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Becoming Gay: The Formation and Meaning of LGBT Political Identity

Kimberly Proctor

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**BECOMING GAY:
THE FORMATION AND MEANING OF LGBT POLITICAL
IDENTITY**

by

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DISSERTATION

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BECOMING GAY: THE FORMATION AND MEANING OF LGBT POLITICAL IDENTITY

by

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ABSTRACT

Data suggest that there are at least 11 million lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people in the United States. Further, evidence demonstrates that there is a “sexuality gap” (Hertzog 1996) in American politics with LGBTs out-participating their heterosexual peers and gay politics dominating political media. However, scholars remain unable to explain why LGBT political identity forms or how this identity matters for political behavior. This dissertation examines the political foundations of LGBT identity and argues that discrimination, engagement in group-specific public spaces, and the influence of the Religious Right have fostered the development of group consciousness in gay Americans. Group consciousness subsequently structures minority political behavior by providing both “the need to act” and “the will to act” (Gamson 1968: p. 48). Using a large-scale survey of LGBT Americans that measures group consciousness and political behavior (Pew 2013), I demonstrate strong support for this argument, with LGBT group consciousness resulting from the political process and emerging to significantly influence participation, partisanship, and public opinion. In general, positive in-group association demonstrates the strongest results, with this measure of group consciousness increasing political participation by nearly 30% on average.

By analyzing the foundations of group consciousness and its political outputs, this dissertation makes important theoretical and methodological contributions to political science. Theoretically, it expands on theories of group consciousness, details how and

why group consciousness matters for politics, and applies these theories to an understudied, yet politically important, community. Methodologically, it provides the first statistical analysis of gay political identity and behavior, while also contributing two methodologically validated measures of group consciousness. In total, the results demonstrate that LGBT group consciousness is the result of a longstanding, and ongoing, political process that shapes both gay life and the broader political landscape. As long as gays continue to engage in the broader LGBT community and recognize the discrimination facing their community, LGBT group consciousness will remain an important force in American politics.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

| | |
|-------|--|
| CEI | Counterpublic Engagement Index |
| CFA | Confirmatory factor analysis |
| DI | Discrimination Index |
| ECHO | East Coast Homophile Organization |
| GLF | Gay Liberal Front |
| GMHC | Gay Men's Health Crisis |
| HRC | Human Rights Campaign |
| HRCF | Human Rights Campaign Fund |
| IPI | Issue Prioritization Index |
| LGBT | Lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender |
| MECLA | Municipal Elections Committee of Los Angeles |
| MSM | Men who have sex with men |
| PEI | Public Evaluation Index |
| PII | Positive Identity Index |
| PPI | Political Participation Index |
| RR | Religious Right |
| RRI | Religious Right Index |
| SEM | Structural equation modeling |
| SGM | Sexual and gender minorities |
| SOGI | Sexual orientation and gender identity |

CHAPTER ONE

**UNCHARTERED IDENTITIES: INCORPORATING LESBIAN, GAY,
BISEXUAL, AND TRANSGENDER PEOPLE INTO THE STUDY OF MINORITY
POLITICS AND POLITICAL BEHAVIOR**

On election night in 2012, the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), a leading lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT)ⁱ civil rights organization, declared an “Equality Landslide (HRC 2012),” with overwhelming support for LGBT equality in the voting booth. This electoral victory was a long way from the criminalization of homosexual sex acts, the labeling of homosexuality as a mental illness, and the routine arrests and firings of gay persons that occurred only a few years prior. In fact, legal, scientific, social, religious, and bureaucratic discrimination shaped the history leading up to this night. Evidence of this discrimination spans multiple decades and ranges from the “Save Our Children” campaign in the late 1970s aimed at restricting gay rights to the presence of gay marriage bans in over 40 states, with losses at the ballot box more than 30 times. The activism of the gay political rights movement and the individual LGBT persons that comprise it is largely credited with transforming this long trajectory of formal discrimination into a repeal of the “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” military ban on gay and bisexual service members, the passage of the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. Hate Crimes Act, the endorsement of gay marriage by the first acting president, and the nationwide legalization of gay marriage within just a few years.

Although gay rights may seem like a “new” political issue, LGBT politics have occupied a central position in the American political system since the end of World War II, playing a particularly important role in the culture wars that dominate the American

political landscape. A long and detailed history of state, local, and federal policy aimed at regulating gay behaviors and identities, as well as direct appeals from politicians, political parties, and other political actors interested in harnessing (and suppressing) the power of the gay community, exemplify the centrality of gay rights to the political process. Further, gay rights issues have received intense media coverage and dominated election news cycles, with some pundits declaring that, “For the GOP, gay marriage could be the most important issue in 2016” (Linker 2015).

However, even with the growing prominence of gay politics in the discussion and analysis of American politics, members of the LGBT community remain largely understudied and unexamined as political actors in their own right. Countless studies examine heterosexuals’ attitudes toward homosexuals and their support for the gay rights platform, yet almost no analyses directly examine LGBT attitudes toward these same topics and issues. This is a limitation, as it fails to problematize the emergence and meaning of LGBT political identity or detail the construction of this identity through the political process. Not only does this inhibit our ability to test theories of the formation of political identity but, perhaps more importantly, it limits our ability to explain the momentous outcomes of the gay rights movement.

This absence of research on the LGBT community is particularly puzzling given the community’s disproportionate political engagement. During the half century that followed the Stonewall riots of 1969, the LGBT community became increasingly politically active, representing over 5 percent of the voting population in 2012 (Cohen 2012), even though it represents only 3.4 percent of the total U.S. population (Gates and Newport 2013). Although LGBT persons represent a relatively small portion of the

overall American public, LGBT voters in 2012 were almost as numerous as Latino voters (11.2 million; Lopez & Taylor 2012; Rodriguez 2012) and outnumbered Asian and Pacific Islander voters by one and a half times (3.85 million; AAJC et al. 2012). The disproportionate influence of the LGBT community is so well recognized that media pundits credited the gay community with “[sending] Obama back to the White House” (Grindley 2012) by giving him over two thirds of its six million votes (HRC 2012). Gay political influence is only expected to grow as an increasing number of Americans self-identify as LGBT, with the number of same-sex couples who identified as unmarried partners increasing at three times the rate of population growth from 2008 to 2009 (Gates 2010).

Essentially, researchers know enough about the gay community to know that it matters in the political arena and that gay people are disproportionately politically engaged, but not enough to explain why LGBT political identity forms, the mechanisms that define its political importance, or what it means to the actual gay people that define the movement. To address this limitation, I explore the political foundations of identity salience and the effects this has on political behavior within the LGBT community using a new dataset on the political experiences of LGBT Americans. By focusing on the foundations of politicized identity salience and testing both the inputs and outputs of this identity, this dissertation provides the first detailed examination of self-identified LGBT persons that shows *under what conditions* the LGBT community formed a distinct political minority and *how* this matters for politics. Using historical evidence and statistical modeling, I address the complex puzzle of how a group facing both seemingly

insurmountable formal discrimination and internal divisions formed a salient political identity that translated into powerful political outcomes.

The LGBT community provides an excellent case for testing theories of group consciousness formation because these theories would not predict a cohesive group identity to emerge among gays. First, LGBT identity is not hereditary, meaning that it is not conferred at birth. Because of this, parents do not pass gay identity onto their children and, therefore, LGBT identification must occur later in life. Therefore, LGBT persons must learn how to “be gay” in the world through a distinct identity formation process. Further, the LGBT community is among the most diverse groups operating in the current political environment, spanning multiple demographic categories, such as race, ethnicity, national origin, sex, religion, age, income, and essentially any other characteristic that organizes social life. The identities that fundamentally structure the community, such as sexual orientation and gender identity (SOGI), are also internally divisive and LGBT persons often organize their social lives along these distinct lines. Scholars of political identity recognize that intragroup cleavages frequently create an insurmountable obstacle to the formation of politically cohesive identities (de la Garza et al. 1992; Cohen 1999; Lien et al. 2001; Masuoka 2006), making the emergence of a well-mobilized and highly engaged LGBT persons particularly unlikely. Therefore, given the seemingly high levels of group consciousness in the LGBT community, gays represent a meaningful example of how cohesive political identities form in the face of potentially insurmountable difference.

LGBT Identity and the Study of Minority Politics

Analyzing the LGBT community will clarify existing theories of minority group politics and group identity formation by contributing the first systematic analysis of the political inputs and outputs of politicized gay identity. To accomplish this, I examine theories of group membership, political identity, and group consciousness. This framework, and its effects on political behavior, provides us with a model for examining LGBT persons as political actors. Using these theoretical foundations, we can examine the causes of group identification, as well as the political outputs we should expect given these causes.

Group Membership, Political Identity, and Group Consciousness

Among the most used measures in political science is group membership, which refers to the assignment of individuals to groups based on intersubjective definitions and shared characteristics (McClain et al. 2009; Huddy 2001). In most analyses that operationalize demographic factors as causal variables, such as using race to predict vote choice, group membership serves as a proxy for identity with the group label being the primary criteria for classification (Betancourt & Lopez 1993). In the case of LGBT persons, group membership captures if a person identifies as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender. Using these descriptive categories, researchers then infer social, cultural, and political outputs from the categories themselves. Although this is a common practice, it is problematic because using group membership as the primary driver of political preference assumes that identity is inherently linked to political outcomes, with all group members sharing similar preferences and behaviors. Therefore, measures of group

membership contain a large deal of error, as they fail to capture the internal variance associated with group labels.

For the LGBT community, assuming that all sexual orientations and gender identities have similar preferences and behaviors is not only atheoretical, but it is also untested and may be incorrect. Further, because group membership is often constructed by flexible and arbitrary societal and legal rules (Lee 1993), and may be unrelated to an internalized sense of membership, numerous scholars caution against using group membership as a predictor for politicization or behavioral outcomes (Lee 2008; McClain et al. 2009; Smith 2003, 2004; Chong & Rogers 2005; Junn 2006). Consequently, if we assume that identities are inherently linked to politics and that group membership will unite all persons within a group, we inadvertently treat identity as primordial and intrinsic and inhibit the ability to analyze the boundaries of how, when, and why group membership matters for politics (Smith 2004).

Focusing on political identity helps overcome the ambiguity and limited usefulness of group membership. Political identity refers to the internalized and salient set of characteristics by which persons are recognized as members of a political group and organize their struggle for control over the state's allocation of resources (Smith 2004; Jung 2006), or when subjective group membership takes on overtly political relevance (McClain et al. 2009). It primarily refers to a psychological feeling of belonging to a particular group, accompanied by collective identification and loyalty (Miller et al. 1981). Therefore, it differs from group membership because it occurs *a posteriori* and is directly chosen by the individual actor, rather than assigned to them.

There are many sources of political identity, such as political parties, demographic categories, or nation-state allegiances, and these identities are political because the political process, political institutions, legal codes, and other political actors construct them. These identities matter for the study of politics because they are connected to both political inputs, such as state-based discrimination, and political outputs, such as vote choice. On the input side of the equation, political identities form as a result of politics because political actors and groups determine how governing power is formed, shared, exercised, and ended, and structure how and when collective goods are distributed (Smith 2004). On the output side, there is overwhelming evidence that internalized awareness of group membership shapes perceptions of political preferences and behaviors (Jackman & Jackman 1973; Gurin et al. 1980; Miller et al. 1981; Chong & Rogers 2005; McClain et al. 2009). For LGBT persons, political identification captures the strength and degree to which people identify as LGBT.

Based on this logic, any identity may be politicized, but none are inherently so. Unlike group membership, which assumes that all members of a group share the same set of preferences, politicized identity demands an analysis of the political process that creates these identities. Therefore, it informs hypotheses about the political outcomes we should expect to witness because of this process. For example, not all demographic groups are mobilized as political actors. Although we see strong political movements among some demographic groups, such as African Americans, Latinos, and women, the majority of a person's features remain depoliticized, such as handedness, eye color, and hair color (Jung 2000). Thus, determining the political foundations of LGBT identity is important for explaining the political outcomes the group has been linked to, such as

ballot fights, voting booth outcomes, and policy preferences such as support for gay marriage.

Just as some identities are politicized while others are not, some issues and affiliations arise as more salient than others within politicized identity groups, leading to the relevance of group consciousness. Group consciousness combines in-group politicized identity with a set of ideas about the group's relative status and strategies for improving it (Jackman & Jackman 1973; Gurin et al. 1980; Miller et al. 1981; Chong & Rogers 2005; McClain et al. 2009), and it structures the values and meanings that identity provides for its members (Smith 2004). Group consciousness temporally follows group identification and is multidimensional in nature, including components such as self-identification, a sense of dissatisfaction with the status of the group, identity importance, and identity attachment (Gurin et al. 1980; Miller et al. 1981; Ashmore et al. 2004; Chong & Rogers 2005). Group consciousness helps individuals translate their political identification with a group to a set of common beliefs and interests by encouraging a level of political awareness regarding the group's relative position in society (Miller et al. 1981; Shingles 1981; Chong & Rogers 2005; Junn 2006; Lee 2008). It encourages the resonance of identity categories by helping individuals internalize the meanings and boundaries of the political conditions that surround their group, and it encourages increased adherence to group norms (Jung 2006; Huddy 2001). Overall, group consciousness enhances the effects of politicized identity, and both are functions of the political process that are fundamental to explaining political action among members of minority groups (Junn & Masuoka 2008).

Although group consciousness has a well-developed theoretical tradition of explaining minority political behavior, this application has primarily applied to racial and ethnic minorities, such as African Americans, Latinos, and Asians. However, there are no existing studies of the role that group consciousness plays in LGBT politics. Therefore, not only does this dissertation contribute to the study of minority politics by extending its theoretical application beyond racial and ethnic minorities, but it also fills a void in the literature by examining the role of group consciousness in an understudied, yet politically important, population.

Group Consciousness, Participation, Partisanship, and Public Opinion

Upon examining the formation of group consciousness within the LGBT community, I also examine the effects this consciousness has on political outputs. To accomplish this, I analyze the relationship between group consciousness and political participation, partisanship, and public opinion because these areas form the cornerstone of studying political behavior. Group consciousness is consistently found to affect rates of participation, the structure of party identification, and the nature of political attitudes. This relationship is also expected to influence the behavior of LGBT persons as political actors, thus clarifying which political actions, ideologies, and opinions are relevant for the LGBT community, and why.

Political participation, which includes the activities that citizens use to influence the structure of government, the selection of government authorities, and government policies (Conway 2000, 2001), is often operationalized with measures such as voting and protest behavior. Group consciousness influences individual political behavior, such as higher levels of group consciousness increasing rates of voter registration, voter turnout,

rally attendance, and petition signing (Gurin et al. 1980; Shingles 1981; Tate 1991; Jamal 2005; Sanchez 2006). Previous research suggests that analyzing political participation in the context of the LGBT community is relevant and will provide meaningful insights into the role of group consciousness in influencing minority political behavior. For example, both anecdotal evidence and historical data show that LGBTs are significantly more likely to vote than heterosexuals, referred to as the “sexuality gap” in voting (Hertzog 1996). The community also has a well-documented history of political actions such as protests, with its political formation rooted in the Stonewall riots, boycotts, such as the boycott of Florida orange juice against the “Save our Children” campaign, and supporting LGBT and LGBT-friendly political organizations, such as the Victory Fund, which trains and funds LGBT politicians.

Group consciousness also influences the partisan behavior of racial and ethnic groups, as both partisan identification and group consciousness require notions of “group belonging” and identification (Greene 2002). This relationship is often analyzed in the context of African American support for the Democratic Party (Dawson 1994; Tate 1991; Harris-Perry 2010), although it has also been applied to Latino (Leal et al. 2005) and Asian (Kuo et al. 2014) support for Democrats. While the relationship between group consciousness and partisan identification is relatively well tested for racial and ethnic minorities, it is considerably less analyzed in terms of sexual and gender minorities. Although the media and political actors consistently discuss the LGBT community in terms of their alliance with the Democratic Party (Hertzog 1996; Cohen 2012), this connection remains assumed, untested, and un-theorized. To address this limitation, this dissertation explicitly focuses on the political foundations of partisanship within the

LGBT community and the role that group consciousness plays in driving partisan identification.

LGBT public opinion is the least studied area of LGBT political behavior. Although there are media and descriptive accounts of LGBT voting and partisan behavior, there are currently no studies of LGBT public opinion. Based on racial and ethnic minorities, we should expect group consciousness to strongly influence LGBT support for group-specific issue areas. Examples from racial and ethnic minorities range from African American support for welfare (Dawson 1994; Tate 1993) to Latino support for immigration reform (Sanchez 2006), and imply that LGBTs with high levels of group consciousness should support gay rights across a variety of areas. Given the current dearth of information regarding LGBT public opinion, this area of the dissertation makes a large contribution both in terms of explaining minority group behavior and in terms of increasing our understanding of the current political environment. With opinion issues such as gay marriage, gay adoption, non-discrimination, and hate crime legislation dominating media poll reporting, politicians' political stances, the Supreme Court's rulings, and the broader literature on public opinion, it is imperative to analyze the relationship between LGBT identity and public opinion in greater detail.

Taken together, scholars of group consciousness have consistently demonstrated that group consciousness influences political participation, partisan identification, and public opinion. This relationship has remained largely untested for the LGBT community, which is problematic because it inhibits our ability to understand minority group politics outside the racial/ethnic framework. To address this limitation, I focus on

LGBT people as political actors and provide the first analysis of the foundations, and effects, of group consciousness among gays and lesbians.

A Model of Group Consciousness and Political Behavior

By focusing on the LGBT community, I help illuminate the causes and effects of group consciousness. I begin with an explanation of the specific mechanisms that link group identities to politics and I argue that politicized in-group identities will emerge when three conditions exist: (1) discrimination specifically targets the group, (2) the group has access to group-specific public spaces, and (3) the group faces a well-defined political enemy. Discrimination, engagement in group-specific public spaces (counterpublics), and the role of a well-defined enemy lay the foundation for group consciousness to emerge. Discrimination structures the emergence of group consciousness because it demonstrates that the group's oppression is institutional and that society explicitly limits the social, political, economic, and psychological resources available to the group (Young 1990; Cohen 1999; Collins 2004; King & Smith 2005). In many instances, discrimination formally bars subordinate groups from full participation in democratic institutions, such as restricting voting rights, participation in the armed forces, or legal citizenship (Yashar 1998, 1999, 2005). Chapter 2 details the LGBT community's extensive and ongoing battle against institutionalized discrimination, arguing that treating homosexuality as a mental illness and criminal act has laid the groundwork for discrimination across a variety of areas, such as employment discrimination, negative social treatment, and widespread physical violence. Therefore, discrimination matters because it demonstrates that there are severe consequences for identifying as gay and that these consequences permeate gay life. This gives members of

marginalized communities the “need to act” (Gamson 1968: p.48) and leads to

Hypothesis 1:

H₁: Group Consciousness and Discrimination: As a member of a marginalized group experiences an increasing level of discrimination on the basis of her group membership, her level of group-specific political consciousness will also increase.

Although discrimination is necessary for the emergence of politicized identities, it is not sufficient in explaining their development. Numerous groups are discriminated against that fail to engage politically to combat that discrimination. Counterpublics, or distinct public spheres that operate among oppressed communities (Fraser 1990, 1997; Cohen 1999; Lee 2002; Warner 2002; Harris-Perry 2010), are one of the foundational requirements that must also be present for politicized group consciousness to emerge. Counterpublics allow marginalized persons to meet freely and form associations within public spaces. This permits group members to share stories of their oppression, develop intragroup resources and institutions, define their political worldviews, and work together to act on those opinions. Chapter 2 details the LGBT community’s widespread utilization of gay-specific public spaces, such as gay bars, gay pride parades, LGBT social and political organizations, and gay friendships. The evidence demonstrates that since its inception, the gay community has developed internal institutions that foster a distinctly gay public sphere. This counterpublic space provides marginalized communities with the “ability to act” (Gamson 1968: p.48) and leads to Hypothesis 2:

H₂: Group Consciousness and Counterpublic Engagement: As a member of a marginalized group increasingly engages in group-specific counterpublic spaces, his level of group-specific political consciousness will also increase.

Well-defined political enemies and opposing social movements complement the process that discrimination and counterpublic spaces initiate. Opposing social movements are movements that challenge one another in the political arena, create political problems

for their opposition, and engage in political battles about claims, arenas, and framing devices (Fetner 2001, 2008). Facing an opposing political actor helps solidify group consciousness because it creates an easy target for blame, primes identity salience through political attacks, and pushes a group's political issues to center stage. The LGBT community has faced the Religious Right as its political opposition for the past five decades (Fetner 2001, 2008; Herman 1997; Bull & Gallagher 1996). During this time, the Religious Right has declared that homosexuality is a sin, that it is a chosen behavior, and that Americans should oppose LGBT civil rights, while simultaneously working to propose legislation that would restrict gay rights across a variety of areas. The presence of such a strong enemy in the political arena enhances both the discrimination gays face, by reminding them of their need to act, and the influence of counterpublic space, by providing new political opportunities that aide in their ability to act. Therefore, well-defined political enemies enhance these mechanisms and bolster the development of group consciousness. This leads to Hypotheses 3:

H₃: Group Consciousness and a Well-Defined Enemy: As a member of a marginalized group increasingly faces, and recognizes the influence of, an opposing social movement, her level of group-specific political consciousness will also increase.

Taken together, this theoretical argument explains group consciousness as the result of discrimination, engagement in the gay counterpublic, and the role of a well-defined political enemy. As persons become more conscious of their marginalized identity, they become more willing to engage politically on behalf of that identity. This influences many areas of political behavior, such as political participation, partisan identity, and public opinion. Across all three dimensions, group consciousness will encourage marginalized persons to structure their political thoughts and actions in a

manner that reflects their group-specific context. Regarding political participation, group consciousness encourages group members to engage in historically relevant forms of political activity, such as voting or protesting, on behalf of their group. Regarding partisan identification, group consciousness encourages marginalized groups to align with the political parties that best represent their group interests and have forged historical alliances with the group. Regarding public opinion, group consciousness encourages marginalized persons to support policies that favor their group and combat the discrimination that the group faces.

For the LGBT community, gays with high levels of group consciousness should be more willing to engage in activities such as boycotting, voting, protesting, and donating to gay-friendly politicians on behalf of gay rights. Political support from the Democratic Party and an allegiance with leftist political movements suggests that highly conscious LGBT persons should align with Democrats. Moreover, the gay rights issues of the current political environment, such as gay marriage, adoption rights, equal employment rights, and support for services targeted toward LGBT youth, indicate that LGBT persons with high levels of group consciousness should show strong support for all policies aimed at expanding the legal rights of LGBT persons. This leads to

Hypothesis 4, Hypothesis 5, and Hypothesis 6:

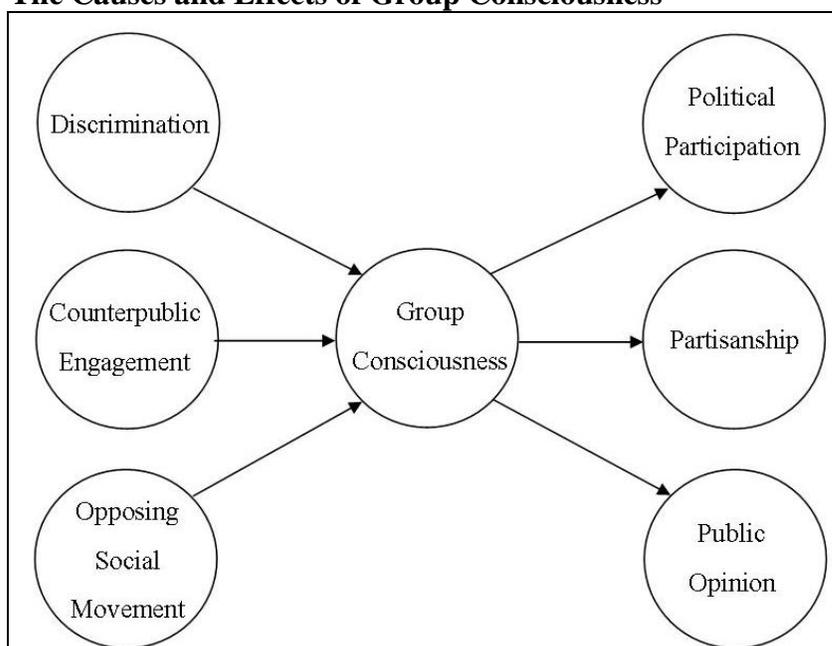
H₄: Group Consciousness and Political Participation: As a member of a marginalized group reports increasing levels of group consciousness, his likelihood of engaging in political participation on behalf of the marginalized group will also increase.

