative assumptions: Assumptions that people are, or should be, heterosexual.

Heteronormativity: Refers to a social system in which ideas and practices regarding sexuality are organized in such a way that heterosexuality becomes accepted as the norm (Wieringa, 2012). Consequently, those who do not identify as heterosexual are considered abnormal, complete with associated stigmas of pathology and aberration (Warner, 1999).

Heterosexism: Refers to an institutional, or macro level of homophobia, encompassing an ideological system that stigmatizes or denigrates non-heterosexual orientations. Morrison and Dinkel (2012) defined heterosexism as a belief that individuals are, or should be, heterosexual, and that alternative orientations are unnatural or deviant. By virtue of this cultural creed endorsement, heterosexism promotes

institutional obstacles for non-heterosexuals, thereby limiting their full involvement in society.

LGB: Refers to lesbian, gay, and bisexual individuals.

Religious Fundamentalists/Biblical Literalists: Refers to individuals who take a literal (as opposed to metaphorical or allegorical) approach in the understanding, interpretation, and application of the Christian Bible (Aten, Mangis, & Campbell, 2010). Fundamentalists often use biblical teachings for divine guidance, which commonly proscribes specific behaviors, emotions, thoughts, and interpersonal contact, in addition to a sacred connection with God (Aten et al., 2010). Moreover, Athen et al., (2010) found rural fundamentalists deeply rely on religious authorities for guidance in "right" living.

Religiosity: Refers to a person's degree of religious commitment (Guittar, 2014), or more precisely, the degree to which an individual complies with religious practices, values, and beliefs (Shukor & Jamal, 2013). Adamczyk and Pitt (2009) describe religiosity as comprising religious involvement, contact with biblical literature, and interpersonal interaction with other adherents. For the purposes of this study, religiosity is defined as frequency of attendance to religious services, frequency of prayer, and frequency of reading of Holy Scripture.

Syncretize: An attempt to unite or combine opposing or differing principles or beliefs. For the purposes of this study, *Syncretism* refers to the disjuncture between the teachings and positions of an individual's denomination and an individual's own religious beliefs (Woodford et al., 2012). Individuals may accept and reject certain

aspects of their denominational stances, or even incorporate beliefs from other religious denominations into their personal belief system (Woodford et al., 2012).

Theocratic encroachment: A state in which clergy exert political power insofar as religious law dominates over and encroaches upon civil law.

Assumptions

The current research makes the following assumptions, which guided the design of the study and data interpretations:

1. Participants answered all survey questions accurately and honestly.
2. Participants completed one survey only.
3. Heterosexism has adverse effects on those who identify as LGB or are perceived to have non-heterosexual orientations (Barnes & Meyer, 2012; Szymanski et al., 2008).
4. A representative sample may be gleaned, such that affords generalization for southern expressions of heterosexism within a religious context.

Scope and Delimitations

Religious affiliation can have a profound influence on attitudes, behaviors, and interpersonal relationships (Aten et al., 2010). Because the implications of heterosexism can exacerbate risk factors associated with internalized homophobia, it is imperative to explore factors that correlate with heterosexism (Barnes & Meyer, 2012). Given this underlying goal to mitigate the effects of social inequality for sexual minorities, heterosexual populations specifically were targeted for sample selection; yet, LGB populations were not excluded. To further delineate the relationship between religiosity

and heterosexism, specific denominational populations were selected to provide a generalization of this relationship in the southern United States.

Denominational selection and exclusion were based on major divisions within Christianity and theocratic approaches. Thus, multiple Christian denominations were excluded because of lower parishioner populations and similar doctrinal stances. Chapter 2 delineates major stances by denomination, including a basis for denominational selection. Qualitative methodological measures were avoided to bolster and facilitate data collection, enabling quantifiable results with larger sample sizes.

Limitations

This study is limited by its method of sample selection. Specifically selected denominations do not account for all Christian views within southern United States. However, major denominations were chosen to provide sufficient data insofar as extrapolation may become viable and instrumental in future research. Given this study was nonexperimental, descriptive, and correlational in design, results do not infer causality. To account for this inference, results will contribute to existing literature on the relationship between heterosexism, religiosity, and same-sex sexuality perspectives. Moreover, instruments in this study consist solely of self-report measures. Accurate reporting serves as a limitation of self-reports (Creswell, 2009). In addition, the cross-sectional findings may change over time with societal and political pressure (Thomas & Olson, 2012). Consequently, the intellectual climate of a given society may have the potential to alter attitudes of parishioners and church leaders. Objectivity and an

understanding of the study's limitations offer reasonable measures in addressing limitations.

Significance of the Study

This study will contribute to the literature by exploring the implications of a geographical, religious influence on heterosexism, which in turn will illuminate the need for social equality in southern, rural communities that may unwittingly perpetuate internalized homophobia. More specifically, the purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between Christian denominational religiosity, as measured by the Religiosity Measurement, and heterosexism, as measured by the ATLG-R scale, and to compare degree of religiosity and heterosexism between members of five Christian denominations, and between same-sex sexuality perspectives (i.e., biologically-driven or a chosen lifestyle), in the southern United States. Studies that address the oppression and marginalization of LGB populations often do so in the realm of overt homophobic tendencies (Barnes, 2012; Barton, 2010; McDermott et al., 2008; Woodford, Kulick, & Sinco, 2014). This study aimed to examine the relationship of heterosexism within Christianity, which may be inadvertently projected without knowledge of the consequences such ideological tendencies propagated in various pockets of society. This study hypothesized that more insular, conservative settings are more inclined to cultivate environments that inform the morality and worldviews of their inhabitants (Li, Hubach, & Dodge, 2015; Swank et al., 2012).

For example, rural communities with fewer public gathering venues often rely on the church for social support and entertainment. Families spanning generations often

attend a specific church, and many of these families helped lay the foundation of the church (Barton, 2011). LGB Christians reared in this milieu of insularity whereby the church, community, and family are intricately interwoven, understand more is at stake than their salvation or church membership (Barton, 2011). They must also consider the consequences of their family's rejection in addition to their community's disapproval of the complete family unit. In this context, the implications of heterosexism are heightened in more insular environments via risks of excommunication, loss of communal and familial social support, and increased public shame (Barton, 2011). Additionally, insular environments are more susceptible to theocratic encroachment, which in turn can infiltrate multiple domains of secular society (Barton, 2011). For example, Röndahl et al. (2006) found that many LGB people experience negative heteronormative assumptions by heterosexuals on an institutional level, such as in health care systems.

Data gleaned from this study are intended to contribute to the knowledge base regarding heterosexism, which may prove particularly helpful given the medical community's historical pathologization of homosexuality that in turn not only justified, but perpetuated homophobic and heterosexist societal views (Morrison, & Dinkel, 2012). Practical application will derive from encouraging self-awareness of naive behaviors in professional practice that may contribute to the plight of gay men and lesbians. Moreover, because heterosexism infiltrates virtually all domains of social functioning, findings may improve health seeking behaviors of LGB individuals, who are underserved and undervalued by the health care system (Morrison & Dinkel, 2012).

Because this study targeted heterosexual populations, its purpose was to illuminate the oftentimes unintentional complicity of heterosexual people in perpetuating heterosexist views that negatively impact LGB individuals. Heterosexism is often more prevalent in religious fundamentalist communities and can be exacerbated via geographical location (Garcia & Kruger, 2010). Religiosity may be intricately woven into the formation and perpetuation of these beliefs. Many Southerners share homogeneous views that ultimately impact their beliefs about LGB individuals (Barton, 2011). A mounting body of research has shown that those who experience heterosexism have an increased risk of self-harming behaviors and psychological distress (Silenzio et al., 2007). Suicide rates in the general population, for example, are the third leading cause of death among 15 to 24 year-olds (NIMH, 2011). However, suicide risks for LGB populations are substantially and disproportionately higher (Scourfield et al., 2008). Thus, aside from raising awareness in heterosexual populations, the fundamental goal of this research was to promote positive social change that extends to LGB individuals, who are often forced to negotiate a volatile environment while simultaneously concealing their true identity (Barton, 2011; Scourfield et al., 2008). The distinguishing element of this study lies in its exploration of theocratic encroachment.

Summary

For the devout, the church can serve as a major vehicle through which heterosexist ideologies are mobilized. Social group cues significantly inform implicit and explicit attitudes (McConnell et al., 2008) and an individual's degree of religiosity has been shown to influence adherents' views on homosexuality (Adamczyk & Pitt, 2009).

Frequently, denominations within Christianity classify homosexual behaviors as "unnatural" and "impure" which can, depending on one's degree of religiosity, promote heterosexism (Fuist et al., 2012; Woodford et al., 2012) and heteronormativity (Gattis et al., 2014; Guittar, 2013; Wieringa, 2012). Those subjected to heteronormativity and who internalize heterosexism have a substantially increased risk of self-destructive behaviors, including suicidality (Duarté-Vélez et al., 2010). In this context, religious affiliation for LGB individuals may prove detrimental. However, not all Christian denominations hold negative views on homosexuality. Fuist et al., (2012) found that many denominations are welcoming and affirming, and thus religious affiliation may prove psychologically beneficial for devout Christians who identify as LGB. This study examined the relationship between Christian denominational religiosity and heterosexism and compared the degree of religiosity and heterosexism among members of five Christian denominations in the southern United States. The underlying goal of this study lies in promoting positive social change as an understanding of this relationship may inform awareness of the possible implications of heteronormativity and heterosexism with a focus on theocratic encroachment and involvement.

Chapter 2 will provide a more in-depth account of current literature on heterosexism and religiosity, including a clear elucidation of related biblical passages. The theoretical framework of the study is presented in detail with an analysis of denominational stances of homosexuality. Chapter 2 also addresses the ways in which the current study contributes to gaps in the literature regarding the relationship between heterosexism and Christian religiosity in the southern United States.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between Christian denominational religiosity, as measured by the Religiosity Measurement, and heterosexism, as measured by the Attitudes Toward Lesbians and Gay Men Scale-Revised (ATLG-R), and to compare the degree of religiosity and heterosexism between members of five Christian denominations, and between same-sex sexuality perspectives (i.e., biologically-driven or a chosen lifestyle), in the southern United States.

Homosexuality is one of the most divisive issues in Christianity (Barnes & Meyer, 2012); still, this matter has effects beyond the church. Recent research has shown that denominational religiosity is significantly related to adherents' attitudes toward same-sex sexuality (Fuist et al., 2012; Woodford et al., 2012) and that Christian denominations' stances on same-sex sexuality range from welcoming and affirming, to ambivalent, to exclusionary and condemnatory (Fuist et al., 2012). However, many religious groups publically oppose same-sex marriage, and some are actively involved in efforts to prohibit same-sex sexuality (Soule, 2004; Woodford et al., 2012).

Religious beliefs are historically associated with oppositional stances on same-sex rights (Sherkat, Powell-Williams, Maddox, & Mattias de Vries, 2011) and religious fundamentalism stands as one of the most significant predictors of negative attitudes toward same-sex marriage (Whitehead, 2014). Same-sex marriage has come to the forefront of American politics, and opposition to same-sex marriage is an example of how heterosexism is reflected within strong religious communities. Issues of same-sex

marriage are becoming increasingly important because they affect various domains of life, including taxes, finances, pensions, healthcare, and Social Security benefits (Woodford et al., 2012). More fundamentally-oriented and biblically-literal religious denominations, such as Southern Baptist Convention and Jehovah's Witness, condemn same-sex marriage in the strongest possible terms (Guist et al., 2012).

Support for same-sex marriage on an individual level has been shown to be influenced by whether an individual attributes the cause of homosexuality to choice or biological factors, and fundamental denominations view homosexuality as a choice (Whitehead, 2014). Individuals are more likely to support same-sex marriage if they believe homosexuality is the result of biological factors outside the individual's control (Whitehead, 2014). Because religious institutions bear a longstanding role in defining the moral dimensions of sexual and romantic relationships and because attribution of the perceived causes of homosexuality influences support of same-sex unions, including marriage, more research is needed to explore the potential ramifications and etiologies of the stances on same-sex sexuality of denominations. In addition, the influence of denominational doctrine on an individual's attribution of the causes of homosexuality is emergent, and is part of what this study seeks to explore by comparing heterosexism across denominational groups.

Furthermore, condemnation of homosexuality and same-sex marriage is often driven by heterosexism that can lead to harmful psychosocial outcomes for LGB individuals (Woodford et al., 2014). For example, LGB populations may internalize homophobia, creating internal turmoil with respect to one's perception of the world, how

one fits in, and how one's gender role and sexual orientation differs from that of the mainstream (McDermott et al., 2008). Because life on the receiving end of heterosexism can be troublesome and harmful for LGB individuals, more research is needed on the negative influence denominations have on attitudes towards sexuality. Recent research has shown that gay-affirming religious affiliation is positively related to LGB populations as well, acting as a protective factor for LGB individuals (Gattis, Woodford, & Han, 2014). Consequently, research is needed on the important positive influence denominations may have on LGB populations as well.

Literature Search Strategy

Research literature collected for this review was obtained through comprehensive online search methods. For this study, various combinations of the following key terms and phrases were used in the literature search: *religious affiliation, religious denomination, sexuality, heterosexuality, homosexuality, religious worldview, religiosity and sexuality, heteronormativity, religion and sexuality,* and *religiosity*. Academic Search Complete was used to search for relevant and current, peer-reviewed journal articles, five or less years old. Academic Search Complete is a mega-, multidisciplinary indexing and abstracting tool that allows for searches of other databases. Academic Search Complete offers full-text articles from more than 4,600 journals, including full-text articles for more than 3,900 peer-reviewed titles. Academic Search Complete allows for searching databases in a variety of fields, including those of sociology, religion, ethics, psychology, business, and science, among others. A search of Google Scholar also returned references to articles used for this review. Finally, I obtained the titles of

several additional studies by using citation chaining, or referring to the bibliographies of key studies on religion and sexuality.

Theoretical Framework

The attribution theory served as the theoretical framework for this study, and relates to how individuals make causal explanations in their efforts to understand human behavior (Kelley, 1973). This theory has been extensively studied and applied in psychological research to examine perceived causes of human behavior (Murray & Thomson, 2009). Attribution theory asserts that individuals attribute causes to the behaviors of others in an attempt to understand why other people behave the way they do. The theory unfolds in three steps:

1. An individual observes or perceives a behavior,
2. The individual believes the behavior was intentionally performed, and
3. The individual decides whether the behavior was uncontrollable (determined by external forces beyond an individual's control) or controllable (determined by individual choice; McArthur, 2011).

Ultimately, attributions derive from one's perceptions and interpretations (McArthur, 2011).

In the early twentieth century, Fritz Heider (1958) first proposed the notion of attribution theory in his seminal book, *The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations*, and explored how individuals sought to explain the behavior of others by attributing the causes of their behavior to either internal or external factors. Jones (1972) and Weiner (1974, 1985) further developed Heider's theories and emphasized the concept of

controllability, wherein certain behaviors could be understood as being either controllable or uncontrollable and whether or not causal factors could be regulated by an individual. Weiner (1985) referred to locus of control for behavior as being either external (outside the individual's control) or internal (within the individual's control). The consequence of behavior deemed controllable is that individuals can be held responsible or accountable for their behavior (Weiner, 1985). The consequence of behavior that is deemed uncontrollable is that individuals are less likely to be held accountable for their behavior (Weiner, 1985). Wood (2008) added a fourth dimension of specificity, which leads the observer to determine whether the event was a global occurrence or specific to the individual.

Attribution theory posits that people have a natural tendency to ask why certain outcomes and behaviors occur, particularly those outcomes and behaviors that individuals perceive as unexpected, abnormal, or negative (McArthur, 2011). Attitudes about stigmatized behaviors, according to attribution theory, are significantly influenced by the perceived causes of those behaviors. For example, evidence suggests that individuals view same-sex sexuality more favorably (e.g., affirming and accepting LGB individuals via interpersonal relations, demonstrating inclusive behaviors within social and religious contexts, etc.) when sexual orientation is perceived to have a biological basis rather than being the result of internal factors or individual choice (Lewis, 2009; Whitehead, 2014).

These favorable perceptions are applied to groups through the support of LGB politics. Lewis (2009) found this favorable perception applied to the support of LGB rights, and Whitehead (2014) found this favorable perception applied to the support of

exercising those rights through same-sex unions. Support for behaviors perceived as uncontrollable and lack of support for behavior perceived as controllable aligns with earlier research on attribution theory in relation to other areas. For example, Zucker and Weiner (1993) used attribution theory to inform their research on perceptions of the causes of poverty. Participants viewed the poor unfavorably and were less likely to support social change on behalf of the poor when they viewed poverty to be the result of individualist causes (Zucker & Weiner, 1993).

Boysen and Vogel (2007) used attribution theory to undergird their study on the implications of biased assimilation and attitude polarization via learning about biological causes of homosexuality. Findings revealed that pre-existing attitudes served as somewhat of a filter when presented with the biological basis of homosexuality (Boysen & Vogel, 2007). This aligns with the findings of Lewis (2009) who found that behaviors caused by biological forces were viewed more positively than behaviors perceived as being within an individual's control. In addition, Whitehead (2014) found that opinions about the controllability and origin of same-sex sexuality significantly influenced support or lack of support for same-sex unions.

Attribution theory and the findings of Lewis (2009) and Whitehead (2014) are appropriate for the current study. In this view, those who conceptualize homosexuality as a chosen lifestyle are more apt to hold negative views concerning same-sex attraction (Lewis, 2009). This theoretical lens may prove helpful in contributing to the understanding of heterosexism based on gospel interpretations of homosexuality. Religious fundamentalism, for example, is an approach to religious study wherein

biblical literature is interpreted in its literal, rather than allegorical sense (Vincent et al., 2011). According to these teachings, same-sex sexuality is characterized as sinful, perverse, unnatural, or immoral. Fundamentally-oriented religious individuals, therefore, may view same-sex sexuality more negatively if they attribute its cause to individual choice rather than natural or biological forces beyond an individual's control. From the perspective of attribution theory, religious individuals may view same-sex sexuality based on individual choice negatively because those who choose to behave in this manner knowingly do so in direct opposition of Christian scripture. This study examined the relationship between Christian denominational religiosity and heterosexism, compared the degree of religiosity and heterosexism among members of five Christian denominations in the southern United States.

Religiosity

Religiosity generally refers to an individual's degree of religious commitment (Guittar, 2014), or more specifically the degree to which an individual complies with religious practices, values, and beliefs (Shukor & Jamal, 2013). Religiosity differs from spirituality in that spirituality focuses on a connection to an amorphous transcendence, whereas religiosity refers to the outward observance of a form of religious tradition or denomination (Shukor & Jamal, 2013). Recent research has shown that religiosity is one of the most significant indicators of attitudes toward same-sex sexuality (Guittar, 2014). Researchers are increasingly using religiosity as a construct to study the significance of individuals' religious attitudes in relation to variables such as fundamentalism (Vincent et al., 2011), sexuality (Woodford et al., 2012), and consumer behavior (Shukor & Jamal,

2013). Highly religious individuals, or those with a high degree of religiosity, abide by the rules and codes of conduct of their religious denominations, for example: regularly attending worship services and demonstrating dedication to denominational practices (Shukor & Jamal, 2013). Woodford et al. (2012) observed that researchers have operationalized religiosity in recent research regarding religion in two ways: centrality of religion in one's life and the frequency of religious services attendance. In addition, researchers have shown that religiosity is one of the most significant indicators of attitudes toward same-sex sexuality (Guittar, 2014), and some researchers have argued that religiosity is more influential than religious affiliation (Woodford et al., 2012).

Although some Christian denominations are becoming increasingly same-sex tolerant, and even supportive, homosexuality, historically, has been associated with cultural values influenced by the domain of religion, which has largely considered same-sex orientation sinful (Fuist et al., 2012). Christian denominational attitudes about same-sex sexuality in the southern United States are fundamentally heteronormative (Fuist et al., 2012). The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between Christian denominational religiosity, as measured by the Religiosity Measurement, and heterosexism, as measured by the ATLG-R sale, and to compare degree of religiosity and heterosexism between members of five Christian denominations, and between same-sex sexuality perspectives in the southern United States.

Historical Overview

Christian Doctrine

The Old Testament of Christian doctrine includes numerous caveats and prohibitions concerning several types of sexual practices, for example: same-sex sexuality, anal sex, masturbation, and bestiality (De Block & Adriaens, 2013), and numerous seminal studies exist on the Bible and homosexuality (e.g. Bahnsen, 1978; Brawley, 1996; Helminiak, 2000; Nissinen , 1998; Rogers, 2009; Schenker , & Edart, 2012; Vasey, 1995; Via & Gagnon, 2003; Wold, 1998). However, no mention of the terms *homosexuality* or *homosexual* exist in the original gospels, and these terms did not appear until late in the nineteenth century (De Block & Adriaens, 2013). Biblical scripture does refer to same-sex relations, and what the Scriptures ostensibly say or do not say concerning same-sex relations, however, remains pivotal to many denominations within Christianity (Fuist et al., 2012). Although some denominations are becoming increasingly same-sex tolerant, and even supportive, homosexuality, historically, has been associated with cultural values influenced by the domain of religion, which has largely considered same-sex orientation sinful (Fuist et al., 2012).

What the Bible Says

Seven biblical verses target specifically same-sex acts: Three in the Old Testament (Leviticus 18:22 and 20:13, and Genesis 19) and four in the New Testament (Romans 1:26-27, Corinthians 6:9, Timothy 1:10, and Jude 7). All these references constitute injunctions against same-sex relations, characterizing them as deviant and abnormal, as the following two examples illustrate: “You shall not lie with a male as with a woman; it is an abomination” (Leviticus 18:22, English Standard Version). Another passage from Leviticus reads, “If a man lies with a male as with a woman, both of them

have committed an abomination; they shall be put to death, their blood is upon them" (Leviticus 20:13). The passage in Genesis 19, however, remains highly controversial, as most reputable biblical scholars view the passage as pertaining to hospitality rather than homosexuality (McGinniss, 2010). Specifically, this verse offers an account of events that occurred in the cities Sodom and Gomor'rah and states that two angels arrived in Sodom and were greeted by Lot. Lot invited the angels into his home and baked them a feast. Before they could retire for the evening, the men of Sodom surrounded Lot's home, demanding that he release his two visitors: "And they called to Lot, 'Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so that we can have sex with them'" (Genesis 19:5, New International Version).

Like the Old Testament, the New Testament contains subjective language, which may take on an entirely different meaning depending on one's Anglican (e.g., metaphorical) or fundamentalist (e.g., literalist) approach to religious doctrine (Pihlaja, 2013; Village, 2012).

> For this reason God gave them up to dishonorable passions. Their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural, and the men likewise gave up natural relations with women and were consumed with passion for one another, men committing shameless acts with men and receiving in their own persons the due penalty for their error. (Romans 1:26-27, English Standard Version).