H₅: Group Consciousness and Partisanship: As a member of a marginalized group reports increasing levels of group consciousness, her likelihood of supporting political parties that favor the marginalized group will also increase.

H₆: Group Consciousness and Public Opinion: As a member of a marginalized group reports increasing levels of group consciousness, his likelihood of supporting public policies that favor the marginalized group will also increase.

Figure 1.1 summarizes these hypotheses and demonstrates the theoretical argument I propose in this dissertation.

Figure 1.1: The Causes and Effects of Group Consciousness



A Survey of LGBT Americans

To test these hypotheses, I rely on survey data from the Pew Research Center. In April 2013, the Pew Research Center conducted an unprecedented survey of LGBT persons, focusing on their attitudes, experiences, and values in the changing political environment (Pew 2013). This survey makes capturing and examining the attitudes of gay Americans possible. Before detailing the components of “A Survey of LGBT Americans,” a discussion of why surveys rarely capture LGBT persons is relevant for framing many of the methodological issues addressed in this dissertation, as well as its unique contribution. LGBT persons are difficult to sample for multiple reasons, ranging from sampling frame issues to problematic conceptualization and measurement strategies.

From a sampling standpoint, we currently lack population estimates of the LGBT population as neither the U.S. Census nor the American Community Survey ask questions about sexual orientation. Because of this, there is no direct sampling frame for the proportion of LGBT persons relative to the total population. The stigma surrounding LGBT identity exacerbates these limitations, as persons who have historically faced social, political, and economic oppression may have serious privacy concerns when discussing their identity with survey researchers. This makes sampling more difficult, as the LGBT community often represents a “hidden population” (Salganik & Heckathorn 2004), or a population that is difficult to distinguish from the general population and, thereby, difficult to capture in surveys.

Conceptualization and measurement strategies also present a unique problem for the LGBT community because sexual orientation and gender identity are difficult concepts to accurately measure. To demonstrate, three distinct components, including attraction, behavior, and identity, comprise sexual orientation. Attraction refers to an enduring pattern of attractions that may include emotional, romantic, or sexual components (APA 2008; Gates 2011). Attraction variables are relevant to lesbian, gay, and bisexual identity to the degree that they capture same and different sex attractions. Behavior refers to sexual behaviors and captures the extent to which individuals engage in sexual relationships with same or different sex partners (APA 2008; Gates 2011). Behavior variables are relevant for the LGBT community to the extent that they capture the sexual practices of the community. The third component is identity, or the sense of identity related to attractions, related behaviors, and membership in a community of persons who share those attributes (APA 2008; Gates 2011). Given these multiple

components, survey researchers may struggle with which aspects of a person's sexual orientation to measure and how this measurement is related to different explanatory variables of interest. This analysis focuses on LGBT identity, not only for its relationship to the theoretical variable of interest (group consciousness), but also because there are no theoretical or evidence-based reasons to think that sexual attraction or sexual behaviors are the product of, or contribute to, political outcomes.

Similar to lesbian, gay, and bisexual persons, surveying transgender persons also presents multiple methodological issues. Like sexual minorities, there are currently no population estimates of transgender persons, making the development of a sampling frame incredibly difficult. Anecdotal evidence suggests that the transgender population faces incredibly high levels of physical violence and societal disapproval, thereby exacerbating sampling issues. Difficulty in operationalizing the concept of "transgender" compounds these problems, as the concept includes two distinct components, gender identity and gender expression. Gender identity refers to a person's internal sense of being male, female, or something else. Gender expression is the outward communication of gender identity through factors such as behavior, clothing, hairstyle, voice, or body characteristics (Gates 2011). For transgender persons, their gender identity and/or gender expression does not conform to the characteristics typically associated with the sex they were assigned at birth, indicating discordance between their assigned sex and their preferred or lived sex.

To summarize, there are numerous reasons why so few scholars and surveys focus on analyzing the LGBT community. Given the lack of population estimates, that respondents may be fearful of self-identifying with their stigmatized identity, and that the

identities themselves are multifaceted and challenging to capture, it has been very difficult to conduct large-sample analyses of the LGBT population. This dissertation provides the first step in addressing this gap by focusing on the first publicly available survey of LGBT Americans and their political experiences.

“A Survey of LGBT Americans” (Pew 2013) is based on a Pew Research Center survey of the LGBT population conducted from April 11 to the 29th in 2013. It includes a nationally representative sample of 1,134 self-identified lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender adults 18 years of age or older. The survey identifies lesbians, gays, and bisexuals using the following question: “Do you consider yourself to be heterosexual or straight, gay, lesbian, or bisexual?” The survey identifies transgender respondents by asking the question, “Do you consider yourself to be transgender?” If respondents reported that they were transgender, a follow up question relating to the nature of their transition asked them: “Are you (1) transgender, male to female, (2) transgender, female to male, or (3) transgender, gender non-conforming?” Respondents who reported both a lesbian, gay, or bisexual identity and a transgender identity were asked to select one term (e.g., transgender or lesbian) they would prefer to be called throughout the remainder of the survey. Table 1.1 demonstrates the number of respondents across each category.

Table 1.1:
LGBT Subgroup Frequency

| Category | <i>N</i> | % |
|-------------|----------|------|
| Lesbian | 276 | 24.3 |
| Gay (male) | 394 | 34.7 |
| Bisexual | 421 | 37.2 |
| Transgender | 43 | 3.8 |
| Total | 1,134 | |

Given the limited sample size of the transgender population, with only 43 respondents, this subgroup is not included in the statistical tests contained in this dissertation. Although the theoretical mechanisms are expected to equally apply to the transgender population, this sample is inadequate for hypothesis testing due to its limited power. Given the general statistical rule that categories should have no fewer than 50 observations for advanced statistical testing (Green 1991; Wilson Van Voorhis & Morgan 2007), this sample is inappropriately small for modeling across multiple independent and dependent variables. The Pew data lacks the power to detect significant differences pertaining to the transgender population because of its inadequate sample size and is likely to fail to detect significant differences that affect this specific population. Following the exclusion of transgender respondents, the analytical sample contains 1,091 respondents.

The GfK Group administered the survey using KnowledgePanel, a nationally representative online research panel, as considerable research on sensitive issues, such as sexual orientation and gender identity, demonstrates that online survey administration is the most likely mode for eliciting honest answers from respondents (Pew 2013; Kreuter et al. 2008). KnowledgePanel recruits participants using probability-sampling methods and includes persons both with and without internet access, those with landlines and cellphones, those with only cell phones, and persons without a phone. From a sample of 3,645 self-identified LGBT panelists, one person per household was recruited into the study, constituting a sample of 1,924 panelists. From this eligible sample, 59% completed the survey. They offered respondents a \$10 incentive to complete the interview, which increased to \$20 toward the end of the field period to reduce the nonresponse rate.

The questionnaire contains numerous items that specifically relate to group consciousness formation and its effects on participation, partisanship, and public opinion. Subsequent chapters discuss these variables in greater detail, examining factors such as their measurement, distribution throughout the LGBT community, and appropriateness for testing the formation and effects of LGBT group consciousness. In addition to these theoretically fundamental variables, the survey also includes numerous demographic variables that are particularly relevant to understanding the unique demographics of the LGBT community. These variables, which include measures of race and ethnicity, age, education, income, and sexual orientation, are important because they fundamentally structure the gay experience and may motivate different outcomes across different demographic groups.

Race and ethnicity matter for examining the LGBT community because they structure sexual identity and community integration. Evidence suggests that racial and ethnic minorities are less likely to identify as LGBT (Egan et al. 2008; Egan 2012) and less integrated into the gay community (Rosario et al. 2004). This occurs because racial and ethnic minorities are doubly-bound, as they face homophobia within their racial/ethnic minority community (Rosario et al. 2004; Diaz 1998; Greene 1998; Martinez & Sullivan 1998; Parks et al. 2004) and racism within the larger sexual minority community (Rosario et al. 2004; Icard 1986; Loiacano 1989; Savin-Williams 1998). These experiences can be alienating for LGBT racial and ethnic minorities, who report feeling ostracized from the broader gay community, frustrated that issues of race and racism within the community remain unexamined, and discouraged that the community uses whiteness as a political strategy for winning credibility and acceptance (Cho 1998;

Bérubé 2001; Han 2007). Therefore, racial and ethnic minorities may have fundamentally different experiences as LGBT, making them less likely to report high levels of LGBT group consciousness. Because of this potential, controlling for racial and ethnic minority status is an important component of modeling the formation and effects of LGBT identity.

“A Survey of LGBT Americans” includes a question that asks respondents to report their racial and ethnic identity in accordance with the categories included in Table 1.2. The results demonstrate that, although the majority of respondents self-categorized themselves as “White, Non-Hispanic,” there was a large degree of variation in the population, with nearly one-quarter of respondents reporting a minority racial identity.

Table 1.2:
Racial and Ethnic Identity among LGB Respondents

| Racial/Ethnic Category | <i>N</i> | % |
|---------------------------|----------|------|
| White, Non-Hispanic | 824 | 75.5 |
| Black, Non-Hispanic | 75 | 6.9 |
| Other, Non-Hispanic | 32 | 2.9 |
| Multiracial, Non-Hispanic | 46 | 4.2 |
| Hispanic | 114 | 10.5 |
| Total | 1,091 | |

Similar to racial and ethnic differences, younger Americans are considerably more likely to self-identify as LGBT than older Americans are (Gates 2012). This trend is often attributed to the unique cultural and political circumstances that shaped the identity development of elderly LGBT persons, including pervasive state-sponsored discrimination,ⁱⁱ the psychological stress of the emergence of the HIV/AIDS epidemic during the 1980s, and facing decades of animosity stemming from overwhelmingly negative public opinion (Friend 1991; Lelutiu-Weinberger et al. 2013; Fredriksen-Goldsen 2015). These experiences may limit self-identification and the development of

group consciousness within the elderly LGBT population, making them less likely to report a politically salient gay identity or adherence to the broader gay political agenda. Table 1.3 contains data on respondents' age categories. It demonstrates that respondents span multiple age categories, with more than one-third of respondents being 55 years of age or older.

Table 1.3:
Age of LGB Respondents

| Age Category | <i>N</i> | % |
|--------------|----------|------|
| 18-24 | 122 | 11.2 |
| 25-34 | 230 | 21.1 |
| 35-44 | 139 | 12.7 |
| 45-54 | 231 | 21.2 |
| 55-64 | 228 | 20.9 |
| 65-74 | 111 | 10.2 |
| 75+ | 30 | 2.8 |
| Total | 1,091 | |

Education and income are also uniquely relevant to the LGBT community, because they represent two areas where LGBT persons differ significantly from the general population. Regarding education, survey results on self-identified LGBT persons demonstrate that they are far more educated than the general population, with a considerably higher number of LGBT persons completing bachelor's and post-bachelor's degrees relative to their heterosexual counterparts (Black et al. 2000; Egan et al. 2008). Regarding income, however, LGBT persons consistently report lower earnings than heterosexuals, particularly given their higher levels of education (Black et al. 2000; Egan et al. 2008; Albelda et al. 2009; Redman 2010). Given that both higher education and higher levels of income are consistently related to higher levels of participation and group consciousness (Verba et al. 1995; Duncan, 1999; Masuoka 2006; Sanchez 2006), the LGBT community makes an interesting case for examining these issues, as their varying

income and education may encourage mixed results, with one dimension increasing group consciousness and the other dimension dampening it.

Table 1.4 displays the education levels of survey respondents and Table 1.5 displays their income categories. Regarding education, the data demonstrate that respondents in this sample are particularly well educated, with more than 50% completing a bachelor's degree or higher. Relative to the general population, where approximately 30% have a bachelor's degree (Census 2012), the data capture the significantly higher level of education present in the LGBT community. Conversely, these respondents' incomes were disproportionately low when compared to national averages, particularly relative to their high levels of education. While half of the U.S. population reports a household income above \$50,000 (Egan et al. 2008), this is true of only 45.5% of respondents in this sample. Although this 5% difference may not appear to be substantial, the difference in income between the LGBT population and the broader population becomes more apparent when considering gays' disproportionately high levels of education.

Table 1.4:
Education of LGB Respondents

| Education Category | <i>N</i> | % |
|-----------------------------|----------|------|
| Less than High School | 30 | 2.8 |
| High School | 119 | 10.9 |
| Some College | 379 | 34.7 |
| Bachelor's Degree or Higher | 563 | 51.6 |
| Total | 1,091 | |

Table 1.5:
Income of LGB Respondents

| Income Category | <i>N</i> | % |
|------------------------------|----------|------|
| Less than \$20,000 | 199 | 18.2 |
| \$20,000 to under \$30,000 | 139 | 12.7 |
| \$30,000 to under \$40,000 | 123 | 11.3 |
| \$40,000 to under \$50,000 | 115 | 10.5 |
| \$50,000 to under \$75,000 | 185 | 16.7 |
| \$75,000 to under \$100,000 | 136 | 12.5 |
| \$100,000 to under \$150,000 | 111 | 10.2 |
| \$150,000 or more | 67 | 6.1 |
| Total | 1,075 | |

The final demographic dimension of importance for the LGBT community is the role that sexual orientation plays within gay life, which has often divided lesbians, bisexuals, and gay men into separate communities. Regarding bisexuals, similar to the experience of racial and ethnic minorities, bisexuals have a long history of facing both external and internal discrimination. Research thoroughly documents the “biphobia,” or discrimination towards bisexuals, that bisexuals face, which has historically alienated bisexuals from the broader gay rights movement (Queen 1999; Bradford 2004; McLean 2008; Welzer-Lang 2008). Externally, heterosexual society frames bisexuals as hedonistic, disease carriers, indecisive, and promiscuous (Weinberg et al., 1995; Ochs, 1996; Weiss, 2004). Internally, gays and lesbians often treat bisexuals as confused about their sexual identity (Weinberg et al. 1995) and willing to “pass” as heterosexual to assume the benefits of dominant culture (Ka'ahumanu & Yaeger 2000). This has created decades of tension between bisexuals and gays/lesbians, with bisexuals being formally excluded from events such as gay pride marches (Hemmings 2002). Given this tension within the LGBT community, in which gays and lesbians form the core of the community and bisexuals fall outside it, bisexuals may form a distinct subgroup within the LGBT

community. In addition to these internal divisions, bisexuals are significantly more likely to be female than male, with similar surveys of the LGBT population finding that more than 60% of bisexuals are female (Egan et al. 2008). Therefore, not only do they differ from the larger gay community in terms of identity and history, but they also display unique demographic patterns. Table 1.6 displays the gender breakdown of bisexuals in “A Survey of LGBT Americans.” Similar to previous studies, the number of female bisexuals in this sample greatly outnumbers the number of male bisexuals, with more than two-thirds of all bisexuals identifying as female.

Table 1.6:
Bisexuality and Gender

| Category | <i>N</i> | % |
|-----------------|--------------------|------|
| Bisexual Female | 304 | 72.4 |
| Bisexual Male | 116 | 27.6 |
| Total | 420 ⁱⁱⁱ | |

Although bisexuality has played a powerful role in shaping LGBT intragroup relations, gender may play an even more central role, because it has structured boundaries within the LGBT community since its formation. Beginning with the first political organizations, men and women joined separate political groups, with the Mattachine Society representing men and the Daughters of Bilitis representing women (D’Emilio 1983; Esterberg 1994). The social lives of lesbians and gay men were similarly sex-segregated, with cities frequently having separate public spaces, such as gay bars, for gays and lesbians. This is partially because of differences in discrimination against these subgroups, with men being much more likely to be arrested for their homosexuality than women, and also because male homosexual organizations tended to lack an awareness of the unique issues facing females in society (Faderman 1991; Esterberg 1994). Beginning in the late 1960s, the lesbian movement began to align more closely with the feminist

movement, rather than the broader gay movement, signaling a sharp division between gays and lesbians (D'Emilio 1983). Although this trend has shifted in recent decades with lesbians and gays working closely together for common political causes (Van Dyke and Cress 2006), it also suggests that lesbians and gay men may have differing forms of group consciousness and conceptions of what it means to be gay in America.

This discussion of the demographic composition of the sample also helps address the issue of selection bias within this analysis. Because this is a self-selected sample, in that respondents are only included if they identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender, inclusion is not randomly selected, which may pose methodological limitations (Winship & Mare 1992). This is particularly relevant for this sample because self-reported LGBT respondents are more likely to be White, female, report lower earnings than their heterosexual peers, and report higher levels of education than their heterosexual peers (Egan et al. 2008; Egan 2012). Further, because respondents have already labeled themselves as LGBT, they may be more likely to over-report heightened levels of group consciousness relative to their non-identified peers, given that associating with the LGBT group label is both a prerequisite for inclusion in the sample and an indicator of group consciousness. Therefore, selection bias may contribute to an overestimation of LGBT group consciousness and the strength of the relationship between group consciousness and political behavior.

However, previous research, the nature of the scientific inquiry motivating the analysis, and methodological tools help limit the threat that selection bias poses to the validity of this study. Regarding previous research, studies utilizing probability-based sampling methods, such as this survey, demonstrate that participants captured using these

methods are nearly indistinguishable from the broader community of nonparticipants (Koch & Emrey 2001), are demographically comparable to a nationwide cohort (Koch & Emrey 2001), and are much more likely to have lower levels of selection bias (Meyer 1999). For example, research demonstrates that using randomized online surveys to analyze LGBT respondents minimizes many of the biases associated with non-probability sampling methods, with those recruited through randomized methods reporting less affiliation with the gay community and higher levels of internalized homophobia (Meyer 1999). Therefore, probability-based sampling methods help minimize selection bias by including more respondents with lower levels of self-identification with the LGBT group label and introducing a greater amount of variation in the strength of group identification into the sample.

Although using population-based sampling methods reduces selection bias, it cannot fully remove the bias related to self-selected samples, and the nature of the scientific inquiry itself plays a fundamental role in mitigating the remaining bias. Namely, the selection bias resulting from self-selected samples does not distort the results when the focus of the analysis is to clarify theoretical mechanisms and examine relationships between key variables of interest (Meyer 1995). This is because the generalization of results is not dependent on the statistical representativeness of the study population; rather, the generalizability of the findings depends only on the representativeness of the underlying mechanisms that are identified (Alonso et al. 2007; Rothman 2002; Rothman & Greenland 1998). Because the purpose of this dissertation is to explore the relationship between politics, group consciousness, and political behavior, and generalize those findings, rather than compare rates or generalize point estimates, the

potential for selection bias is not expected to falsify the analytical findings. Therefore, even if the sample suffers from selection bias, it is still possible for this analysis to illuminate the relationship between group consciousness and politics using Pew's "A Survey of LGBT Americans." It is important to note, however, that the statistical results will only refer to members of the LGBT community that are willing to self-identify as LGBT to at least one other person (the survey administrator), even if the theoretical argument is expected to extend beyond that population.

The final strategy for addressing the potential for selection bias is to control for the factors that are associated with it (Alonso et al. 2007; Hernan et al. 2004). In this case, identification as LGBT is associated with distinct racial, gender, income-related, and education-related factors (Egan et al. 2008; Egan 2012). Because of the potential for these factors to distort the results obtained from using the sample, their inclusion in statistical models is an important aspect of addressing the sample's potential bias. Consequently, I adjust for the factors that are most likely to introduce bias into the sample by controlling for these relevant variables in each of the statistical models I examine.

To summarize, without additional data elements or longitudinal data, it is impossible to determine whether the factors related to selection into the sample are the precursors to gay identity, the consequences of gay identity, or simply correlated with gay identity (Koch & Emrey 2001). Because of this, it is possible that this sample represents a group with higher levels of group consciousness, and its associated political factors, than the broader population of all persons who experience same-sex attraction, engage in same-sex sexual behavior, or internally identify as LGBT. However, by

utilizing probability-based online sampling, focusing on an examination of the relationships between the key variables of interest, and controlling for the potentially distorting factors, I directly address the issue of selection bias and argue that the results of this dissertation are both internally and externally valid.

Constructing LGBTs as Political Actors

Taken together, the aim of this study is to examine how political identity and group consciousness forms and to predict which policies, parties, and political behaviors emerge as a byproduct of that process. It focuses on the LGBT community as an interesting and paradoxical case, in which the community has become central to the discussion of the current political environment, yet remains largely unexamined. Further, the LGBT case is one in which, given evidence from other minorities, internal divisions are expected to drive the community apart; yet, anecdotal evidence suggests that there are relatively high levels of internal cohesion even with large intragroup differences. With a focus on LGBT persons, I capitalize on a new and innovative survey of LGBT Americans regarding their social and political experiences. By testing the impacts of group consciousness and competing theories on the construction of LGBT political identity and its outputs, I explore the mechanisms that drive the formation of politicized identity and the influence this has on political outcomes.

Based on this goal, this dissertation covers multiple chapters, including theoretical chapters that examine the inputs and outputs of group consciousness, and empirical chapters that test how these theories hold up against data on LGBT Americans. Chapter 2, “From LGBT People to LGBT Actors: Factors that Motivate LGBT Political Identity,” begins this process by outlining the theoretical relationships that drive the formation of

politicized identity within the LGBT community, with a specific focus on discrimination, counterpublic space, and the role of a well-defined political enemy. It includes historical evidence that forms the foundation for three testable hypotheses regarding LGBT identity formation. It also includes a description of the data used to test these hypotheses, as well as performing a confirmatory factor analysis that assesses the appropriate use of the data. Chapter 3, “Becoming Gay: Testing from People to Actors,” continues this process by testing the relationship between experiences of discrimination, counterpublic engagement, and the role of the Religious Right in motivating minority group consciousness formation.

The following three chapters, Chapters 4 through 6, demonstrate how group consciousness influences political outcomes. While Chapters 2 and 3 focus on the theoretical inputs of group consciousness, Chapters 4, 5, and 6 focus on the theoretical outputs. Based on historical evidence and data from other minority groups, these chapters outline the role that group consciousness plays in structuring political participation, partisanship, and public opinion. Chapter 4, “Out of the Closet and Into the Streets: LGBT Group Consciousness and Political Participation,” begins this process by examining the influence that LGBT group consciousness has on political participation, such as voter turnout, participation in protests and boycotts, and political donations. Chapter 5, “Gay Republicans are an Oxymoron: LGBT Group Consciousness and Partisanship,” tests the relationship between group consciousness and party identification within the gay community. Chapter 6, “I Can’t Even Think Straight: LGBT Group Consciousness and Public Opinion,” completes this process by examining the relationship between group consciousness and public opinion, particularly regarding

LGBT support for the gay rights platform, including issues such as marriage equality, same-sex adoption, and workplace non-discrimination protection. Taken together, these chapters clarify the degree to which the theoretical inputs outlined in Chapters 2 and 3 inform the real-world formation of LGBT political identity as represented by a large-scale dataset of LGBT Americans.