The inclusion of the terms *homosexuality* and *homosexual*, although not coined until the late nineteenth century (De Block & Adriaens, 2013), can be found in some modern biblical translations: "Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor

idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders… will inherit the kingdom of God" (1 Corinthians 6:9-10, New International Version, 1973). Another example referring to same-sex relations reads, "Law is not laid down for the just but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and sinners…for manslayers, immoral persons, sodomites, kidnapers, liars, perjurers, and whatever else is contrary to sound doctrine" (1 Timothy 1:9-10, English Standard Version). The final passage in the New Testament refers to Genesis: "Just as Sodom and Gomor'rah and the surrounding cities, which likewise acted immorally and indulged in unnatural lust, serve as an example by undergoing a punishment of eternal fire" (Jude 1:7). When interpreting these passages, it is often difficult for modern day readers not to overlay contemporary social and perceptual constructs on biblical texts, thereby compromising, some theologians argue, the central integrity of the text (McGinniss, 2010). However, denominational interpretations have been found to have significant influences on individuals' relation to their religion (Fuist et al., 2012). Because denominational interpretations help form individuals' interpretations of biblical passages, denominations have an influence on the practices, attitudes, and values of their adherents (Fuist et al., 2012).

Recent research has shown that biblical literalism is positively associated with attributing homosexuality as resulting from individual choice rather than biological factors (Whitehead, 2014). Whitehead (2014) used biblical literalism (e.g., the Bible is true and should be taken literally, word-for-word, on all subjects) to characterize religious fundamentalism. Whitehead (2014) found that attribution beliefs mediated the relationship between the independent variable of religious fundamentalism and attitudes

about same-sex unions, including marriage. In addition, Whitehead (2014) found that belief in homosexuality as a choice is associated negatively with the support of same-sex marriage. This research aligns with earlier findings of Lewis (2009) that indicated individuals are more likely to support LGB rights if individuals believe that homosexuality results from biological factors beyond an individual's control. Zucker and Weiner (1993) also found that support for social change and programs for the poor was more likely when the causes of poverty were believed not to be of an individual's own making. According to these findings, because the Bible characterizes same-sex sexuality as aberrant and unnatural the more biblically literal and fundamental a denomination is, the more likely its adherents are to view homosexuality as a choice and, consequently, the less likely they are to support same-sex marriage.

Stance on Homosexuality by Denomination

Because no unified view of same-sex sexuality exists within Christianity (Woodford et al., 2012) and because denominations have significant influence on adherents' take on religion (Fuist et al., 2012), it is important to survey denominational stances on same-sex sexuality of the major Christian denominations. Researchers have found significant connections to both positive and negative attitudes toward same-sex sexuality among religious denominations, as well as important ways in which individual attitudes and denominational doctrine syncretize (Fuist et al., 2012; Woodford et al., 2012). Major Christian denominations include the Catholic Church, Jehovah's Witness, and the Protestant denominations of the Southern Baptist Convention, Methodist, and Episcopal churches. In their study of denominational influence on attitudes toward same-

sex sexuality, Fuist et al. (2012) studied the moral order of denominations along collective and individual axes and characterized denominations as welcoming and affirming, ambivalent, exclusionary and condemnatory, or as a special case.

Denominational selection for the study was based on population size, prevalence in the southern United States, and stance on homosexuality (i.e. traditionalism vs modernism and libertarianism vs communalism). For example, Catholicism and Southern Baptist Convention stand as the largest Christian denominations in the United States (Fuist et al., 2012). As the oldest Christian denomination, the Catholic Church provides an apt level of traditionalism, whereas the Methodist and Episcopal churches offer a more modern view of religion (Fuist et al., 2012). In fact, Fuist et al., (2012) found the Episcopal Church to be one of the most progressive churches. Conversely, Jehovah's Witnesses, although smaller in size, are well known for their strident views against homosexuality (Garraud, 2014; Lalich & McLaren, 2010). Therefore, a spectrum was hypotheses such that denominations may be examined not only by prevalence and size, but by stance on homosexuality.

***The Catholic Church*.** The official Roman Catholic stance on homosexuality rests on the notion that same-sex behaviors are both immoral and disordered (The Catholic Church, 2000). This view is replete throughout Roman Catholic literature; thus, the Church's formal position on homosexual behavior is one of contempt (Benagiano, Carrara, Filippi, & Brosens, 2011; Bordeyne, 2006; Duncan, 2013; Lienemann, 1998). In 2003, the Vatican released a decree, stating explicitly, "Homosexuality is a troubling moral and social phenomenon" (Vatican, 2003). In their official pronouncements, the

Vatican described the inclination of homosexuality as disordered, and the enactment as evil (Dourley, 2010). Parishioners who act on same-sex compulsions are denied participation in the sacraments. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC), a text used to facilitate the teaching of Catholic doctrine, makes its stance clear. According to the CCC, engaging in homosexual acts are purported "intrinsically disordered," counter "natural law," and "under no circumstances can they be approved" (Catholic Church, 2000, p. 566). Although the Church has morally proscribed same-sex relations, this position has evolved into somewhat of a divergent path with secular and social shifts of sexuality and sexual orientation. Membership, for example, is not reserved exclusively for heterosexual parishioners. Those of homosexual orientation are welcomed to attend mass, providing they refrain from homosexual behavior (Bordeyne, 2006; Lienemann, 1998). Bordeyne (2006) contends that the influence of secular pressure and ecumenical discourse creates an ever-increasing Catholic divide.

Progressive Catholics tend to downplay individual sexual and moral deportment emphasized by the Vatican and rather focus on Catholic communal teaching (D'Antonio, 2007; Ellison, 2011). Lienemann (1998) observed that the moral proscriptions of the Roman Catholic Church regarding homosexuality generally and often align with larger social and cultural contexts. Furthermore, the Catholic Church, along with the vast majority of Protestant churches, forbids clergy from performing same-sex marriage rights (Bordeyne, 2006; Cohler & Hammack, 2004). In addition, Fuist et al. (2012) found that the Catholic Church, like the Church of Latter Day Saints, constitutes a special case in the study of denominations. The modern Catholic Church represents a unique take on

same-sex sexuality. For example, the Catholic Church is associated with several lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender religious organizations (e.g., Dignity USA) and pro-church organizations that counsel lesbians and gays in chastity rather than pressuring them to change their sexual orientation (Fuist et al., 2012).

Jehovah's Witness. Jehovah's Witnesses are frequently categorized as a strict, fundamentalist denomination and biblically-literal (Fuist et al., 2012; Garraud, 2014; Lalich & McLaren, 2010). The church rejects the classification of Protestant or Catholic because of its overarching beliefs. Many Christian denominations accept LGB members, but require they repent and refrain from homosexual activity (Fuist et al., 2012). However, LGB Jehovah's Witnesses are required to suppress not only their sexual behavior, but also their desires and feelings of same-sex attraction (Lalich & McLaren, 2010). The Church forbids same-sex orientation, and teaches that homosexuality is a chosen lifestyle that can be consciously rejected. Thus, a mere vow of celibacy is insufficient; rather, lesbian and gay Witnesses must entirely reject their sexual identity (Lalich & McLaren, 2010). The Church's policy on homosexuality is unyielding; those who violate these policies are publicly denounced and excommunicated. Excommunication, often referred to as disfellowshipping, is equivalent to social suicide in the eyes of Witnesses, who must cease all contact with a disfellowshipped individual (Lalich & McLaren, 2010).

Moreover, Witnesses believe disfellowship also precludes one from ascending to heaven upon death or Armageddon, whichever is first to occur (Lalich & McLaren, 2010). According to the teachings of the Church, God abhors homosexuality; thus, this

authoritarian stance against homosexuality is reverberated and upheld throughout the Jehovah's Witness community (Lalich & McLaren, 2010). However, while Jehovah's Witnesses condemn same-sex sexuality, their theology prohibits political involvement, and, thus, Witnesses are unable to advance their position politically (Fuist et al., 2012). Given the aforementioned stance, prohibitions also exist among ordaining gay or lesbian clergy and the blessing of same-sex unions. In their study, Fuist et al. (2012) found Jehovah's Witness to be an exclusionary and condemnatory denomination regarding same-sex sexuality.

Protestantism. In the sixteenth century, Martin Luther challenged the prevailing Roman Catholic authority, culminating in the Protestant Reformation (Moltmann, 2012; Printy, 2012; Robinson, 2012; Singleton, 2011). The movement ushered in an innovative religious philosophy and theology resulting in Lutheran, Presbyterian, and Anglican churches. For the purpose of the current study, Southern Baptist, Methodist, and Episcopal churches within Protestantism are emphasized herein.

Research suggests that among religious denominations, Protestant denominations are generally less supportive of same-sex marriage than their non-Protestant or Catholic counterparts (Jones, 2010; Olson, Cadge, & Harrison, 2006; Woodford et al., 2012). Ellison (2011) studied associations between religiosity and attitudes toward same-sex marriage among evangelical Protestant Latinos and found strong opposition to same-sex marriage. Moreover, Ellison (2011) reported the level of opposition was significantly higher in Latino Protestants than their Catholic counterparts. However, within the realm of Protestantism, although the gospels are considered inerrant, local churches are

generally autonomous, allowing for subjective interpretation among the congregation and church council (Ruijis, Hautvast, Kerrar, van der Velden, & Hulscher, 2013).

Southern Baptist Convention. In 1821, an association formed to split Northern and Southern Baptist churches, giving rise to the denomination known as Southern Baptist Convention, which comprises the largest Protestant group in the United States (Rosenbaum & Weathersbee, 2013). Parishioners believe in the inerrancy of the Scripture, proclaim faith in God via individual religious experiences, profess devotion to Jesus via baptism, and place great importance on religious education and evangelistic enterprise (Sears, 2013). Southern Baptists are largely fundamentalist (e.g., forwarding an authoritarian set of beliefs identifying their own religious teachings as foundational truth as opposed to other religious and non-religious worldviews; Vincent et al., 2011). In addition, Southern Baptists are characterized by being strongly biblically-literal and recognized for their conservative stance on political, theological, and cultural issues, including same-sex marriage (Fuist et al., 2012). Emphasis rests on the gospels, to which are revered as the word of Jesus Christ; thus, on this basis, homosexuality is a sin, albeit a forgivable one (Levy & Reeves, 2011).

Although the church formally extends Christian hospitality to all by neither approving of nor disapproving of homosexual behavior, those who engage in homosexual behavior are encouraged to repent their sins, such that they may receive redemption (Levy & Reeves, 2011). Abstinence until marriage serves as a religious ideal for Southern Baptist Convention adherents, as it does for many of its denominational counterparts. The conceptualization of marriage rests on the union between a man and a

woman; thus, Southern Baptist Convention prohibits clergy from performing same-sex marriage rights (Bordeyne, 2006; Cohler & Hammack, 2004). Fuist et al. (2012) found the Southern Baptist Convention to be an exclusionary and condemnatory denomination in regard to same-sex sexuality based on a long history of resolutions of negatively addressing gay and lesbian issues.

Methodism. In 1972, The Book of Discipline of the United Methodist Church included a statement prohibiting homosexual practice. Since then, contentious debates have ensued within the United Methodist Church, leading to a substantial divide (Waldrep, 2012). The Book of Discipline stands as an exclusive and official manuscript in the denomination. Although the church is often viewed as democratic, some Methodists rally against progressive clergy, whereas others support reform (Waldrep, 2012). Thus, the church is fraught with ambivalence (Fuist et al., 2012). Many proponents of gay rights illuminate the Book's open membership policy that extends to gay and lesbian Christians; however, like many denominations, the Book makes clear its stance against homosexual behaviors and same-sex marriage (Fuist et al., 2012).

Homosexuality, according to the Book of Discipline, "is incompatible with Christian teaching" (United Methodist Church, 2008, p. 206). Consequently, openly gay or lesbian individuals may not be ordained as ministers, nor may ministers perform ceremonies related to same-sex unions or marriage (Fuist et al., 2012). Without the backing of the Church, clergy who perform gay marriages can, and have been, defrocked (Waldrep, 2012). Despite these punitive measures, the United Methodist Church stands

as one of the most progressive denominations in the United States and Fuist et al. (2012) found Methodism to be ambivalent toward same-sex sexuality.

Episcopalian. Of the largest denominations in the United States, the Episcopal Church takes a relatively liberal stance on homosexuality (Fuist et al., 2012; Robinson, 2012). In fact, the Episcopal Church was the first to ordain a noncelibate, openly gay priest as a Bishop (Robinson, 2012). Reverend Gene Robinson was elected Bishop in June of 2003 by the New Hampshire diocese of the Episcopal Church, making Robinson the first openly gay official in the worldwide Anglican community. Though the church is recognized for its progressive stance, the decision was highly controversial. During his consecration, Bishop Robinson wore a bulletproof vest, having received numerous death threats (Robinson, 2012). These events indicate some of the Churches congregates refer to the gospels to which they perceive to denigrate same-sex orientation. Cadge, Girouard, Olson, and Lylerohr (2012) found more than half of the clergy the researchers studied conveyed uncertainty with regard to whether and how to take action concerning homosexuality. Though divided, the Episcopal Church remains substantially progressive, and Fuist et al. (2012) found the Episcopal Church to be a welcoming and affirming denomination in relation to same-sex sexuality.

Denominations' views on same-sex sexuality have been shown to range from welcoming and affirming (Episcopal), ambivalent (Methodism), exclusionary and condemnatory (Jehovah's Witness and Southern Baptist Convention), to special case (Catholicism; Fuist et al., 2012). According to Whitehead (2014), a denomination's degree of fundamentalism has been shown to be related to an increased likelihood of its

adherents seeing homosexuality as a choice and, this perception has been shown to be related to a decreased likelihood of support for LBG rights and politics (Fuist et al., 2012). Jehovah's Witness and Southern Baptist Conventions, for example, oppose same-sex marriage in the strongest possible terms, pledging never to recognize the moral legitimacy of any law supporting it (Fuist et al., 2012). While other, less fundamental denomination's (i.e., the United Methodist Church) views on same-sex marriage are more ambivalent, recognizing, for example, the sacred worth of LGB individuals while preventing ministers from conducting same-sex marriages (Fuist et al., 2012). Exploring denominational stances on same-sex sexuality of the major Christian denominations is important because there is no unified view of same-sex sexuality within Christianity (Woodford et al., 2012) and because denominations have influence on adherents' worldview on religion (Fuist et al., 2012). However, a denomination's degree of fundamentalism or biblical literalism negatively influences support of same-sex sexuality (Fuist et al., 2012; Whitehead, 2014). Emergent quantitative research shows that how individuals view same-sex sexuality is related to denomination, and this study adds to this line of inquiry by examining the relationship between Christian denominational religiosity and heterosexism, and comparing the degree of religiosity and heterosexism among members of five Christian denominations in the southern United States.

The Historical, Social, and Psychological Stigmatization of Homosexuality

It is well documented that same-sex preferences are found in numerous species, from insects (i.e., fruit flies; Lawson, 2011) to higher mammals (i.e., bonobos; Lawson, 2011) and in all human cultures (Barash, 2010; Elie, Mathevon, & Vignal, 2011; Lawson,

2011). However, attitudes toward homosexuality have varied considerably throughout different periods in history and in different places. Historically, homosexuality has been pathologized and depathologized, illuminating psychology's efforts to differentiate mental disorders from immoral and illegal behavior (De Block & Adriaens, 2013). The notion of sexual deviance, until roughly the 1850s, rested on the foundation of morality and theological considerations; however, as psychiatry grew in popularity, a new conceptualization emerged casting same-sex attraction as pathological rather than strictly immoral (De Block & Adriaens, 2013). In addition, authority shifted in the nineteenth century from religious or pious authority to more secular-oriented power, leading to increased scrutiny of homosexuality from legal systems, psychiatry, medicine, and psychology (Drescher, 2010).

The scientific study of homosexuality arose in the nineteenth century. During this period, Hungarian journalist Karioli Maria Kertbeny wrote a commentary against a Prussian law criminalizing male homosexual behavior, and coined the actual terms *homosexuality* and *homosexual* in 1869 (Drescher, 2010). Kertbeny believed in and supported a biological basis of homosexuality, to which he contended could not be changed, and this conceptualization of sexuality was pitted against the condemning beliefs that initiated sodomy laws (Drescher, 2010). Kertbeny's neologisms were borrowed a decade later by Gustav Jager in his book, *Discovery of the Soul* (1878), and by Emil Kraepelin who released the first edition of the book, *Compedium der Psychiatrie* in 1883 in which he alluded to "contrary sexual feelings" and "states of psychological weakness" (Mendelson, 2003, p. 679). However, it was Richard von Drafft-Ebing in

1886 who historically used the terms as the first psychological conceptualization of homosexuality in his book, *Psychopathia Sexualis* (Himbaza, Schenker, & Edart, 2012).

Kraepelin's renowned textbook evolved substantially upon the release of its eighth edition in 1915, whereby the notion of homosexuality progressed from a state of "psychological weakness" to a mental condition of "constitutional origin" (Mendelson, 2003, p. 679.). Kraepelin came to view homosexuality as a disease based on degeneration; albeit, he did not believe practicing homosexuals should be prosecuted (Mildenberger, 2007). Between 1900 and 1933, physician Magnus Hirschfeld, an opponent of Kraepelin, protested fervently against sodomy laws, leading to a split in psychiatry between followers of Hirschfeld and those of Kraepelin (Mildenberger, 2007).

Freud pioneered the psychoanalytic study of sexuality that asserted heterosexuality signified normal psychosexual development; however, Freud made clear that homosexuality could not be categorized as a mental illness (Mendeleson, 2003). Despite these ideas, the conceptualization of homosexuality as abnormal and aberrant came to prevail, and the supremacy of this notion sustained homosexuality within psychiatric nosology through the better part of the 1900s (Mendeleson, 2003).

The Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders

In 1952, the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders, first edition (DSM-I) categorized homosexuality as a sociopathic personality disturbance, and subsequently as a nonpsychotic sexual deviation in the 1968 release of DSM-II (APA, 1952; APA, 1968; Krueger, 2010). In its harshest depiction, the APA categorized homosexuality alongside pedophilia and sexual sadism, labeling the condition as a

"pathologic sexuality" (APA, 1952, p. 39). The DSM-II, although similar in context, emphasizes sexual deviations, their "distasteful" nature, and the inability of the afflicted to "substitute normal sexual behavior" (APA, 1968, p. 44). In the midst of the late 60s, however, this label came under great scrutiny, and the 1969 renowned Stonewall riots provided an impetus for the gay rights movement to initiate widespread protests for equality and social acceptance (Silverstein, 2009).

For the better part of the twentieth century, however, homosexuality was pathologized by the American Psychiatric Association (APA) by being characterized as a mental disorder, and interventions were thus devised to cure the disorder (Silverstein, 2009). However, Hooker (1957), contributed important findings that helped de-pathologize homosexuality and eventually remove it from the DSM. The population for Hooker's study was at the time, quite innovative. To eliminate research bias, Hooker's study consisted of gay men without psychological or social pathology histories and no ties with psychiatric clinics, mental hospitals or prison facilities (Hooker, 1957). Hooker believed that selecting such a population was necessary for her as a researcher to suspend potential theoretical perceptions that she observed had plagued previous research on homosexuality. Hooker found that no correlation existed between homosexuality and mental illness, and this finding allowed her to argue that homosexuality was not a symptom of pathology and that its forms were as varied as those of heterosexuality. Moreover, Hooker outlined the following important implications of her study: (a) homosexuality did not exist as a clinical entity, (b) homosexuality was a deviation in sexual pattern within the normal range, and (c) if homosexuality did represent

maladjustment, it may be limited to the sexual sector and not connected to the psychological.

Hooker's study helped pave the way for separating homosexuality from psychological maladjustment and consequently, its removal from the DSM. In addition, given the spirit of the 60s, scholarly dissenters amassed literature to repudiate the misguided zeitgeist of homosexuality as pathological (Silverstein, 2009). The Stonewall riots marked a pivotal turning point in the gay rights movement, and lesbians and gay men rejected the confines of their proverbial closet (Silverstein, 2009). In the aftermath of Stonewall, gay activists indicted the APA with perpetuating homosexuality as a social stigma (Silverstein, 2009). Riots persisted, disrupting both the 1970 and 1971 APA annual meetings (Silverstein, 2009). Feeling the pressure of the world's lens, the APA acquiesced and agreed to open discourse on changing the diagnosis of homosexuality (Silverstein, 2009).

The APA's Nomenclature Committee met in February of 1973 with an ad hoc group of gay activists to revisit the issue of homosexuality as a diagnosable mental condition. Insofar as psychiatry represented the gate-keepers of societal attitudes, removing homosexuality from the DSM, the activists hoped, would bear profound implications for LGB individuals, such as hastening the eradication of sodomy laws and moral turpitude clauses to which proscribed the professional licensing of otherwise qualified individuals (Silverstein, 2009). Moreover, the activist committee also anticipated the change would facilitate civil rights protection for lesbians and gay men, including anti-discrimination laws for employment and housing.

In December of 1973, after nearly a 12-month review, the APAs Board of Trustees voted to declassify and remove homosexuality from the DSM (Drescher, 2008; Silverstein, 2009). In their acceptance of the Nomenclature Committees recommendation, however, the APA asserted that only some, indeed not all, homosexuals merited diagnosis and treatment (Silverstein, 2009). In this vein, the third edition of the DSM classified homosexuals as either ego-syntonic or ego-dystonic, with the latter warranting treatment (Silverstein, 2009). The APA failed to make clear, however, the direction of treatment (i.e., change sexual orientation or encourage ego-syntonic sexuality). Ostensibly, the therapist and patient would make this decision.

Published in 1987, the revised edition of the DSM-III removed ego-dystonic homosexuality, leaving the residual, Sexual Disorder Not Otherwise Specified diagnosis, which related to marked and persistent distress regarding one's sexual orientation, regardless of its hetero- or homo- distinction. In 1994, the DSM-IV again modified the nomenclature, referring instead to sexual and gender identity disorders, and referencing the diagnosis of Sexual Disorder Not Otherwise Specified, 302.9 (APA, 1994). The revised edition of DSM-IV released in 2000, preserved the category of sexual and gender identity disorder as well as diagnosis 302.9, but included a caveat that deviance should be considered in its cultural context (APA, 2000; Mendelson, 2003). The current edition, DSM-5, further distinguishes itself from the antiquated views that once dominated psychiatry. Its emphasis on cultural context is replete throughout the text; thereby overtly eliminating the notion that homosexuality signifies a pathological mental ailment.

Therefore, the omission of homosexuality from the field's nosology was derived from a concatenation of societal forces and scientific data (Mendelson, 2003.).