Chapter 7, “Made with Pride: The Creation of LGBT Group Consciousness and Why it Matters,” concludes the dissertation by providing an overview of the major findings and results, as well as their theoretical and methodological contributions. It includes a discussion of the “sexuality gap” (Hertzog 1996) in American politics and predications about what the future of sexuality politics looks like. Based on the theoretical and statistical findings presented, this chapter discusses the implications for scholars of political identity and minority politics. It also provides the foundation for an argument calling for the incorporation of LGBT group membership and membership salience into future analyzes of general levels of political participation, partisanship, and public opinion.

In total, this dissertation addresses an overlooked and relevant case for the study of minority politics. Using a group that has faced extreme levels of societal intolerance and government restriction, accompanied by intense internal divisions and fractionalization, it demonstrates how the political process contributed to the formation of a politically salient and behaviorally relevant politicized identity. This project provides the first analysis of identity meaning and salience among one of the most important minority groups in contemporary American politics, while also informing our broader understanding of minority movements and attitudes.

CHAPTER TWO

FROM LGBT PEOPLE TO LGBT ACTORS:

FACTORS THAT MOTIVATE LGBT POLITICAL IDENTITY

What motivates the development of LGBT group consciousness and how do these theoretical explanations compare to the experiences of gay, lesbian, and bisexual people? The previous chapter briefly explored the relationship between group consciousness and gay political identity. This chapter examines the roles that discrimination, participation in the broader gay community (the gay counterpublic), and the influence of opposing social movements play in motivating this identity. It begins with an analysis of historical information that establishes the relevance of these factors to the gay community. Using descriptive data from “A Survey of LGBT Americans,” this chapter demonstrates that sexual and gender minorities experience a range of discriminatory events, actively participate in the broader gay community, and are able to clearly identify the Religious Right (RR) as their enemy. This historical and statistical evidence informs the creation of three hypotheses, which argue that group consciousness is the product of discrimination, counterpublic engagement, and the influence of the Religious Right. Based on these findings, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using structural equation modeling (SEM) tests whether each theoretical component is methodologically distinct. The results propose internally consistent, face-valid measures of discrimination, counterpublic engagement, and recognition of the Religious Right that are multidimensional and provide the foundation for testing the relationship between these factors, group consciousness, and political behavior in subsequent chapters.

Discrimination and LGBT Group Consciousness

Beginning with a discussion of the factors that influence group consciousness, I first examine the role of discrimination in shaping gay political identity. Discrimination is among the best-theorized and well-tested explanations for group consciousness formation, particularly among racial and ethnic minorities (Cohen 1999; Yashar 1998, 1999, 2005; Masouka 2006; Sanchez & Masouka 2010). Discrimination matters for the formation of group consciousness because it demonstrates that oppression, or the deliberate accumulation of political, economic, social, and psychological goods by dominant groups at the expense of subordinate groups (Young 1990), is institutional and structures the lives of minority group members in a negative way. This manifests as a systematic lack of access to the resources available to other groups (Cohen 1999; Collins 2004; King & Smith 2005), and is often accompanied by a prohibition against full participation in democratic institutions (Cohen 1999; Yashar 1998, 1999, 2005). Historical examples are abundant in the American case, ranging from the economic oppression of slavery, to the disenfranchisement of groups such as African Americans, women, and the non-propertied. Group consciousness develops within these contexts because, as everyday life increasingly marginalizes minorities, communities must turn inward to pursue their collective interests. Evidence from racial and ethnic minorities demonstrates strong support for this relationship, with experiences of discrimination being associated with higher levels of political cohesion among groups such as African Americans, Asians, and Latinos (Dawson, 1994; Tate, 1994; Masouka 2006).

This framework of discrimination explains LGBT group consciousness as a result of a political process in which the marginalization facing LGBT persons routinely denies

them access to full participation in American society. The historical record supports this argument as LGBT persons have faced intense and nearly monolithic discrimination for much of modern American history. These discriminatory processes strip LGBT persons of institutional resources, while simultaneously working to marginalize, exclude, and oppress the community. They are fundamentally rooted in the two mutually reinforcing processes of: (1) framing homosexuality as a mental illness, and (2) treating homosexual behavior as a crime.

From the standpoint of treating homosexuality as a mental illness, the mental health profession officially labeled homosexuality as a mental disorder until December 1973 (D'Emilio 1983; Miller 2006). The “gay is sick” model of explaining homosexuality lent itself to the oppression of LGBT persons, which ranged from sexual psychopath laws, incarceration, and hospitalization to castration, hysterectomy, lobotomy, electroshock, and aversion therapy (D'Emilio 1983). Even after declassifying homosexuality as a mental disorder, many psychiatrists and members of the public continue to view homosexuals as pathological (Miller 2006), with practices aimed at changing sexual orientation from homosexual to heterosexual remaining prevalent (Haldeman 2002; Alexander 1999). The medical model of treating homosexuality as a mental disorder provides legitimacy to the view that homosexuals are “sick,” that they can be “cured” (i.e., they can choose to change their sexual orientation), and that they deserve the discrimination they face based on these factors.

This discrimination manifested in, and was reinforced by, state-based sodomy laws that made homosexual sex acts illegal until 2003. Although states primarily applied these laws to men who have sex with men (MSM), they encouraged discrimination

against all LGBT persons by framing gays as disgusting and distrustful (Eskridge 2008). This translated into both thousands of arrests and the creation of a “homosexual = criminal” worldview, with discrimination against gays and lesbians becoming rational and rooted in the law (Leslie 2000). This attitude has persisted well past the 2003 *Lawrence v. Texas* ruling that overturned sodomy laws, with a recent survey of heterosexuals revealing that over half report disapproval of affection between two persons of the same sex, signaling ongoing disgust with same-sex sexual behavior (Doan et al. 2014).

This history of framing LGBT status as mentally perverse and criminally dangerous serves as the foundation for a wide range of formal, state-sponsored discrimination against gays. Among the most prevalent and ongoing manifestations of this discrimination are mandatory exclusions from employment, which serve to create an environment in which 29 states allow employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity. Employment discrimination manifests in many forms, such as mandatory dismissal, and across many fields, such as public school teachers and counselors (Jackson 2007; DeMitchell et al. 2009), federal employees (D’Emilio 1983; Johnson 2009), and members of the U.S. armed forces (Humphrey 1990; Shilts 1993; Bérubé 2010). Regarding public school teachers, numerous court cases, such as the California Court of Appeals decision in *Sarac v. State Board of Education* (1967), the *Board of Education v. Calderon* (1973), and *Gaylord v. Tacoma School Dist. No. 10* (1975), uphold the right of states to revoke teaching credentials from LGBT persons on the basis of “immoral and unprofessional conduct” (*Sarac* 1967). This treatment continues to persist in states that allow discrimination, with schools firing over ten

teachers for their LGBT status in 2013 alone (Ragusea 2014; Machado 2014; Brydum 2013).

The treatment of gay teachers is similar to the decades long ban on LGBT federal employment that is among the most damning and severe policies aimed at homosexuals in American history. During the “Lavender Scare” of the 1950s, more Americans lost their jobs for being homosexual than for being communists and the FBI began a surveillance program targeting LGBT persons that would last for nearly thirty years (D’Emilio 1983; Shilts 1993; Johnson 2009). This federal employment ban translated into a military ban on LGB service members that lasted until 2010, with the military continuing to ban transgender persons in 2015. Between 1993 and 2010 alone, the ban on LGBT service members led to over 14,000 discharges (Kolenc 2013) and framed homosexuals as “an unacceptable risk to the high standards of morale, good order, discipline, and unit cohesion that are the essence of military capability” (Shilts 1993; Bérubé 2010). This creates a situation of intense economic insecurity for LGBT persons, as employers can deny job offers or dismiss employees based on sexual orientation or gender identity alone. A Human Rights Campaign report from 2013 indicates that over 53% of LGBT persons continue to feel that they must hide their sexual orientation at work, 35% feel compelled to lie about their personal lives while at work, and 62% report hearing jokes about lesbian or gay people on the job (Fidas & Cooper 2013). By marginalizing LGBT persons in the workforce and creating high levels of economic anxiety, this process encourages LGBT persons to develop salient political identities.

Discrimination against gays in the business environment extends beyond denying employment security, and also includes the right to refuse service to LGBT customers.

For most of the 21st century, LGBT persons could not congregate in public spaces or businesses based on sodomy laws. Therefore, local laws required most businesses to refuse to serve LGBT customers, gay bars were illegal, and non-gay establishments were required to deny alcohol to LGBT customers, ensure that LGBT persons were not dancing or touching one another, and call the police if they noticed a customer in drag (Bérubé 2003). This trend has persisted past the overturning of sodomy laws, with many businesses continuing to refuse service to LGBT customers. Notable cases span the full range of the business environment, including hotels, elementary schools, doctor's offices, and wedding planners (Gilgoff 2010; Cooper 2014; Appel 2006; Melling 2015). The desire for the right to refuse service to LGBT customers is so intense that 24 states proposed "turn-away-the-gays" legislation in 2015, with these laws passing in places such as Mississippi, Arkansas, and Indiana (Baume 2015; HRC 2015e). In this context, many LGBT persons face discrimination in all aspects of the business environment, as both employees and consumers. This discrimination lends itself to LGBT persons having a well-defined sense of being an oppressed minority and a desire to counteract this discrimination.

Institutional policies that target LGBT persons for poor treatment support ongoing social and physical attacks against gays and lesbians. Physical violence remains among the most pervasive and ongoing forms of discrimination against LGBT persons, and is rooted in the ideology that gays are mentally ill and/or criminals. The case of Matthew Shepard exemplifies this, as his attackers tied him to a split-rail fence, viciously beat him, and left him to die in the near-freezing temperatures of Laramie, Wyoming in 1998 because he was gay. When the police found his body, the only portions of his face not

covered in blood were those cleaned by his tears. He died six days later, sparking nationwide vigils and protests, and bringing national attention to the epidemic of physical violence perpetrated against the LGBT community.

This epidemic of violence is widespread and ongoing, with 111,644 crimes targeted toward LGBT persons in 2012 alone (Wilson 2014). Of the 293,800 nonfatal violent crimes and property hate crimes reported to the Bureau of Justice in 2012, 12% were motivated by sexual orientation and 26% were motivated by gender/gender identity. This constitutes 38% of hate crimes, demonstrating the significant physical burden of the LGBT community, which only comprises 3.4% of the total population (Gates 2011). Given that an estimated 60% of hate crimes are not reported (Wilson 2014), this disproportionately high figure may actually be a significant undercount. This is particularly problematic for the transgender community, as a review of self-report surveys, hotline call-ins, social services records, and police reports indicates that violence against transgender people begins early in life, that transgender people are at risk for multiple types and incidences of violence, that they are at a particularly high risk for sexual violence, and that these risks persist throughout the course of their lives (Stotzer 2009). The claim that violent perpetrators were in a “trans panic” or “gay panic” in which they attacked their victims in a “heat of passion” is so pervasive in justifying attacks against LGBT persons that California outlawed the use of these terms in 2014 (Molloy 2014).

While physical violence places a deeply disproportionate burden on the LGBT community, the influence of societal disapproval of homosexuality and gender nonconformity may be the strongest discriminatory force in America. Based on the logic

of the “gay is sick” worldview and the official policy that “homosexuals=criminals,” societal attitudes towards homosexuals have remained distinctly negative, even with changes in official policy. These attitudes form the cornerstone of an anti-gay worldview that justifies and upholds much of the discrimination facing the community. Historical data on LGBT issues demonstrate the ongoing intensity of disdain for LGBT persons. When questions about LGBT persons were first asked in the General Social Survey (GSS) in 1973, only 11% of respondents reported that homosexual sex acts were “not wrong at all,” with over 70% of respondents reporting that they were “always wrong” (Flores 2014; Hansen 2014). Similarly, when the American National Election Survey (ANES) asked respondents about their feelings toward gays and lesbians for the first time in 1984, the average score was 29 on a scale of 0 to 100, which was significantly below the average scores for any other group or institution in America (Flores 2014; Hansen 2014). This explicit dislike of the gay community is the foundation for all other forms of negative treatment, such as firing gay employees, arresting gays for sexual acts, banning gay marriages, and physically abusing LGBT persons. Discrimination occurs in this context because intense personal aversion to homosexuality combines with the power of institutional policies aimed at policing homosexuality to control members of the gay community and inhibit them from exercising the full rights of citizenship.

Although societal attitudes toward LGBT persons have improved dramatically in the past thirty years, there remains a sizeable portion of the population that continues to disapprove of sexual and gender minorities. The 2010 GSS, for example, shows that 42% of people reported that homosexual sex acts were “not wrong at all.” Although this is a substantial improvement, it demonstrates that almost 60% of Americans continue to

disapprove of LGBT sexual behaviors. Similarly, the ANES feeling thermometer toward homosexuals in 2012 was neutral, with an average score of 50. While this represents a 22-point improvement since 1984, it also indicates that attitudes towards LGBT persons are not actually positive, particularly given that a sizeable portion of the population continues to report a zero on the thermometer scale (Flores 2014). Overall, the American public has demonstrated that negative attitudes towards LGBT persons drive much of the discrimination that gays encounter in their lives, encouraging them to turn inward toward the community to improve their situation. Facing negative treatment by those espousing hatred toward LGBT persons, such as slurs, attacks, threats, and the denial of economic opportunity, discrimination encourages the development of group consciousness in the LGBT community.

How has this discrimination manifested in the lives of LGBT people?^{iv} 73% of the LGBT persons surveyed in Pew's 2013 "A Survey of LGBT Americans" reported an instance of discrimination during their lifetime and 24% reported an instance of discrimination within the past year. This figure derives from answers to the questions contained in Table 2.1. These questions focus on the interpersonal experiences of LGBT discrimination, rather than institutional aspects, such as specific laws and policies, as there is minimal institutional variance and a great deal of variance regarding interpersonal discrimination. For example, until 2013, the federal government refused to recognize *all* gay marriages, entailing that the government discriminated equally against all gay couples. By focusing on the negative interpersonal treatment these policies encourage, this analysis better captures the variety of outcomes LGBT people experience.

It is important to note, however, that this limits the ability to analyze institutional discrimination. The historical record demonstrates that LGBT persons have faced both interpersonal discrimination, such as discrimination stemming from relations between people, and institutional discrimination, such as discrimination resulting from laws and policies. Theoretically, both forms of discrimination should motivate LGBT action. However, due to limitations in the data, variation in institutional discrimination cannot be tested, as data relating to the influence of policy over time or across geographic units are unavailable. Therefore, an important extension of this research would be to incorporate data regarding variation in institutional discrimination into this analysis to better discuss the distinct influences of institutional and interpersonal discrimination.

Table 2.1:

Discrimination in "A Survey of LGBT Americans"

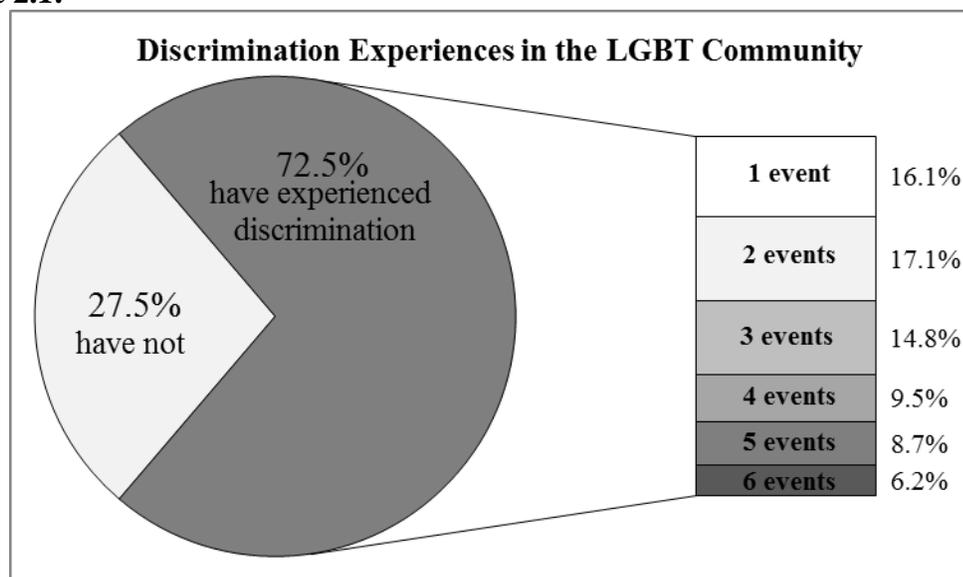
For each of the following, please indicate whether or not it has happened to you because you are, or were perceived to be, [lesbian, gay, or bisexual]:

| Category | % Happened in the past 12 months (<i>N</i>) | % Happened, but not in the past 12 months (<i>N</i>) | % Never happened (<i>N</i>) | Total |
|---|---|--|-------------------------------|-------|
| Been threatened or physically attacked | 3.5 (38) | 27.8 (302) | 68.7 (745) | 1,085 |
| Been subject to slurs or jokes | 15.7 (170) | 46.4 (502) | 38.0 (411) | 1,083 |
| Received poor service in restaurants, hotels, or other places of business | 5.4 (58) | 21.4 (232) | 73.3 (794) | 1,084 |
| Been treated unfairly by an employer in hiring, pay, or promotion | 3.8 (41) | 18.2 (196) | 78.1 (843) | 1,080 |
| Been made to feel unwelcome at a place of worship or religious organization | 6.7 (72) | 23.3 (252) | 70.0 (757) | 1,081 |
| Been rejected by a friend or family member | 5.6 (60) | 36.9 (399) | 57.6 (623) | 1,082 |

For the LGBT community, the most common form of discrimination is being the subject of anti-gay slurs or jokes, with 62.1% of gays experiencing this form of

discrimination within their lifetime and 15.7% experiencing it in the previous year alone. This is followed by familial rejection, physical violence or threats, being made to feel unwelcome at a place of worship or religious organization, receiving poor service in places of business, and discrimination in the workplace. These data demonstrate the great deal of variance that accompanies discrimination events throughout the lives of LGBT people. Although most LGBT people experience discrimination in at least one form, the degree and currency of that discrimination varies greatly throughout the community.

Figure 2.1 further reiterates this, as it demonstrates that many LGBT persons experience discrimination across a variety of domains. This figure displays the distribution of discrimination events over the course of an LGBT person's lifetime. It represents the additive number of areas in which an LGBT person has experienced discrimination, ranging from no discrimination events (no areas) to six discrimination events (all areas). Similar to Table 2.1, this figure demonstrates that LGBT persons experience varying levels of discrimination in their lifetimes, and across different areas. These differences in levels of discrimination experiences are important and will allow the data to demonstrate how varying experiences of discrimination influence the development of LGBT-related group consciousness.

Figure 2.1:

Based on Figure 2.1, most lesbian, gay, and bisexual persons face oppression across many areas, as the average number of discriminatory experiences is two events. Further, nearly 25% experienced discrimination across the majority of areas. These data demonstrate that discrimination against LGBT persons remains pervasive, central to the gay experience, and spread across many aspects of a person's life. Based on both historical evidence and survey data regarding legally and societally enshrined discrimination against gays, oppression has played a strong role in motivating the political consciousness and collective behavior of LGBT persons. It is this discrimination that has structured the gay experience, pushing all LGBT persons into the same marginalized category. By sharing experiences of discrimination, gay people recognize their minority status, understand fellow community members as having similar experiences, and decide to work together to address this oppression. Without discrimination, there is no need for gay group consciousness, because it is oppression that serves as the primary marker of gay difference. This relationship between group consciousness and discrimination has been evident since the formation of the first LGBT

political organization in 1950, the Mattachine Society, where members often met to discuss their experiences of discrimination. In the words of its founder, Henry Hay (Cusac 1998):

I remember hardened old queens who would show up [to meetings], and they would be cynical, and they would be disparaging, and all of a sudden, this one particular hardened old guy, he started to cry. He said, "Look what I've had to put up with all my life, and nobody ever asked about these things before." And when he started to cry, he just broke open. Because all the things he'd been suffering were things that all the rest were suffering, too.

In sum, discrimination matters because it helps LGBT persons recognize that their political conflicts are institutionalized and shared among sexual and gender minorities, that there are severe consequences associated with their identity, and that the only way to address this shared burden is through collective political action. This leads to Hypothesis 1:

H₁: Group Consciousness and Discrimination: As an LGBT person experiences an increasing level of group-based discrimination, her level of LGBT-specific political consciousness will also increase.

Counterpublic Engagement and LGBT Group Consciousness

Although discrimination is a necessary condition for the formation of group consciousness, it is not sufficient in explaining when politically meaningful group consciousness will emerge among LGBT persons. In countries such as Iran, where homosexuality is punishable by death (Michaelson 2014; IGLA 2013), there is clear evidence of severe discrimination, with reports of the state executing between 4,000 and 6,000 gay men and lesbians since 1979 (*The Telegraph* 2008). Because this discrimination is so severe that it threatens the lives of LGBT persons, gay people have not politically organized within Iran. Cases, such as Iran, are missing a key ingredient; namely, the freedom to form and associate in a counterpublic, or a distinct public sphere

that operates among marginalized groups (Fraser 1990, 1997; Cohen 1999; Lee 2002; Warner 2002; Harris-Perry 2010). In the face of discrimination, group members come to understand their shared label, experiences of oppression, and the issues that matter most to them (those that structure their discrimination). However, they cannot translate that discrimination into political action without a public space for mobilization.

Counterpublics provide the public space for marginalized groups to come together to discuss their oppression, to develop an altered worldview that is distinct and has political ramifications, and to create intra-community institutions that represent their distinct political needs. It is through these spaces that community members develop political leadership, form strong social ties to other group members, share information, and pool financial resources (Jenkins 1983; McCarthy & Zald 1977). Therefore, turning inward toward one another allows marginalized groups to develop the skills and capital necessary to translate shared grievances into a political movement.

The LGBT community in the United States has a well-developed gay counterpublic that fosters group consciousness among sexual and gender minorities, including institutions such as gay bars, pride events, social and political organizations, and gay friendships. All of these distinctly gay spaces harness materials, skills, and political information, and tie LGBT persons together for political action on behalf of gay identity (Bell & Valentine 1995; Davis & Kennedy 1993; D'Emilio 1983). Among the most prominent gay institutions is the gay bar, which serves as a site of gay organization, meeting, and cultural development. As early as the 1890s, there were widespread reports of gay bars in Manhattan, replete with drag, gay slang, and gay relationships (Chauncey 1994). Other prominent historical examples demonstrate this centrality, such as the 1966

“sip-in” at Julius’ in New York City, which protested regulations prohibiting bars and restaurants from serving homosexuals, and the infamous raid at the Stonewall Inn, which sparked the modern-gay rights movement (Pitillo 2013). This has led some to speculate, “gay liberation is the only civil rights movement that began in a bar” (Thomas 2011). Bars grew to prominence because, particularly during periods of extreme oppression against LGBTs, they were a refuge, where gays could be “out” to one another in a public space without fear of reprisal from straights.^v Writing in *Gay* magazine in 1970, gay activist Dick Leitsch wrote that, “Gay bars . . . teach and enforce the ethics and rules of gay life and pass on traditions and gay culture” (Thomas 2011). In his thorough analysis of gay and lesbian history, John D’Emilio (1983: p. 32-33), writes that:

Of all the changes set in motion by [WWII], the spread of the gay bar contained the greatest potential for reshaping the consciousness of homosexuals and lesbians. Alone among the expressions of gay life, the bar fostered an identity that was both public and collective. . . the bars offered an all-gay environment where patrons dropped the pretension of heterosexuality, socializing with friends as well as searching for a sexual partner. When trouble struck, as it often did in the form of a police raid, the crowd suffered as a group, enduring the penalties together. The bars were seedbeds for a collective consciousness that might one day flower politically.

Numerous studies validate the link between gay bars and gay political success, with the density of gay bars significantly and positively increasing the likelihood of passing domestic partnership laws and antidiscrimination ordinances (Haider-Markel et al. 2000; Haider-Markel & Meier 1996; Wald et al. 1996).

Gay pride events occupy a similar centrality in explaining gay group consciousness. Gay pride events and parades are annual celebrations of gay identity. Ironically, this tradition began as a police raid on June 28, 1969 at 1:20 A.M., when police officers raided the Stonewall Inn, a gay bar located in New York City. Following the raid, a crowd formed outside the bar to protest police harassment. Although the crowd

dispersed that night, both the police and the crowds returned the following evening. This time, the events became overtly political, including signs scrawled on the front of the Stonewall Inn reading, “THEY INVADED OUR RIGHTS,” “LEGALIZE GAY BARS,” and “SUPPORT GAY POWER” (Miller 2006; D’Emilio 1983). Exactly one month later, three to four hundred gays and lesbians gathered at Washington Square and marched up Sixth Avenue to the site of the riots, signaling the beginning of the modern gay rights movement. Following this, activists proposed an annual event to commemorate gay pride. Over time, gay pride events and parades evolved into weeklong events with presidential recognition from both President Clinton and President Obama. Hundreds of U.S. cities continue to celebrate gay pride, with over 1 million people attending events like the New York City Pride (NYC Pride 2015).

Celebrations are only one form of the gay counterpublic, which also includes formal social and political organizations. Gay-specific organizations have a long history within the gay counterpublic. The first documented gay social organization, the Society for Human Rights, formed in Chicago in 1924 with the goal to “promote and protect the interests” of gays (Katz 1976). After the publication of one newsletter, which outlined a strategy for “homosexual emancipation,” the group disbanded after police arrested all the members. The first gay political organization, the Mattachine Society, did not form until almost thirty years later. Mattachine’s earliest activities were group discussions where members met in private and discussed shared experiences of discrimination, and it was during these meetings that the idea that homosexuals as an oppressed minority first emerged (D’Emilio 1983). Although the Mattachine Society later disbanded, LGBT organizations continue to provide an outlet for LGBT persons to share their experiences

of discrimination, develop strategies to combat this oppression, and share resources for the betterment of the community. They currently span dozens of topic areas, such as politics, law, business, sports, and health, and operate at all levels of society, including nationally, statewide, and locally. National organizations, such as the Human Rights Campaign (HRC), boast over 1.5 million members (HRC 2015c), while local community centers continue to publish gay newsletters and papers, produce Pride events, host speakers, coordinate business and professional services, maintain LGBT libraries, and provide meeting spaces for LGBT groups. The presence of these organizations directly increases the likelihood of gay political victories, such as the statewide adoption of domestic partner benefits (Haider-Market et al. 2000) and passing antidiscrimination ordinances (Wald et al. 1996).

The final, and perhaps most important, component of the gay counterpublic is gay friendships. Unlike members of many other minority groups, gay people are not born into gay families, indicating that the vast majority of gay persons have no innate gay contact. Without contact with other LGBT persons, gay people cannot develop a shared sense of identity or its political meaning. Further, it is through these friendships that gay people experience their first exposure to the gay counterpublic. Although institutions such as gay bars help foster gay identity, gay friendships are what facilitate access to these spaces (Nardi 1999). This demonstrates that, without interpersonal ties, these institutions are often inaccessible. It is within gay friendships that most of the community functions occur among gay people, especially the exchange of resources, support, love, and advice (Woolwine 2000). Qualitative interviews and research anthologies pay particular tribute to the centrality of gay friendships in fostering gay identity, with evidence suggesting that

gay friendships are among the most important elements of the lived experiences of LGBT persons and that gay friendships fundamentally structure the gay community (Weston & Floersch 2013). When interviewed, gay people report that it is among other gays that they find support for their identity and political concerns, particularly regarding gay rights, and that their sexuality is the primary organizing element of their social life (Logan 2013; Nardi & Sherrod 1994). Therefore, the development of gay friendships is instrumental in the development of group consciousness among LGBT persons.

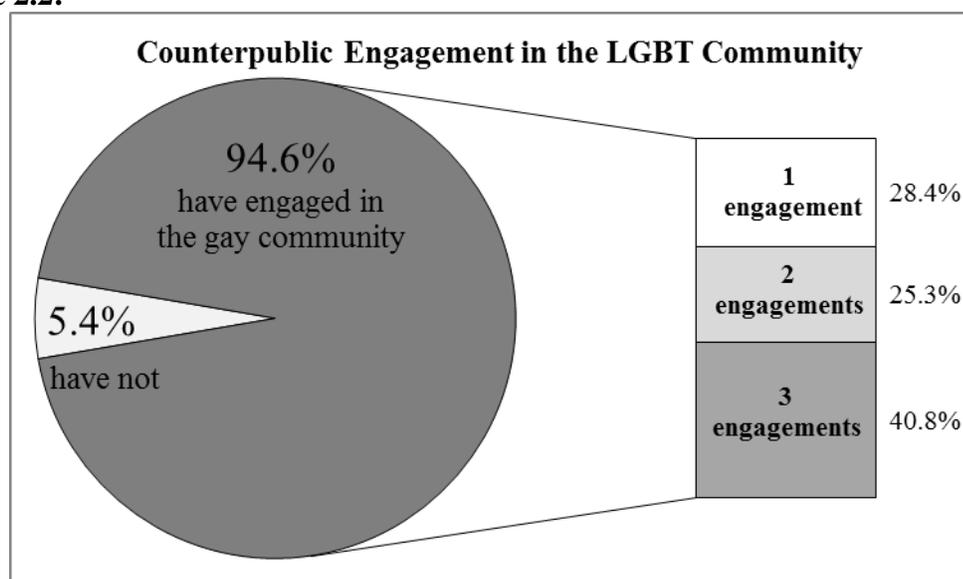
How many LGBTs engage in the gay counterpublic? More than 94% of the LGBT persons surveyed in Pew's 2013 "A Survey of LGBT Americans" reported engaging in the gay counterpublic during their lifetime. This figure results from answers to the questions contained in Table 2.2. To calculate the total percentage of respondents who have participated in the gay counterpublic, I combined all respondents who reported being a member of an LGBT organization, attending an LGBT pride event, or having an LGBT friend and divided that figure by the total number of respondents. This figure does not include engagement in some historically relevant gay spaces, such as bars, because the survey lacks questions measuring these topics. For lesbian, gay, and bisexual persons, gay friendships represent the most popular form of counterpublic engagement, with 92.9% of LGBT persons reporting that they have a few or more gay friends. This is followed by participation in pride and being a member of a gay organization. Taken together, the data demonstrate that the gay community is deeply socially embedded and actively participates in a variety of gay counterpublic spaces.

Table 2.2:
Counterpublic Engagement in “A Survey of LGBT Americans”

Here are a few activities some people do and others do not. Please indicate whether or not you have done this:

| Category | % Yes, in the Past 12 Months (N) | % Yes, but not in the Past 12 Months (N) | % No, Never Done This (N) | Total |
|--|----------------------------------|--|---------------------------|-------|
| Been a member of an LGBT organization | 19.0 (205) | 29.1 (314) | 51.9 (559) | 1,078 |
| Attended an LGBT pride event | 22.0 (238) | 38.6 (417) | 39.4 (425) | 1,080 |
| How many of your close friends are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender? | | | | |
| % All or Most (N) | % Some of Them (N) | % Only a Few of Them (N) | % None of Them (N) | Total |
| 13.9 (151) | 47.0 (512) | 32.1 (350) | 7.1 (77) | 1,090 |

Figure 2.2 reiterates this information by displaying the distribution of counterpublic engagement across the LGBT community. It represents respondents' additive embeddedness during their lifetime, ranging from zero connections (no areas) to three connections (all areas). The figure demonstrates that not only do many LGBT persons engage in the gay counterpublic, but that there is a great deal of variance across survey respondents regarding their degree of participation. This variance will help illuminate how variation in counterpublic engagement influences variation in levels of political consciousness.

Figure 2.2:

Of the many gays engaging in the gay counterpublic, the average number of engagements is two, demonstrating that LGBT persons are active across many areas of gay public life. The proliferation and utilization of the gay counterpublic establishes its centrality to the gay experience. Discrimination marginalizes gays, denying them political, economic, and social resources. Following this, the LGBT community turns inward to support itself and develops a distinctly gay culture that is politicized around shared discrimination. While discrimination helps gays recognize their shared label, the counterpublic plays an instrumental role in translating that recognition into a shared group consciousness that matters politically. Without the gay counterpublic, there is no outwardly facing gay political action. In conclusion, the gay counterpublic matters because it helps LGBT persons translate their shared experiences into shared actions.

This leads to Hypothesis 2:

H₂: Group Consciousness and Counterpublic Engagement: As an LGBT person increasingly engages in gay counterpublic spaces, his level of LGBT-specific political consciousness will also increase.

Opposing Social Movements and Group Consciousness

In addition to identification with a marginalized group and engagement in counterpublic spaces, opposing social movements further entrench a heightened sense of group consciousness. Opposing social movements are movements that exist in tandem, engaging in collective action to affect the social and political world, while simultaneously challenging one another, shifting political venues, disputing the other movement's claims, introducing new framing devices, altering the political context surrounding issues, and creating political problems for the opposition (Lo 1982; Meyer & Staggenborg 1996, 2008; Mottl 1980; Rohlinger 2002; Fetner 2001, 2008; Dugan 2004). The presence of a well-defined enemy encourages political cohesion because an opposing movement helps the group identify an external actor upon which to place blame for their subordinate status (Miller et al. 1981; Reese & Brown 1995). The ability to place this blame upon another social actor incites the group toward political action and internal cohesion, motivating them to turn toward the political arena to address their complaints. These opposition movements help marginalized communities clearly define the important issues, clarify the most appropriate political venues, decrease internal division, and increase commitment to the cause. For example, when the broader Mennonite community disciplined a Maryland congregation for marrying gay couples, its preacher declared that the opposition mattered because, "it has forced us to be clear about who we are" (Green 2015).

Does the LGBT community face opposition? The role of the Religious Right (RR) as a counterforce to the gay community is well-documented (Fetner 2001, 2008; Herman 1998), with some scholars calling the two movements "perfect enemies" (Bull &

Gallagher 1996: p. xv). The Religious Right primarily consists of evangelical Protestants and other conservative Christian traditions, such as Mormons, and refers to a coalition of organizations that upholds the biblical tenets of inerrancy, the belief that the bible is the authoritative word of God, and premillennial dispensationalism, the belief in a specific end-time scenario (Herman 1998). Although it predominantly refers to Christians, it also includes members from fundamentalist Muslim and Jewish backgrounds, who report similar levels of religious fundamentalism, right-wing authoritarianism, and negative attitudes towards homosexuals (Hunsberger 2009). The RR has an explicitly political agenda, with a particular focus on creating antigay legal statutes, such as those banning gay marriage and/or antidiscrimination protections (Dorf & Tarrow 2014). Key players in this movement, such as Focus on the Family, the Family Research Council, the American Family Association, the Traditional Values Coalition, and Concerned Women for America, have all declared aggressive responses to the gay rights movement, proclaiming that homosexual practice is an incontrovertible sin, that homosexuality is a chosen behavior, and that Americans should thoroughly oppose rights for LGBT persons (Fetner 2001, 2008; Herman 1998; Dugan 2004; Bull & Gallagher 1996). The mainstreaming of LGBT identities has shaken the foundations of the RR movement and, as the momentum of the LGBT movement has increased, the opposition of the RR has increased in tandem.

The RR targets the gay movement with an aggressive animosity that emboldens the LGBT movement and increases internal cohesion. Although this seems counterintuitive, as the RR dampens and hinders gay rights, the process of defeating and criticizing the gay community actually serves to maintain the movement's momentum and create a clear target for blame and mobilization (Fetner 2001, 2008; Herman 1998;

Dugan 2004; Bull & Gallagher 1996). Attacks from the Religious Right are particularly relevant in relation to the gay rights movement, where internal divisions have historically impeded the community's progress. This is particularly true for divisions arising between the various identity groups, such as gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and the transgender community competing against one another for issue priority. By attacking the entire community as a whole, and trying to ban the rights of all LGBT persons, regardless of subgroup membership, the RR inadvertently helps foster a stronger sense of community and increases the internal alliances of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender persons.

Overall, the presence of a well-defined enemy in the Religious Right has encouraged LGBT cohesion. Beginning with Anita Bryant claiming that, "I must protect my children from [homosexuals'] evil influence . . . They want to recruit your children and teach them the virtues of becoming a homosexual," this hostile language, which claimed that homosexuals were pedophiles and perverts, inspired anger, outrage, and group consciousness among the sometimes fractured LGBT community. Intensive legislative action accompanied these verbal criticisms, with the RR attempting over 200 antigay referendums and initiatives to retract or prevent gay rights laws between 1974 and 2008 (Stone 2010). The comments and legislative actions of the RR have increased group consciousness in the LGBT community by priming identity salience within LGBTs and creating an external enemy upon which to place blame and fight within the political arena.

How many LGBT persons recognize the Religious Right as their enemy?

Although the Pew data does not directly measure recognition of the RR as a political enemy, it does include a series of questions related to the perceived hostility of various

religious traditions. To validate the theory outlined above, LGBT persons should clearly recognize conservative and anti-gay religious traditions as unfriendly relative to less conservative and less anti-gay religious traditions. The questions capturing the perception of religious hostility are displayed in Table 2.3. Based on these data, 96.5% of LGBT persons in Pew’s 2013 “A Survey of LGBT Americans” recognized that at least one religious tradition is unfriendly toward LGBT people. Survey respondents considered the Muslim religion the most unfriendly, followed by the Mormon Church, the Catholic Church, Evangelical churches, the Jewish religion, and non-Evangelical Protestant churches. The large degree of variance in perceived hostility across these traditions demonstrates preliminary support that the RR is clearly recognizable as hostile to gay persons. Because conservative religious traditions, such as Evangelical churches and Mormon Churches, are recognized as unfriendly more often than less conservative traditions, such as non-Evangelical churches, the evidence suggests that perceived hostility is an appropriate proxy for measuring the influence of the Religious Right.

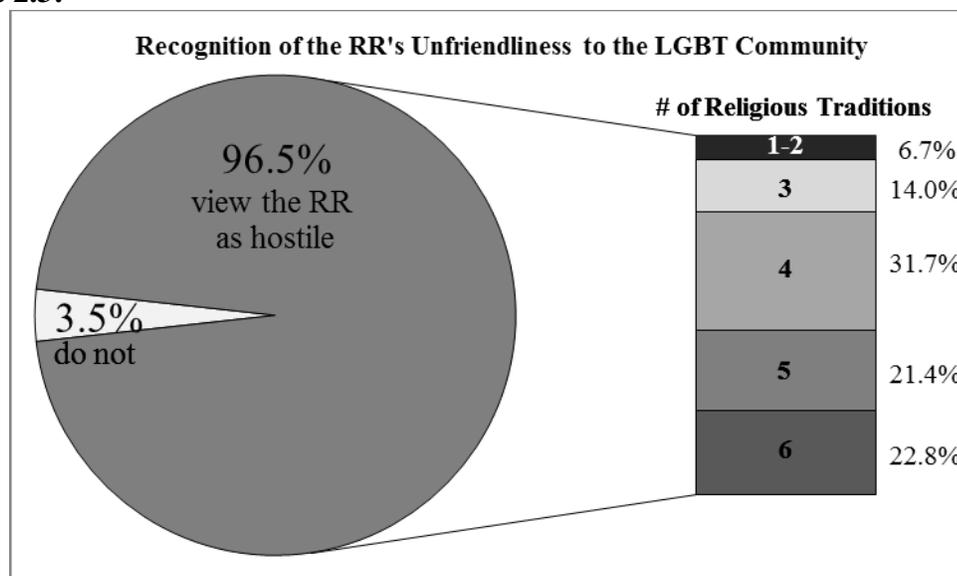
Table 2.3:

Opposition from the Religious Right in “A Survey of LGBT Americans”

| Thinking about some different religions and religious groups, do you feel each of the following is generally friendly, neutral, or unfriendly toward lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people? | | | | |
|--|-------------------|------------------|---------------------|-------|
| Category | % Friendly (N) | % Neutral (N) | % Unfriendly (N) | Total |
| Evangelical churches | 3.3 (35) | 17.8 (190) | 79.0 (844) | 1,069 |
| The Catholic Church | 2.3 (25) | 14.0 (152) | 83.7 (906) | 1,083 |
| The Jewish religion | 12.0 (130) | 46.6 (503) | 41.4 (447) | 1,080 |
| The Muslim religion | 0.1 (1) | 8.8 (95) | 91.1 (984) | 1,080 |
| The Mormon Church | 0.9 (10) | 10.2 (110) | 88.9 (958) | 1,078 |
| Non-Evangelical Protestant churches | 15.0 (162) | 45.9 (495) | 39.1 (421) | 1,078 |

Figure 2.3 reinforces this finding by displaying the additive number of traditions LGBT respondents reported as unfriendly, ranging from zero (no religious traditions) to six religious traditions (all traditions). The results demonstrate that, while the overwhelming majority of LGBT persons recognize multiple religious traditions as hostile to the gay community, there is a large deal of variance across survey respondents. While very few people report that all religious traditions are friendly toward gays, there are important differences across the number of religious traditions respondents recognize as hostile. These differences are important in understanding how variation in recognition of the RR influences the salience of gay political identity.

Figure 2.3:



Related to discrimination and engagement in counterpublic space, opposing social movements strongly influence the development of group consciousness. By painting homosexuals as perverts and criminals and working tirelessly to use laws, state constitutions, and official policies to limit the rights of LGBT persons, the Religious Right has inadvertently increased group cohesion and identity salience within the LGBT community. Following the logic of the popular phrase, “The enemy of my enemy is my

friend,” the LGBT movement found itself as the target of a well-mobilized and well-funded movement that treated lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people as the same, regardless of their personal interpretation of the community. This increased internal political cohesion and enhanced the processes that discrimination and engagement in the gay counterpublic set in motion. In the words of the executive director of the Gay Rights National Lobby, Steve Endean, some LGBT persons believe that, “We are blessed to have the hateful, bigoted opponents we have had . . . to push our issues . . . to center stage” (Fetner 2008: p. 119). This evidence leads to Hypothesis 3:

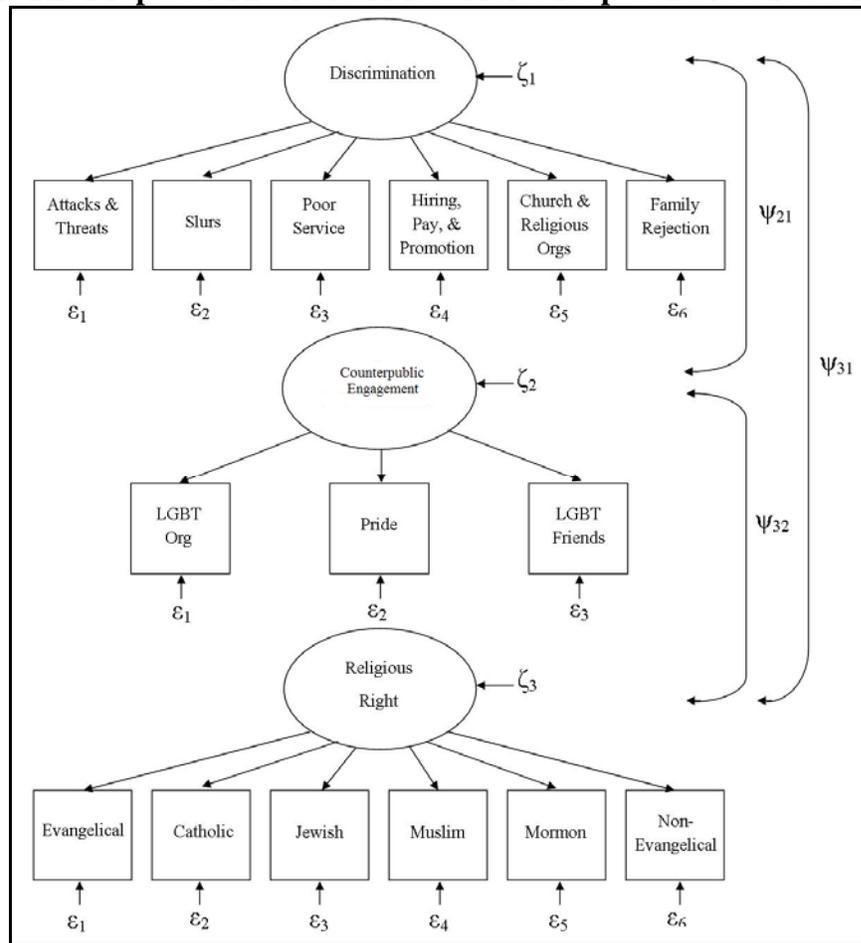
H₃: Group Consciousness and a Well-Defined Enemy: As an LGBT person increasingly recognizes the Religious Right as an enemy to the LGBT community, her level of LGBT-specific group consciousness will also increase.

Measuring Discrimination, Counterpublic Engagement, and Recognition of the Religious Right

This discussion of discrimination, counterpublic engagement, and recognition of the Religious Right presents them as independent measures that each uniquely informs the formation of group consciousness. It suggests that these variables are distinct, operate across many dimensions, and contain multiple subcomponents. While these relationships are face-valid, in that there is an abundance of descriptive and historical data to support their usage, they lack a methodological basis, in that their statistical relationship remains unexplored. This is problematic, as testing the relationships between these variables in subsequent chapters is inappropriate without validated and internally consistent measures. To address this limitation and establish the appropriate measurement of discrimination, counterpublic engagement, and recognition of the Religious Right, I performed confirmatory factor analysis (CFA).

Confirmatory factor analysis is a methodological technique that is theory driven and rooted in the theoretical relationships between observed and unobserved variables (Schreiber et al. 2006). To conduct CFA, one should start with a theoretical foundation that forms the basis for model development (Levin et al. 1995). Therefore, this CFA relies on the large amount of descriptive and historical data outlined above. Figure 2.4 displays the proposed model, with the epsilons (ϵ) representing the measurement error, the zetas (ζ) representing the residual-error terms, and the psis (ψ) representing the correlated-residual-error terms. The proposed model contains three latent dimensions of LGBT identity formation: discrimination, counterpublic engagement, and the role of the Religious Right. These three latent dimensions form the foundation of the fifteen indicators contained in the model, which were captured using the Pew 2013 “A Survey of LGBT Americans” dataset. The observed measures for the discrimination construct are measured on a 3-point scale, including the response options displayed in Table 2.1. Two of the observed measures for the counterpublic engagement construct are measured on a 3-point scale (pride and LGBT organizations), while the gay friendships variable is measured on a 4-point scale, with all three measures capturing the response options contained in Table 2.2. The observed measures for the Religious Right construct are measured on a 3-point scale, including the response options displayed in Table 2.3.