Negative and Positive Psychological Consequences of Religiosity and Heterosexism for Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Populations

An important part of what religious institutions can offer to individuals is emotional support, interpersonal contact, and a sense of belonging (Woodford et al., 2012). For the devout, religion informs important decisions based on belief systems (Levy & Reeves, 2011). The benefits of religion are well documented in the literature, and ample evidence suggests that religion is positively correlated with increased levels of subjective wellbeing (Mochron, Norton, & Ariely, 2011). Findings from a national sample demonstrated individuals with higher degrees of religious involvement are nearly two times more likely to report feeling happy than their less religiously-involved counterparts (Ferris, 2002; Hackney & Sanders, 2003; Keonig & Larson, 2001; Myers, 2000). However, in a recent Gallup poll LGB individuals were reportedly significantly less religious than their heterosexual counterparts (Newport, 2014).

Less research has focused on the extent to which one's degree of religiosity, defined as religious involvement, may be related to negative outcomes, such as depression and hopelessness. Mochon et al., (2011) found moderate believers are less likely to reap the benefits of religious involvement (e.g., wellbeing, satisfaction, self-esteem) than fervent believers, thus in cases of moderate believers, reducing religiosity may improve psychological well-being. The results imply group membership may bear psychological costs, depending on the degree of religiosity (Mochon et al., 2011). Same-

sex orientation bears a lengthy history replete with victimization, oppression, and discrimination (Herek, 2010; Zucker & Spitzer, 2005). Arefi, Ghoreshi, and Eimann (2001) revealed clinically significant correlations between motivations, religious beliefs, and self-identity. Similarly, Levy and Reeves (2011) found that LGB individuals reared in Christianity frequently experience substantial conflict between their sexual identity and religion. The researchers also found religious orientation carried a significant negative association with diffused identity (Arefi et al., 2011). This phenomenon is exacerbated for many Christians whom view their religion as a cornerstone in their lives (Duarté-Vélez et al., 2010; Sears, 2013).

Consequently, Christian LGB individuals may be exposed to competing ideologies, a situation that can lead to severe depression, debilitating secrecy, internalized homophobia, and self-loathing (Duarté-Vélez et al., 2010; Levy & Reeves, 2011). Typically, LGB Christians address these conflicts in the following ways: (a) rejecting their homosexuality, (b) rejecting their religion, (c) integrating the two identities, (d) compartmentalizing both identities, or (e) living with the tension (Levy & Reeves, 2011). Integration is far from the norm; however, this option is only available within gay-affirming churches and congregations that acknowledge the compatibility between same-sex sexuality and Christianity, thereby creating both a spiritual home and safe haven for LGB Christians (Levy & Reeves, 2011). Using a grounded theory approach, Levy and Reeves (2011) sought to understand how LGB Christians resolved identity conflict resulting from the clash of their sexuality and Christian doctrine. They found that resolving this tension comprises a five-stage process of internal conflict resolution: (a)

awareness of the conflict (b) an initial response, (c) a catalyst spurred by new knowledge, (d) working through conflict, and (e) resolution. Levy and Reeves (2011) found that this process of conflict resolution often involved a move away from the strict doctrinal constraints of organized religion toward a more personalized or customized relationship to a larger faith that allowed for the acceptance of their sexual identities. This departure from more authoritative or fundamental religious stances aligns with research that shows denominational fundamentalism is connected to decreased levels of support for same-sex sexuality (Fuist et al., 2012; Whitehead, 2014). Other methods to mitigate depression in LGB Christians include cognitive-behavioral therapy. For example, in their case study, Duarté-Vélez et al., (2010) found that the flexible and problem-focused approach of cognitive-behavioral therapy was helpful in the treatment of depression in a Latino gay Christian adolescent.

Craig, Austin, and Alessi (2013) also found a gay-affirming cognitive-behavioral therapy model helpful in the treatment of mental health problems, including depression, in sexual minority youth. Cognitive-behavioral therapy concentrates on identifying, addressing, and modifying dysfunctional behavior (Craig et al., 2013). However, because negative outcomes (e.g., depression, anxiety) and dysfunctional behavior (e.g. substance abuse) can be explained, in part, by the chronic stress of sexual prejudice and discrimination, Craig et al., (2013) argue that it is important to expand and use gay-affirming models of cognitive-behavioral therapy when treating sexual minority youth. Craig et al., (2013) expanded on a gay-affirming cognitive-behavioral therapy model that involves mental health professionals viewing homosexuality and bisexuality as equally

positive variants of sexual identity development. A gay affirming cognitive-behavioral therapy approach includes ten components centered on validating gay, lesbian, and bisexual sexuality and recognizing the negative consequences of heterosexism and homophobia on the well-being of sexual minority youth (Craig et al., 2013). Craig et al., (2013) illustrated the application of their gay affirming cognitive-behavioral therapy approach in a case study of a 16-year-old Hispanic female who identified as bi-sexual. Craig et al., (2013) found that their approach provided tangible strategies to help minimize negative mental health outcomes for the participant; these strategies included selectively letting others know about her sexuality when she was ready, identifying potential sources of social support, and finding positive ways to educate herself about the experiences of other sexual minority youth. While Craig et al., (2013) gay-affirming cognitive-behavioral therapy model may prove helpful in the treatment of mental health problems for sexual minority youth, the approach has yet to be used and tested by other researchers.

Despite social and governmental advances to protect sexual minorities, LGB citizens continually and persistently face marginalization, bigotry, and discrimination (Avery et al., 2007; Woodford et al., 2012). Contemporary discrimination has changed markedly, often taking on more unintentional, subtler forms, frequently referred to as microaggressions (Nadal, Rivera, & Corpus, 2010; Woodford, et al., 2012). Microaggressions involve demonstrations of discrimination and prejudice communicated via meaningless and innocuous tactics, such as snubs, contemptuous stares, tones, and gestures (Shelton & Delgado-Romero, 2011; Sue, 2010). The idea of microaggressions

arose in the 1970s to elucidate subtler types of racism; however, current research has focused on LGB discrimination (Nadal et al., 2011; Sue, 2010). Given the pervasive and oftentimes inadvertent use of microaggressions in virtually all social domains, some researchers have aimed their efforts at studying microaggressions in therapeutic contexts (Shelton & Delgado-Romero, 2013). Shelton and Delgado-Romero (2011) conducted a qualitative study to explore the reported influence of microaggressions among 16 self-identified LGB individuals aged 20 to 47, who had participated in psychotherapy. Their findings supported their original hypotheses that proposed sexual orientation microaggressions exist within psychotherapeutic environments and relationships (Shelton & Delgado-Romero (2011).

Heterosexism and Heteronormativity

Heteronormativity refers to a social system in which ideas and practices regarding sexuality are organized in such a way that heterosexuality becomes accepted as the norm (Wieringa, 2012). Warner (1999) sought to address and extend thinking of what Rich (1986) earlier characterized as *compulsory heterosexuality*, a system of cultural, social, and political forces that upholds, heterosexuality as the norm and compel, implicitly and explicitly, individuals' adherence to these norms through social conventions and dominant attitudes and ways of thinking. Heteronormativity refers to a social and cultural system in which heterosexual orientation and sexual conduct are promoted and accepted as normal or natural (Warner, 1999). Consequently, those who do not identify as heterosexual are considered abnormal, complete with associated stigmas of pathology and aberration (Warner, 1999). Injunctions and arguments against same-sex sexuality go

back to antiquity (De Block & Adriaens, 2013), but what Warner added was a better understanding of how the ideological interconnectedness of social institutions (e.g., churches, schools, relationships, community, and familial expectations) syncretize to give the impression of normalcy or naturalness and the potential detrimental effects this has on LGB populations (Wieringa, 2012). However, heteronormativity relates to, but is not interchangeable with, heterosexism (Wieringa, 2012). Heteronormativity is more than normalized heterosexual practices; heteronormativity undergirds attitudes and practices of daily life, as well as social institutions, including laws, and regulations influencing peoples' personal lives (Wieringa, 2012). Recent research has linked religious fundamentalism and religiosity to heteronormativity (Guittar, 2013; Wieringa, 2012) and has shown that heteronormativity can have harmful effects in the form of experienced discrimination, depression, and microaggressions of LGB populations (Gattis et al., 2014; Guittar, 2013; Wieringa, 2012).

Heterosexism refers to the belief that people are, or should be, heterosexual, and that alternative sexualities are deviant or unnatural (Morrison & Dinkel, 2012), and researchers have used heterosexism as a construct to study attitudes toward sexuality. For example, Rankin, Weber, Blumefeld, and Frazer (2010) conducted a national study of LGB undergraduates who experienced heterosexism on campus and found that these students were 17 times more likely to encounter derogatory remarks than physical violence. This aligns with Rankin's (2005) national study that revealed a similar pattern among undergraduate LGB students in which more than a third (36%) of LGB students reported experiencing harassment, primarily in the form of derogatory remarks.

Woodford et al., (2014) conducted a qualitative, cross-sectional study (N=299) of LGBT college students' experiences and wellbeing, which explored the reported influence of blatant victimization and microaggressions, separately and combined, on psychological distress with a mediator of self-acceptance. Their findings indicated samples with higher atypical gender expression were more likely to experience increased victimization and heterosexism, younger samples experienced increased heterosexism, and finally undergraduates reported increased experiences of victimization (Woodford et al., 2014).

Woodford et al. (2014) observed that on college campuses, which are thought to be places of acceptance of sexual and cultural diversity, subtle forms of heterosexism exist and can derive from individuals who do not hold anti-gay attitudes. Microaggressions showed a greater relation to heterosexism than did blatant victimization. Wright and Wegner (2012) found that homonegative microaggressions negatively correlated with LGB individual's sexual identity development and were associated with lower self-esteem and negative feelings relating to one's minority sexual identity. Developing an identity that is stigmatized can be difficult and have negative outcomes relating to psychosocial functioning, including social isolation and the ability to cope with discrimination and prejudice (Woodford et al., 2014; Wright & Wegner, 212). However, self-acceptance, which included high self-esteem and LGB pride, mediated psychological distress from both microaggressions and heterosexism (Woodford et al., 2014). In this sense, one's level of self-acceptance may hold protective attributes in negative environments. Still, given this importance of healthy development and positive

identity formation, more work is needed on the connection between microaggressions, sexual minority identity formation, and protective factors, such as self-acceptance.

Suicide rates, among those aged 15 to 24, stand as the third leading cause of death (NIMH, 2011). However, Scourfield et al., (2008) found suicide rates of LGB individuals to be disproportionately higher than those of their heterosexual counterparts. Mulé et al., (2009) investigated suicide rates among youths by sexual orientation and found suicide rates for LGB youth to be 14 times higher than their heterosexual counterparts. This disparity, many scholars have contended, originated from internalized homophobia often derived from heterosexism (Duarté-Vélez et al., 2010; Scoufield et al., 2008; Woodford et al., 2012). Internalized homophobia refers to the ways LGB individuals internalize or come to believe negative beliefs and attitudes as true about same-sex sexuality and direct these attitudes toward themselves (Barnes & Meyer, 2012). Through the pervasiveness of heterosexism, internalized homophobia can be a particularly significant stressor for LGB individuals, and researchers have found that LGB members of denominations that do not affirm same-sex sexuality are associated with higher levels of internalized homophobia (Barnes & Meyer, 2012). In their study of religious affiliation and internalized homophobia, Barnes and Meyer (2012) hypothesized using minority stress theory that exposure to religious environments that do not affirm LGB individuals could lead to depression, decreased wellbeing, and increased homophobia. The researchers sampled 396 LGB individuals via questionnaire in New York City and found that non-affirming religious settings represent a hostile environment for LGB individuals, leading to increased internalized homophobia and depression.

Barnes and Meyer's (2012) study was guided by and supported the tenets of minority stress theory that posits because LGB individuals (i.e., sexual minorities) are exposed to prejudice and stigma, they will experience greater psychological stress, leading to negative health outcomes than do their heterosexual counterparts (Barnes & Meyer, 2012).

The Persistence of Negative Attitudes toward Homosexuality

Public attitudes toward homosexuality have dramatically shifted in the last 30 years (Drazenovich, 2012), and the vestiges of the pathologization of homosexuality in the DSM were removed formally in 1987 (Drazenovich, 2012). A 2007 US Gallup poll revealed 57% of respondents supported the sanctioning of homosexuality as an alternative public lifestyle to heterosexuality. However, negative attitudes toward same-sex sexuality persist, and in their attempt to better understand attitudes toward homosexuality, researchers have long focused on individuals' beliefs about homosexuality and various aspects that influence the manner in which homosexuality is conceptualized (Adamczyk & Pitt, 2009; Drazenovich, 2012). Researchers have found multiple factors influence one's attitude toward homosexuality, such as the perception of inequality and economic growth (Anderson & Fetner, 2008). Political liberals tend to hold more positive attitudes toward homosexuality than do political conservatives (Inbar, Pizarro, & Bloom, 2009). Gender and gender roles contribute to attitude formation concerning homosexuality (Furnham & Saito, 2009). Moreover, interaction and contact with gay and lesbians also influences attitudes surrounding same-sex attraction

(Adolfsen, Iedema, & Keuzenkamp, 2010). Recent research has also focused on factors that influence the perceived origins of attitudes toward homosexuality.

For example, Hans, Kersy, and Kimberly (2012) conducted a qualitative study (N=417) on undergraduate students to explore self-identified origins of attitudes toward homosexuality and various conditions that may trigger a change in attitudes. Of their respondents, 41% expressed favorable attitudes, 22% reflected indifferent attitudes, 20% were tolerant, and 17% conveyed unfavorable attitudes toward homosexuality (Hans et al., 2009). Female participants were approximately twice as likely to hold favorable attitudes, whereas males were twice as likely to hold unfavorable views. This study was unique in that respondents named specific factors, via open-ended questions, that influenced their expressed attitudes, which were interaction with LGB individuals, parental influence, support of social equality, positions on the origin of homosexuality, and religious beliefs. Of the 41.2% whom held favorable views, 70% named personal interaction as most influential in their attitudes. These findings support Allport's (1954) contact hypothesis in shaping attitudes, which posits contact between minority and majority groups decreases majority group prejudice toward minority groups. Their findings, albeit useful, are limited such that participants were young, undergraduates for whom research suggests tend to be more liberal and accepting of homosexuality. In addition, Whitehead (2014) found that women were more likely to view homosexuality more favorably than men because women were less likely to view homosexuality as a choice. This aligns with attribution theory that holds people are more accepting of

unusual behavior when the behavior is considered outside of an individual's control (Weiner, 1985).

Researchers have also focused on the social factors that correlate with attitude formation toward homosexuality. For example, McConnell et al., (2008) found that social group cues bear a forceful influence on implicit and explicit attitude formation. Attitudes are frequently classically conditioned such that viewing a display of negative reactions toward a specific group, cultivates negative reactions in the viewer, thereby perpetuating prejudice toward a targeted group (Jacoby, 2002). Ogland and Hinojosa (2012) found evolving attitudes prompted by societal change frequently conflicts with religious ideologies because of their inherent departure from biblical notions. Religious factors, researchers find, are frequently and powerfully correlated with an individual's moral orientation of social, cultural, and political matters that entail relationships (Ellison, Acevedo, & Ramos-Wada, 2011; Ogland & Hinojosa, 2012; Thornton et al., 2007). Such phenomena prove particularly significant in more insular religious environments. For example, rural environments with fewer public gathering facilities frequently depend on the church for social support and entertainment. LGB Christians reared in this milieu of insularity whereby the church, community, and family are intricately interwoven, are well aware of the inherent stakes (i.e., communal rejection, familial disappointment, excommunication) and must continually weigh the consequences of their family's rejection and community's disapproval (Barton, 2011). Barton (2011) found the implications of heterosexism to be heightened in more insular environments via risks of excommunication, loss of community and family social support, and increased public

shame. Barton (2011) also found insular environments to be more vulnerable to theocratic encroachment, which can infiltrate various domains of secular society.

Denominational Variation

Woodford et al., (2012) examined the endorsement of same-sex marriage and religion in relation to denominational teachings about same-sex orientation and personal religious beliefs among heterosexual college students. Woodford et al., (2012) observed that previous research regarding religion and sexuality ignored the possible influence of people's endorsements of denominational teachings regarding homosexuality. The researchers used syncretism as a conceptual lens to examine how individuals accept some aspects of their faith or religions while rejecting other aspects. Syncretism refers to the disjuncture between the teachings and positions of an individual's denomination and an individual's own religious beliefs (Woodford et al., 2012). Individuals may accept and reject certain aspects of their denominational stances, or even incorporate beliefs from other religious denominations into their personal belief system (Woodford et al., 2012). The researchers collected data from 2,568 students from a cross-section of students at a large, public, Midwestern university using an Internet-based survey. The researchers found that among religiously identified students, 59% supported same-sex marriage, and that support varied by denomination. Jewish participants were significantly more likely to support same-sex marriage, followed by Buddhists and Hindus, then by African American Protestants and Catholics (Woodford et al., 2012). Evangelical Conservative Christians and Evangelical Christians reported the strongest opposition to same-sex marriage. The study was important as an early representative of using syncretism as a

variable in the study of how religion influences individuals' attitudes about sexuality. Although individually held religious beliefs may be consistent with a person's denominational doctrine, these results indicated that it is not safe to assume religiously affiliated individuals necessarily oppose same-sex marriage.

In another study, Woodford et al., (2012) investigated the connection between sexual prejudice among Christian college students, personal religious beliefs, and denominational teachings. The researchers observed that previous scholars had argued religiosity was more influential in the formation and maintenance of prejudicial attitudes than denominational affiliation. However, according to Woodford et al., (2012), the influences of a denomination and one's endorsement of those teachings had not been empirically assessed. The researchers used the same dataset as in Woodford et al., (2012) and found that, contrary to previous findings, the endorsement of denominational teachings were more influential than religiosity. Given the usefulness of the concept of syncretism and findings that indicate an influence of denominational doctrine (Fuist et al., 2012; Woodford et al., 2012), the researchers recommended studies on the influence of religion and religious messages on same-sex sexuality at the congregational level, as well as of the cognitive dissonance that may occur in young adults when they begin to think differently from, and perhaps challenge, denominational lessons (Woodford et al., 2012).

Because the connections between same-sex sexuality, religious denomination, and personal beliefs have been found to be complex (Woodford et al., 2012), researchers have also examined the potential positive relationships between religious denominations and LGB populations. For example, Gattis, Woodford, and Han (2014) investigated whether

gay-affirming religious affiliation can act as a protective factor for sexual minorities. The researchers noted that scholars have investigated sexual discrimination as risk factors for depression among sexual minorities but that positive effects of religion on these populations remains under investigated. The researchers also observed that religion can play a mixed role in the lives of sexual minorities (Gattis et al., 2014). For example, being associated with a religious denomination was found to be correlated with more general support, but with less support concerning sexual orientation (Gattis et al., 2014). Gattis et al. (2014), therefore, sought to increase understanding of the possible unique contribution of religious denominational affiliation as a protective factor against perceived discrimination and depression. Gattis et al. (2014) sampled 393 sexual minority students and 1,727 heterosexual-identifying students. The researchers also included secular students because identifying as secular has been shown to act as a protective factor against internalized homophobia, which was found to be positively associated with depression in sexual minorities. Gattis et al., (2014) found that gay-affirming denominations acted as a protective factor against perceived discrimination and depression in sexual minorities compared to those affiliated with denominations opposed to same-sex sexuality. Implications included consideration of religious affiliation and denominations' stances on same-sex sexuality when working with sexual minority youth. The researchers also recommended that gay-affirming denominations committed to addressing the concerns of LGB individuals may want to open dialogues with leaders and members of denominations opposed to same-sex sexuality. Gattis et al.'s (2014) study was particularly important because it focused on the potential positive aspects of religious

affiliation rather than on the negative aspects of such. The findings of Gattis et al., (2014) may have implications for the current study because Gattis et al., (2014) findings suggest that while denominational religiosity may be positively related to heterosexism in the denominations opposed to same-sex sexuality, denominational religiosity may be negatively related to heterosexism in gay-affirming denominations.

Summary and Conclusions

Research has shown that the pervasiveness of heterosexism and internalized homophobia can have adverse effects on LGB individuals, including depression (Gattis et al., 2014; Guittar, 2013; Wieringa, 2012) and increased instances of suicide (Scoufield et al., 2008). Microaggressions also represent pervasive ways negative attitudes toward LGB individuals are carried out in virtually all social domains (Nadal et al., 2010; Woodford, et al., 2012), including psychotherapeutic contexts (Shelton & Delgado-Romero, 2011). In addition, recent research has shown that religious denominations have significant influence on adherents' attitudes towards same-sex sexuality (Fuist et al., 2012; Woodford et al., 2012). The current research uses the attribution theory (Weiner, 1985) as an academic scaffolding regarding a humanly innate need for causal explanations of atypical behaviors. In this vein, evidence supports those who assign biological explanations to homosexuality, as opposed to choice-driven explanations, are more likely to view same-sex sexuality more favorably (Lewis, 2009; Whitehead, 2014). Individuals of fundamental, or biblically-literal, denominations, such as Jehovah's Witness and Southern Baptist Convention, tend to view homosexuality as an individual choice and, consequently, tend to not support the rights of LGB populations, including

supporting same-sex marriage (Fuist et al., 2012; Whitehead, 2014). In addition, researchers have used the construct of religiosity to study ways individual attitudes and denominational doctrine syncretize among different religious denominations (Fuist et al., 2012; Gattis et al., 2014; Shukor & Jamal, 2013; Woodford et al., 2012).

Research examining the influence of religious denominations on individual attitudes toward sexuality is important and promising, but more work is needed to further the scope of this line of research, because no unified Christian view of same-sex sexuality exists (Woodford et al., 2012). Also, it is necessary to extend this current line of research to further determine relationships between stances of religious denominations toward same-sex sexuality and measures of denominational religiosity and heterosexism among LGB populations. This study sought to add to the small but growing amount of literature on the connection between perceptions of heterosexism among LGB populations and the positions of religious denominations on same-sex sexuality. Specifically, the study examined the relationship between Christian denominational religiosity and heterosexism, and compared the degree of religiosity and heterosexism among members of five Christian denominations in the Southern United States. Data gleaned may serve to mitigate heteronormative assumptions surrounding same-sex sexuality via the presentation of research evidence. In addition, this information might also be useful to church leaders interested in providing welcoming and affirming church atmospheres and providing models of denominational support to LGB populations, and to mental health professionals, by providing information on the relationship between degrees of denominational religiosity and heterosexism.

Chapter 3 will elaborate on the methodology used for the study. The chapter will include a review of the nature of the study, research questions and hypotheses, research design and related rationale, participant-sampling procedures, and data collection and data analysis procedures.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between Christian denominational religiosity, as measured by the Religiosity Measurement, and heterosexism, as measured by the ATLG-R, and to compare degree of religiosity and heterosexism between members of five Christian denominations, and between same-sex sexuality perspectives in the southern United States. This chapter unfolds in three distinct sections. In the first section, the research design and rationale employed to advance the knowledge of the role of religion in heterosexist ideology, or heterosexism is presented. The second section details methodology, including targeted populations, sample size, sampling procedures, measurements, operationalization of constructs, and data analysis. Lastly, the third section encompasses a review of assumptions and limitations of the study, threats to validity and ethical procedures.