Figure 2.4: The Proposed Theoretical Model for Group Consciousness's Inputs



A strength of utilizing CFA is that the technique allows for the comparison between both the proposed model and one or more alternative models (Liang et al. 1989; Levin et al. 1995). This analysis compares the proposed three-dimensional model (M_3) to three alternative models, a two-dimensional model (M_2), a one-dimensional model (M_1), and a null model (M_0). The two-dimensional model collapses discrimination and recognition of the Religious Right into a single dimension, given the similarities between the theories underlying both explanations, and maintains counterpublic engagement as a separate dimension. The one-dimensional model (M_1) maps all fifteen of the observed indicators along the same dimension, representing the potential that all three unobserved variables are part of the same process. The null model (M_0) assumes that all fifteen

indicators measure exactly one group of fifteen unrelated constructs (Levin et al. 1995). The null model is the most restrictive model and serves as a baseline for comparison to the other models (Bentler & Bonett 1980).

This CFA compares the proposed model to alternative models because of two potential problems that may accompany using the proposed model to measure theories of group consciousness: (1) the three theoretical explanations may be indistinct, rather than distinct, and (2) the subcomponents of each measure may be unrelated, rather than interlocking pieces of the same theoretical process. Regarding the potential for theoretical overlap, it is possible that discrimination, counterpublic engagement, and the role of a well-defined enemy are all part of the same process, rather than three distinct components. This chapter describes each component as playing a unique role in shaping LGBT group consciousness. However, there is the potential that each individual construct is a different aspect of the same latent variable, with only one or two measures best capturing this relationship. This is particularly relevant for the possible relationship between discrimination and the role of a well-defined enemy, as both explanations are rooted in negative treatment, discrimination, and opposition. Consequently, these two theoretical explanations may have a particularly high probability of functioning as one process.

Similarly, upon examining the distinctiveness of each theory, it is necessary to evaluate the degree to which each measure's subcomponents fit together and are correctly specified. Assuming that each theoretical tradition is distinct, do all of the observed variables actually operationalize the same latent construct? Using discrimination as an example, does rejection by one's family influence a person's sense of discrimination the

same way as being physically attacked? Before using multiple different types of discrimination in the same measure, it is necessary to quantitatively establish that they measure the same construct of interest. Similarly, for measures that appear more similar on the surface, such as the unfriendliness of different religious traditions, do attitudes towards all religious traditions belong in the same model? It is possible that LGBT persons will not view non-Evangelical Christians as conceptually similar to Evangelicals or other groups, indicating that these subcomponents may be inappropriately specified.

Confirmatory factor analysis is conducted using structural equation modeling with correlated error terms and standardized parameter estimates. The sample was randomly split into two subsamples ($N_1=545$, $N_2=546$), to minimize the probability of obtaining invalid results by allowing for model replication (Finifter 1972; Levin et al. 1995; Heere & James 2007; Jackson et al. 2009). Tables 2.4 and 2.5 contain results from overall model fit, while Table 2.6 contains factor loadings for the proposed theoretical model.

Before analyzing factor loadings and an index's internal structure, it is necessary to determine which model best measures the theoretical constructs. To determine the most appropriate model for measuring the theoretical factors that drive group consciousness, I begin by analyzing absolute fit indices, which demonstrate how well the models fit the sample data and which model has the best fit (McDonald & Ho 2002). This analysis assesses the overall fit of the three-dimensional model (M_3), the two-dimensional model (M_2), the one-dimensional model (M_1), and the null model (M_0), and compares the results to determine the correct structure of the data. Absolute fit indices include the chi-square test and the root-mean-square error of approximation (RMSEA; Steiger & Lind 1980; Steiger 1998, 2000). The chi-square value is the traditional measure for assessing

the overall model fit and gauging discrepancies between the sample and the fitted covariance matrices (Hu & Bentler 1999; Hooper et al. 2008). A well-specified model provides an insignificant result at $\alpha < 0.05$ threshold (Barrett 2007). However, this assumption is almost universally violated in models with large sample sizes because the chi-square test statistic is sensitive to sample size and often inappropriately rejects models when sample sizes are large (Bentler & Bonnet 1980; Joreskog & Sorborn 1993). Because of the effect of sample size on this test statistic, the relative chi-square, measured by dividing the chi-square statistic by the degrees of freedom, is also reported (Wheaton et al. 1977; Smith & Patterson 1995). Models with relative chi-square statistics below 5.0 are considered well-specified (Wheaton et al. 1977). The RMSEA supplements these statistics by reporting how well the model fits the covariance matrix (Steiger & Lind 1980; Hooper et al. 2008). RMSEA statistics close to .06 (Hu & Bentler 1999), with a strict upper limit of 0.07 (Steiger 2007), represent well-specified models.

After assessing absolute fit, incremental fit indices (McDonald & Ho 2002; Hooper et al. 2008), which compare the chi-square value to the null model, are also useful in evaluating the proposed models. The comparative fit index (CFI; Bentler 1990) assumes that latent variables are uncorrelated and compares the model results to the null model (Hooper et al. 2008). CFI values range between 0.0 and 1.0, with values closer to 1.0 indicating better model fit (Hu & Bentler 1999; Fan et al. 1999; Bollen 1989). The CFI is very similar to the Tucker-Lewis index (TLI; Tucker & Lewis 1973; Bentler & Bonett 1980), which also compares the model's chi-square value to the null's chi-square value. This statistic is most useful with larger sample sizes, making it appropriate to use with this dataset (Bentler 1990). Similar to the CFI, the TLI should be above .80 (Hu &

Bentler 1999), with values closer to 1.0 indicating better specification. Parsimony fit indices supplement incremental fit indices by helping compare models to one another. The Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) is a particularly useful parsimony fit index, with lower levels indicating better model fit. Because statistics such as the AIC lack pre-specified thresholds, they are primarily useful in comparing the fit of competing models. The final evaluation statistic is the coefficient of determination (CD; Schreiber et al. 2006), which captures the proportion of variance explained. For this statistic, values closer to 1.0 indicate better model fit.

Table 2.4 demonstrates the results from the CFA for the discrimination, counterpublic engagement, and recognition of the RR measures. The results indicate that the three-dimensional model, which includes discrimination, counterpublic engagement, and the role of the RR as three distinct factors, is the best-specified model. This model is the only proposed model that meets all standard thresholds for overall model fit. Beginning with the chi-square test statistic, M_3 reports the lowest chi-square test statistic compared to all other models. Although all models indicate significant chi-square statistics, this result is expected due to the large sample size. Because of this sample size issue, the relative chi-square statistic is more appropriate for interpreting model results. M_3 is the only model with a relative chi-square statistic that falls within an acceptable range, with a score well below the upper limit of five. Conversely, all other models display relative chi-square statistics that are above acceptable levels, indicating that they are poorly specified. The results for the AIC are similar, with the three-dimensional model reporting the lowest AIC statistic, indicating that it is a better model relative to the two-dimensional and one-dimensional models. For the CFI and TFI, which should track

closely to 1.0, M_3 demonstrates the best model fit with scores above .90 on both measures. For these statistics, the one and two-dimensional models fall well below standard levels of acceptability. The RMSEA reiterates this trend, with the three-dimensional model meeting the necessary threshold of 0.06 – 0.07. Conversely, the one and two-dimensional models greatly exceed this threshold, with their RMSEAs indicating poor model fit. Finally, the CD captures the proportion of variance explained, with scores closest to 1.0 being best. M_3 has the highest CD, with a score above 0.90, indicating good model fit.

Overall, the fit indices displayed in Table 2.4 demonstrate that discrimination, counterpublic engagement, and recognition of the RR are three distinct methodological constructs. Because M_3 demonstrates a significant improvement over M_1 and M_2 , which both display unsatisfactory model fit, this sample confirms the usage of the proposed model. Therefore, the CFA clearly indicates support for a three-dimensional model in which each theoretical explanation is maintained as independent and unique.

Table 2.4:

CFA: Discrimination, Counterpublic Engagement, and the Religious Right

| | M_0 : Null | | M_1 : One-Factor | | M_2 : Two-Factor | | M_3 : Three-Factor | |
|------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|----------------------|----------------|
| | Sample 1 | Sample 2 | Sample 1 | Sample 2 | Sample 1 | Sample 2 | Sample 1 | Sample 2 |
| X^2 (df) | 1716.75 (105) | 1526.49 (105) | 828.56 (90) | 645.32 (90) | 663.37 (89) | 514.83 (89) | 266.58 (87) | 258.98 (87) |
| X^2/df | 29.95 | 14.54 | 9.21 | 7.17 | 7.45 | 5.78 | 3.06 | 2.97 |
| AIC | - | - | 11993.9 | 12207.8 | 11830.7 | 12079.4 | 11437.9 | 11827.5 |
| CFI | - | - | 0.54 | 0.61 | 0.64 | 0.7 | 0.89 | 0.88 |
| TLI | - | - | 0.47 | 0.54 | 0.58 | 0.65 | 0.87 | 0.85 |
| CD | - | - | 0.81 | 0.81 | 0.93 | 0.92 | 0.98 | 0.98 |
| RMSEA | - | - | 0.13 | 0.11 | 0.11 | 0.1 | 0.06 | 0.06 |

Before proceeding with M_3 as the measurement model, it is necessary to confirm the model's internal structure by examining individual parameter estimates. To confirm a

model's internal structure, models require factors to be statistically significant with factor loadings of at least .40 (Buss & Durke 1957; Cudeck & O'Dell 1994; Levin et al. 1995). For M_3 , all factor loadings for the discrimination and counterpublic engagement measures were statistically significant at conventional levels and above the .40 threshold, indicating that they are internally consistent and that the latent variable is correctly specified. For the RR measure, however, the factor loadings for the friendliness of the Jewish religion and the friendliness of non-Evangelical Protestant religions failed to meet the 0.40 factor-loading threshold.^{vi} This result further supports the utilization of the RR measure, as it demonstrates that the measure includes only conservative religious traditions with an organized gay opposition. Therefore, the RR measure accurately includes and excludes only those traditions that are outwardly hostile and directly oppose LGBT rights.

Because the subcomponents for the Religious Right construct were incorrectly specified, the three-dimensional model with 15 subcomponents was compared to a modified three-dimensional model (M_{3b}) with 13 subcomponents, and the Jewish and non-Evangelical Protestant traditions removed. Table 2.5 displays the model results and demonstrates that the modified three-dimensional model, with the non-Evangelical Protestant and Jewish religious traditions removed from the evaluations of the Religious Right, has the best overall model fit. With a lower chi-square statistic, relative chi-square statistic, AIC, and RMSEA, and a higher CFI, TLI, and CD, M_{3b} demonstrates that it is the best overall representation of the theories explaining LGBT group consciousness formation. Therefore, data relating to the Jewish and non-Evangelical traditions should be removed when measuring a respondent's recognition of the hostility of the Religious Right.

Table 2.5:
CFA: The Modified Three-Factor Model

| | M ₀ : Null | | M ₃ : Three-Factor | | M _{3b} : Modified Three-Factor | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|-----------------|-------------------------------|----------------|---|----------------|
| | Sample 1 | Sample 2 | Sample 1 | Sample 2 | Sample 1 | Sample 2 |
| X ² (df) | 11574.42 (78) | 1343.65 (78) | 266.58 (87) | 258.98 (87) | 159.07 (62) | 106.65 (62) |
| X ² /df | 148.39 | 17.23 | 3.06 | 2.97 | 2.57 | 1.72 |
| AIC | - | - | 11437.9 | 11827.5 | 9451.99 | 9909.03 |
| CFI | - | - | 0.89 | 0.88 | 0.94 | 0.97 |
| TLI | - | - | 0.87 | 0.85 | 0.92 | 0.96 |
| CD | - | - | 0.98 | 0.98 | 0.93 | 0.97 |
| RMSEA | - | - | 0.062 | 0.06 | 0.056 | 0.038 |

Using the modified three-factor model, Table 2.6 demonstrates the factor loadings for the modified model. For all three dimensions, all factor loadings were statistically significant and exceeded the .40 threshold, indicating that they are internally consistent and that the latent variables are correctly specified.

Table 2.6:
Factor Loadings for M_{3b}^{vii}

| Observed Variable | Latent Construct | Sample 1 | | Sample 2 | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| | | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> |
| Attacks+ | Discrimination | 0.63 | 0.03 | 0.65 | 0.03 |
| Slurs | Discrimination | 0.68 | 0.03 | 0.70 | 0.03 |
| Bad Service | Discrimination | 0.65 | 0.03 | 0.63 | 0.03 |
| Employment | Discrimination | 0.58 | 0.04 | 0.56 | 0.04 |
| Church | Discrimination | 0.65 | 0.03 | 0.62 | 0.03 |
| Family | Discrimination | 0.59 | 0.04 | 0.58 | 0.04 |
| LGBT Organizations+ | Counterpublic Engagement | 0.70 | 0.04 | 0.70 | 0.04 |
| LGBT Pride | Counterpublic Engagement | 0.72 | 0.04 | 0.68 | 0.04 |
| LGBT Friends | Counterpublic Engagement | 0.54 | 0.04 | 0.49 | 0.05 |
| Evangelical+ | Religious Right | 0.52 | 0.04 | 0.43 | 0.05 |
| Catholic | Religious Right | 0.51 | 0.04 | 0.41 | 0.05 |
| Muslim | Religious Right | 0.62 | 0.04 | 0.61 | 0.05 |
| Mormon | Religious Right | 0.79 | 0.04 | 0.71 | 0.05 |

Note. All estimates are completely standardized and are significant at $\alpha < 0.05$. The symbol + indicates a constrained parameter.

The confirmatory factor analysis demonstrates that measures of discrimination, counterpublic engagement, and recognition of a well-defined enemy are distinct and

should be operationalized along three separate measures. From a discrimination standpoint, although different forms of discrimination may appear to operate distinctly, this CFA demonstrates that they are all part of the same overall process. Thus, it is methodologically appropriate to create a measure that operationalizes them as part of the same index. Similarly, participation in organizations, attending pride events, and having a network of gay friends all capture different, yet interlocking, parts of embedding oneself in the gay community. From a recognition of the Religious Right perspective, the gay community clearly recognizes that specific religious traditions comprise the base of the RR and its opposition to the gay political agenda, while other traditions do not. The data demonstrate that recognition of the hostility and opposition of these conservative religious traditions represents an appropriate construct of the role of opposing social movements. In accordance with these model results, Jewish and non-Evangelical traditions are not included in subsequent chapters when analyzing recognition of the Religious Right. In conclusion, this CFA demonstrates that using the proposed measures of discrimination, counterpublic engagement, and recognition of a well-defined enemy is both methodologically and theoretically appropriate.

Discussion

Taken together, the historical, descriptive, and statistical evidence demonstrates that discrimination, counterpublic engagement, and opposition from the Religious Right strongly influence the formation of gay political identity. Discrimination against gays and lesbians has spanned dozens of issue areas over the past century, which has shaped and molded the gay community's place in society. This ranges from formal exclusions, such as employment and marriage bans, to societal disapproval, which encourages physical

and emotional violence against gays. Overall, this discrimination has partially determined what it means to be gay by associating gay identity with a set of social, political, and economic consequences that disadvantage the LGBT community. By pushing gays out of society and heightening their sense of identity, discrimination encourages the formation of group consciousness.

Counterpublic engagement runs parallel to discrimination, as it provides the buffer that helps LGBT persons cope with this oppression, while also allowing them to develop methods for counteracting it. Discrimination alone can suffocate a social movement, particularly in cases where there is total oppression, such imprisonment or execution. Counterpublic space is a necessary and complementary partner to discrimination because it provides a relatively safe public space for minorities to interact, share their stories of oppression, and develop a community-specific worldview for understanding the political world. In this space, LGBTs form strong connections that help empower them to fight back against their discrimination and pursue their aims in the political arena. Therefore, by pushing gays closer together, giving them a sense of their shared political goals, pooling their resources, and empowering them politically, counterpublic engagement boosts the development of group consciousness in the LGBT community.

The Religious Right enhances this process because it moves LGBT issues to center stage and gives gays a clear external actor upon which they can blame for their subordinate status. With formal government oppression of LGBTs lessening, such as the repeal of the Defense of Marriage Act and the overturning of “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,” the federal government is receding as an official enemy to the gay community. Because

opposition can help embolden and empower minority groups, particularly by giving them a clear agenda and serving as a site of external blame, this process may hinder gay political action. However, with the prominent role of the Religious Right as an opposition to the gay movement, and with no sign of this relationship subsiding, gays should have a cohesive political identity and strong sense of the issues that matter most to them as long as the Religious Right is a powerful political force. Consequently, the Religious Right aids in the development of group consciousness by reminding gays of the discrimination they face, creating new obstacles to their success, and pushing gay political issues to center stage.

Descriptive data from LGBT Americans reinforces these theoretical arguments by demonstrating the prevalence of discrimination, counterpublic engagement, and recognition of the Religious Right in gay Americans' lives. The vast majority of gay Americans report that they have experienced discrimination across many diverse areas, that they actively engage in the broader gay community, and that they understand the opposition of the Religious Right to their interests. Using confirmatory factor analysis, a deeper analysis of the statistical relationship between these three theoretical drivers and their unique subcomponents confirms that they are distinct processes. Each is expected to inform group consciousness in a separate and independent fashion, and all are thought to be necessary factors in the development of high levels of LGBT-related group consciousness.

Conclusion

Overall, the historical record demonstrates that the LGBT community faces discrimination across many domains, engages in a diverse set of gay-specific public

spaces, and experiences intense political opposition at the hands of the Religious Right. These mechanisms are all strongly tied to the formation of group consciousness by creating a situation in which LGBT persons are treated poorly and denied the full exercise of their citizenship rights, while simultaneously being allowed to form public spaces where they can share their experiences, connect to one another, and organize on behalf of their community. Survey data from the lives of LGBT persons confirms this, as the majority of lesbians, gays, and bisexuals experience discrimination, are deeply embedded in the broader gay community, and recognize the Religious Right's opposition to their political success. Further, confirmatory factor analysis demonstrated that all three mechanisms are both conceptually and methodologically distinct, making them appropriate for inclusion in statistical models. Based on these findings, the three hypotheses outlined in this chapter, which argue that group consciousness is the product of experiences of LGBT-specific discrimination, engagement in the gay counterpublic, and recognition of the Religious Right as an enemy to LGBT persons, are explored in greater detail in Chapter 3.

CHAPTER THREE

BECOMING GAY: TESTING FROM PEOPLE TO ACTORS

What is the most appropriate way to measure group consciousness, and what role do discrimination, counterpublic engagement, and the role of a well-defined enemy play in shaping it? The previous chapter explored the theoretical foundations of LGBT group consciousness and demonstrated the prevalence of discrimination, counterpublic engagement, and hostility from the Religious Right facing LGBT Americans. This evidence informed the formulation of three distinct hypotheses regarding group consciousness, which proposed that heightened levels of discrimination, involvement in the broader gay community, and recognition of the Religious Right's opposition to gays would all be associated with higher levels of group consciousness. This chapter tests these hypotheses using data from Pew's 2013 "A Survey of LGBT Americans." This process begins with an examination of the multidimensional nature of group consciousness and its distinct subcomponents of self-categorization, evaluation, importance, and attachment (Ashmore et al. 2004). Using data related to these measures, I perform confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using structural equation modeling (SEM) to test whether each theoretical subcomponent of group consciousness is methodologically distinct, with results suggesting the usage of two separate measures of group consciousness. This makes an important contribution to the measurement of group consciousness by suggesting that, although it is multidimensional in nature, only some of its subcomponents are statistically distinct, rather than all of them being so. Building upon this important methodological finding, I demonstrate strong support for the

argument that gay political identity is largely a function of discrimination, counterpublic engagement, and opposition from the Religious Right.

Do LGBT Americans have Group Consciousness?

Before examining the relationship between discrimination, engagement in the broader gay community, the role of the Religious Right, and group consciousness, it is necessary to discuss measures of group consciousness and the degree to which the LGBT community experiences them. Scholars of group consciousness argue that it is a multidimensional and complex concept (Stryker 1980; Tajfel 1981, 1982; Turner 1987; Ashmore et al., 2004), with operationalizations that shift across fields and range from interpersonal processes to aggregate-level products of political action (Brubaker & Cooper 2000). Because of this shifting and complicated nature, scholars of identity formation have proposed four distinct factors that are relevant for the analysis of group consciousness: (1) self-categorization, (2) evaluation, (3) importance, and (4) attachment (Ashmore et al. 2004).

Self-Categorization

Self-categorization refers to the first step in developing group consciousness, as it signifies identification as a member of a particular social group (Deaux 1996; Ashmore et al. 2004). It is the precondition for all other dimensions of group consciousness because one cannot express pride or importance in an identity that she does not self-identify with (Phinney 1991). Research consistently demonstrates the power of self-categorization, with even arbitrary group labels eliciting powerful in-group favoritism among group members (Brewer 1979; Diehl 1989, 1990; Tajfel 1982). Following this logic, self-categorization provides the basis for meaningful collective action and triggers in-group

favoritism and adherence to group norms (Ashmore et al. 2004). For this analysis, self-categorization captures the degree to which LGBT persons think of themselves as gay and the extent to which they locate their identities within the gay community. Outwardly labeling oneself as gay is a fundamental part of this process, often referred to as “coming out.” When an LGBT person comes out, she explicitly signals to the outside world that she categorizes her identity in terms of her gayness and that public recognition of this identity is important. Consequently, as persons increasingly outwardly label themselves as LGBT, they indicate a heightened level of self-categorization, signaling higher levels of group consciousness.

All participants in Pew’s 2013 “A Survey of LGBT Americans” self-identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender, as this was a prerequisite for participation in the survey. However, the survey also contains a question related to “being out,” or the extent to which a respondent publicly self-identifies with his LGBT label. Table 3.1 contains a summary of the self-categorization data, including a description of the question and response rates for each category. It demonstrates that the LGBT community reports varying levels of self-categorization, with many respondents reporting that they are out to all or most of the important people in their lives, while many others report that they remain “in” among certain contacts. This variance is important and it shows that this sample makes an interesting and appropriate case for testing these explanations of group consciousness formation. Based on this, we should expect self-categorization to be a meaningful measure of group consciousness in the LGBT community.

Table 3.1:
Self-Categorization in "A Survey of LGBT Americans"

| All in all, thinking about the important people in your life, how many are aware that you are [lesbian, gay, or bisexual]? | | | | |
|--|----------|------|-------------|-----------|
| Category | <i>N</i> | % | <i>Mean</i> | <i>SD</i> |
| All or most of them | 642 | 59.1 | 2.3 | 0.9 |
| Some of them | 230 | 21.2 | | |
| Only a few of them | 160 | 14.7 | | |
| None of them | 55 | 5.1 | | |
| Total | 1,087 | | | |

Discrimination, counterpublic engagement, and recognition of the Religious Right's unfriendliness toward gays matter for self-categorization because they should each motivate higher rates of self-categorization. Regarding discrimination, persons who experience higher rates of discrimination on the basis of an identity are expected to internalize the group label most strongly. Being oppressed because of a group label makes the label become deeply embedded within a person, making him more likely to report that identity to others and making self-categorization a meaningful way of organizing around his discrimination (Haslam 2001). For counterpublic engagement, by participating in spaces with many other LGBT persons, gays have the opportunity to meet open and "out" members of their community. These examples help encourage LGBT persons to self-categorize within their own lives, while also providing them with many contacts to disclose their sexual orientation or gender identity to. Finally, in terms of the Religious Right, facing an organized enemy that pushes LGBT persons to clarify their political positions and identify themselves as LGBT, LGBT persons who view the RR as hostile are expected to be more likely to self-categorize.

Evaluation

Following self-categorization as a group member, one of the first processes an LGBT person undergoes is evaluation of the group. Evaluation refers to the positive or negative attachments that a person has toward her group identity (Eagly & Chaiken 1993; Ashmore et al. 2004). It has two distinct components, public evaluation and private evaluation. Public evaluation captures how favorably the broader population regards the individual's social group, while private evaluation captures how favorably the individual regards his or her social group (Crocker et al. 1994; Luhatenen & Crocker 1992; Sellers et al. 1997; Heere & James 2007). In many cases, there may be a discrepancy between public and private evaluation. For example, an individual may report pride in having an LGBT identity, yet recognize the discrimination and societal disapproval that accompanies that label.

Public evaluation and private evaluation are theorized to operate along two distinct components regarding their relationship to group consciousness (Crocker et al. 1994). Negative public evaluation, signaling that respondents perceive a large amount of discrimination and societal disapproval, is consistently found to indicate heightened levels of group consciousness (Miller et al. 1981; Stokes 2003; Masuoka 2006; Sanchez 2006). This implies that, as perceptions of society's attitudes towards the group grow more negative, the group is indicating higher levels of political consciousness. Private evaluation displays the inverse of this relationship, with positive personal evaluations signaling higher levels of group consciousness (Abrams & Brown 1989; Trapnell & Campbell 1999).

Table 3.2 displays the survey questions that measure public and private evaluation. Regarding public evaluation, Table 3.2 indicates that the majority of respondents (55%) reported that gays and lesbians face a lot of discrimination in American society, although many respondents reported that there was only some discrimination (38%). The data for private evaluations demonstrate an even higher degree of variance, with respondents largely divided between reporting neutral attitudes (56.6%) or positive attitudes (37.6%). Therefore, similar to the measure of self-categorization, the data demonstrate that the LGBT community displays a great deal of variance regarding self-reported group consciousness.

Table 3.2:

Public and Private Evaluation in "A Survey of LGBT Americans"

| How much discrimination is there against gays and lesbians in our society today? | | | | |
|---|----------|----------|-------------|-----------|
| | <i>N</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>Mean</i> | <i>SD</i> |
| None at all | 14 | 1.3 | 2.5 | 0.7 |
| Only a little | 62 | 5.7 | | |
| Some | 413 | 38.0 | | |
| A lot | 598 | 55.0 | | |
| Total | 1,087 | | | |
| Thinking about your sexual orientation, do you think of it as mainly something positive in your life today, mainly something negative in your life today, or it doesn't make much of a difference either way? | | | | |
| | <i>N</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>Mean</i> | <i>SD</i> |
| Mainly something positive | 408 | 37.6 | 1.3 | 0.6 |
| Doesn't make much of a difference either way | 615 | 56.6 | | |
| Mainly something negative | 63 | 5.8 | | |
| Total | 1,086 | | | |

For these measures, we should expect experiences of discrimination, engagement in the broader gay community, and negative perceptions of the RR to increase levels of both negative public evaluation and positive private evaluation. In terms of discrimination, experiencing discrimination on a personal level raises broader perceptions

of discrimination by giving the respondent a direct connection to negative treatment. The role of the Religious Right reiterates this on a macro level by raising awareness of general levels of animosity toward the LGBT community. Somewhat counterintuitively, these negative experiences may increase positive private evaluation by retrenching group identification and giving gays a psychological and social place where they can establish a sense of identity (Simon 1999; Spears et al. 2002; Schmitt et al. 2003). It is counterpublic engagement that enhances this process, however, because the process of understanding others as similarly stigmatized raises self-esteem, lowers depression, and is associated with positive well-being (Frable et al. 1998; McKenna & Bargh 1998; Branscombe & Wann 1991). This engagement enhances perceptions of discrimination by connecting persons and allowing them to share experiences, while also increasing their sense of shared identity by allowing them to positively identify with other group members.

Importance

In addition to self-identifying with a group label and making value judgments regarding the favorability of that label, the importance of the identity to an individual also captures his level of group consciousness. Importance represents the degree of significance an individual attaches to her group label and her overall self-concept of her group membership as meaningful (Ashmore et al. 2004). A fundamental component of identity importance is the concept of psychological centrality (Stryker & Serpe 1994), which captures the extent to which a social category is essential to an individual's sense of self (Stryker & Serpe 1994; McCall & Simmons 1978; Rosenberg 1979). When persons report that their group label is important to their overall sense of identity, they acknowledge the importance and centrality of that label, indicating that it is a

fundamental component of their identity. As the identity becomes more central to respondents, it indicates higher levels of group consciousness.

Table 3.3 demonstrates the centrality of gay identity in the lives of gay Americans, demonstrating that there is a large degree of variability within the community regarding the centrality of LGBT identity. Many respondents report that the identity is very or extremely important (38.1%), signaling high levels of group consciousness, while many others report that it is not too or not at all important (33.4%), signaling low levels of group consciousness. The key independent variables of interest are expected to motivate this variability.

Table 3.3:
Importance in "A Survey of LGBT Americans"

| How important, if at all, is being [lesbian, gay, or bisexual] to your overall identity? Would you say it is . . . | | | | |
|---|----------|----------|-------------|-----------|
| | <i>N</i> | <i>%</i> | <i>Mean</i> | <i>SD</i> |
| Extremely important | 134 | 12.3 | 2.1 | 1.2 |
| Very important | 280 | 25.7 | | |
| Somewhat important | 311 | 28.6 | | |
| Not too important | 241 | 22.2 | | |
| Not at all important | 122 | 11.2 | | |
| Total | 1,088 | | | |

Discrimination, counterpublic engagement, and the role of a well-defined enemy influence identity importance through similar mechanisms as those described above. At the micro level, interpersonal discrimination increases the centrality of an identity because it determines a person's social status. Because discrimination structures access to important social, political, and economic resources, it imposes group identities from an external actor and makes them salient (Tajfel 1978). Attacks from the Religious Right enhance this process on a societal level by targeting the entire community for negative treatment and discrimination. Counterpublic spaces, conversely, provide the much-

needed areas where LGBT persons can counteract this discrimination and develop positive attachments. As attachments form, and persons are increasingly socially embedded in the broader gay community, the identity becomes more central to their overall sense of self.

Attachment

In addition to the centrality of a group identity, attachment, or the sense of closeness a person feels toward the larger group based on that identity, is also a distinct and important component of group consciousness (Ashmore et al. 2004). Attachment reflects an individual's affective involvement while also capturing the close relationships group members form with other members of the group (Heere & James 2007). An important component of attachment is interdependence, or the interconnection of the individual to the broader social group, indicating a merging of the self and the larger community (Mael & Terrick 1992; Tyler & Blader 2001). Therefore, when persons report higher levels of interdependence, or a heightened sense of shared identity with other group members, they are indicating higher levels of group consciousness. Table 3.4 displays the survey questions and data related to interdependence, which capture the attitudes of LGBT subgroups toward other community members. Participants reported their sense of shared identity for all outgroups, entailing that a lesbian respondent would only describe her feelings of shared identity regarding gay men and bisexuals. The data demonstrate the distribution of responses regarding shared identity. Similar to the previous measures, the LGBT community displays a great deal of variance regarding identity attachment, with a diversity of responses that range from feeling close to other groups to feeling very far apart. This is most evident in attitudes towards bisexuals, where

gays and lesbians are nearly 10% less likely to report that they share “a lot” with bisexuals.

Table 3.4:

Attachment in “A Survey of LGBT Americans”

| As a [lesbian, gay man, bisexual], how much do you feel you share common concerns and identity with [lesbians, gay men, bisexuals]? | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---------|----------|-------------|---------|----------|-------------|---------|----------|-------------|
| | GB to L | | | LG to B | | | LB to G | | |
| | % | <i>N</i> | <i>Mean</i> | % | <i>N</i> | <i>Mean</i> | % | <i>N</i> | <i>Mean</i> |
| Not at all | 8.5 | 69 | 1.9 | 7.2 | 48 | 1.8 | 9.5 | 66 | 1.8 |
| Only a little | 19.1 | 155 | | 25.6 | 170 | | 20.9 | 145 | |
| Some | 43.3 | 352 | | 50.8 | 337 | | 46.8 | 324 | |
| A lot | 29.2 | 237 | | 16.3 | 108 | | 22.8 | 158 | |
| Total | | 813 | | | 663 | | | 693 | |

For this analysis, increasing levels of discrimination, counterpublic engagement, and recognition of the RR’s hostility should be associated with increasing levels of ingroup attachment. Discrimination and recognition of the Religious Right increase attachment because discrimination causes minority group members to retreat from dominant society and turn inward toward their community. This retreat increases the strength and density of internal ties, pushing lesbians, gays, and bisexual persons closer to one another. The gay counterpublic boosts this process, as it provides the space where LGBT persons are able to actually meet and form those connections. By consistently engaging with one another, LGBT persons are better able to form meaningful and lasting intra-community attachments.

Across all four dimensions of group consciousness (self-categorization, evaluation, importance, and attachment), LGBT persons consistently demonstrate that they constitute an appropriate case for testing these hypotheses. While many members report high levels of group consciousness, LGBT respondents also demonstrate a substantial amount of variability. For the data to confirm the three hypotheses outlined in

Chapter 2, discrimination, counterpublic engagement, and the unfriendliness of the Religious Right must explain this variability. Discrimination and the Religious Right inform this process by pushing gays out of the mainstream and structuring their sense of the world to produce a gay-specific worldview, while the gay counterpublic allows them to form a community that mitigates these effects by giving them a sense of belonging and valuing their membership. This indicates that patterns of group consciousness within the LGBT community should help illuminate the theoretical mechanisms outlined in Chapter 2 and inform our understanding of the formation of group consciousness in minority communities.

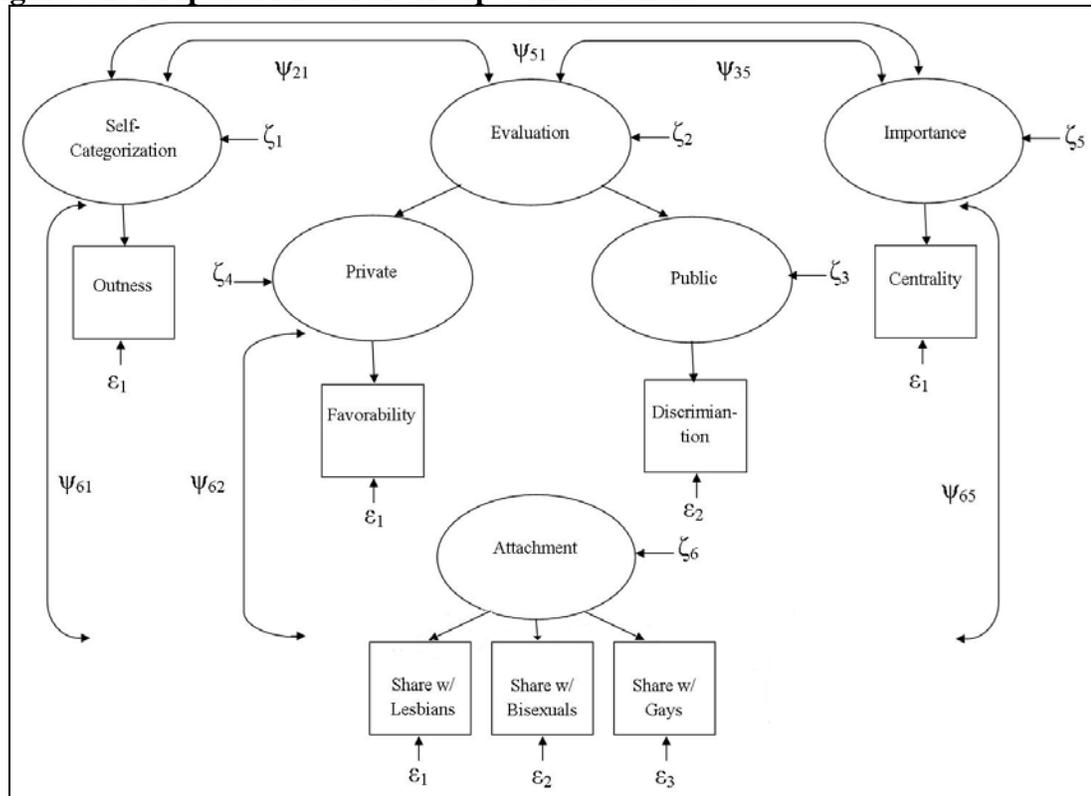
Measuring Group Consciousness

Group consciousness is a multidimensional construct that is comprised of multiple independent subcomponents. Before testing the relationship between discrimination, counterpublic engagement, the role of the Religious Right, and group consciousness, it is important to determine the most appropriate measure of group consciousness and determine if it is, in fact, multidimensional. This process makes an important contribution to the measurement of group consciousness, because its multidimensional nature is often theoretically assumed, rather than methodologically tested. To complete this process and establish an internally valid and consistent measure of group consciousness, I performed confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) using structural equation modeling (SEM).

Chapter 2 provides an overview of the foundations and assumptions of CFA using SEM, including a discussion of indications of good model fit. To summarize that discussion, CFA should be rooted in theoretical explanations of social events, and this CFA relies on the theoretical and descriptive data outlined above to justify its utilization.

CFA using SEM indicates good absolute model fit when the chi-square (Hu & Bentler 1999; Hooper et al. 2008; Barrett 2007), relative chi-square (Bentler & Bonett 1980; Joreskog & Sorbom 1993; Wheaton et al. 1977; Smith & Patterson 1995), and root-mean-square-error of approximation (RMSEA) are low (Steiger & Lind 1980; Hooper et al. 2008; Hu and Bentler 1999; Steiger 2007). The model indicates good incremental fit when the comparative fit index (CFI; Bentler 1990; Hu & Bentler 1999; Fan et al. 1999; Bollen 1989) and Tucker-Lewis index (TLI; Tucker & Lewis 1973; Bentler & Bonett 1980; Hu & Bentler 1999) are high, with values closer to 1.0 indicating better specification. Parsimony fit indices complement this, with lower Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) and higher coefficients of determination (CDs; Schreiber et al. 2006) indicating better model fit.

Figure 3.1 displays the proposed model of group consciousness, based on the four theoretical components of group consciousness outlined above. In this model, the epsilons (ϵ) represent the measurement error, the zetas (ζ) represent the residual-error terms, and the psis (ψ) represent the correlated-residual-error terms. The proposed model contains four latent dimensions regarding the measurement of group consciousness: self-categorization, evaluation, importance, and attachment. These four dimensions form the foundation of the seven indicators contained in the model, which were captured using the Pew 2013 “A Survey of LGBT Americans” dataset and described in Tables 3.1 through 3.4.

Figure 3.1: Proposed Model of Group Consciousness

Although the proposed model is four-dimensional, each latent variable has a limited number of observed constructs. This indicates that the model is underspecified for modeling using structural equations, particularly along four dimensions. However, analyzing a one-dimensional model still informs the measurement of group consciousness, as factor loadings should load onto one, and only one, latent variable (Cole 1987). This implies that if the one-dimensional model has good model fit with statistically significant factor loadings that exceed the .40 threshold, the data reject the proposed model and indicate that, in the Pew data, group consciousness is best measured along only one dimension. If the model fit is poor, with insignificant and low factor loadings, the model offers support for measuring group consciousness using multiple distinct measures.

Table 3.5 displays the model fit of M_1 , showing that the one-factor model has excellent model fit, with an insignificant chi-square statistic, a low relative chi-square value, AIC, and RMSEA, and a high CFI, TLI, and CD. Because all of these values meet conventional standards for good model fit, this CFA indicates that group consciousness is best measured as a one-dimensional construct. Therefore, the results suggest that, while group consciousness is comprised of multiple theoretical subcomponents, these subcomponents are methodologically part of the same construct.

Table 3.5:
CFA: Group Consciousness Measures

| | M_0 : Null | | M_1 : One-Factor | |
|------------|--------------|-------------|--------------------|----------|
| | Sample 1 | Sample 2 | Sample 1 | Sample 2 |
| X^2 (df) | 315.96 (10) | 293.40 (10) | 9.33 (5) | 7.63 (5) |
| X^2/df | 31.6 | 29.34 | 1.87 | 1.53 |
| AIC | - | - | 7275.52 | 6408.53 |
| CFI | - | - | 0.97 | 0.99 |
| TLI | - | - | 0.97 | 0.98 |
| CD | - | - | 0.68 | 0.68 |
| RMSEA | - | - | 0.04 | 0.03 |

A preliminary analysis of the factor loadings, however, suggests that the public evaluation subcomponent should not be included in the overall index. Factor loadings for all components, including self-categorization, private evaluation, identity importance, and community attachment were significant above the .40 level. However, the factor loading for public evaluation, measured through perception of shared discrimination, did not meet the .40 threshold.^{viii} This demonstrates that the variable should be removed from the one-factor model. This finding is somewhat intuitive, as perceptions of discrimination capture negative outgroup relationships, while positive internal associations capture affirmative ingroup relationships. One variable signifies the negativity and discrimination that exists

between groups, while the other signifies the positivity and connectedness that occurs between members of the same group. Consequently, it is unsurprising that the two dimensions of group consciousness operate distinctly among LGBT persons.

Table 3.6 confirms this, as the modified one-factor model (M_{1b}) outperforms the original one-factor model. With a lower chi-square statistic, a lower relative chi-square statistic, a lower AIC, a lower RMSEA, and higher CFIs, TLIs, and CDs, M_{1b} demonstrates that is the best overall representation of group consciousness. This suggests that, in Pew’s 2013 “A Survey of LGBT Americans,” two distinct measures, one that includes self-categorization, private evaluation, importance, and attachment, and one that measures public evaluation, should be used to capture respondents’ overall levels of group consciousness.

Table 3.6:

CFA: The Modified One-Factor Model

| | M_0 : Null | | M_1 : One-Factor | | M_{1b} : Modified One-Factor | |
|------------|--------------|-------------|--------------------|----------|--------------------------------|----------|
| | Sample 1 | Sample 2 | Sample 1 | Sample 2 | Sample 1 | Sample 2 |
| X^2 (df) | 246.06 (6) | 293.40 (10) | 9.33 (5) | 7.63 (5) | 0.50 (2) | 0.62 (2) |
| X^2/df | 41.01 | 29.34 | 1.87 | 1.53 | 0.25 | 0.31 |
| AIC | - | - | 7275.52 | 6408.53 | 6380.74 | 6216.57 |
| CFI | - | - | 0.97 | 0.99 | 1.00 | 1.00 |
| TLI | - | - | 0.97 | 0.98 | 1.02 | 1.02 |
| CD | - | - | 0.68 | 0.68 | 0.66 | 0.67 |
| RMSEA | - | - | 0.04 | 0.03 | 0.00 | 0.00 |

Using the modified one-factor model, Table 3.7 demonstrates the factor loadings for the updated model. For this measure of group consciousness, all factor loadings were above the .40 threshold, indicating that they are internally consistent and that the latent variable is correctly specified.

Table 3.7:
Factor Loadings for M_{1b}

| Observed Variable | Latent Construct | Subsample 1 ($N=545$) | | Subsample 2 ($N=546$) | |
|----------------------|---------------------|----------------------------|------|----------------------------|------|
| | | B | SE | B | SE |
| Self-Categorization+ | Group Consciousness | 0.59 | 0.04 | 0.56 | 0.05 |
| Private Evaluation | Group Consciousness | 0.53 | 0.04 | 0.50 | 0.05 |
| Importance | Group Consciousness | 0.68 | 0.04 | 0.70 | 0.05 |
| Attachment | Group Consciousness | 0.48 | 0.05 | 0.43 | 0.05 |

Notes: All estimates are completely standardized and are significant at $\alpha < 0.05$. The symbol + indicates a constrained parameter.

This finding makes an important and interesting contribution that challenges the conventional measurement of group consciousness. Although group consciousness is multidimensional in nature and contains multiple subcomponents, spanning from identity salience to in-group attachment, its most appropriate operationalization may not directly reflect the four dimensions outlined above. Rather, this CFA suggests that group consciousness primarily falls along two axes, rather than four. These axes include: (1) positive in-group associations, and (2) perceptions of negative out-group treatment. In some ways, this finding seems intuitive, as the concept of positive in-group associations, captured by self-identifying, viewing the group in a positive light, assigning importance to the identity, and feeling close to those who share the identity, all capture similar sentiments. For these measures, respondents are reporting their overall positive assessments and feelings of closeness to other gays. Conversely, recognizing public discrimination captures a fundamentally different concept that better measures the distance and animosity between gays and non-group members. Moving forward, this implies that group consciousness is best measured along these two dimensions and that researchers should further consider how differences between in-group attachment and

out-group assessments motivate the formation of a uniquely two-dimensional sense of group consciousness.

Testing From People to Actors

The results of the CFA in Chapter 2 indicated that discrimination, engagement in the gay counterpublic, and recognition of the Religious Right as a political enemy were all conceptually and methodologically distinct. The CFA also confirmed that each theoretical dimension contained numerous subcomponents that all measured different aspects of the same latent construct. Therefore, the independent variables are measured using additive composite indices, with a distinct index measuring discrimination, counterpublic engagement, and recognition of the RR.^{ix}

The first index measures discrimination using an additive measure of the number of discrimination events a respondent has experienced. Based on CFA, this Discrimination Index (DI) includes whether a respondent has faced discrimination by being threatened or physically attacked, being subject to slurs or jokes, receiving poor service in restaurants, hotels, or other places of business, being made to feel unwelcome at a place of worship or religious organization, being treated unfairly by an employer in hiring, pay or promotion, and/or being rejected by a friend or family member. Because discriminatory events were highly unlikely to occur within the past year, with a 6.8% average chance of occurring, responses capture only whether a respondent lacked experience with that event (score of 0) or had experienced that event during his lifetime (score of 1). Because all six subcomponents have the same scale, all components were equally weighted. The resulting DI ranges from a score of zero, indicating a lack of discriminatory events, to a score of six, indicating experience with all subcomponents of

discrimination. Table 3.8 contains summary statistics for the Discrimination Index, demonstrating the distribution of discrimination experiences across the LGBT community.