Research Design and Rationale

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between Christian denominational religiosity, as measured by the Religiosity Measurement, and heterosexism, as measured by the ATLG-R scale, and to compare degree of religiosity and heterosexism between members of five Christian denominations, and between same-sex sexuality perspectives, in the southern United States. A quantitative, correlational, cross-sectional survey design was selected to optimize the analysis. A correlational design assesses the relationships between variables (Creswell, 2005). This method proved most fitting, given the crux of the study centers on examining statistically significant

effects of quantifiable (i.e., numerically measurable) concepts (Howell, 2010). Because of the nature of the study and the need to safeguard anonymity, a qualitative approach was rejected. For example, qualitative interviews may prove valuable in revealing anecdotal narratives, but may not adequately signify patterns within larger groups (Creswell, 2009). Given participants were asked to complete questionnaires, a survey design provides a more apt analysis of responses in a more practical and economical manner. Consequently, a quantitative, correlational survey design approach was used to examine the relationship between measures of religiosity, heterosexism, religious denomination, and same-sex sexuality perspective related to the perceived origins of homosexuality.

Religious denomination serves as the categorical factor with five groups, comprising Catholic, Southern Baptist Convention, Methodist, Episcopal, and Jehovah's Witness Christian denominations. Measures of religiosity (researcher's pilot tested religiosity measure) and heterosexism (ATLG-R) was compared among religious denominations. The Religiosity Measure ascertains one's degree of religiosity via the frequency of three overt behaviors: attendance of religious services, reading of Holy Scriptures, and prayer. Moreover, the Religiosity Measure gauges one's perspective related to perceived origins of homosexuality. The ATLG-R targets specifically heterosexist attitudes regarding lesbians and gay men.

Methodology

Population

The population represented in this study included Christian parishioners from five denominations including: Catholic, Southern Baptist Convention, Methodist, Episcopalian, and Jehovah's Witness. To be eligible, participants had to identify as Christian, hold membership in one of the aforementioned Christian denominations, be at least 18 years of age, and capable of reading and writing in English. This population consisted of ethnically diverse adults between the ages of 19 and 81.

Denominational selection for the study was based on population size, prevalence in the southern United States, and stance on homosexuality (i.e. traditionalism vs modernism and libertarianism vs communalism). For example, Catholicism and Southern Baptist Convention stand as the largest Christian denominations in the United States (Fuist et al., 2012). As the oldest Christian denomination, the Catholic Church is traditionalist, whereas the Methodist and Episcopal churches offer a more modern view of religion (Fuist et al., 2012). In fact, Fuist et al., (2012) found the Episcopal Church to be one of the most progressive churches. Conversely, Jehovah's Witnesses, although smaller in size, are well known for their strident views against homosexuality (Garraud, 2014; Lalich & McLaren, 2010). Therefore, a relatively broad spectrum of doctrinal theology regarding acceptance of same-sex sexuality was conceptualized so that denominations were examined not only by prevalence and size, but by stance on homosexuality.

Sampling and Sampling Procedures

The sample was a stratified random sample obtained from Christian parishioners from five distinct denominations (i.e., Catholic, Southern Baptist Convention, Methodist,

Episcopal, and Jehovah's Witness). A stratified random sample is an appropriate sampling procedure when the population is divided into smaller groups, also known as strata (Creswell, 2005). The strata in this study corresponded to the five religious denominations (i.e., Catholic, Episcopal, Methodist, Southern Baptist Convention, and Jehovah's Witness). Data was analyzed by denomination; participants held membership in one of the five aforementioned denominations. Participants whom did not meet this strata qualification (i.e., membership in Catholic, Episcopal, Methodist, Southern Baptist Convention, or Jehovah's Witness) were excluded from the study. The intent of the study centered on ascertaining an equally distributed number of participants for each denomination (i.e., approximately 40 participants from each of the five denominations). However, given discrepancies in denominational population size, denominations with lower populations (i.e., Jehovah's Witness) required additional recruitment efforts. For example, given the number of Catholic and Methodist churches in the study's geographical locale, the primary researcher contacted approximately two to three churches per denomination. However, given the Jehovah's Witness parishioner population is substantially lower than their Christian counterparts, multiple Kingdom Halls were contacted to acquire a sufficient sample of 40 participants. In this sense, the pattern of recruitment in this study differed for Jehovah's Witness populations, such that the researcher had to expend disproportionally recruitment efforts in collecting data for Jehovah's Witness samples. For example, roughly 5% of time allocated to recruitment efforts (i.e., searching for churches via the internet, phoning churches, and speaking with church leaders) were expended on securing Catholic samples, 10% on Methodist, 15% on

Episcopal, 20% on Southern Baptist Convention, and 50% on Jehovah's Witness. Ultimately, the denominations used in this study were approximately even in representation: Catholic (n = 40), Southern Baptist Convention (n = 41), Methodist (n = 42), Episcopal (n = 44), and Jehovah's Witness (n = 37).

Denominational selection was based largely on stance on homosexuality (i.e. welcoming and affirming to exclusionary and condemnatory) and adherent population within the United States. Moreover, significant variation exists among degrees of religiosity and degrees of heterosexism among chosen denominational approaches, interpretations, and beliefs about the Christian Bible and same-sex sexuality. Sample strategy hinged on church participation. Churches in the southern United States were targeted specifically (e.g., Texas and Louisiana). See below for details of data collection.

Sample Size. In the current study, statistical power was calculated to help ensure a reasonable probability that the statistical tests employed in the study had fair chances of detecting a real correlation between religiosity and heterosexism, as well as differences in mean levels religiosity and heterosexism between denominational groups. The current study included both Pearson correlation analysis (Hypotheses 1 below) and analysis of variance (ANOVA; Hypotheses 2 and 3 below). A total of five groups were included: Catholic, Southern Baptist Convention, Methodist, Episcopal, and Jehovah's Witness. Additionally, differences were examined between same-sex sexuality perspective (i.e., biologically-driven or chosen lifestyle). Power analysis was conducted for ANOVA and Pearson Correlation using G*Power 3.1.7 using a medium effect size (Cohen, 1988), .80, and an alpha level of .05. Based on these calculations, for two-way ANOVA, a sample of

approximately 200 participants (approximately 40 participants from each of the five denominations) and for Pearson correlations, a sample of an estimated 85 participants was deemed sufficient for the study (Faul, Erdfelder, Buchner, & Lang, 2014).

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

Catholic, Southern Baptist Convention, Methodist, Episcopal, and Jehovah's Witness denominations were recruited via phone. Church leaders who agreed to participate received recruitment flyers (Appendix C), approved by Walden's Institutional Review Board (approval: 10-08-15-0245295; Appendix F), from the researcher via hand delivery; albeit some churches requested an electronic version. Church leaders distributed recruitment flyers to parishioners. Some churches that initially agreed to participate in the research opted to withdraw from the study upon reading questions that comprise the ATLG-R. Many clergy cited their withdrawal as potentially being perceived as advocating for, or having an association with, the gay rights movement. Clergy often perceived participation in the study as an endorsement of a left wing agenda, thereby countering conservative values. Thus, research efforts were expanded to public areas (i.e., shopping malls, grocery stores, coffee shops, etc.), whereby the researcher handed out flyers or in some instances, managerial staff opted to post flyers.

Participants were directed via a SurveyMonkey link on the recruitment flyer, which required they provide consent (Appendix D) in order to access and complete the survey. Thus, participants whom did not provide consent, were denied access to the survey and therefore excluded from the study. Demographic data was first obtained, which included each participant's age, gender, denomination, education level, and race.

The pilot tested Religiosity Measure and the ATLG-R were presented next. Because the survey was completed anonymously, no identifiable data was obtained. A review of storage, protection, and destruction of data is presented below in Ethical Procedures.

Instrumentation and Operationalization of Constructs

Religiosity Instrument

I created an instrument to ascertain participants' degrees of religiosity, as measured by frequency of prayer, reading Holy Scriptures, and attendance of religious services (Appendix A). Moreover, the Religiosity Measure also obtains same-sex sexuality perspective, which assesses whether or not participants perceive homosexuality to be biologically-driven and therefore, innate. Demographic questions such as gender, age, race, education level, and religious denomination were included at the beginning of the survey. A five-point Likert-type scale was used for items regarding the frequency of three overt behaviors: attendance of religious services, reading of Holy Scriptures, and prayer. The anchor points for this scale include *never* and *daily or more often than once a day*. The Religiosity Measure was scored by generating an average of the three Likert-scaled items; thus, creating a Religiosity composite score. The fourth and final survey question addressed one's same-sex sexuality perspective via two options: Yes, people choose to be gay or No, people are born gay. The religiosity instrument was assessed for face validity through the use of a pilot study.

Pilot Study for Religiosity Instrument

A pilot (feasibility) study is a preliminary investigation to collect data and assess the validity and reliability of the data analysis procedures before the full study is

conducted. Pilot studies are typically applied to improve efficiency and overall quality of the study (Creswell, 2009). While conducting the pilot study, possible drawbacks and deficiencies in the data collection and data analysis procedures may be evident. These shortcomings can be addressed by placing more resources, time, and money toward the overall study. Many religious surveys were considered during the investigative stage of this proposal. However, current religiosity measures often consist of omnibus surveys that include a number of different modules on many different topics (e.g. Aalsma et al., 2013; Baylor University, 2007; Bharmal et al., 2013;.Friese & Wänke, 2014; Lewis & Bates, 2013; Piedmont, 2010; Pudrovska, 2015) and do not accurately define and operationalize religiosity in a manner consistent with this study. Moreover, given the typical style of existing religiosity assessments, psychometrics (i.e., established reliability and validity) were not available. Andrew Whitehead, PhD, an expert in religious studies, recommended the questions that comprise the pilot study. In addition multiple publications (Stroope & Whitehead, 2012; Whitehead, 2014; Whitehead, 2015), Dr. Whitehead also assisted in constructing the Baylor Religious Survey (Baylor University, 2007), which Gallup has employed in multiple studies.

I used a pilot study to assess the appropriateness of the Religiosity Measure (Appendix A) with approximately 28 participants. No concurrent validity test was performed. Once the methodology of the research design and approach were justified, I conducted the actual study. Resultant data from the pilot study remain independent from the findings of the complete data set.

The Attitudes Toward Lesbians and Gay Men Scale (ATLG-R)

Herek (1988) developed The ATLG in the mid-1980s and published his first edition in 1987. Subsequent revised editions were released in 1988 and 1994. The scale measures heterosexuals' attitudes toward gay men and lesbians. The revised long version, ATLG-R, was used in the current study (Appendix B), which includes 20 statements (10 related to gay men and another 10 related to lesbians), to which respondents indicate their level of disagreement or agreement on a five-point Likert-type scale with the anchor points of *strongly agree* and *strongly disagree*. For each item, respondents will select one option from the scale: *strongly agree*, *agree somewhat*, *neither agree nor disagree*, *disagree somewhat*, and *strongly disagree*. An average of the 20 responses were generated for each participant to create a heterosexism composite score. That is, total points were summed and then divided by the number of questions to identify each participant's average score.

Herek permits all doctoral-level students working under supervision to use the ATLG (Herek, 1988, 1994). Formal permission requests are not accepted, as Dr. Herek provides written permission on the scale. The ATLG-R subscales contain high levels of internal consistency: *alpha > .85* with nonstudent adult samples and *alpha >.85* with college student samples (self-administered). Test-retest reliability has been demonstrated with alternate forms (Herek, 1988, 1994). Scores are reliably correlated with other theoretically applicable constructs. Higher scores are correlated with interpersonal contact with LGB individuals, endorsement of discriminatory policies against gays and lesbians, support for conventional family values, adherence to conventional gender-role

attitudes, and high religiosity (Herek, 1994, 2009). The latter studies support the validity of the ATLG-R.

Operationalization of Constructs

The key variables in this quantitative correlational study are religious denomination (grouping variable), religiosity, heterosexism, and same-sex sexuality perspective. An operationalization of these variables are defined below:

Heterosexism: Continuous variable corresponding to an individual's degree of heterosexism, was measurable by the ATLG-R.

Religiosity: Continuous variable corresponding to an individual's degree of religiosity. This variable was measurable by the frequency of religious service attendance, prayer, and the frequency with which one reads Holy Scriptures via the Religiosity Measure.

Religious denomination: Categorical variable corresponding to Christian denominations Catholic, Southern Baptist Convention, Methodist, Episcopal, and Jehovah's Witness was measurable in the demographic portion of the survey.

Same-sex sexuality perspective: Dichotomous categorical variable corresponding to whether individuals believe homosexuality is a choice (i.e., a chosen lifestyle) or not (i.e., biologically-driven; innate).

Data Analysis

Data from the completed surveys were compiled into SPSS version 22.0 for Windows. Descriptive statistics were calculated to describe the sample demographics and the research variables. Frequencies and percentages were calculated for any nominal

(i.e., categorical) variables of interest, such as gender, race, and religious denomination. Means and standard deviations were calculated for any continuous (i.e., interval or ratio) variables of interest, such as degree of religiosity or age (Howell, 2010).

Pre-Analysis Data Screening

Data were screened for accuracy and missing data. Descriptive statistics and frequency distributions were compiled to ensure responses are within a possible range of values. Degree of religiosity was calculated by taking a summative composite score of the corresponding items from the Religiosity Measure. Possible scores for degree of religiosity can range from three to 15. Degree of heterosexism was also be calculated by taking a summative composite score of the corresponding items from the ATLG-R. Possible scores for degree of heterosexism can range from 20 to 100. Moreover, the data were scanned for patterns of inconsistent responding; thus, participants with inconsistent responses were removed from the dataset. For example, participants whom respond "strongly agree" to the ATLG-R questions, "I think male homosexuals are disgusting" and "Sex between two men is just plain wrong" were eliminated if coupled with another "strongly agree" response to the survey question, "I would not be too upset if I learned that my son were a homosexual." Thus, patterns of discriminatory or heterosexist behaviors (e.g. endorsing disgust for individuals with same-sex orientation) may be readily identified, such that conflicting or inconsistent responses (e.g., responses that endorse egalitarian views) may be detected and removed accordingly. In this vein, although strong responses are acceptable, extreme heterosexist responses coupled with egalitarian views are indicative of inconsistent responses.

Moreover, participants whom produced all responses indicating the same answer type, i.e., all in agreement (agree and/or strongly agree) or disagreement (disagree and/or strongly disagree), were removed from the dataset. Because this study sought to sample a minimum of 40 participants per denomination, participant responses that were removed from the dataset were replaced to ensure a minimum sample goal of approximately 40 participants per denomination. Given the electronic modality of the survey (i.e., Survey Monkey), participants were required to answer each question on both the religiosity and heterosexism scales in order to progress through and complete the survey, thereby, eliminating difficulties with missing data for completed surveys.

Reliability

Cronbach's alpha test of reliability and internal consistency was conducted on the Religiosity Measure (i.e., degree of religiosity) and ATLG-R (i.e., degree of heterosexism). Cronbach's alpha assesses how well a set of variables measures a single construct (Brace, Kemp, & Snelgar, 2006). The alpha values were interpreted using the guidelines suggested by George and Mallery (2003), where an alpha > .9 is deemed to be excellent, >.8 is deemed to be good, >.7 is deemed to be acceptable, >.6 is deemed to be questionable, >.5 is deemed to be poor, and $\leq$ .5 is deemed to be unacceptable.

Research Questions

Research Question 1

Is there a significant positive relationship between religiosity and heterosexism?

***H_0*1:** There is no significant relationship between religiosity and heterosexism.

***H*$_A$1:** There is a significant positive relationship between religiosity and heterosexism.

To address Research Question 1, a Pearson product-moment correlation (*r*) was used to assess the strength of the relationship between religiosity and heterosexism. A Pearson correlation is an appropriate bivariate statistic to utilize when the variables of interest are continuous, and the primary researcher seeks to analyze the association between the two variables. Correlation coefficients can range from -1 to 0 to +1. Positive Pearson correlation coefficients suggest that a direct relationship exists between the constructs; as one variable increases, the other variable tends to increase. Negative Pearson correlation coefficients indicate an inverse relationship between the constructs; as one variable increases, the other variable tends to decrease. Using Cohen's standard (Cohen, 1988), the correlation coefficients (β) were interpreted to evaluate the strength of the association between the two variables. Correlation coefficients between the values of .10 and .29 represent a small association; correlation coefficients between .30 and .49 represent a medium association; and correlation coefficients above .50 represent a large association.

The assumptions of Pearson correlation were assessed for linearity, normality, and homoscedasticity. The assumption of linearity assumes an approximate straight-line relationship exists between the independent and dependent variables. The assumption of normality assumes that the data roughly follows a normal (bell-shaped) distribution, which is assessed by the data's skewness and kurtosis. The assumption of homoscedasticity assumes that scores are normally distributed about the least-squares

regression line. Linearity and homoscedasticity were assessed by examination of a scatter plot between the observed cumulative probability and expected cumulative probability (Stevens, 2009).

Research Question 2

Are there significant differences in degree of reported religiosity between religious denominations (Catholic, Southern Baptist Convention, Methodist, Episcopal, and Jehovah's Witness) and same-sex sexuality perspectives (biologically-driven or a chosen lifestyle)?

H_0**2a:** There are no significant differences in degree of religiosity between religious denominations.

H_A**2a:** There are significant differences in degree of religiosity between religious denominations.

H_0**2b:** There are no significant differences in degree of religiosity between same-sex sexuality perspectives.

H_A**2b:** There are significant differences in degree of religiosity between same-sex sexuality perspectives.

H_0**2c:** The direction and magnitude of differences (significant or not significant) in degree of religiosity between religious denominations does not vary across same-sex sexuality perspectives.

H_A**2c:** The direction and magnitude of differences (significant or not significant) in degree of religiosity between religious denominations varies across same-sex sexuality perspectives.

To address Research Question 2, a two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to determine whether significant differences in degree of religiosity exist between religious denominations and same-sex sexuality perspective. An ANOVA is the proper statistical tool to utilize when the goal of the researcher is to analyze differences in means of one dependent (continuous) variable between at least two independent grouping variables. The continuous dependent variable in this analysis corresponded to a degree of religiosity and was measured by the Religiosity Measurement. The grouping factors in this analysis were religious denominations with five groups (i.e., Catholic, Southern Baptist Convention, Methodist, Episcopal, and Jehovah's Witness), and same-sex sexuality perspective, that was obtained from responses in the Religiosity Measure.

Prior to conducting the parametric analysis, the researcher examined the assumptions of an ANOVA—normality and homogeneity of variance. The assumption of normality assumes that the levels of heterosexism follow a bell-shaped (normal) distribution and was assessed via the Kolmogorov- Smirnov (KS) test. Homogeneity of variance makes the assumption that the independent grouping variables have equal error variances. The assumption was assessed by using Levene's test. Significance for either the KS test or Levene's test indicates that the corresponding assumption was not met. In many cases, the ANOVA is considered a robust statistic in which assumptions can be violated with relatively minor effects (Howell, 2010).

After checking for the preliminary parametric assumptions, the ANOVA (*F* Test) was used to determine the significance of the overall model. If the obtained *F* is significant, then the null hypothesis can be rejected (Pagano, 2010), and post hoc analysis

will be conducted using pairwise comparisons of mean religiosity scores among groups via the Bonferroni method. An additional assessment will also determine whether the direction and magnitude of differences in degree of religiosity between religious denominations varies across same-sex sexuality perspectives.

Research Question 3

Are there significant differences in degree of heterosexism between religious denominations (i.e., Catholic, Southern Baptist Convention, Methodist, Episcopal, and Jehovah's Witness) and same-sex sexuality perspectives (i.e., biologically-driven or a chosen lifestyle)?

***H_0*3a:** There are no significant differences in degree of heterosexism between religious denominations.

***H_A*3a:** There are significant differences in degree of heterosexism between religious denominations.

***H_0*3b:** There are not significant differences in degree of heterosexism between same-sex sexuality perspectives.

***H_A*3b:** There are significant differences in degree of heterosexism between same-sex sexuality perspectives.

***H_0*3c:** The direction and magnitude of differences (significant or not significant) in degree of heterosexism between religious denominations does not vary across same-sex sexuality perspectives.

***H_A*3c:** The direction and magnitude of differences (significant or not significant) in degree of heterosexism between religious denominations varies across same-sex sexuality perspectives.

To address Research Question 3, a two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to determine whether significant differences in degree of heterosexism exist between religious denominations, and same-sex sexuality perspective. An ANOVA is the proper statistical tool to utilize when the goal of the researcher is to analyze for differences in means of one continuous variable between at least two independent grouping variables. The continuous variable in this analysis corresponded to degree of heterosexism and was measured by the ATLG-R. The grouping factors in this analysis were religious denominations with five groups (i.e., Catholic, Southern Baptist Convention, Methodist, Episcopal, and Jehovah's Witness), and same-sex perspective, that was obtained from responses in the Religiosity Measure.

Prior to conducting the parametric analysis, the researcher examined the assumptions of an ANOVA—normality and homogeneity of variance. The assumption of normality assumes that the degree of religiosity follow a bell-shaped (normal) distribution and was assessed via the Kolmogorov Smirnov (KS) test. Homogeneity of variance makes the assumption that the independent grouping variables have equal error variances. The assumption was assessed by Levene's test. Significance for either the KS test or Levene's test indicates that the corresponding assumption was not met. In many cases, the ANOVA is considered a robust statistic in which assumptions can be violated with relatively minor effects (Howell, 2010).

After checking for the preliminary parametric assumptions, the ANOVA (*F* test) was used to determine the significance of the overall model. If the obtained *F* is significant, then the null hypothesis can be rejected (Pagano, 2010) and post hoc analysis will be conducted using pairwise comparisons of mean religiosity scores among groups via the Bonferroni method. An additional assessment will also determine whether the direction and magnitude of differences in degree of heterosexism between religious denominations varies across same-sex sexuality perspectives.

Assumptions and Limitations

Key threats to external validity correspond to characteristics of the sample that provide bias to the situational specifics of the study data collected, the measured results, or a specific researcher. Moreover, a possible validity threat is the total anonymity, that is, the possibility exists that participants may have participated more than once. Furthermore, threats may be confounding variables that strengthen or weaken the relationships between the variables of interest (Howell, 2010). Because it is not feasible to account for the effect of every potential covariate, this is accepted and acknowledged in the interpretation of the results. Consequently, caution should be applied with the interpretation of the study's results and should not assume that these results can be perfectly tied to the entirety of the population of interest or generalized (Creswell, 2005).

Ethical Procedures

A researcher who conducts studies that utilize human subjects has a legal and ethical obligation to protect and inform participants (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2012). Upon conducting this study, the moral, ethical, and legal guidelines created by federal

regulations and the Institutional Review Board (IRB) were followed. The following paragraphs provide the approach of providing informed consent and a brief discussion on data retention, storage, and destruction to protect participant's confidentiality.

Informed Consent

Informed consent documents were electronically administered to each individual who responded to the recruitment letter, prior to providing the surveys, in order to obtain written informed consent from the study participants. Informed consent documents provided the study's purpose, described the full procedures, clarified the risks and benefits, and estimate the time to complete the surveys. In addition, information regarding the voluntary nature of participation and an explanation that dropping out of the study is allowed at any time without any penalty was provided. Given the anonymous modality of the survey, no identifiable information was used in the data analysis.

Data Storage, Retention, and Destruction to Protect Confidentiality

The survey instruments applied to this study reduce the necessity to collect identifiable or archival data. In accordance with federal and IRB guidelines, the primary researcher, protected all data and information in order to preserve participants' anonymity. The safeguard measure for data storage is an encrypted Secured Sockets Layer (SSL) webserver, to which only the primary researcher will have access. The data will be stored securely for a period of five years after the research is complete. Upon expiration of the five-year retention period, the data will be permanently destroyed via deletion from the external drive and local hard drive by the primary researcher.

Summary

Chapter 3 outlined the quantitative design, and provided rationale for the use of this research model to examine the relationship between Christian denominational religiosity, as measured by the Religiosity Measurement, and heterosexism, as measured by the ATLG-R scale, and to compare degree of religiosity and heterosexism between members of five Christian denominations, and between same-sex sexuality perspectives (i.e., biologically-driven or a chosen lifestyle), in the southern United States. In addition, a population and subsequent sample were delineated, and procedures for the recruiting of participants were indicated as following a convenience sampling method. The chapter also operationalized the categorical variables and variables of measurement, and provided a review of the instrumentation and procedures for data collection. The treatment of data and subsequent statistical procedures to address the hypotheses were also explained and include a rationale for such analyses and the presentation of results. Finally, limitations and ethical concerns were addressed. The primary researcher will adhere strictly to these procedures when gathering and analyzing data to address the research problem effectively and efficiently.

Chapter 4 will present a summary of demographic data and the findings of the inferential statistical tests in correspondence to the research questions. Chapter 5 will provide a discussion of the obtained results, and explanation and interpretation of the results through evaluation of related theory, corresponding research literature, and implications for positive social change.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between Christian denominational religiosity, as measured by the Religiosity Measurement, and heterosexism, as measured by the ATLG-R scale among participants who are members of five Christian denominations: Catholic, Episcopal, Methodist, Southern Baptist Convention, and Jehovah's Witness. The degree of religiosity and heterosexism was compared between participants who are members of the five Christian denominations, and compared between participant's same-sex sexuality perspectives in the southern United States. The following research questions and hypotheses were examined:

Research Question One

Is there a significant positive relationship between religiosity and heterosexism?

$H_0$1: There is no significant relationship between religiosity and heterosexism.

H_A1: There is a significant positive relationship between religiosity and heterosexism.

Research Question Two

Are there significant differences in degree of reported religiosity between religious denominations (i.e., Catholic, Southern Baptist Convention, Methodist, Episcopal, and Jehovah's Witness) and same-sex sexuality perspectives (biologically-driven or a chosen lifestyle)?

$H_0$2a: There are no significant differences in degree of religiosity between religious denominations.

***H_A*2a:** There are significant differences in degree of religiosity between religious denominations.

***H_0*2b:** There are no significant differences in degree of religiosity between same-sex sexuality perspectives.

***H_A*2b:** There are significant differences in degree of religiosity between same-sex sexuality perspectives.

***H_0*2c:** The direction and magnitude of differences (significant or not significant) in degree of religiosity between religious denominations does not vary across same-sex sexuality perspectives.

***H_A*2c:** The direction and magnitude of differences (significant or not significant) in degree of religiosity between religious denominations varies across same-sex sexuality perspectives.

Research Question Three

Are there significant differences in degree of heterosexism between religious denominations (i.e., Catholic, Southern Baptist Convention, Methodist, Episcopal, and Jehovah's Witness) and same-sex sexuality perspectives (i.e., biologically-driven or a chosen lifestyle)?

***H_0*3a:** There are no significant differences in degree of heterosexism between religious denominations.

***H_A*3a:** There are significant differences in degree of heterosexism between religious denominations.

***H_0*3b:** There are not significant differences in degree of heterosexism between same-sex sexuality perspectives.

***H_A*3b:** There are significant differences in degree of heterosexism between same-sex sexuality perspectives.

***H_0*3c:** The direction and magnitude of differences (significant or not significant) in degree of heterosexism between religious denominations does not vary across same-sex sexuality perspectives.

***H_A*3c:** The direction and magnitude of differences (significant or not significant) in degree of heterosexism between religious denominations varies across same-sex sexuality perspectives.

This chapter presents the findings of the data collection and analysis. The raw data were entered into SPSS version 22.0 for Windows for statistical analysis. Results of the pilot test are reported to justify the reliability of the Religiosity Measurement. The data collection steps of the full study are described and the data analysis for partial responses and consistency. Frequencies and percentages of categorical responses were examined for gender, ethnicity, education, religious denomination, and same-sex sexuality perspective. Means and standard deviations were calculated for the degree of religiosity and degree of heterosexism. To address the research questions, Pearson correlations and two-way ANOVAs were utilized. To evaluate significant results, an alpha level of $\alpha = .05$ was used.

Pilot Study

Descriptive Statistics for Pilot Study

The Religiosity Measure was administered to an initial group of 28 individuals to assess the reliability of the scale. The Religiosity Measure consists of three questions regarding frequency of attending religious services, frequency of reading Holy Scriptures, and frequency of prayer. For the full study and purpose of the research questions, degree of religiosity was calculated by taking a summative composite score of the three corresponding items from the Religiosity Measure. A majority of participants in the pilot study were Catholic (n = 16, 57%). Many participants indicated that they attended religious services at least monthly but less than weekly (n = 10, 36%) or at least weekly but less than daily (n = 10, 36%). Many participants indicated that they read Holy Scriptures at least once in their life but less than monthly (n = 10, 36%). Many participants indicated that they prayed once a day or more (n = 13, 46%). A majority of participants indicated that homosexuality was a biological or natural phenomenon (n = 17, 61%). Frequencies and percentages of the pilot test for the Religiosity Measurement are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Frequencies and Percentages of Responses to the Religiosity Measurement (Pilot Study)

Demographic	*n*	%
Christian denomination		
Catholic	16	57
Southern Baptist Convention	5	18
Methodist	2	7

Other	5	18
How often do you attend religious services and activities?		
Never	2	7
At least once in my life by less than monthly	6	21
At least monthly but less than weekly	10	36
At least weekly but less than daily	10	36
How often do you read Holy Scriptures?		
Never	6	21
At least once in my life but less than monthly	10	36
At least monthly but less than weekly	6	21
At least weekly but less than daily	4	14
Once a day or more	2	7
How often do you pray?		
At least monthly but less than weekly	5	18
At least weekly but less than daily	10	36
Once a day or more	13	46
Same-sex sexuality perspective		
Yes, people choose to be gay	11	39
No, people are born gay	17	61

Note. Due to rounding error, not all percentages may sum to 100.

Reliability

Cronbach's alpha tests of reliability and internal consistency were conducted on scales, with one test utilized per scale. The Cronbach's alpha calculates the mean correlation between each pair of items and the corresponding number of items in a scale (Brace et al., 2006). The alpha values were interpreted by applying the guidelines suggested by George and Mallery (2010) where $\alpha > .9$ excellent, >.8 good, >.7 acceptable, >.6 questionable, >.5 poor, and $\leq .5$ unacceptable. Cronbach's alpha statistics for the Religiosity Measurement ($\alpha = .74$) were acceptable; thus, the researcher determined that the scale was sufficiently reliable to use for the full study.

Data Collection

Data collection spanned approximately 50 days; actual recruitment efforts consisted of roughly four months. The researcher initially sent surveys to approximately

1,000 participants and received responses from 258 individuals, corresponding to a response rate of 25%. Although the expectation of this research was to expedite data collection via the recruitment of churches, several churches declined participation once clergy reviewed the survey questions. A total of 16 churches participated in the study.

Pre-Analysis Data Screening

The data were screened for accuracy and missing data. Twelve participants were removed for not stating their religious denomination and 21 participants were removed for not completing sections of the ATLG-R. Due to the reverse scoring of particular items on the ATLG-R, participants were examined for inconsistent responding (i.e., consistently agreeing or disagreeing to Likert scale questions across response items). There were no patterns of inconsistent responses among participants. Thus, the final analyses were conducted on 225 participants.

Demographic Characteristics of Sample

A majority of participants were female (n = 138, 61%). The majority of the participants were Caucasian (n = 197, 88%), followed by Latino/Hispanic (n = 11, 5%), African American (n = 10, 4%), and Asian (n = 2, 1%). Many of the participants were college graduates (n = 84, 37%). The denominations utilized in the study were approximately even in representation: Catholic (n = 40, 18%), Southern Baptist Convention (n = 41, 18%), Methodist (n = 42, 19%), Episcopal (n = 44, 20%), and Jehovah's Witness (n = 37, 16%). The remaining participants selected "other" as their Christian denomination (n = 21, 9%).

Among the participants in the study, 50% believed that homosexuality was a choice (n = 113) and 50% believed homosexuality was biological or natural (n = 112). The distribution of denominations in the sample was similar to the national representation of denominations; thus, it was determined that the external validity was high and the findings could be extrapolated to the population of interest. The percentages of the participants' demographic characteristics are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Frequencies and Percentages of Demographic Characteristics (Full Study)

Demographic	*n*	%
Gender		
Male	86	38
Female	138	61
Prefer not to answer	1	< 1
Ethnicity		
Caucasian	197	88
African American	10	4
Latino/Hispanic	11	5
Asian	2	1
Other	5	2
Education		
Some high school	3	1
High school graduate	64	28
Some college	50	22
College graduate	84	37
Graduate/advances degree	24	11
Christian denomination		
Catholic	40	18
Southern Baptist Convention	41	18
Methodist	42	19
Episcopal	44	20
Jehovah's Witness	37	16
Other	21	9
Same-sex sexuality perspective		
Yes, people choose to be gay	113	50
No, people are born gay	112	50

Note. Due to rounding error, not all percentages may sum to 100.

Results

Descriptive Statistics of Continuous Variables

The age of the participants ranged from 19.00 to 81.00 years, with a mean (*M*) of 49.76 years and a standard deviation (*SD*) of 15.04. Degree of religiosity was calculated by taking a summative composite score of the corresponding items from the Religiosity Measure. Degree of heterosexism was calculated by taking a summative composite score of the corresponding items from the ATLG-R instrument. Degree of religiosity scores ranged from 4.00 to 15.00 (M = 11.32; SD = 2.50). Degree of heterosexism scores ranged from 20.00 to 100.00 (M = 61.88; SD = 26.30. The descriptive statistics of the continuous variables are presented in Table 3.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics of Continuous Variables

Continuous Variables	*Min.*	*Max.*	*M*	*SD*
Age	19.00	81.00	49.76	15.04
Degree of religiosity	4.00	15.00	11.32	2.50
Degree of heterosexism	20.00	100.00	61.88	26.30

Reliability Reassessment

Cronbach's alpha reliability statistics were again assessed for the two scales. Results for degree of religiosity indicated acceptable reliability (α = .78). Results for degree of heterosexism indicated excellent reliability (α = .98). The Cronbach's alpha reliability statistics are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Statistics for Composite Scores

Scale	No. of Items	α
Degree of religiosity	3	.78
Degree of heterosexism	20	.98

Research Question One

Is there a significant positive relationship between religiosity and heterosexism?

H_0**1:** There is no significant relationship between religiosity and heterosexism.

H_A**1:** There is a significant positive relationship between religiosity and heterosexism.

To address Research Question 1, a Pearson product-moment correlation (*r*) was conducted to assess the direction and strength of the relationship between religiosity and heterosexism. A Pearson correlation is an appropriate statistical analysis when the researcher is interested in assessing the strength of association between two continuous variables (Pagano, 2009). Prior to analysis, the assumptions of linearity, normality, and homoscedasticity were assessed.

Assumptions

Linearity. The assumption of linearity checks that there is an approximate straight-line relationship between the independent and dependent variables. The linearity assumption was checked by examination of a scatterplot. The assumption was met, as the data depicted a positive relationship (see Figure 1).

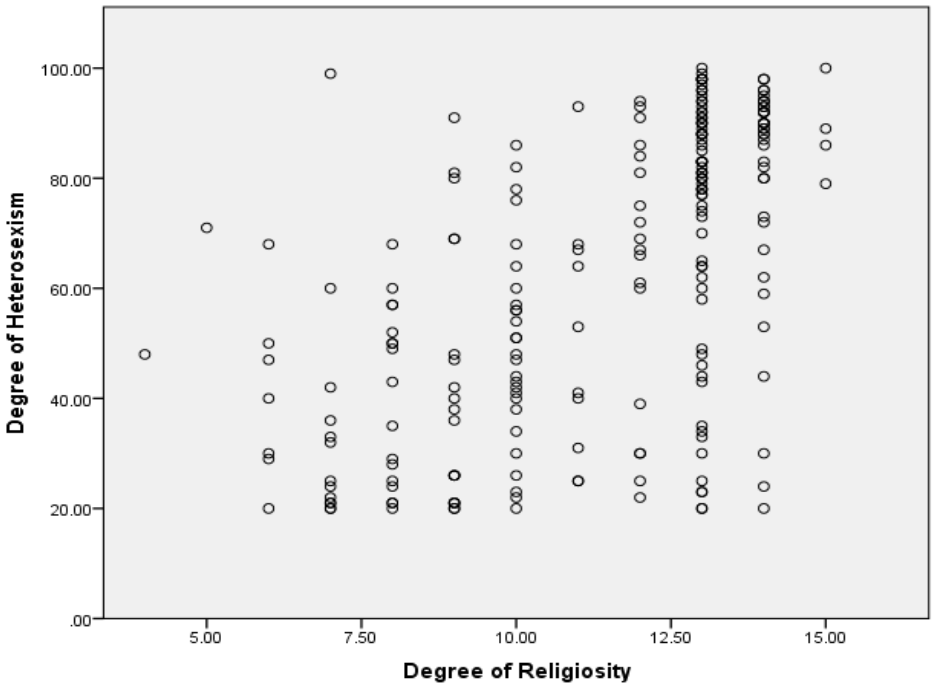

Figure 1. Scatterplot to assess for linearity assumption between degrees of religiosity and heterosexism.

Normality. The assumption of normality checks that the residuals follow an approximate bell-shaped distribution. The assumption was assessed by examination of a scatterplot and the assumption was met as the data closely followed the normality trend line (see Figure 2).

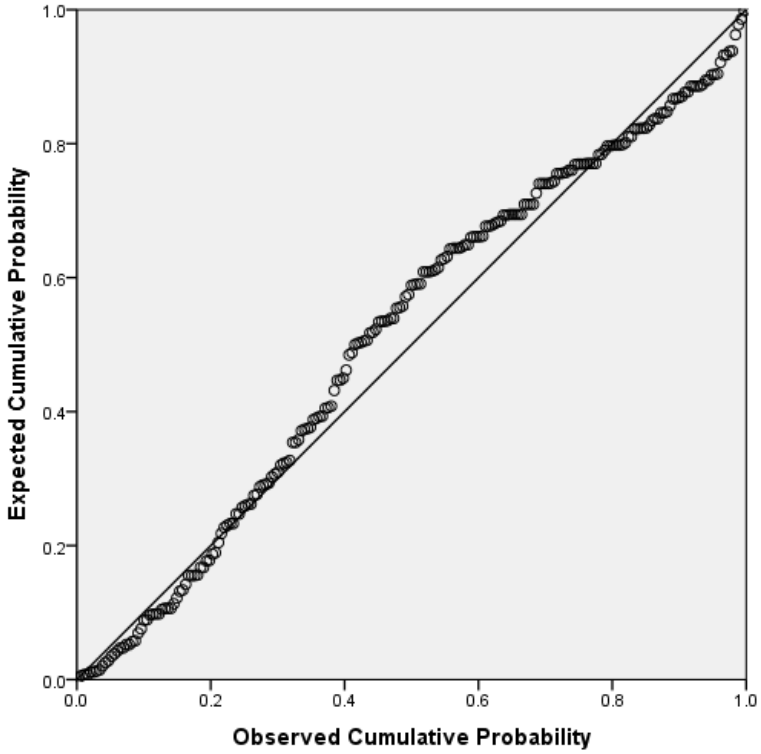

Figure 2. Normal P-P plot for degrees of religiosity and heterosexism.

Homoscedasticity. The assumption of homoscedasticity checks that the scores are normally distributed about the least-squares regression line. The assumption was checked with a scatterplot between the expected cumulative probability and observed cumulative probability. The assumption was met as the data were rectangularly distributed and there was no clear trend in the data (see Figure 3).

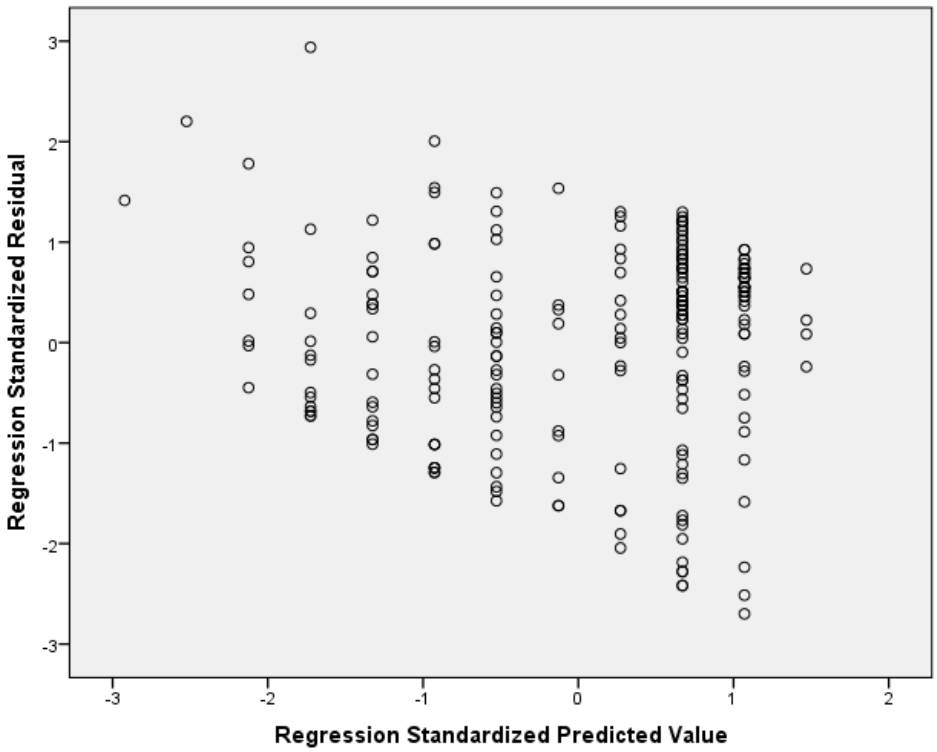

Figure 3. Residuals scatterplot for homoscedasticity for degrees of religiosity and heterosexism.

Pearson's product moment correlations. The results of the Pearson correlation indicated a significant direct relationship existed between degrees of religiosity and heterosexism ($r = .577$, $p < .001$). Using Cohen's standard (Cohen, 1988), the correlation coefficients (β) were interpreted to evaluate the strength of the association between the two variables. Correlation coefficients between the values of .10 and .29 represent a small association; correlation coefficients between .30 and .49 represent a medium association; and correlation coefficients above .50 represent a large association. The correlation coefficient $r = .577$ suggested that there was a large direct relationship between degrees of religiosity and heterosexism. A direct relationship corresponds to an association in which both variables tend to increase or decrease in the same direction.

The null hypothesis ($H_0$1) can be rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis, which states there is a significant positive relationship between religiosity and heterosexism.

Research Question Two

Are there significant differences in degree of reported religiosity between religious denominations (i.e., Catholic, Southern Baptist Convention, Methodist, Episcopal, and Jehovah's Witness) and same-sex sexuality perspectives (biologically-driven or a chosen lifestyle)?

***H_0*2a:** There are no significant differences in degree of religiosity between religious denominations.

***H_A*2a:** There are significant differences in degree of religiosity between religious denominations.

***H_0*2b:** There are no significant differences in degree of religiosity between same-sex sexuality perspectives.

***H_A*2b:** There are significant differences in degree of religiosity between same-sex sexuality perspectives.

***H_0*2c:** The direction and magnitude of differences (significant or not significant) in degree of religiosity between religious denominations does not vary across same-sex sexuality perspectives.

***H_A*2c:** The direction and magnitude of differences (significant or not significant) in degree of religiosity between religious denominations varies across same-sex sexuality perspectives.

To address Research Question 2, a two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) of degree of religiosity was conducted using religious denomination and same-sex sexuality perspective as factors, to determine whether significant differences in degree of religiosity exist between religious denominations and same-sex sexuality perspective and whether there is a religious denomination by same-sex perspective interaction. A two-way ANOVA is an appropriate statistical tool when the goal of the research is to analyze for differences in a continuous dependent variable between two independent grouping variables (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2012). The continuous dependent variable in this analysis corresponded to degree of religiosity as measured by the Religiosity Measurement. The grouping factors in this analysis were religious denominations with six groups (i.e., Catholic, Southern Baptist Convention, Methodist, Episcopal, Jehovah's Witness, and other), and same-sex sexuality perspective obtained from responses to the Religiosity Measure. Prior to conducting the parametric analysis, the researcher examined the assumptions of an ANOVA – normality and homogeneity of variance.

Assumptions

Normality. The assumption of normality assumes that the levels of religiosity follow a bell-shaped (normal) distribution and was assessed via the Kolmogorov- Smirnov (KS) test. The KS test indicated significance for religiosity ($p < .001$) suggesting that the data did not follow a normal distribution. However, the central limit theorem states that in large samples ($n > 30$) normality may be assumed (Stevens, 2009).

Homogeneity of variance. Homogeneity of variance makes the assumption that the independent grouping variables have equal error variances. The assumption was assessed

by using Levene's test. The results of Levene's test were significant ($p < .001$) such that the assumption of homogeneity of variance was not met for degree of religiosity between the groups. However the ANOVA is still considered a robust statistic in which assumptions can be violated with relatively minor effects (Howell, 2010).