Table 3.8:
The Discrimination Index: Summary Statistics

| Discrimination Index | <i>N</i> | % | <i>Mean</i> | <i>Minimum</i> | <i>Maximum</i> | <i>SD</i> |
|----------------------|----------|------|-------------|----------------|----------------|-----------|
| 0 Events | 294 | 27.2 | 2.1 | 0 | 6 | 1.9 |
| 1 Event | 185 | 17.1 | | | | |
| 2 Events | 184 | 17.0 | | | | |
| 3 Events | 157 | 14.5 | | | | |
| 4 Events | 101 | 9.3 | | | | |
| 5 Events | 93 | 8.6 | | | | |
| 6 Events | 69 | 6.4 | | | | |
| Total | 1,083 | | | | | |

The second index measures counterpublic engagement using an additive measure of the number of counterpublic engagements. This includes participation in LGBT organizations, attendance at an LGBT pride event, and the number of LGBT friends a respondent reports. Following the logic of discrimination events, the LGBT organization and pride participation variables were measured according to whether a respondent had never participated (score of 0) or had participated within her lifetime (1). The LGBT friends measure captures four response options, including no LGBT friends (0), only a few LGBT friends (1), some LGBT friends (2), and all or mostly LGBT friends (3). Given the different scales between the variables and the conceptual difference between having no or few LGBT friends compared to many or most LGBT friends, the LGBT friends measure was recoded into a binary scale with one response option capturing no or only a few LGBT friends (0) and one response option capturing some, all, or mostly LGBT friends (1). All three measures were weighted equally and added together to create the Counterpublic Engagement Index (CEI). The CEI ranges from a score of zero,

indicating no counterpublic engagement, to a score of three, indicating high levels of engagement across all three subcomponents. Table 3.9 contains summary statistics for the Counterpublic Engagement Index, demonstrating the distribution of counterpublic engagement within the LGBT community.

Table 3.9:

The Counterpublic Engagement Index: Summary Statistics

| Counterpublic Engagement Index | <i>N</i> | % | <i>Mean</i> | <i>Minimum</i> | <i>Maximum</i> | <i>SD</i> |
|--------------------------------|----------|------|-------------|----------------|----------------|-----------|
| 0 Engagements | 225 | 21.1 | 1.7 | 0 | 3 | 1.1 |
| 1 Engagement | 223 | 20.9 | | | | |
| 2 Engagements | 269 | 25.2 | | | | |
| 3 Engagements | 352 | 32.9 | | | | |
| Total | 1,069 | | | | | |

The third index captures recognition of the RR's hostility and unfriendliness toward the LGBT community. This index, the Religious Right Index (RRI), was originally intended to be an additive measure that captured the degree to which respondents viewed the Evangelical, Catholic, Muslim, and Mormon religious traditions as unfriendly. However, given that over 65.9% of respondents viewed all religions as unfriendly, this index had very limited variability. Therefore, the variable was transformed into an ordinal measure ranging from recognizing two or fewer religions as unfriendly (0), to recognizing three religions as unfriendly (1), or recognizing all four religions as unfriendly (2).

Table 3.10:

The Religious Right Index: Summary Statistics

| Religious Right Index | <i>N</i> | % | <i>Mean</i> | <i>Minimum</i> | <i>Maximum</i> | <i>SD</i> |
|--|----------|------|-------------|----------------|----------------|-----------|
| Recognizes <=2 Religions as Unfriendly | 145 | 13.4 | 1.5 | 0 | 2 | 0.7 |
| Recognizes 3 Religions as Unfriendly | 220 | 20.3 | | | | |
| Recognizes 4 Religions as Unfriendly | 718 | 66.3 | | | | |
| Total | 1,083 | | | | | |

Two measures capture the dependent variable, group consciousness. The first measure is an additive index based on self-categorization, private evaluation, importance, and attachment. Self-categorization includes four response options and ranges from not being out at all (score of 0) to being all or mostly out (score of 3), private evaluation includes three response options and ranges from negative favorability (score of 0) to positive favorability (score of 2), importance includes five response options and ranges from not at all important (score of 0) to extremely important (score of 4), and attachment includes four response options and ranges from sharing nothing at all with other groups (score of 0) to sharing a lot with other groups (score of 3).^x The resulting Positive Identity Index (PII), ranges from no positive identification, a score of 0, to high positive identification, a score of 12. However, this index had limited variability and minimal sample size across certain categories; for example, only 25 respondents received a PII score between 0 and 3, and only 35 respondents received a PII score between 11 and 12. To address this limitation, the PII was rescaled following the logic contained in Table 3.11, which also displays the PII's summary statistics. For this analysis to confirm all three hypotheses, discrimination, counterpublic engagement, and recognition of the RR must be positively associated with increasing scores on the Positive Identity Index.

Table 3.11:*The Positive Identity Index: Summary Statistics*

| PII Score | Original Score | <i>N</i> | % | <i>Mean</i> | <i>Min.</i> | <i>Max.</i> | <i>SD</i> |
|-----------|----------------|----------|------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|
| 0 | 0, 1, 2, 3 | 48 | 4.5 | 4.7 | 0 | 8 | 2.3 |
| 1 | 4 | 73 | 6.8 | | | | |
| 2 | 5 | 82 | 7.6 | | | | |
| 3 | 6 | 126 | 11.7 | | | | |
| 4 | 7 | 137 | 12.7 | | | | |
| 5 | 8 | 149 | 13.8 | | | | |
| 6 | 9 | 182 | 16.9 | | | | |
| 7 | 10 | 153 | 14.2 | | | | |
| 8 | 11, 12 | 127 | 11.8 | | | | |
| Total | | 1,077 | | | | | |

The second measure of group consciousness, the Public Evaluation Index (PEI) captures the public evaluation variable using each respondent's level of perceived discrimination. Summary statistics for this variable are described in Table 3.2. Given the limited number of respondents who selected "no" or "a little" discrimination, these response options were combined to better capture the variation in responses. The recoded variable includes three categories that are depicted in Table 3.12. For the hypotheses to be confirmed, all three independent variables must be positively associated with increased levels of perceived discrimination.

Table 3.12:*The Public Evaluation Index: Summary Statistics*

| | <i>N</i> | % | <i>Mean</i> | <i>Min.</i> | <i>Max.</i> | <i>SD</i> |
|-------------------------------|----------|------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-----------|
| 0 (Only a little/None at all) | 75 | 6.9 | 1.5 | 0 | 2 | 0.6 |
| 1 (Some) | 413 | 38.0 | | | | |
| 2 (A lot) | 598 | 55.0 | | | | |
| Total | 1,087 | | | | | |

In addition to the independent variables and dependent variables, there are number of theoretically relevant controls necessary to include in the models, as discussed

in the introductory chapter. These include measures of racial/ethnic identity, age, education, income, and LGBT subgroup membership. Based on the information contained in the introduction, racial and ethnic minorities are expected to report lower levels of group consciousness, given the internal discrimination they face from the broader gay community. Similarly, older Americans are expected to report lower levels of group consciousness because of the severe discrimination they have faced on behalf of their identity. Education and income are consistently found to increase levels of group consciousness (Verba et al. 1995; Duncan, 1999; Masuoka 2006; Sanchez 2006), and they are expected to operate similarly among LGBT respondents. Finally, bisexuals and lesbians are expected to report lower levels of group consciousness relative to gay men, given internal divisions within the community that have historically separated bisexuals and lesbians from gay men. Summary statistics for each variable are included in Appendix C.

Results

Because both the Positive Identity Index and the Public Evaluation Index are ordinal rankings, the models are estimated using ordinal logistic regression with robust standard errors. The output in Table 3.13 demonstrates that experiences of discrimination, engagement in the gay counterpublic, and recognition of the Religious Right as an enemy to LGBT persons strongly drive the formation of group consciousness. Aside from age and bisexuality, these variables are the only consistently significant predictors across both models, further indicating their influence in shaping the development of group consciousness in LGBT persons. Thus, the results provide strong support for all three hypotheses, indicating that group consciousness is primarily a function of experiences of

discrimination, engagement in counterpublic spaces, and the influence of a well-defined political enemy.

Table 3.13:
Ordered Logistic Models of Group Consciousness

| | PII | | PEI | |
|--------------------------|-----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> |
| Discrimination | 0.161*** | (0.035) | 0.169*** | (0.041) |
| Counterpublic Engagement | 0.753*** | (0.065) | 0.276*** | (0.067) |
| Recognition of RR | 0.153** | (0.077) | 0.420*** | (0.096) |
| Age | -0.210*** | (0.037) | -0.131** | (0.044) |
| Education | 0.022 | (0.091) | -0.067 | (0.093) |
| Income | -0.004 | (0.028) | -0.345 | (0.032) |
| Black, Non-Hispanic | -0.219 | (0.259) | 0.629** | (0.266) |
| Hispanic | 0.109 | (0.259) | -0.340 | (0.228) |
| Other, Non-Hispanic | -0.487** | (0.238) | -0.049 | (0.280) |
| Lesbian | -0.004 | (0.144) | 0.252 | (0.162) |
| Bisexual | -1.189*** | (0.156) | 0.349*** | (0.166) |
| N | 1,045 | | 1,052 | |
| X^2 | 469.50*** | | 89.58*** | |

Note. * $p < .10$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .01$

The control variables tended to support theoretical expectations, although few of the demographic controls were statistically or substantively meaningful. Regarding race, both African Americans and respondents reporting “Other” races reported significantly lower levels of the Positive Identity Index than their White counterparts. Although this supports theoretical expectations, the effects are not substantively meaningful. To demonstrate, African Americans were only 1% more likely to report the lowest PII score and 1% less likely to report the highest PII score. Given this minimal difference, it appears that race and ethnicity do not fundamentally structure levels of positive in-group evaluations and that racial and ethnic minorities maintain similar levels of LGBT group consciousness relative to their White counterparts. Regarding the discrimination aspect of group consciousness, minorities reported higher levels of perceived discrimination than

Whites, although not significantly so. Therefore, similar to the Positive Identity Index, racial and ethnic minorities possess similar perceptions of negative out-group treatment as their White counterparts.

Comparable to the minimal impact of race and ethnicity on the development of group consciousness, many of the other demographic control variables displayed insignificant results. Education, income, and lesbian identity were insignificant across both models, demonstrating that these variables do not significantly influence the development of LGBT-related group consciousness. Age and bisexuality, however, demonstrated significant differences across both models. Older Americans were significantly more likely to report lower levels of both measures of group consciousness. Regarding the Positive Identity Index, the effects of increasing age were moderately powerful, with the oldest Americans being 3% more likely to report the lowest levels of the PII and 8% less likely to report the highest levels of the PII, when compared to the youngest Americans. The effects for the Public Evaluation Index were more pronounced, with the oldest Americans being 4% more likely to report no/a little discrimination and 19% less likely to report that gays and lesbians face a lot of discrimination. Bisexuals reflected these effects on the Positive Identity Index, as they were 3% more likely to report the lowest PII score and 7% less likely to report the highest PII score. The effect of bisexuality had the opposite impact as the effect of age on public evaluations, however, as bisexuals reported significantly higher levels of discrimination facing the community. Bisexuals were 2% less likely to report that there is no/a little discrimination facing LGBTs and 9% more likely to report that there is a lot of discrimination facing the community. In total, these results demonstrate that older respondents, racial and ethnic

minorities, and bisexuals are somewhat different from their young, White, and gay/lesbian counterparts, but that these differences are relatively minor across most demographic categories.

Although all three independent variables and a variety of the controls were significant predictors of the development of group consciousness across both measures, the strength of the DI's, CEI's, and RRI's substantive effects may be the strongest evidence for their relevance. To demonstrate the power of these effects, I examine the marginal effects of each model using two strategies. First, I graph the predicted probability of reporting each category of the group consciousness variables, moving from the minimum category to the maximum category for each of the independent variables, holding all other variables to their mean or mode. Therefore, all control variables were held at a constant value, while the independent variable of interest was allowed to vary (i.e. moving from no discrimination to 6 experiences of discrimination). Although a minimum to a maximum change is a dramatic shift, it is not unrealistic or improbable for LGBT persons to experience this change over time. For example, it is plausible that a person could experience no discrimination, particularly if they are not "out," and then experience all components of discrimination upon coming out. Similarly, a person may not engage in the broader gay community and then experience a lift event, such as coming out or making a new gay friend, that encourages him to be an active member. Therefore, analyzing the difference between the highest and lowest utilizers not only represents the powerful influence of each variable, but it also captures a process that is likely to occur for many people over the course of a lifetime.

The second strategy graphs changes across the minimum, average, and maximum cases. The minimum case represents a DI score of 0, a CEI score of 0, and an RRI score of 0, the average case represents a DI score of 2, a CEI score of 2, and a RRI score of 2, and the maximum case represents a DI score of 6, a CEI score of 3, and a RRI score of 2. By allowing values of all three independent variables to vary in these graphs, we are better able to understand how the independent variables work together to amplify (or dampen) the development of group consciousness. Figure 3.2 displays the Positive Identity Index's marginal effects and Figure 3.3 displays the PII's case comparison.

Figure 3.2:

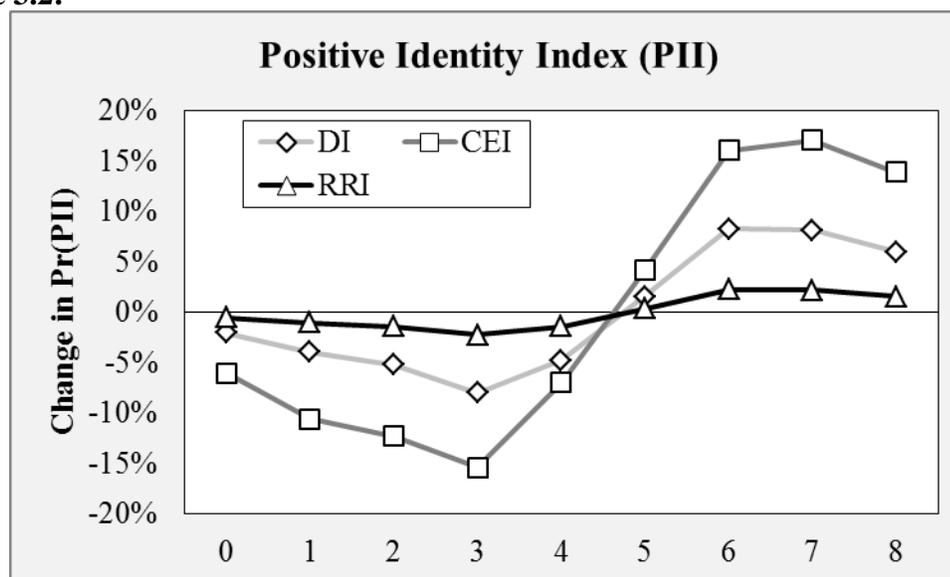
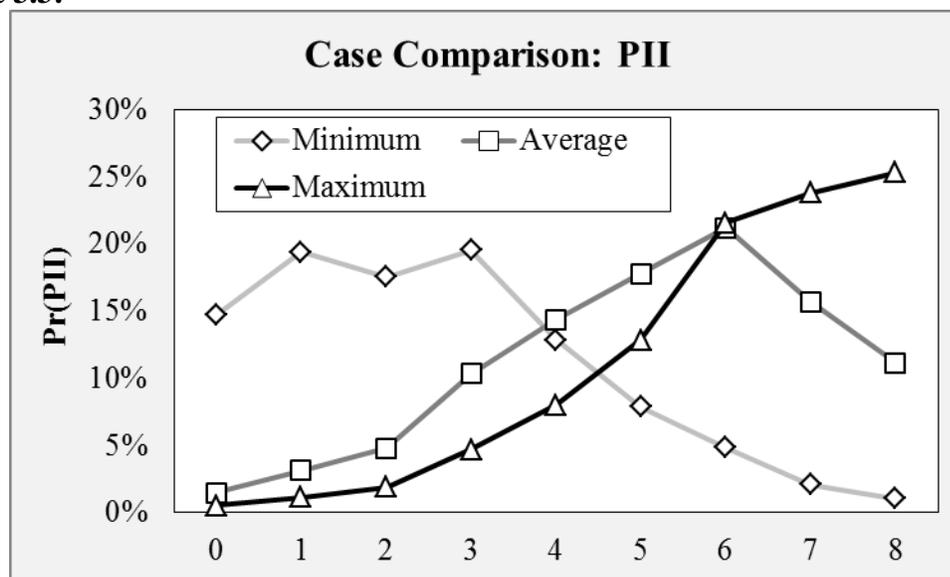


Figure 3.3:



Figures 3.2 and 3.3 display a powerful relationship between all three independent variables and respondents' levels of group consciousness. Across discrimination, counterpublic engagement, and the unfriendliness of the Religious Right, low scores on the independent variables are related to low levels of group consciousness, while high scores on the independent variables are related to high levels of group consciousness. This indicates that, given low levels of discrimination, low levels of engagement in the gay counterpublic, and/or lacking recognition of the RR, LGBT persons are expected to report low levels of group consciousness. Conversely, when respondents experience discrimination, engage in the broader gay community, and/or recognize the role of their opposition, they consistently report higher levels of group consciousness.

These effects are most pronounced for engagement in the gay counterpublic. Regarding the Positive Identity Index, a person with no counterpublic engagement has a 7% probability of reporting no group consciousness, while a person with the maximum level of counterpublic engagement only has a 1% probability of reporting the same outcome. At the other end of the spectrum, a person with no counterpublic engagement

has only a 2% chance of selecting the highest level of group consciousness, while a person with the highest level of counterpublic engagement has a 16% chance of selecting the same outcome. This demonstrates that persons with high levels of counterpublic engagement are 8 times more likely to report high levels of group consciousness than non-engagers. In this case, the probability of selecting low levels of group consciousness decreases as values of the CEI increase, while the probability of selecting high levels of group consciousness increases as values of the CEI increase. This demonstrates a very strong effect, showing that those who are highly engaged in the LGBT community report consistently higher levels of LGBT group consciousness, while those who lack engagement are much more likely to report an absence of group consciousness.

Experiences of discrimination have a similar influence on the development of group consciousness. As the number of discrimination experiences increases, the probability of selecting the low-consciousness categories decreases, while the probability of selecting the high-consciousness categories increases. Over the range of discrimination experiences, this leads to a large chasm between those who have experienced no discrimination compared to those who have experienced the full range. For example, a person with no discrimination experiences has only a 5% chance of reporting the highest PII score, while a person with six discrimination experiences has a 12% chance of selecting the same outcome. Thus, persons with the highest levels of discrimination are 2.4 times more likely to report the highest level of group consciousness. At the other end of the spectrum, persons with no discrimination experiences are 2.6 times more likely to report the lowest PII score. These substantive effects indicate that, as LGBT persons

experience more discrimination, they consistently report higher levels of self-categorization, private evaluation, identity importance, and community attachment.

Finally, recognizing the RR as an enemy also maintains a meaningful effect. Recognizing the Religious Right as a threat to the LGBT community increases the likelihood of reporting high scores on the Positive Identity Index, while decreasing the probability of reporting low scores. Recognizing all four religious as unfriendly toward LGBT persons increases the probability of reporting the highest PII score by 2%, while similarly decreasing the probability of reporting low PII scores.

Examining the gaps between the minimum, average, and maximum cases further demonstrates this relationship. The minimum case had a 12% probability of reporting a Positive Identity Index score of 0, which was drastically higher than both the average (2% probability) and maximum (0.4% probability) cases. Comparing these three cases, those with no discrimination, counterpublic engagement, or recognition of the RR were 7.7 times more likely to lack group consciousness than the average case and more 29 times more likely than the maximum case. Regarding high levels of group consciousness, those with low levels of discrimination, engagement, and recognition were considerably less likely to report high levels of group consciousness. The probability of reporting the highest PII score was only 1% for the minimum case, while it was 9% for the average case, and 28% for the maximum case. This is nearly an exact reversal of the previous example, with the maximum case being 25.5 times more likely to report high levels of group consciousness and the average case being 8 times more likely to report high levels of group consciousness. Although the effects are most drastic for the maximum case, it is important to note that the average case tracks closely to the maximum case. This

indicates that the average respondent maintains a marked increase in their reported level of group consciousness relative to the independent variables.

Each independent variable maintains similarly impactful effects regarding the Public Evaluation Index. Figures 3.4 and 3.5 display the strong relationship between discrimination, counterpublic engagement, recognition of the Religious Right, and group consciousness, with low DI, CEI, and RRI scores consistently related to low levels of consciousness and high scores consistently related to high levels of consciousness. Regarding public evaluation, the substantive effects are most pronounced for the Religious Right Index, with increasing values of the RRI associated with a decreased probability of reporting no/a little discrimination or some discrimination and an increased probability of reporting a lot of discrimination. Persons reporting the highest levels of unfriendliness are 24% more likely to report that there is a lot of discrimination facing gays and lesbians than those with no recognition of the RR's unfriendliness. They are also significantly less likely to report lower levels of discrimination, such as being 17% less likely to report some discrimination and 7% less likely to report no/a little discrimination. Given that persons with the highest RRI scores have a 60% probability of reporting that there are high levels of societal discrimination facing gays and lesbians, it is evident that there are large differences between those who recognize the Religious Right's unfriendliness and those who do not.

Figure 3.4:

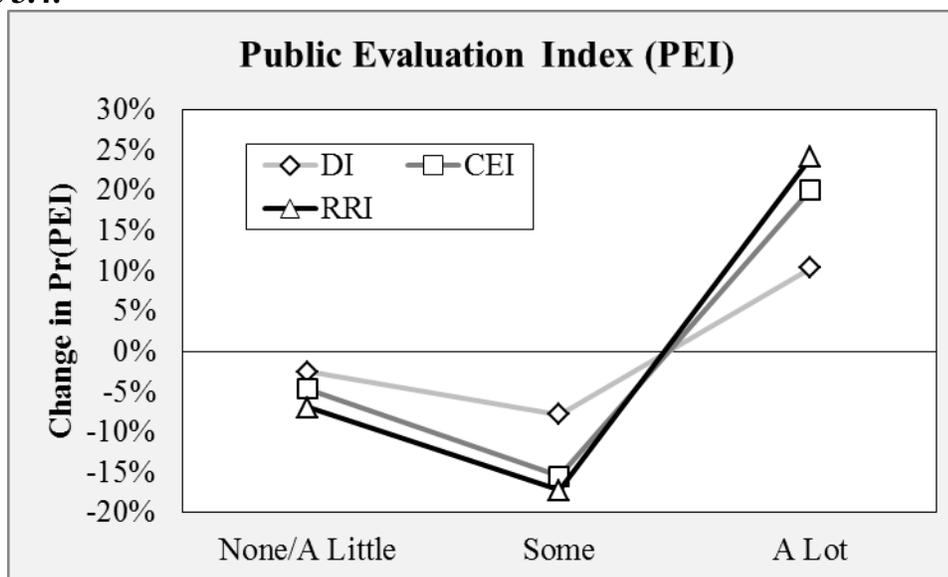
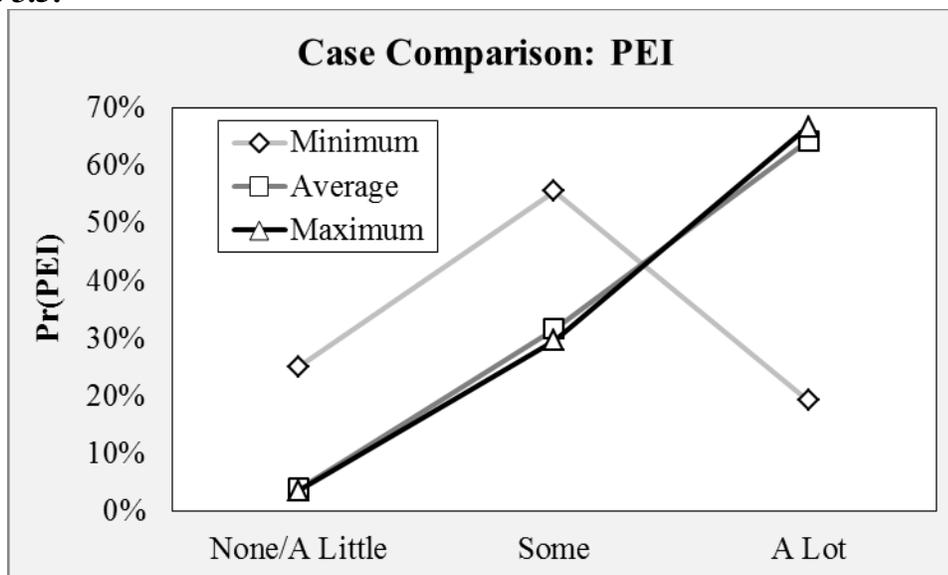


Figure 3.5:



The Counterpublic Engagement Index maintains similar effects on public evaluations. As the number of counterpublic engagements increases, respondents routinely report higher levels of perceived discrimination. Conversely, when respondents lack engagement in the gay counterpublic, they often report much lower levels of discrimination. For the highest engagers, respondents are 5% less likely to select no/a little discrimination, 16% less likely to select some discrimination, and 20% more likely

to select a lot of discrimination. Further, the most active engagers have a 64% probability of reporting that there is a lot of discrimination facing gays, while having only a 4% probability of reporting that there is no/a little discrimination. The effects of the Discrimination Index are similar, with increasing discrimination decreasing the probability of selecting a little/none (3%) and some (8%), while increasing the probability of selecting of a lot (10%). Additionally, there is a 56% probability that persons reporting the most experiences with discrimination will report high levels of perceived societal discrimination.