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

The results of the ANOVA indicated overall significance, $F(11, 213) = 12.63$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .395$, suggesting that significant differences existed in degree of religiosity between the groups. The main effects of denomination and same-sex sexuality perspectives were examined to address the first two hypotheses ($H_0$2a and $H_0$2b). The interaction term was used to address the third hypothesis for the research question ($H_0$2c).

Religious Denominations. To address the first hypothesis, the main effect of denomination was examined. There was a significant effect of religious denominations on degree of religiosity, $F(5, 213) = 2.36$, $p = .041$, $\eta^2 = .053$). Thus, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis ($H_0$2a) in favor of the alternative and concluded that there were significant mean differences in degree of religiosity between religious denominations.

Post hoc analyses were conducted using pairwise comparisons via the Bonferroni method to examine which denominations had significantly different religiosity scores. Catholic participants had significantly lower religiosity scores ($M = 10.45$) than Southern Baptist participants ($M = 11.78$) and Jehovah's Witnesses participants ($M = 13.41$). Southern Baptist participants had significantly higher religiosity scores ($M = 11.78$) than Methodist participants ($M = 10.19$) and lower than Jehovah's Witnesses participants (M

= 13.41). Methodist participants had significantly lower religiosity scores (M = 10.19) than Jehovah's Witness-participants (M = 13.41). Episcopalian participants had significantly lower religiosity scores (= 11.36) than Jehovah's Witnesses participants (M = 13.41). Jehovah's Witness participants had significantly greater religiosity scores (M = 13.41) than all five of the other denominations.

Same-sex sexuality perspective. To address the second hypothesis, the main effect of same-sex sexuality perspective was examined. There was a significant effect of same-sex sexuality perspective on degree of religiosity F (1, 213) = 42.64, $p < .001$, η^2 = .167). Participants who believe individuals choose to be gay reported higher religiosity scores (M = 12.63) than participants who believe individuals are born gay (M = 10.00). Thus, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis ($H_0$2b) in favor of the alternative and concluded that there were significant mean differences in degree of religiosity between same-sex sexuality perspectives.

Interaction effect. To address the third hypothesis, the interaction effect for religious denomination and same-sex sexuality perspective was examined. The results showed a significant denomination by same-sex sexuality perspective interaction (F(5, 213) = 2.77, p = .019, η^2 = .061). Thus, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis ($H_0$2c) in favor of the alternative and concluded that there were significant mean differences in degree of religiosity between denominations and same-sex sexuality perspectives. The results of the two-way ANOVA are presented in Table 5 and the means and standard deviations for religiosity by denomination and same-sex sexuality preferences are presented in Table 6.

Individual one-way ANOVAs were conducted to further examine the interaction effect of denomination and same-sex sexuality perspective on degree of religiosity. The split-file function in SPSS was utilized to conduct one-way ANOVAs between denomination and degree of religiosity, while separately examining the two groups of the same-sex sexuality perspective variable. Among participants who indicated that people choose to be gay, results showed a significant effect of denomination on degree of religiosity, (5, 107) = 5.34, $p < .001$, $\eta 2 = .200$. Among participants who indicated that people choose to be gay, Jehovah's Witness participants had higher religiosity scores ($M = 13.57$) than Catholic participants ($M = 11.23$) and participants of other religious denominations ($M = 11.67$).

Among participants who indicated that people are born gay, results showed a significant effect of denomination on degree of religiosity, (5, 106) = 3.52, $p = .006$, $\eta 2 = .142$. Among participants who indicated that people are born gay, Episcopal participants had higher religiosity scores ($M = 10.97$) than Methodist participants ($M = 8.54$). Results of the individual one-way ANOVAs may be found in Tables 7 and 8.

Table 5

Two-Way ANOVA for Degree of Religiosity

Source	*F*	*p*	η^2
Denomination	2.36	.041	.053
Same-sex sexuality perspectives	42.64	< .001	.167
Denomination and Same-sex sexuality perspectives	2.77	.019	.061

Note. Overall model: $F(11, 213) = 12.63$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .395$

Table 6

Means and Standard Deviations for Degree of Religiosity

Continuous Variables	*M*	*SD*
Denomination		
Catholic	10.45	2.52
Southern Baptist Convention	11.78	2.37
Methodist	10.19	2.61
Episcopal	11.36	2.15
Jehovah's Witness	13.41	1.36
Other	10.57	2.48
Same-sex sexuality perspectives		
Yes, people choose to be gay	12.63	1.82
No, people are born gay	10.00	2.41
Catholic		
Yes, people choose to be gay	11.23	1.96
No, people are born gay	10.07	2.70
Southern Baptist Convention		
Yes, people choose to be gay	12.19	2.25
No, people are born gay	10.33	2.35
Methodist		
Yes, people choose to be gay	12.88	1.02
No, people are born gay	8.54	1.75
Episcopal		
Yes, people choose to be gay	13.13	0.64
No, people are born gay	10.97	2.17
Jehovah's Witness		
Yes, people choose to be gay	13.57	1.14
No, people are born gay	10.50	2.12
Other denomination		
Yes, people choose to be gay	11.67	1.94
No, people are born gay	9.75	2.60

Table 7

One-Way ANOVA for Degree of Religiosity by Denomination with Same-Sex Sexuality Perspective (With Response: Yes, People Choose to be Gay)

Source	*F*	*p*	η^2
Denomination	5.34	<.001	.200

Note. Overall model: $F(5, 107) = 5.34$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .200$

Table 8

One-Way ANOVA for Degree of Religiosity by Denomination with Same-Sex Sexuality Perspective (With Response: No, People are Born Gay)

Source	*F*	*p*	η^2
Denomination	3.52	.006	.142

Note. Overall model: $F(5, 106) = 3.52$, $p = .006$, $\eta^2 = .142$

Research Question Three

Are there significant differences in degree of heterosexism between religious denominations (i.e., Catholic, Southern Baptist Convention, Methodist, Episcopal, and Jehovah's Witness) and same-sex sexuality perspectives (i.e., biologically-driven or a chosen lifestyle)?

$H_0$3a: There are no significant differences in degree of heterosexism between religious denominations.

H_A3a: There are significant differences in degree of heterosexism between religious denominations.

$H_0$3b: There are not significant differences in degree of heterosexism between same-sex sexuality perspectives.

H_A3b: There are significant differences in degree of heterosexism between same-sex sexuality perspectives.

$H_0$3c: The direction and magnitude of differences (significant or not significant) in degree of heterosexism between religious denominations does not vary across same-sex sexuality perspectives.

***H_A*3c:** The direction and magnitude of differences (significant or not significant) in degree of heterosexism between religious denominations varies across same-sex sexuality perspectives.

To address Research Question 3, a two-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) of degree of heterosexism was conducted using religious denomination and same-sex perspective as factors to determine whether significant differences in degree of heterosexism exist between religious denominations and same-sex sexuality perspective and whether there is a religious denomination by same-sex perspective interaction. The continuous dependent variable in this analysis corresponded to degree of heterosexism as measured by the ATLG-R. The grouping factors in this analysis were religious denominations with six groups (i.e., Catholic, Southern Baptist Convention, Methodist, Episcopal, Jehovah's Witness, and other), and same-sex sexuality perspective obtained from responses to the Religiosity Measure. Prior to conducting the parametric analysis, the researcher examined the assumptions of an ANOVA—normality and homogeneity of variance.

Assumptions

Normality. The assumption of normality assumes that the levels of heterosexism follow a bell-shaped (normal) distribution and was assessed via the Kolmogorov-Smirnov (KS) test. The KS test indicated significance for degree of heterosexism ($p < .001$) suggesting that the data did not follow a normal distribution. However, the central limit theorem states that in large samples ($n > 30$) normality may be assumed (Stevens, 2009).

Homogeneity of variance. Homogeneity of variance makes the assumption that the independent grouping variables have equal error variances. The assumption was assessed by using Levene's test. The results of Levene's test were significant ($p < .001$) such that the assumption of homogeneity of variance was not met for degree of heterosexism between the groups. However, the ANOVA is still considered a robust statistic in which assumptions can be violated with relatively minor effects (Howell, 2010).

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

The results of the ANOVA indicated overall significance, $F(11, 213) = 48.53$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .715$, suggesting that significant differences existed in degree of heterosexism between the groups. The main effects of denomination and same-sex sexuality perspectives were examined to address the first two hypotheses ($H_0$3a and $H_0$3b). The interaction term was used to address the third hypothesis for the research question ($H_0$3c).

Religious Denominations. To address the first hypothesis, the main effect for denomination was examined. There was a significant effect of religious denomination ($F(5, 213) = 5.89$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .121$). Thus, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis ($H_0$3a) in favor of the alternative and concluded that there were significant mean differences in degree of heterosexism between religious denominations.

Post hoc analyses were conducted using pairwise comparisons via the Bonferroni method to examine which denominations had significantly different heterosexism scores. Catholic participants had significantly lower heterosexism scores ($M = 52.55$) than Southern Baptist participants ($M = 77.24$) and Jehovah's Witnesses participants ($M = 87.70$), and higher heterosexism scores than Episcopal participants ($M = 41.84$).

Southern Baptist participants had significantly higher heterosexism scores (M = 77.24) than all five of the other religious denominations. Methodist participants had significantly higher heterosexism scores (M = 57.17) than Episcopalian participants (M = 41.84) and significantly lower heterosexism scores than Jehovah's Witnesses participants (M = 87.70). Episcopal participants (M = 41.84) had significantly lower heterosexism scores than all five of the other denominations. Jehovah's Witness participants (M = 87.70) had significantly higher heterosexism scores in comparison to all five of the other denominations.

Same-sex sexuality perspective. To address the second hypothesis, the main effect for same-sex sexuality perspective was examined. There was a significant effect of same-sex sexuality perspective on degree of heterosexism $F(1, 213) = 149.62$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .413$. Participants who believe an individual chooses to be gay reported higher heterosexism scores (M = 83.09) than participants who believe individuals are born gay (M = 40.48). Thus, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis ($H_0$3b) in favor of the alternative and concluded that there were significant mean differences in degree of heterosexism between same-sex sexuality perspectives.

Interaction effect. To address the third hypothesis, the interaction effect for religious denomination and same-sex sexuality perspective was examined. The results showed a significant religious denomination by same-sex perspective interaction $F(5, 213) = 2.44$, $p = .035$, $\eta^2 = .054$. Thus, the researcher rejected the null hypothesis ($H_0$3c) in favor of the alternative and concluded that there were significant mean differences in degree of heterosexism between denominations and same-sex sexuality perspectives.

The results of the two-way ANOVA are presented in Table 9 and the means and standard deviations for heterosexism by denomination and same-sex sexuality preferences are presented in Table 10.

Individual one-way ANOVAs were conducted to further examine the interaction effect of denomination and same-sex sexuality perspective on degree of heterosexism. The slit-file function in SPSS was utilized to conduct one-way ANOVAs between denomination and degree of heterosexism, while separately examining the two groups of the same-sex sexuality perspective variable. Among participants who indicated that people choose to be gay, results showed a significant effect of denomination on degree of heterosexism, 95. 107) = 3.81, p = .003, η^2 = .151. Among participants who indicated that people choose to be gay, Jehovah's Witness participants had higher heterosexism scores (M = 88.14) than Catholic participants (M = 73.62).

Among participants who indicated that people are born gay, results showed a significant effect of denomination on degree of heterosexism, (5, 106) = 4.37, p = .001, η^2 = .171. Among participants who indicated people are born gay, Jehovah's Witness participants had higher heterosexism scores (M = 80.00) than Catholic participants (M = 42.41), Methodist participants (M = 41.96), Episcopal participants (M = 33.42), and participants of other denominations (M = 40.75) Results of the individual one-way ANOVAs are presented in Table 11 and 12.

Table 9

Two-Way ANOVA for Degree of Heterosexism

Source	*F*	*p*	η^2

Denomination	5.89	< .001	.121
Same-sex sexuality perspectives	149.62	< .001	.413
Denomination and Same-sex sexuality perspectives	2.44	.035	.054

Note. Overall model: $F(11, 213) = 48.53$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .715$

Table 10

Means and Standard Deviations for Degree of Heterosexism

Continuous Variables	*M*	*SD*
Denomination		
Catholic	52.55	21.89
Southern Baptist Convention	77.24	20.92
Methodist	57.17	23.62
Episcopal	41.84	22.75
Jehovah's Witness	87.70	6.92
Other	55.57	27.06
Same-sex sexuality perspectives		
Yes, people choose to be gay	83.09	12.95
No, people are born gay	40.48	17.52
Catholic		
Yes, people choose to be gay	73.62	15.79
No, people are born gay	42.41	16.58
Southern Baptist Convention		
Yes, people choose to be gay	85.03	14.27
No, people are born gay	49.56	17.18
Methodist		
Yes, people choose to be gay	81.88	9.69
No, people are born gay	41.96	15.09
Episcopal		
Yes, people choose to be gay	79.75	12.01
No, people are born gay	33.42	14.33
Jehovah's Witness		
Yes, people choose to be gay	88.14	6.31
No, people are born gay	80.00	15.56
Other denomination		
Yes, people choose to be gay	75.33	18.92
No, people are born gay	40.75	22.62

Table 11

One-Way ANOVA for Degree of Heterosexism by Denomination with Same-Sex Sexuality Perspective (With Response: Yes, People Choose to be Gay)

Source	*F*	*p*	η^2
Denomination	3.81	.003	.151

Note. Overall model: $F(5, 107) = 3.81$, $p = .003$, $\eta^2 = .151$

Table 12

One-Way ANOVA for Degree of Heterosexism by Denomination with Same-Sex Sexuality Perspective (With Response: No, People are Born Gay)

Source	*F*	*p*	η^2
Denomination	4.37	.001	.171

Note. Overall model: $F(5, 106) = 4.37$, $p = .001$, $\eta^2 = .171$

Summary

Chapter 4 presented a description of the pre-analysis data treatment-frequencies and percentages of categorical data and the descriptive statistics of the continuous variables. After assessing the reliability of the data, the research questions and corresponding hypotheses were examined. Results of the Pearson correlation for research question one indicated a significant direct relationship exists between degree of religiosity and degree of heterosexism. For Research Question 2, results of the two-way ANOVA indicated significant differences in degree of religiosity between religious denominations and between same-sex sexuality perspectives, and a significant religious denomination by same-sex perspective interaction.

Results of the two-way ANOVA indicated significant differences in degree of heterosexism between religious denominations and between same-sex sexuality perspectives, and a significant religious denomination by same-sex perspective interaction. The next chapter will further discuss the findings of the present study, address connections of the findings to the literature and theoretical framework, and provide suggestions for future research.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between Christian denominational religiosity, as measured by the Religiosity Measurement, and heterosexism, as measured by the ATLG-R Scale, and to compare degree of religiosity and heterosexism between members of five Christian denominations, and between same-sex sexuality perspectives in the southern United States.

The research questions were:

1. Is there a significant positive relationship between religiosity and heterosexism?
2. Are there significant differences in degree of reported religiosity between religious denominations (i.e., Catholic, Southern Baptist Convention, Methodist, Episcopal, and Jehovah's Witness) and same-sex sexuality perspectives (biologically-driven or a chosen lifestyle)?
3. Are there significant differences in degree of heterosexism between religious denominations (i.e., Catholic, Southern Baptist Convention, Methodist, Episcopal, and Jehovah's Witness) and same-sex sexuality perspectives (i.e., biologically-driven or a chosen lifestyle)?

The research supported the first hypothesis, in that a direct relationship was shown between religiosity and heterosexism. The second hypothesis was also supported, as significant differences were shown among degrees of religiosity between religious denominations and same-sex sexuality perspectives. Also, the third hypothesis was supported, as significant differences were shown between degree of heterosexism among

religious denominations and same-sex sexuality perspectives. In addition, for both religiosity and heterosexism measures, there was a significant religious denomination by same-sex perspective interaction.

Interpretation of the Findings

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between Christian denominational religiosity, as measured by the Religiosity Measurement, and heterosexism, as measured by the ATLG-R Scale (Herek, 1988), and to compare degree of religiosity and heterosexism between participants whom hold membership in one of the five aforementioned Christian denominations, and between their same-sex sexuality perspectives in the southern United States.

Although research regarding heterosexual attitudes toward same-sex sexuality has expanded (Fuist et al., 2012), much less is understood about the implications of religious fundamentalism and heterosexism, and even less is known about denominational influence in the southern United States (Barton, 2008). This study makes a contribution with respect to investigating denominational religiosity in the southern United States.

Research Question 1 asked: Is there a significant positive relationship between religiosity and heterosexism? According to the data, a strong, direct relationship was shown between religiosity and heterosexism. This large, positive relationship indicates that religiosity and heterosexism tend to increase or decrease in the same direction, thereby providing support for Adamczyk and Pitt's (2009) research on religious affiliation and worldviews, which demonstrated one's degree of religiosity significantly influences adherents' views on homosexuality.

Social group cues have been shown to significantly influence explicit and implicit attitudes (McConnell et al., 2008). Also, religion, for the devout, has been shown to have a powerful role in moral development (Mustea et al., 2010). Adamczyk and Pitt (2009) showed that personal religious affiliation and worldviews are commonly strong predictors of attitudes toward homosexuality, which was supported in the current study in that there was a significant direct relationship between participants' degree of religiosity and degree of heterosexism.

The present findings align with the attribution theory (McArthur, 2011) insofar as participants' reported religiosity and heterosexism--varied across religious denominations that may be considered to be intertwined with perceived causes and biblical adherence, which in turn likely informed world views (Adamczyk & Pitt, 2009; Fuist et al., 2012). Attitudes concerning stigmatized behaviors have been shown to be influenced by perceived causes of behaviors (McArthur, 2001; Fuist et al., 2012). The presented results also provide support of Hans, Kersey, and Kimberly's (2012) research, whereby virtually every respondent in their study who demonstrated negative attitudes toward homosexuality cited religion as a basis of his or her views of homosexuality as immoral. Moreover, even tolerant participants toward homosexuality cited religious beliefs in elucidating their attitudes towards same-sex sexuality (Hans et al, 2012).

Research Question 2 asked: Are there significant differences in degree of reported religiosity between religious denominations (i.e., Catholic, Southern Baptist Convention, Methodist, Episcopal, and Jehovah's Witness) and same-sex sexuality perspectives (i.e., biologically-driven or a chosen lifestyle)? According to the data

analysis, significant differences in degree of religiosity were shown between religious denomination and same-sex sexuality perspective. For example, among participants who indicated that people choose to be gay, results showed a significant effect of denomination on degree of religiosity. Among participants who indicated people choose to be gay, Jehovah's Witness participants had higher religiosity scores (M = 13.57) than Catholic participants (M = 11.23) and participants of other religious denominations (M = 11.67). Among participants who indicated that people are born gay, results showed a significant effect of denomination on degree of religiosity. Among participants who indicated that people are born gay, Episcopal participants had higher religiosity scores (M = 10.97) than Methodist participants (M = 8.54).

These findings extended the knowledge of religiosity in insular, southern communities as presented in Barton's (2011) research. Barton (2011) posited smaller communities with fewer public gathering venues often rely on the church for social support and entertainment, thus supporting relative high levels of religiosity throughout the study. However, the current study revealed an intragroup difference by religiosity with regard to the level of diversity in parishioners' views. That is, there was significant variability in religiosity and same-sex perspective within denominations. In this sense, although the data yielded an average score (see Table 6) by denomination, the level of variability in religiosity suggests individuals are not always aligned with their respective denominations viewpoints. For example, research has shown that the Episcopal Church takes a welcoming and affirming stance on same-sex sexuality, whereas Southern Baptists have been classified in the literature as an exclusionary and condemnatory

denomination in regard to same-sex sexuality based on a long history of resolutions of negatively addressing gay and lesbian issues (Fuist et al., 2012). However, variability in heterosexism scores using the ATLG-R across religious denomination was shown, indicating one's views regarding same-sex sexuality should not be assumed based solely on denominational affiliation. Research has shown that denominational religiosity is directly/inversely related to adherents' views toward same-sex sexuality (Fuist et al., 2012; Woodford, Levey, & Walls, 2012) and that Christian denominations' stances on same-sex sexuality ranged from welcoming and affirming, to ambivalent, to exclusionary and condemnatory (Fuist et al., 2012).

The present findings supported existing literature that suggests members of fundamentalist religious denominations (i.e., Southern Baptist Convention and Jehovah's Witness), on average, are more condemnatory of same-sex sexuality (Fuist et al., 2012; Guist et al., 2012). Despite social paradigm shifts toward equality for LGB individuals (Dotan, 2015), approximately half of participants in the current study viewed same-sex sexuality as a choice (n = 113) rather than a biological phenomenon (n = 112) and results showed a direct relationship between religiosity and heterosexism.

Research Question 3 asked: Are there significant differences in degree of heterosexism between religious denominations (i.e., Catholic, Southern Baptist Convention, Methodist, Episcopal, and Jehovah's Witness) and same-sex sexuality perspectives (i.e., biologically-driven or a chosen lifestyle)? The results supported the first hypothesis (i.e., denomination) in that significant mean differences of heterosexism were shown between participants of different religious denominations. Specifically, the

more fundamentally categorized a denomination was in the literature, the higher the heterosexism score in the current study. Thus, results demonstrate a pattern of significant differences consistent with the literature. For example, denominations classified in Fuist et al., (2012) as more favorable toward same-sex sexuality (i.e., welcoming and affirming) and taking a more Anglican or metaphorical view of Holy Scripture, such as Episcopal participants, scored lowest in heterosexism scores (M = 41.84). Conversely, the Jehovah's Witness denomination scored the highest (M= 87.70). The Jehovah's Witness denomination is frequently categorized as a strict, fundamentalist and biblically-literal denomination (Fuist et al., 2012; Garraud, 2014; Lalich & McLaren, 2010). The Church forbids same-sex orientation, and teaches that homosexuality is a chosen lifestyle that can be consciously rejected (Lalich & McLaren, 2010). Moreover, scores of each denomination were consistent with Fuist et al., (2012) classification. See table 10 in Chapter 4 for a more detailed analysis. According to Sherkat et al. (2011), religious beliefs are historically correlated with oppositional stances on same-sex sexuality, and religious fundamentalism serves as one of the most powerful predictors of negative attitudes toward same-sex sexuality (Whitehead, 2014). Thus, the results of this study are consistent with existing research insofar as religious beliefs and worldviews regarding same-sex sexuality are indeed correlated (Sherkat et al., 2011; Whitehead, 2014).

The second hypotheses, (i.e., there are significant differences in degree of heterosexism between same-sex sexuality perspectives) was also supported in this study. Although 50% of samples (n = 113) viewed same sex-sexuality as a biological phenomenon, this figure does not represent an even distribution by denominations, as

more fundamentally-based religious denominations (i.e., Southern Baptist Convention and Jehovah's Witness) were more likely to consider homosexuality as a chosen lifestyle than less fundamentally-based denominations (i.e. Episcopalian, Methodist, and Catholic).This finding should be considered in light of biblically-literal teachings that allude to or explicitly advocate choice in sexual orientation (Whitehead, 2014), which in turn, according to the attribution theory, connotes controllability of a given behavior. This assertion of self-controllability may account for the higher levels of heterosexism found within more fundamentally-based Christian denominations (i.e., Southern Baptist Convention and Jehovah's Witness; Fuist et al., 2012; Garraud, 2014; Lalich & Mclaren, 2010). For example, Southern Baptist Convention and Jehovah's Witness denominations are classified in the literature as exclusionary and condemnatory with respect to views on same-sex sexuality (Fuist et al., 2012).

In the current study, Jehovah's Witness samples demonstrated significantly higher degrees of heterosexism (i.e., $M = 87.70$) than their less fundamentalist counterparts (i.e., Episcopal: $M = 47.84$). Moreover, of the total Jehovah's Witness participants ($n = 39$) a vast majority ($n = 37$) viewed homosexuality as a chosen lifestyle, leaving a small number of participants who believed homosexuality was a biological phenomenon ($n = 2$). However, of the 37 participants whom viewed same-sex sexuality as a chosen lifestyle, heterosexism scores ($M = 88.14$) were significantly higher than Jehovah's Witness participants whom viewed homosexuality as a biological phenomenon ($M = 80.00$). The Jehovah's Witness written policy on homosexuality is not only clear, it is punitive, insofar as LGB individuals must reject their sexual identity or be publicly

denounced and excommunicated (Lalich & McLaren, 2010). Jehovah's Witness policies including responses Witnesses should relay when questioned from non-Witnesses regarding homosexuality may be located at JW.org.

Southern Baptist Convention also scored higher in degree of heterosexism (*M* = 77.24) than their non-fundamentalist counterparts (i.e., Catholic, Episcopal, and Methodist denominations). Although Southern Baptists are known for being biblically-literal and recognized for their conservative stance on political, theological, and social issues (Fuist et al., 2012), they view homosexuality as a forgivable sin (Levy & Reeves, 2011). However, because Southern Baptists view homosexuality as a sin, there exists an implicit notion of controllability; therefore, Southern Baptists who engage in homosexual behaviors are encouraged to repent and remain celibate, such that they may receive redemption (Levy & Reeves, 2011).

Thus, the current study's findings are congruent with the current literature, as the more fundamentally-based the denomination, the greater the levels of heterosexism (Whitehead, 2014). In fact, the current study supported the Fuist et al., (2012) research with respect to the classification of all denominations; thus Fuist's ranking of denominations (i.e., welcoming and affirming, ambivalent, exclusionary and condemnatory, and special case) mimics the current study's findings. For example, Fuist et al., (2012) found the Episcopal church to be one of the most progressive denominations, classifying the church as welcoming and affirming, the Catholic church as special case, Methodist as ambivalent, and Southern Baptist Convention and Jehovah's Witnesses as exclusionary and condemnatory. The present data suggest the same pattern,

based on the obtained mean heterosexism scores (i.e., Episcopal: *M* = 41.84; Catholic: *M* = 52.55; Methodist: *M* = 57.17; Southern Baptist Convention: *M* = 77.24; and Jehovah's Witness: *M* = 87.70).

The present findings suggest ecclesiastical interpretations, which may range from allegorical to biblically-literal (e.g., the inerrant word of Scripture) are related to views of homosexuality, to which many Christians conflate with morality. Moreover, the present findings showed that parishioners whom viewed homosexuality as a biological phenomenon were less likely to report heterosexist tendencies, as evidenced by lower scores on the heterosexism scale, whereas parishioners whom viewed homosexuality as a chosen lifestyle were more likely to report higher levels of heterosexism as indicated by higher scores on the heterosexism scale. Such findings are consistent with Lewis' (2009) research, which found behaviors perceived to be caused by biological forces were viewed more positively than behaviors perceived as within an individual's control. Whitehead (2014) also found that views about controllability and perceived origins of same-sex sexuality significantly influenced support or lack thereof for same-sex rights.

Limitations of the Study

One limitation of the study is selected denominations do not account for all Christian views within the southern United States. Self-reports also pose limitations (Creswell, 2009), as some participants may have produced responses biased by an understanding of their respective churches position or perceptions of socially acceptable views, rather than their own personal views. Additionally, cross-sectional findings (e.g., differences in measures of religiosity and heterosexism, across religious denominations)

may change over time with changes in the social and political atmosphere (Thomas & Olson, 2012).

It is noteworthy to mention the mean age of participants for this study was 50; however, older congregations were not targeted. Because heterosexism tends to increase with age (Olson et. al., 2006), younger populations in the study's milieu may have demonstrated lower levels of heterosexism. Furthermore, measures were not taken to exclude participants who may have participated more than once. Moreover, given this study's correlational nature, causation may not be determined, only the evaluation of relationships among variables (i.e., measures of religiosity and heterosexism).

Recommendations

The current study may be advanced in future research by exploring the neuronal mechanisms of belief insofar as they apply to scientific studies of morality (i.e., norm enforcement mechanisms, neural basis of egalitarian behaviors, etc.) with respect to the equal treatment of all people, regardless of sexual orientation. Although neuroscience may not yet hold the capacity to elucidate morality, it can, however, demonstrate within a reasonable probability how one may maximize well-being and the extent to which doing so correlates with moral behavior (Marazziti, Baroni, Landi, Ceresoli, & Dell'Osso, 2013). In this vein, people whom cleave to a more fundamentalist perspective may be increasingly vulnerable to exhibiting heterosexism even in the face of contrary evidence (i.e. rejecting, excommunicating, and dehumanizing devout LGB parishioners based solely on sexual orientation; Fuist et al., 2012; Garraud, 2014; Lalich & McLaren, 2010) and awareness that heterosexist behaviors cultivate detrimental implications for people

whom identify as gay, lesbian, or bisexual (i.e., increases in suicidality and self-destructive behaviors; Hatzenbuehler, 2011; Scourfield, et al., 2008).

Additionally, a qualitative investigation on the role of insularity in heterosexism may illuminate societal pressures on subjectivity and attitude formation with respect to same-sex sexuality perspectives. Thus, efforts may be aimed at informing the public regarding such research findings.

Implications for Positive Social Change

The underlying goal of this study lies in promoting positive social change, as an understanding of the relationship between religiosity and heterosexism may inform awareness of the possible implications of heteronormativity and heterosexism with a focus on theocratic encroachment and involvement. A mounting body of research has shown that those who experience heterosexism have an increased risk of self-harming behaviors and psychological distress (Silenzio et al., 2007). Suicide rates, for example, are the third leading cause of death among 15 to 24 year-olds (NIMH, 2011). However, suicide risks for LGB populations are substantially and disproportionately higher (Scourfield et al., 2008). Research demonstrates LGB individuals whom live in environments with a more negative sociopolitical climate concerning same-sex sexuality are placed at an even higher risk of suicidality (Hatzenbuehler, 2011). For example, The Trevor Project, which stands as the nation's leading suicide prevention and crisis intervention for LGB youth has found more than 70% of their calls originate from southern regions (i.e., Texas and Louisiana; Fishberger, 2011). Therefore, non-accepting communities are associated with elevated risks of suicidality in LGB youth

(Hatzenbuehler, 2011). Thus, aside from raising awareness in heterosexual populations, the fundamental goal of this research endeavor is to promote positive social change that extends to LGB individuals, who are often forced to negotiate a volatile environment while simultaneously concealing their true identity (Barton, 2011; Scourfield et al., 2008).

Moreover, this study may prove insightful to clergy whom may inadvertently cultivate heterosexist views in their congregations, thereby making their respective parishes more inclusive than exclusive. This unintentional notion of propagating heterosexist ideology may also hold true in the helping professions, and by virtue of acknowledging heteronormative assumptions and their impact on the therapeutic alliance (Smith, Shin, & Officer, 2012), therapists may be better poised in the mitigation of internalized heterosexism.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between religiosity and heterosexism and to compare degree of religiosity and heterosexism between members of five Christian denominations, and between same-sex sexuality perspectives in the southern United States. Because the underlying goal of the dissertation was to promote social change via examining factors that may be related to the plight of LGB individuals, multiple contributory factors were considered. The literature review provided an in-depth look into the historical pathologization of same-sex sexuality, including psychiatry, psychology, and ecclesiastical culpability, which set in motion a powerful wave of influence (DeBlock & Adriaens, 2013; Drescher, 2010; Hooker, 1957; Mendelson, 2003;

Silverstein, 2009). Although secular society has demonstrated improvements (i.e., legislative reform via the Equality Act), Christianity, and its respective doctrines frequently classify homosexual behaviors as "ungodly," "impure," and "unnatural" (Adamczyk & Pitt, 2009).

Places of religious worship, in this vein, can serve as a major vehicle through which heterosexist ideologies are mobilized. Denominational teachings have been shown to bear a significant influence on adherents' view of religion (Fuist et al., 2012). For the devout, religion plays a significant role in moral development (Mustea et al., 2010) and the formation of attitudes regarding social issues (Adamczyk & Pitt, 2009), thereby making the study of this phenomenon highly tenable. Each of the alternative hypotheses presented in this dissertation were supported, consistent with the research literature, and best elucidated under the scaffolding of attribution theory to which added to the existing literature on the relationship between religiosity and heterosexism, and particularly so in insular southern environments whereby the church and community are intricately interwoven (Barton, 2012). However, the data also reveal that attitudes toward same-sex sexuality need not be conceptualized as derogatory. That is, ecclesiastical influence may be poised to mitigate heterosexist ideology in the same sense as propagating it.

References

Aalsma, M. C., Woodrome, S. E., Downs, S. M., Hensel, D. J., Zimet, G. D., Orr, D. P., & Fortenberry, J. D. (2013). Religiosity measure. *Psyctests,* doi:10.1037/t27606-000

Adamczyk, A. Pitt, C. (2009). Shaping attitudes about homosexuality: The role of religion and cultural context. *Social Science Research, 38*(1), 338-351. doi: 10.1016/j.ssresearch.2009.01.002

Adolfsen, A., Iedema, J., & Keuzenkamp, S. (2010). Multiple dimensions of attitudes about homosexuality: Development of a multifaceted scale measuring attitudes toward homosexuality. *Journal of Homosexuality*, *57*(10), 1237-57.

Altemeyer, B. (2003). Why do religious fundamentalists tend to be prejudiced? *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion, 13*(1), 17–28. Doi: 10.1207/s15327582ijpr1301_03

American Psychiatric Association. (1952). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders.* (1st ed.) Text Revision. Washington, DC: Author.

American Psychiatric Association. (1968). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders*. (2nd ed.) Text Revision. Washington, DC: Author.

American Psychiatric Association. (2000). *Diagnostic and statistical manual of mental disorders*. (4th ed.) Text Revision. Washington, DC: Author.

Andersen, R. & Fetner, T. (2008). Economic inequality and intolerance: Attitudes toward homosexuality in 35 democracies. *American Journal of Political Science 52*(4), 942-958. Doi: 10.1111/j.1540-5907.2008.00352.x

Aten, J. D., Mangis, M. W., & Campbell, C. (2010). Psychotherapy with rural religious fundamentalist clients. *Journal of Clinical Psychology, 66*(5), 513-523. doi: 10.1002/jclp.20677

Avery, A., Chase, J., Johansson, L., Litvak, S., Montero, D., & Wydra, M. (2007). America's changing attitudes toward homosexuality, civil unions, and same-gender marriage: 1977–2004. *Social Work, 52*(1), 71–79. doi:10.1093/sw/52.1.71

Bahnsen, G.L. (1978). *Homosexuality: A biblical view*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

Barash, D. P. (2010). Animal Homosexuality: A Biosocial Perspective. *Evolutionary Psychology, 8*(4), 751-753. doi: 10.1017/cbo9780511762192.002

Barnes, D. M., & Meyer, I. H. (2012). Religious affiliation, internalized homophobia, and mental health in lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 82*(4), 505–515. doi:10.1111/j.1939-0025.2012.01185.x

Barton, B. (2010). "Abomination"—Life as a bible belt gay. *Journal of Homosexuality, 57*(4), 465-484. doi:10.1080/00918361003608558

Barton, B. (2012). *Pray the gay away: The extraordinary lives of Bible belt gays.* New York: New York University Press.

Baylor University. (2007). *The Baylor religion survey, wave II*. Waco, TX: Baylor Institute for Studies of Religion [producer].

Benagiano, G. Carrara, S. Filippi, V. & Brosens, I. (2011). Condoms, HIV and the Roman Catholic church. *Reproductive BioMedicine Online, 22*(7), 701-709. doi: 10.1016/jrbmo.2011.02.007

Bharmal, N., Kaplan, R. M., Shapiro, M. F., Kagawa-Singer, M., Wong, M. D.,

Mangione, C. M., & ... McCarthy, W. J. (2013). Religiosity composite measure. *Psyctests*, doi:10.1037/t29535-000

Bordeyne, P. (2006). Homosexuality, seen in relation to ecumenical dialogue: What really matters to the Catholic Church. *New Blackfriars, 87*(1012), 561-577. doi:10.1111/j.1741-2005.2006.00116.x

Boysen, G.A. & Vogel, D.L. (2007). Biased assimilation and attitude polarization in response to learning about biological explanations of homosexuality. *Sex Roles, 57*(1), 755-762. doi: 10.1007/s11199-007-9256-7

Brace, N., Kemp, R., & Snelgar, R. (2006). *SPSS for psychologists* (3rd ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publisher.

Brawley, R. L. (1996). *Biblical ethics and homosexuality: Listening to scripture.* Louisville, KY: Westminister/John Knox Press.

Burks, D. J. (2011). Lesbian, gay, and bisexual victimization in the military: An unintended consequence of "Don't ask, don't tell"? *American Psychologist, 66*(7), 604-613. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/a0024609

Cadge, W., Girouard, J., Olson, L., & Lylerohr, M. (2012). Uncertainty in clergy's perspectives on homosexuality: A research note. *Review of Religious Research, 54*(3), 371-387. doi:10.1007/s13644-012-0058-1

Cohler, B. and Hammack, P. (2004). Homosexuality. In Charles Donald Spielberger (Ed.), Encyclopedia of applied psychology. Retrieved from http://search.credoreference.com.ezproxy.apollolibrary.com/content/entry/estappliedpsyc/homosexuality/0

Craig, S. L., Austin, A., & Alessi, E. (2013). Gay affirmative cognitive behavioral therapy for sexual minority youth: A clinical adaptation. *Clinical Social Work Journal, 41*(3), 258–266. doi:10.1007/s10615-012-0427-9

Creswell, J. W. (2005). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: .Pearson Education, Inc.

Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

D'Antonio, W.V. (2007). *American Catholic today: New realities of their faith and their church.* Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers.

De Block, A., & Adriaens, P. (2013). Pathologizing sexual deviance: a history. *Journal of Sex Research, 50*(3-4), 276-298. doi:10.1080/00224499.2012.738259

Dotan, Y. (2015). The boundaries of social transformation through litigation: Women's and LGBT rights in Israel, 1970-2010. *Israel Law Review, 48*(1), 3-38. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0021223714000284

Dourley, J. P. (2010). Homosexual marriage, the Vatican, and elements of a Jungian response. *Jung Journal, 4*(3), 37-46. doi: 10.1525/jung.2010.4.3.37

Drazenovich, G. (2012). A Foucauldian Analysis of Homosexuality. *Educational Philosophy & Theory, 44*(3), 259-275. doi: 10.1111/j.1469-5812.2010.00653.x

Drescher, J. (2008). A history of homosexuality and organized psychoanalysis. *Journal of the American Academy of Psychoanalysis and Dynamic Psychiatry, 36*(3), 443-60. doi: 10.1521/jaap.2008.36.3.443

Drescher, J. (2010). Queer diagnoses: Parallels and contrasts in the history of homosexuality, gender variance, and the diagnostic and statistical manual. *Archives of Sexual Behavior, 39*(2), 427-60. doi: 10.1007/s10508-009-9531-5

Duarté-Vélez, Y., Bernal, G., & Bonilla, K. (2010). Culturally adapted cognitive-behavioral therapy: Integrating sexual, spiritual, and family identities in an evidence-based treatment of a depressed Latino adolescent. *Journal of Clinical Psychology, 66*(8), 895-906. doi:10.1002/jclp.20710

Elie, J. E., Mathevon, N., & Vignal, C. (2011). Same-sex pair-bonds are equivalent to male-female bonds in a life-long socially monogamous songbird. *Behavioral Ecology and Sociobiology, 65*(12), 2197-2208. doi: 10.1007/s00265-011-1228-9

Ellison, C. G., Acevedo, G. A., & Ramos-Wada, A. I. (2011). Religion and attitudes toward same-sex marriage among U.S. Latinos. *Social Science Quarterly, 92*(1), 35-56. doi:10.1111/j.1540-6237.2011.00756.x

Faul, F., Erdfelder, E., Buchner, A., & Lang, A. G. (2014). G*Power Version 3.1.9 [computer software]. Uiversität Kiel, Germany. Retrieved from http://www.gpower.hhu.de/en/html

Ferris, A. L. (2002). Religion and the quality of life. *Journal of Happiness Studies, 3*(3), 199–215. doi: 10.1023/A:1020684404438

Fishberger, J. (2011). Gay suicide risk in the U.S., by region. The Huffington Post. Retrieved from http://www.huffingtonpost.com/jeffrey-fishberger-md/gay-suicide_b_851107.html

Friese, M., & Wänke, M. (2014). Measure of Religiosity. *Psyctests*, doi:10.1037/t34416-

000

Fuist, T. N., Stoll, L. C., & Kniss, F. (2012). Beyond the liberal-conservative divide: Assessing the relationship between religious denominations and their associated LGBT organizations. *Qualitative Sociology, 35*(1), 65-87. doi: 10.1007/s11133-011-9211-3

Furnham, A. & Saito, K. (2009). A cross-cultural study of attitudes toward and beliefs about, male homosexuality. *Journal of Homosexuality, 56*(3), 299-318. doi: 10.1080-00918360902728525

Garcia, J.R. & Kruger, D. J. (2010). Unbuckling in the Bible belt: Conservative sexual norms lower age at marriage. *Journal of Social, Evolutionary, and Cultural Psychology,* 4(4), 206-214. doi: 10.1037/h0099288

Garraud, O. (2014). Jehovah's Witnesses and blood transfusion refusal: What next? *US National Library of Medicine National Institute of Health. Blood Transfusion, 12*(1), 402-403. doi: 10.2450/2013.0216-12.

Gattis, M.N., Woodford, M.R., & Han, Y. (2014). Discrimination and depressive symptoms among sexual minority youth: Is gay-affirming religious affiliation a protective factor? *Archives of Sexual Behavior, 43*(1), 1589-1599. doi: 10.1007/s10508-014-0342-y.

George, D. & Mallery, P. (2010). *SPSS for Windows step by step: a simple guide and reference, 18.0 update* (11th ed.). Boston, MA: Allyn and Bacon.

Ghandour, L. A., & El Sayed, D. S. (2013). Gambling behaviors among university youth: Does one's religious affiliation and level of religiosity play a role? *Psychology of*

Addictive Behaviors, 27(1), 279-286. doi: 10.1037/a0030172

Guittar, N.A. (2014). Intersecting gender with race and religiosity: Do unique social categories explain attitudes toward homosexuality? *Current Sociology, 62*(1), 41-62. doi: 10.1177/0011392113516985

Hackney, C. H., & Sanders, G. S. (2003). Religiosity and mental health: A meta–analysis of recent studies. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 42*(1), 43-55. doi: 10.1111/1468-5906.t01-1-00160

Halter, M.J., Rolin-Kenny, D., & Grund, F. (2013). DSM-5: Historical perspectives. *Journal of Psychosocial Nursing & Mental Health Services, 51*(4), 22-29. doi: 10.3928/02793695-20130226-03

Hare, P. R. (2015). *Religiosity measure.* Unpublished raw data, Walden University, Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Hans, J. D., Kersey, M., & Kimberly, C. (2012). Self-perceived Origins of attitudes toward homosexuality. *Journal of Homosexuality, 59*(1), 4-17. doi:10.1080/00918369.2012.638547

Hatzenbuehler, M.L. (2011). The social environment and suicide attempts in lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth. *Pediatrics, 127*(5), 896-903. doi: 10.1542/peds.2010-3020

Heider, F. (1958). *The psychology of interpersonal relations.* New York: Wiley.

Helminiak, D.A. (2000). *What the Bible really says about homosexuality: Recent findings by top scholars offer a radical new view*. Sacramento, CA: Alamo Square Distributors.

Herek, G. M. (1988). Attitudes toward lesbians and gay men scale. *Psyctests,*

doi:10.1037/t06978-000

Herek, G.M. (1988). Heterosexuals' attitudes toward lesbians and gay men: Correlates and gender differences. *Journal of Sex Research, 25*(1), 451-477. doi: 10.1080/00224498809551476

Herek, G.M. (1994). Assessing heterosexuals' attitudes toward lesbians and gay men: A review of empirical research with the ATLG scale. In B. Green, & G.M Herek (Eds.). *Lesbian and gay psychology: Theory, research, and clinical applications* (pp. 206-228). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Herek, G.M. (1998). The attitudes toward lesbians and gay men (ATLG) scale. In C.M. Davis, W.H. Yarber, R. Bauserman, G. Schreer, & S.L. Davis (Eds.), *Sexuality-related measures: A compendium*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

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: The 54th Nebraska Symposium on Motivation* (pp. 65-111). New York: Springer.

Herek, G. M., Norton, A. T., Allen, T. J., & Sims, C. L. (2010). Demographic, psychological, and social characteristics of self-identified lesbian, gay, and bisexual adults in a US probability sample. *Sexuality Research & Social Policy, 7*(3), 176-200. doi: 10.1007/s13178-010-0017-y

Himbaza, I., Schenker, A., & Edart, J.B. (2012) *The Bible on the question of homosexuality*. Washington, D.C: Catholic University of American Press.

Hooker, E. (1957). The adjustment of the male overt homosexual. *Journal of Projective*

Techniques, 21, 18-31. doi:10.1080/08853126.1957.10380742

Howell, D. C. (2010). *Statistical methods for psychology* (7th ed.). Belmont CA: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.

Inbar, Y., Pizarro, D.A., & Bloom, P. (2009). Conservatives are more easily disgusted than liberals. *Cognition and Emotion, 23*(4), 714-725. doi: 10.1080/02699930802110007

Jones, E.E., Kannouse, D.E., Kelley, H.H., Nisbett, R.E., Valins, S., & Weiner, B. (1972). *Attribution: Perceiving the causes of behavior.* Morristown, NJ: General Learning Press.

Jones, J.M. (2010) Americans Opposition to gay marriage eases slightly. Gallup Poll. Retrieved from www.gallup.com/poll/128291/Americans-Opposition-Gay-Marriage-Eases-Slightly.aspx.

Kapinus, C. A., Kraus, R., & Flowers, D. R. (2010). Excluding inclusivity: Protestant framing of homosexuality. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Research on Religion, 6*(4), 2-22. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com/docview/1346931837?accountid=458

Kelley, H. H. (1973). The processes of causal attribution. *American Psychologist, 28*(2), 107-128. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/h0034225

Koenig, H. G., & Larson, D. B. (2001). Religion and mental health: Evidence for an association. *International Review of Psychiatry, 13*(2), 67-78. doi:10.1080/09540260120037290

Krueger, R. B. (2010). The DSM diagnostic criteria for sexual sadism. *Archives of Sexual*

Behavior, 39(2), 325-56. doi: 10.1007/s10508-009-9586-3

Lalich, J., & McLaren, K. (2010). Inside and outcast: Multifaceted stigma and redemption in the lives of gay and lesbian Jehovah's Witnesses. *Journal of Homosexuality, 57*(10), 1303-1333. doi:10.1080/00918369.2010.517076

Lawson, D.W. (2011). Animal homosexuality: A biosocial approach. *Animal Behaviour, 81*(2), 499. doi: 10.1016/j.anbehav.2010.11.009

Lienemann, W. (1998). Churches and homosexuality. *Ecumenical Review, 50*(1), 7-21. doi: 10.1111/j.1758-6623.1998.tb00320.x

Levy, D. & Reeves, P. (2011). Resolving identity conflict: Gay, lesbian, and queer individuals with a Christian upbringing. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Social Services, 23*(1), 53-68. doi: 10.1080/10538720.2010.530193

Lewis, G. B. (2009). Does believing homosexuality is innate increase support for gay rights?. *Policy Studies Journal, 37*(4), 669-693. doi:10.1111/j.1541-0072.2009.00330.x

Lewis, G. J., & Bates, T. C. (2013). Religiosity measure. *Psyctests,* doi:10.1037/t25386-000

Li, M.J., Hubach, R.D., & Dodge, B. (2015). Social Milieu and mediators of loneliness among gay and bisexual men in rural Indiana. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Mental Health, (just-accepted),* 00-00. doi:10.1080/19359705.2015.1033798

Longo, J., Walls, N. E., & Wisneski, H. (2013). Religion and religiosity: protective or harmful factors for sexual minority youth?. *Mental Health, Religion & Culture, 16*(3), 273-290. doi:10.1080/13674676.2012.659240

Marazziti, D., Baroni, S., Landi, P., Ceresoli, D., & Dell'Osso, L. (2013). The neurobiology of moral sense: Fact or hypotheses? *Annals of General Psychiatry, 12*(6), 1-12. doi: 10.1186/1744-859X-12-6

Matthews, C. R., & Adams, E. M. (2009). Using a social justice approach to prevent the mental health consequences of heterosexism. *Journal of Primary Prevention, 30*(1), 11-26. doi: 10.1007/s10935-008-0166-4

McArthur, J. (2011). 'What happened?' Teaching attribution theory through ambiguous prompts. *Communication Teacher, 25*(1), 32-36. doi:10.1080/17404622.2010.528001

McConnell, A. R., Rydell, R. J., Strain, L. M., & Mackie, D. M. (2008). Forming implicit and explicit attitudes toward individuals: Social group association cues. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 94*(5), 792-807. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.94.5.792

McDermott, E., Roen, K., & Scourfield, J. (2008). Avoiding shame: young LGBT people, homophobia and self-destructive behaviours. *Culture, Health & Sexuality, 10*(8), 815-829. doi:10.1080/13691050802380974

McGinniss, M. (2010). The church's response to the homosexual. *Journal of Ministry and Theology*, 129–-163. Retrieved from http://www.bbc.edu/seminary/journal/volume14_2/The-Church%27s-Response-to-Homosexuality.pdf

Mendelson, G. (2003). Homosexuality and psychiatric nosology. *Australian and New Zealand Journal of Psychiatry, 37*(6) 678.

Mildenberger, F. (2007). Kraepelin and the ‘urnings’: Male homosexuality in psychiatric discourse. *History of Psychiatry, 18*(3), 321-335. doi: 10.1177/0957154x07079796

Mochon, D., Norton, M. I., & Ariely, D. (2011). Who benefits from religion? *Social Indicators Research, 101*(1), 1-15. doi: 10.1007/s11205-010-9637-0

Morrison, S., & Dinkel, S. (2012). Heterosexism and Health Care: A Concept Analysis. *Nursing Forum, 47*(2), 123-130. doi:10.1111/j.1744-6198.2011.00243.x

Moltmann, J. (2012). Sun of righteousness, arise! The freedom of a Christian-then and now-for the perpetrators and for the victims of sin. *Theology Today, 69*(1), 7-17. doi: 10.1177/0040573611434585

Mulé, N. J., Ross, L. E., Deeprose, B., Jackson, B. E., Daley, A., Travers, A., & Moore, D. (2009). Promoting LGBT health and wellbeing through inclusive policy development. *International Journal for Equity in Health, 8*(1), 1-11. doi:10.1186/1475-9276-8-18

Murray, J., & Thomson, M. E. (2009). An application of attribution theory to clinical judgment. *Europe's Journal of Psychology, 5*(3), 96. doi: 10.5964/ejop.v5i3.257

Mustea, A., Negru, O., & Opre, A. (2010). Morality and religion: A psychological perspective. *Journal for the Study of Religions and Ideologies, 9*(26), 18-35. ISSN: 1583-0039. Retrieved from doi: /10.1177/0011000007309489

Myers, D. G. (2000). The funds, friends, and faith of happy people. *American Psychologist, 55*(1), 56–67. doi: 10.1037/0003-066x.55.1.56

Nadal, K. L., Issa, M., Leon, J., Meterko, V., Wideman, M., & Wong, Y. (2011). Sexual

orientation microaggressions: 'Death by a thousand cuts' for lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth. *Journal of LGBT Youth, 8*(1) 234 –259. doi:10.1080/19361653.2011.584204

National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). (2011). *Suicide in the U.S.: Statistics and prevention.* Retrieved from www.nimh.nih.gov

Newport, F. (2014). LGBT population in U.S. significantly less religious. Almost half are classified as nonreligious. Religiosity among national adults. By LGBT status and gender. *Gallup Well-Being*. Retrieved from http://www.gallup.com/poll/174788/lgbt-population-significantly-less-religious.aspx

Nissinen, M. (1998). *Homoeroticism in the biblical world*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press.

Ogland, C. P., & Hinojosa, P. (2012). Religion and social attitudes: Examining the contours of religion in moral judgments toward premarital sex and cohabitation in contemporary Brazil. *Sociology of Religion, 73*(4), 411-II. doi:10.1093/socrel/srs027

Olson, L.R., Cage, W., & Harrison, J.T. (2006). Religion and public opinion about same-sex marriage. *Social Science Quarterly, 87*(1), 340-360. doi: 10.1111/j.1540-6237.2006.00384.x

Piedmont, R. L. (2010). Assessment of spirituality and religious sentiments. *Psyctests*, doi:10.1037/t31008-000

Pihlaja, S. (2013). 'It's all red ink': The interpretation of biblical metaphor among

Evangelical Christian YouTube users. *Language and Literature, 22*(2), 103-117. doi: 10.1177/0963947013483996.

Printy, M. (2012). Protestantism and progress in the year XII: Charles Viller's essay on the spirit and influence of Luther's reformation (1804). *Modern Intellectual History, 9*(2), 303-329. doi: 10.1017/S1479244312000054

Pudrovska, T. (2015). Levels of religiosity measure. *Psyctests,* doi:10.1037/t40939-000

Rankin, S.R. (2005). Campus climates for sexual minorities. *New Directions for Student Services, 111*, 17-23. doi:10.1002/ss.170

Rankin, S.R, Weber, G., Blumenfeld, W., & Frazer, S. (2010). 2010 state of higher education for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people. Charlotte, NC: Campus Pride.

Rayside D. (2007) The United States in comparative context. In: Rimmerman CA and Wilcox C (eds) The politics of same-sex marriage. Chicago: *University of Chicago Press*, 341–364.

Rich, A. (1986). *Blood, bread, and poetry: Selected prose, 1979–1985*. New York, NY: Norton.

Robinson, V. (2012). Forty years since John Fryer: That was then, this is now. *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Mental Health, 16*(2), 167-180. doi:10.1080/19359705.2012.652501

Rogers, J. (2009). *Jesus, the Bible, and homosexuality*. Expanded edition. Louisville, KY: Westminster/John Knox Press.

Röndahl, G., Innala, S., & Carlsson, M. (2006). Heterosexual assumptions in verbal and

non-verbal communication in nursing. *Journal of Advanced Nursing, 56*(4), 373-381. doi:10.1111/j.1365-2648.2006.04018.x

Rosenbaum, J. E., & Weathersbee, B. (2013). True love waits: Do southern Baptists? Premarital sexual behavior among newly married southern Baptist Sunday school students. *Journal of Religion and Health, 52*(1), 263-75. doi: 10.1007/s10943-010-9445-5

Scheitle, C. & Adamczyk, A. (2009). It takes two: The interplay of individuals and group theology on social embeddedness. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion, 48*(1), 16-29. doi: 10.1111/j.1468-5906.2009.01427.x

Scourfield, J., Roen, K., & McDermott, L. (2008). Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender young people's experiences of distress: resilience, ambivalence and self-destructive behaviour. *Health & Social Care in The Community, 16*(3), 329-336. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2524.2008.00769.x

Sears, J.T. (2013). *Growing up gay in the South: race, gender, and journeys of the spirit.* New York: Routledge. doi: 10.5860/choice.29-3029

Shelton, K., & Delgado-Romero, E. A. (2011). Sexual orientation microaggressions: The experience of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer clients in psychotherapy. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 58*(2), 210-221. doi:10.1037/a0022251

Sherkat, D.E., Powell-Williams, M. Maddox, G. & Mattias de Vries, K. (2011). Religion, politics, and support for same-sex marriage in the United States, 1988-2008. *Social Science Research ,40*(1), 167-180. doi:10.1016/j.ssresearch.2010.08.009

Shukor, S. A., & Jamal, A. (2013). Developing scales for measuring religiosity in the

context of consumer research. *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research, 13,* 69–-74. Retrieved from http://www.idosi.org/mejsr/mejsr13%28cifwm%2913/12.pdf

Silenzio, V., Pena, J., Duberstein, P., Cerel, J., & Knox, K. (2007). Sexual orientation and risk factors for suicidal ideation and suicide attempts among adolescents and young adults. *American Journal of Public Health, 97*(11), 2017-2019. doi.org/10.2105/ajph.2006.095943

Silverstein, C. (2009). The implications of removing homosexuality from the DSM as a mental disorder. *Archives of Sexual Behavior, 38*(2), 161-3. doi: 10.1007/s10508-008-9442-x

Singleton, J. D. (2011). 'Money Is a Sterile Thing': Martin Luther on the Immorality of Usury Reconsidered. *History of Political Economy, 43*(4), 683-698. doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1428625

Smith, L.C., Shin, R.Q., Officer, L.M. (2012). Moving counseling forward on LGB and transgender issues: Speaking queerly on discourses and microaggressions. *Counseling Psychologist, 40*(3) 385-408. Doi: 10.1177/0011000011403165

Soule, S.A. (2004). Going to the chapel?: Same-sex marriage bans in the United States, 1973-2000. *Social Problems, 51*(4), 453-477. doi.org/10.1525/sp.2004.51.4.453

Stevens, J. P. (2009). *Applied multivariate statistics for the social sciences* (5th ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Routledge Academic.

Stroope, S., Draper, S., & Whitehead, A. L. (2013). Images of a loving god and sense of meaning in life. *Social Indicators Research, 111*(1), 25-44.

doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1007/s11205-011-9982-7

Sue, D.W. (2010). *Microaggressions in everyday life: Race, gender, and sexual orientation*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley.

Swank, E., Eldridge, V. & Mack, L. (2006). Comfort with homosexuality in rural America. *Journal of Homosexuality 51*(2): 39-56. doi: 10.1300/j082v51n02_03

Swank, E., Frost, D. M., & Fahs, B. (2012). Rural location and exposure to minority stress among sexual minorities in the United States. *Psychology & Sexuality, 3*(3), 226-243. doi:10.1080/19419899.2012.700026

Swank, E., Fahs, B., & Frost, D. M. (2013). Region, social identities, and disclosure practices as predictors of heterosexist discrimination against sexual minorities in the United States region, social identities, and disclosure practices as predictors of heterosexist discrimination against… *Sociological Inquiry, 83*(2), 238-258. doi:10.1111/soin.12004

Sweldens, S., Corneille, O., Yzerbyt, V. (2014). The role of awareness in attitude formation through evaluative conditioning. *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 18*(2), 187-209. doi: 10.1177/1088868314527832

Szymanski, D.M., Kashubeck-West, S. Meyer, J. (2008). Internalized heterosexism. Measurement, psychosocial correlates, and research directions. *Counseling Psychologist, 36*(4), 525-574. doi: /10.1177/0011000007309489

Tabachnick, B. G. & Fidell, L. S. (2012). *Using multivariate statistics* (6th ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson.

Thomas, J. N., & Olson, D. V. A. (2012). Evangelical elites' changing responses to

homosexuality 1960-2009. *Sociology of Religion, 73*(3), 239-II. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com/docview/1124558941?accountid=458Vasey, M. (1995). *Strangers and friends: A new exploration of homosexuality and the Bible*. London: Hodder and Stoughton.

Vatican. (2003). *Considerations regarding proposals to give legal recognition to unions between homosexual persons*. Rome, Italy. Vatican Publishing House. Retrieved from http://pewforum.org/assets/files/hispanics-religion-07-methodology-final.pdf

Via, D.O, & Gagnon, R.A. (2003). *Homosexuality in the Bible: Two views.* Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press.

Village, A. (2012). Biblical literalism: A test of the compensatory schema hypothesis among Anglicans in England. *Review of Religious Research, 54*(2), 175-196. doi:10.1007/s13644-012-0055-4

Vincent, W., Parrott, D. J., & Peterson, J. L. (2011). Effects of traditional gender role norms and religious fundamentalism on self-identified heterosexual men's attitudes, anger, and aggression toward gay men and lesbians. *Psychology of Men & Masculinity, 12*(4), 383-400. doi:10.1037/a0023807

Waldrep, C. (2012). The use and abuse of the law: Public opinion and united Methodist church trials of ministers performing same-sex union ceremonies. *Law and History Review, 30*(4), 953-1005. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/S0738248012000545

Warner, M. (1999). *The trouble with normal: Sex, politics, and the ethics of queer life.*

New York, NY: The Free Press.

Weiner, B. (1974). *Achievement motivation and attribution theory*. Morristown, N.J.: General Learning Press.

Weiner, B. (1985). An attributional theory of achievement motivation and emotion. *Psychological Review, 92*(4), 548-573.doi: /10.1007/978-1-4612-4948-1_6

Whitehead, A.L. (2014). Politics, religion, attribution theory, and attitudes toward same-sex unions. *Social Science Quarterly, 95*(3), 701-718. doi: 10.111/ssqu.12085

Whitehead, A.L. (2015). A more perfect union? Christian nationalism and support for same-sex unions. *Sociological Perspectives, 58*(3), 422-440. doi: 10.1177/0731121415577724

Wieringa, S. (2012). Passionate aesthetics and symbolic subversion: Heteronormativity in India and Indonesia. *Asian Studies Review 36*, 515–-530. http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10357823.2012.739997

Wold, D.J. (1998). *Out of order: homosexuality in the Bible and the ancient near east.* Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

Wood, J.T. (2008). Communication mosaics (5th ed.). Belmont, CA: Thompson-Wadsworth.

Woodford, M. R., Walls, N. E., & Levy, D. L. (2012). Religion and endorsement of same-sex marriage: The role of syncretism between denominational teachings about homosexuality and personal religious beliefs. *Interdisciplinary Journal of Research on Religion, (8)*4, 2-29. Retrieved from http://search.proquest.com/docview/1346931995?accountid=458

Woodford, M.R., Howell, M.L., Kulick, A., & Silverschanz, P. (2013). "That's so gay!" Heterosexual male undergraduates and the perpetuation of sexual orientation Microaggressions on campus. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 28*(1), 416-435. doi: 10.1177/0886260512454719

Woodford, M. R., Kulick, A., Sinco, B. R., & Hong, J. (2014). Contemporary heterosexism on campus and psychological distress among LGBQ students: The mediating role of self-acceptance. *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry, 84*(5), 519-529. doi:10.1037/ort0000015

Zucker, G.S. & Weiner, B. (1993). Conservatism and perceptions of poverty: An attributional analysis. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 23*(12), 925-943. doi: 10.1111/j.1559-1816.1993.tb01014.x

Zucker, K. & Spitzer, R. (2005). Was the gender identity disorder of childhood diagnosis introduced into DSM-III as a backdoor maneuver to replace homosexuality? A historical note. *Journal of Sex & Marital Therapy*, *31*(1), 31-42. doi: 10.1080/00926230590475251

Zumbo, B.D., & Zimmerman, D.W. (1993). Is the selection of statistical methods governed by level of measurement? *Canadian Psychology, 34*, 390-400. doi: /10.1037/h0078865

Appendix A: Religiosity Measure

Gender: Male: _____ Female: _____
Age: _____
Race (optional): _____
Educational Level (highest grade or degree completed):

____ Some High School
____ High School Graduate
____ Some College
____ College Graduate
____ Graduate/Advanced Degree

To what Christian denomination do you belong?

____ Catholic
____ Southern Baptist Convention
____ Methodist
____ Episcopal
____ Jehovah's Witness
____ Other

Please circle the responses that you feel best describes you.

1. How often do you attend religious services and activities?
   a. Once a day or more
   b. At least weekly but less than daily
   c. At least monthly but less than weekly
   d. At least once in my life but less than monthly
   e. Never

2. How often do you read Holy Scriptures?
   a. Once a day or more
   b. At least weekly but less than daily
   c. At least monthly but less than weekly
   d. At least once in my life but less than monthly
   e. Never

3. How often do you pray?
   a. Once a day or more
   b. At least weekly but less than daily
   c. At least monthly but less than weekly
   d. At least once in my life but less than monthly
   e. Never

4. Do you believe homosexuality is a choice (therefore NOT biological or natural)?
   a. Yes, people choose to be gay.
   b. No, people are born gay

Appendix B: Attitudes Toward Lesbians and Gay Men Scale-Revised Long Version

(ATLG-R)

1. Lesbians just can't fit into our society.
   ____ strongly agree ____ disagree somewhat
   ____ agree somewhat ____ strongly disagree
   ____ neither agree nor disagree

2. A woman's homosexuality should not be a cause for job discrimination in any situation.
   ____ strongly agree ____ disagree somewhat
   ____ agree somewhat ____ strongly disagree
   ____ neither agree nor disagree

3. Female homosexuality is bad for society because it breaks down the natural divisions between the sexes.
   ____ strongly agree ____ disagree somewhat
   ____ agree somewhat ____ strongly disagree
   ____ neither agree nor disagree

4. State laws against private sexual behavior between consenting adult women should be abolished.
   ____ strongly agree ____ disagree somewhat
   ____ agree somewhat ____ strongly disagree
   ____ neither agree nor disagree

5. Female homosexuality is a sin.
   ____ strongly agree ____ disagree somewhat
   ____ agree somewhat ____ strongly disagree
   ____ neither agree nor disagree

6. The growing number of lesbians indicates a decline in American morals.
   ____ strongly agree ____ disagree somewhat
   ____ agree somewhat ____ strongly disagree
   ____ neither agree nor disagree

7. Female homosexuality in itself is no problem unless society makes it a problem.
   ____ strongly agree ____ disagree somewhat
   ____ agree somewhat ____ strongly disagree
   ____ neither agree nor disagree

Appendix B (continued)

8. Female homosexuality is a threat to many of our basic social institutions.

____ strongly agree ____ disagree somewhat
____ agree somewhat ____ strongly disagree
____ neither agree nor disagree

9. Female homosexuality is an inferior form of sexuality.

____ strongly agree ____ disagree somewhat
____ agree somewhat ____ strongly disagree
____ neither agree nor disagree

10. Lesbians are sick.

____ strongly agree ____ disagree somewhat
____ agree somewhat ____ strongly disagree
____ neither agree nor disagree

11. Male homosexual couples should be allowed to adopt children the same as heterosexual couples.

____ strongly agree ____ disagree somewhat
____ agree somewhat ____ strongly disagree
____ neither agree nor disagree

12. I think male homosexuals are disgusting.

____ strongly agree ____ disagree somewhat
____ agree somewhat ____ strongly disagree
____ neither agree nor disagree

13. Male homosexuals should not be allowed to teach school.

____ strongly agree ____ disagree somewhat
____ agree somewhat ____ strongly disagree
____ neither agree nor disagree

14. Male homosexuality is a perversion.

____ strongly agree ____ disagree somewhat
____ agree somewhat ____ strongly disagree
____ neither agree nor disagree

15. Male homosexuality is a natural expression of sexuality in men.

____ strongly agree ____ disagree somewhat
____ agree somewhat ____ strongly disagree
____ neither agree nor disagree

Appendix B (continued)

16. If a man has homosexual feelings, he should do everything he can to overcome them.

____ strongly agree ____ disagree somewhat
____ agree somewhat ____ strongly disagree
____ neither agree nor disagree

17. I would not be too upset if I learned that my son were a homosexual.

____ strongly agree ____ disagree somewhat
____ agree somewhat ____ strongly disagree
____ neither agree nor disagree

18. Sex between two men is just plain wrong.

____ strongly agree ____ disagree somewhat
____ agree somewhat ____ strongly disagree
____ neither agree nor disagree

19. The idea of male homosexual marriages seems ridiculous to me.

____ strongly agree ____ disagree somewhat
____ agree somewhat ____ strongly disagree
____ neither agree nor disagree

20. Male homosexuality is merely a different kind of lifestyle that should not be condemned.

____ strongly agree ____ disagree somewhat
____ agree somewhat ____ strongly disagree
____ neither agree nor disagree

Appendix C: Participant Recruitment Flyer

Christian Participants Needed for Research

We are looking for volunteers to participate in a study about Religious Commitment and Views on Homosexuality in the South.

TO BE ELIGIBLE YOU MUST:

1. Be an adult, between the ages of 18-85.
2. Be able to read and respond in English.
3. Have internet access.
3. Be a Christian, whom holds membership in Catholic, Methodist, Episcopal, Jehovah's Witness, or Southern Baptist Convention denominations.

The survey consists of 24 Questions related to religious commitment and views on homosexuality. Participants must provide consent prior to accessing the survey.

PARTICIPATION IS COMPLETELY ANONYMOUS

Please type in the following link to begin:

www.tinyurl.com/TheChristianView