Exploring the differences between the minimum, average, and maximum cases further clarifies these effects. For the Public Evaluation Index, the minimal case had a 25% probability of reporting that there is little or no discrimination facing gays and lesbians, a 56% probability of reporting that there is some discrimination, and a 20% probability of reporting that there is a lot of discrimination. The average case is considerably more likely to report higher levels of discrimination when compared to the minimal case, with a 16% decrease in the probability of reporting little or no discrimination, a 23% decrease in the probability of reporting some discrimination, and a 40% increase in the probability of reporting a lot of discrimination. The strongest effects, however, are evident in the maximum case, with only a 3% probability of reporting that there is little or no discrimination and a 30% chance of reporting that there is some discrimination. Further, the maximum case had a 67% probability of reporting that there is a lot of discrimination, indicating a difference of nearly 50% when compared to the minimum case. Overall, this framework captures the enormous differences between the minimum case compared to the average and maximum cases, with high levels of the

independent variables consistently fostering high levels of group consciousness in the LGBT community.

Discussion

In conclusion, the results from both the CFA and the ordered logistic regression model demonstrate strong support for the hypotheses detailed in Chapter 2, as well as the usage of a two-dimensional strategy for measuring group consciousness. Regarding the measurement of group consciousness, this chapter has made an important contribution to the operationalization of group consciousness by demonstrating that it primarily operates along two distinct axes. This includes the independent components of: (1) the degree of positive in-group associations, and (2) the perception of negative out-group evaluations. The degree of positive in-group associations captures identity integration by measuring the extent to which respondents self-categorize as LGBT, evaluate their LGBT status as a positive factor in their life, report that their LGBT identity is an important component of their overall identity, and feel close to other members of their community. The degree of negative out-group evaluations captures perceived discrimination and signals the extent to which a respondent recognizes the discrimination that faces gays and lesbians. Using these measures, this chapter provides among the first methodological analyses of the measurement of group consciousness and its theoretical inputs in the political science literature.

The model results contained in Table 3.13 also strongly support this, as many of the independent variables and controls operate differently across both models. To demonstrate, discrimination and the influence of the Religious Right play a more powerful role in explaining negative public evaluations relative to explaining positive in-

group associations. Similarly, counterpublic engagement plays a stronger role in explaining positive in-group attachments and a considerably weaker role in explaining public evaluation. The controls further support this, with many of the independent variables and control variables demonstrating different levels of significance and magnitude across the two dependent variables. Consequently, the models support the utilization of a two distinct measures for group consciousness and provide additional confirmation for the CFA's findings. Following from these results, scholars should begin to operationalize group consciousness along two dimensions and recognize that the highest levels of group consciousness will be present when respondents report positive feelings for their in-group, combined with a sense that out-groups evaluate them negatively (i.e., they face a substantial amount of discrimination).

The CFA results also provided the foundation for testing the hypotheses outlined in Chapter 2. Taken together, the results demonstrate the powerful substantive effects of discrimination, counterpublic engagement, and recognition of the Religious Right. At high levels of each independent variable, levels of group consciousness remain consistently high. Conversely, at low levels of each index, levels of group consciousness remain low or nonexistent. Not only do these three variables maintain consistent and independent effects, but they also display strong effects when analyzed together. At one extreme, persons with the highest levels of discrimination, counterpublic engagement, and recognition of the RR have incredibly high probabilities, approximately 70% for some measures, of reporting high levels of LGBT group consciousness. At the other extreme, persons with the lowest levels of these measures have substantially lower probabilities of reporting strong group consciousness, with some probabilities below 1%.

These results demonstrate the significance and substantive importance of each variable, with the models and marginal effects confirming all three hypotheses.

Although the marginal effects varied across models, an interesting result of this analysis was the powerful role that engagement in the gay counterpublic plays in motivating the development of group consciousness. Although discrimination and recognition of the Religious Right play an important role in the formation of LGBT identity, particularly regarding public evaluations, counterpublic engagement maintains very powerful and consistent effects across both models. Therefore, engaging in the gay counterpublic has an impact that is almost as powerful as discrimination itself in explaining perceptions of discrimination. This finding is likely to have important implications that help inform our expectations about the future of the gay political movement. Given the powerful influence of the gay counterpublic, group consciousness should remain highly political and salient if LGBT persons continue to engage in the broader gay community. With marriage bans being overturned, more heterosexuals reporting favorable attitudes towards gays, and a series of gay political victories, the effects of discrimination and the Religious Right may taper with time. Yet, this chapter suggests that gay identity will matter as long as gay people need to engage in gay-specific public spaces to meet and form relationships.

Conclusion

This chapter provided the first systematic analysis of the measurement of group consciousness and the formation of politicized identity within the gay community. In providing this foundation, the results help inform our understanding of minority politics. Regarding group consciousness, these results suggest that group consciousness is best

understood as a two-part process in which minority group members positively internally associate with their minority group while also externally recognizing the threats facing the group. Moving forward, scholars of minority politics and group consciousness should build on this foundation and better incorporate two-dimensional measures of group consciousness. Regarding identity formation, this chapter shows that group consciousness is predominately a byproduct of discrimination, engagement in minority-specific public spaces, and recognition of a hostile political enemy. The implications of these findings are important because they demonstrate that these factors represent the political conditions that encourage politicized identity to emerge. With a strong foundation explaining the sources of group consciousness in minority groups, the next three chapters turn to testing this relationship regarding political outputs, such as the political attitudes, opinions, and behaviors of LGBT persons.

CHAPTER FOUR
OUT OF THE CLOSET AND INTO THE STREETS: LGBT GROUP
CONSCIOUSNESS AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

How does group consciousness influence LGBT political participation?

Addressing this question is particularly relevant for the LGBT community because evidence suggests that LGBT persons are significantly more likely to participate in politics than heterosexuals are. For example, exit polls demonstrate that LGBT persons constitute over 5% of the voting population (Cohen 2012a, 2012b), even though they only comprise 3.5% of the adult population (Gates & Newport 2012, 2013). Further, in the 2012 presidential election, the total number of LGBT voters nearly matched the number of Hispanic voters and exceeded the number of Asian and Pacific Islander voters, even though the size of both the Hispanic and Asian/Pacific Islander communities significantly exceeds the size of the LGBT community (Hertzog 1996; Cohen 2012a, 2012b; Grindley 2012; HRC 2012). This particularly high rate of LGBT political participation is referred to as the “sexuality gap” in participation (Hertzog 1996). Although scholars recognize the existence of the sexuality gap, we currently lack any explanations for *why* these high levels of participation exist among gays and lesbians. This chapter addresses this limitation by examining the relationship between group consciousness and LGBT political participation. Data from Pew’s 2013 “A Survey of LGBT Americans” demonstrate that LGBT people regularly participate in politics through mechanisms such as attending rallies or marches in support of gay rights, donating to political candidates and organizations that are supportive of gay rights, boycotting anti-gay companies, and voting. Using these data, I demonstrate that group

consciousness is the primary driver of LGBT political participation, thereby explaining the high rates of political participation in the gay community. Overall, the results suggest that as long as LGBT persons maintain high levels of LGBT-related consciousness, they will also maintain high levels of political participation.

Traditional Explanations of Political Participation

Political participation is the result of a dynamic process in which numerous factors contribute to a person's probability of engaging in political action. It is among the most studied and theorized components of political science, because it is focused on the activities that citizens use to influence the structure of government, the formation of government policies, and the selection of governing authorities (Milbrath & Goel 1977; Verba et al. 1978; Wolfinger & Rosenstone 1980; Verba et al. 1995; Conway 2000, 2001). It is important because it represents the mechanisms that individuals use to pressure the government to respond to their interests. Participation is considered one of the three main indicators of democratic performance (Powell 1982) and scholars argue that "citizen participation is at the heart of democracy" (Verba et al. 1995: p.1). Because the notion that people should be involved in the process of governing is central to the philosophy of democracy, explaining why some people participate in politics while others do not is fundamental to our understanding of American politics.

Traditional explanations of political participation center on socioeconomic status (SES; Lindquist 1964; Verba & Nie 1972; Peterson 1990; Wolfinger & Rosenstone 1980; Verba et al. 1995; Leighley & Nagler 2013), political efficacy (Craig & Maggionto 1982; Sabucedo & Cramer 1991; Sears 1987), party mobilization (Huckfeldt & Sprague 1992; Rosenstone & Hansen 1993), and social capital (Putnam 1995a, 1995b, 2001; La Due

Lake & Huckfeldt 1998; McClurg 2003). Socioeconomic status is among the most commonly utilized variables in explaining levels of participation, with higher SES, measured through higher education, higher income, and employment in higher status occupations, being strongly and consistently associated with higher levels of participation (Lindquist 1964; Verba & Nie 1972; Brady et al. 1995; Verba et al. 1995; Leighley & Nagler 2013; Schlozman et al. 2012). The general argument underlying this body of research is that higher SES individuals are more likely to participate because their access to more resources increases their motivation, knowledge, and skills (Schlozman et al. 2012). Because politics is difficult to understand and costly to participate in, high SES status indicates that an individual has both the cognitive skills and financial resources necessary to participate. Among SES variables, education consistently demonstrates the greatest impact on participation (Leighley & Nagler 1992; Wolfinger & Rosenstone 1980).

Although SES is among the best-tested explanations for political participation, its relationship to minority politics is somewhat complicated, because the behavior of minorities does not always follow the logic of the SES model. To demonstrate, Asian Americans have high median incomes, high levels of education, and often occupy prestigious jobs, but also demonstrate low levels of political participation (Cain et al. 1991; Tam 1995; Lien et al. 2001; Xu 2005; Cho et al. 2006). Conversely, African Americans exhibit high levels of political participation relative to their SES (Olsen 1970; Dawson 1994; Verba & Nie 1972; Verba et al. 1995). Therefore, scholars of minority politics argue that the SES model may not fully capture the social and psychological

processes that shape minority groups and, in turn, affect their rates of political participation (Hunt et al. 2000).

Political efficacy explanations mirror SES explanations in that they focus on resources as an explanation for political participation. Unlike the SES approach, which focuses on education and income as resources, the political efficacy model explains participation as a function of psychological resources. This framework attempts to tackle the confounding fact that, although income and education have increased consistently over time within the United States, levels of voter turnout have decreased or remained stagnant (Gray & Caul 2000; Burden 2000; Franklin 2004). Within this context, political interest, efficacy, and civic duty become essential in clarifying why some people participate while others do not. The efficacy framework argues that people participate in politics because they are interested, feel a sense of civic responsibility or pride, and feel confident in their ability to effectively engage in politics (Aramson & Aldrick, 1982; Conway, 2000; Rosenstone & Hansen, 1993). This explanation for political participation holds that when individuals believe they can make a difference in politics, they are more likely to participate, and are more likely to refrain from participating when they think that political leaders do not care about them (Campbell et al. 1954). A key limitation of this explanation is that it does not always adequately explain the sources of political efficacy, particularly in relation to low status minority groups, such as lesbians and gays.

Given the high cost of political participation, candidates, parties, and activists also work to encourage individuals to engage in the political arena (Campbell et al. 1964; Rosenstone & Hansen 1993; Green & Gerber 2008). Similar to how high-SES helps provide the resources necessary to participate in politics, political actors can help increase

the skills necessary for political participation, such as political knowledge. This model, the mobilization model (Leighley 1995), argues that participation is a function of political opportunities, such as those created by parties, candidates, and issue organizations (Campbell et al. 1964; Huckfeldt & Sprague 1992; Wielhouwer & Lockerbie 1994; Green & Gerber 2008). Personal contact with a mobilizing agent, such as a face-to-face conversation with a canvasser, has a particularly powerful impact on encouraging political participation (Gerber & Green 2000). This method of contact is also tied to the psychological resources of the efficacy model, because it helps increase a citizen's sense of mattering to an election and its outcomes.

The mobilization model is particularly relevant to minority groups because social status strongly shapes the level and nature of a minority's political participation (Leighley 1995). In general, higher status is associated with more opportunities to participate, indicating that minority group members are at a disadvantage for mobilization. However, many minority groups are specifically targeted by mobilizing actors based on their potential cohesion and group population size (Leighley 1996, 2001). Therefore, this theoretical approach explains minority group participation, such as the sexuality gap, as a function of mobilization through political actors.

Social capital explanations of political participation utilize social connectedness and social networks to explain political outcomes. Within this framework, an individual's level of participation is viewed as a function of a high degree of connectedness between individuals and the larger political community (Putnam 1995a, 1995b, 2000; La Due Lake & Huckfeldt 1998; McClurg 2003). This engagement occurs through networks of political communication, where people talk about politics and become increasingly likely

to participate (Rosenstone & Hansen 1993). Using forms of formal social engagement, such as membership in civic groups, churches, and the workplace (Verba et al. 1995; Harris 1994; Radcliff & Davis 2000), research demonstrates that membership increases collective interest in politics and helps people develop the political skills that enable political participation (Verba et al. 1995; Putnam 2000). Further, it is through these networks that the social exchange of political information occurs, whereby individuals encounter political information and increase their interest and understanding (Huckfeldt & Sprague 1995; Huckfeldt 2001).

This type of organizational participation is reflective of the role counterpublic space plays in motivating group consciousness among minorities, with participation in group-relevant organizations serving to mobilize minority communities. For example, African American participation in churches encourages higher levels of participation (Tate 1991; Harris 1994; Harris-Perry 2010; McKenzie 2004). Overall, social explanations of political participation stress the interpersonal and organizational relationships that encourage participation by educating people, increasing their efficacy, and connecting them to one another and the political arena. This explanation also overlaps with descriptions of the relationship between counterpublic space, group consciousness, and participation because it stresses the roles that interpersonal networks and organizational memberships play in turning people toward the political arena.

Group Consciousness and Political Participation

Group consciousness explanations draw on many of these traditions and contribute a powerful explanation for political participation. Group consciousness is among the most important factors influencing a minority's political behavior (Gurin et al.

1980; Miller et al. 1981; Shingles 1981; Stokes 2003; Sanchez 2006). Group consciousness combines in-group politicized identity, or when group membership has political relevance (McClain et al. 2009), with a set of ideas about a group's relative status and the strategies that will be useful in improving it (Jackman & Jackman 1973; Gurin et al. 1980; Miller et al. 1981; Chong & Rogers 2005; McClain et al. 2009). Chapter 3 demonstrates that group consciousness is best measured as a two-dimensional concept that includes positive in-group associations, such as identification with the group, attaching meaning to the group label, assigning importance to the group identity, and evaluating the group positively, and an understanding of negative out-group treatment, such as recognizing the level of discrimination facing the group.

Causally, scholars argue that group consciousness is linked to political participation through a two-part process in which discrimination causes group members to have a "need to act" (Gamson 1968: p.48) and a sense of political mistrust (Shingles 1981), and counterpublic engagement causes group members to have the "ability to act" (Gamson 1968: p.48) and group-specific political efficacy (Shingles 1981). Regarding discrimination and group consciousness, as Chapters 2 and 3 demonstrate, minority groups, such as LGBTs, face seemingly insurmountable levels of discrimination, which the U.S. government often formally institutionalizes and endorses. This discrimination increases group consciousness and provides the motivation that is necessary for a person to participate in politics (Verba et al. 1995; Schlozman et al. 2012). This motivation is the underlying catalyst for political action and the expression of political will and it encourages group members to engage in politics to combat their subordinate status, particularly when politics is the source of that discrimination. For example, gays and

lesbians faced more than 200 antigay referendums and initiatives aimed at retracting or preventing gay rights between 1974 and 2008 (Stone 2010), demonstrating the political nature of their struggle.

Similarly, counterpublic engagement and group consciousness develop the capacity to act in minority groups (Verba et al. 1995; Schlozman et al. 2012). Capacity includes a variety of factors, ranging from political knowledge and skills to money and time (Schlozman et al. 2012). By fostering social networks of gays that pool their resources, encourage the development of close personal ties, increase their cognitive awareness of the political issues affecting their group, develop their political skillset, and allow them to invest their time in politics in an effective manner, group consciousness builds the underlying capacity that is necessary for gays to actively engage in political action (Gamson 1968; Leighley 1995; Verba et al. 1995; Schlozman et al. 2012). Because group consciousness, particularly positive in-group associations, is a byproduct of counterpublic engagement, it acts as a conduit between social networks and political action. Therefore, group consciousness results from actions such as participation in LGBT friendship networks, celebrating gay pride events, and joining LGBT organizations, which increases the capacity to act and directs group-favorable sentiments towards politics on behalf of the group.

Group consciousness emerges as among the most powerful predictors of minority group behavior because it addresses many of the limitations present in traditional explanations of participation. Regarding SES, group consciousness helps explain why African Americans with low SES have higher than expected turnout (Xu 2005; Verba & Nie 1972; Olson 1970). Further, heightened levels of group consciousness are strongly

related to higher levels of political participation across many additional disadvantaged groups, such as women, Muslims, and Latinos (Duncan 1999; Jamal 2005; Sanchez 2006). Regarding efficacy, mobilizing agents, and resource mobilization, group consciousness helps explain the link between these factors and political outcomes. In this sense, group consciousness mediates the effects of political inputs, such as party contact, interpersonal psychological differences, and the role of community resources (Duncan 1999), and translates these inputs into group-specific political action. As Chapter 3 demonstrates, group consciousness is largely a function of social capital and mobilizing agents. Therefore, group consciousness indirectly captures both of these factors, in addition to politicized group identity.

Overall, the framework of group consciousness stresses the role that strong, disadvantaged, group-based identities play in structuring participation. By encouraging members to connect, share their experiences, and understand themselves in the context of the political world, group consciousness inspires group members to act in the political realm on behalf of their group. This approach builds upon and captures much of the theoretical arguments present in the social capital and mobilizing agents theories, while also addressing the limitations of the SES argument. This argument leads to Hypothesis 1:

H₁: Group Consciousness and Political Participation: As an LGBT person reports increasing levels of group consciousness, her likelihood of engaging in political participation on behalf of LGBTs will also increase.

LGBT-Specific Forms of Political Participation

This framework of political participation explains LGBT behavior as a result of group consciousness. However, not all types of political participation are relevant to all minority groups at all times, and relevant forms of political participation are often rooted

in the sociopolitical context facing that group. Therefore, the forms of political participation that are relevant to each minority community may be different, implying that not all groups will utilize the same actions or venues across all issues. For the LGBT community, the theoretical foundations of group consciousness demonstrate the historical processes most likely to structure LGBT political participation. These relevant forms of political participation include attending rallies or marches in support of gay rights, voting, donating to political candidates in support of LGBT rights, and participating in boycotts.

Protesting and Marching

Protest behavior, such as attending rallies or marches in support of LGBT rights, is among the oldest and most important forms of political behavior in the LGBT community. Because informal and formal institutions criminalized and demonized homosexuality, mainstream politics excluded the LGBT community for much of the twentieth century. Barred from mechanisms such as forming political parties, the earliest forms of LGBT political engagement manifested as public protest. From the early 1960s onward, the gay community adopted public protest as a strategy for contesting discrimination against LGBT persons and for mobilizing community members.

Events such as the East Coast Homophile Organizations' (ECHO) public pickets, which spawned the idea of using protests to commemorate important homosexual events (Marotta 1981; D'Emilio 1983; Armstrong & Cragg 2006), clearly demonstrate the long and important history of protest behavior in the gay community. In April of 1965, 10 activists picketed the White House on behalf of gay rights, signifying the beginning of direct action protests by the LGBT community. Following the protests of 1965, ECHO held an Annual Reminder protest every year through 1969, encouraging the protest model

established at Stonewall in 1969 (Marotta 1981; Duberman 1993; Armstrong & Crage 2006). The events at the Stonewall Inn in 1969, which included nights of rioting and a public march up Sixth Avenue, solidified marching in support of LGBT rights as a fundamental component of LGBT political participation. LGBT persons have commemorated this tradition in June ever since, beginning with Christopher Street Liberation Day in New York City in 1970. Since 1970, cities across America have held gay pride marches and rallies every June as a form of political participation, encouraging the gay community to move from stigma to pride while simultaneously contesting discrimination against LGBT persons. Today, over 1 million people attend events like the New York City LGBT March (NYC Pride 2015).

The LGBT community uses numerous additional forms of protest to compliment pride marches and challenge gays' disadvantaged positions. This includes national marches on Washington, such as the Millennium March in Washington in April of 2000, which saw several hundred thousand protestors demonstrate on behalf of LGBT rights. The goal of these national marches was to build community, encourage a national movement (Barber 2002), and "put a face on gay America" (Ghaziani 2008, p.195). LGBT persons also use this protest behavior to combat discrimination that specifically targets the gay community, such as gay marriage bans, job discrimination against LGBT persons, and culturally insensitive depictions. For example, following the passage of Proposition 8 in California in 2008, which defined marriage as between a man and a woman and made it illegal for gays to marry, protests took place in at least 75 cities across America and included thousands of participants (Smith 2008). These sentiments carried over to the Supreme Court, where supporters of marriage equality protested

during the hearings on Proposition 8 and the Defense of Marriage Act in 2013 (Dunkley 2013).

The gay community has used similar protests against companies it views as discriminating against LGBT persons. This includes protests against companies such as Exxon Mobil, which refuses to add sexual orientation to its official equal employment opportunity statement (Stewart 2013), Target, which donated \$150,000 to a conservative candidate that was opposed to gay rights (Friedman 2010), and Ikea, which cut photographs of a lesbian couple from one of its magazines (*The Huffington Post* 2014). These protests also extend to cultural institutions, such as the Academy Awards, which gays protested in response to the perception that Hollywood treats LGBT characters as demented and homicidal (Broverman 2015). Overall, the gay community has utilized protests, marches, and rallies to counter discrimination against gays in dozens of issue areas, engage in community building, and participate in the political process for over fifty years. This leads to Hypothesis_{1a}:

H_{1a}: Group Consciousness and Protesting in Support of Gay Rights: As an LGBT person reports increasing levels of group consciousness, his likelihood of participating in marches or rallies in support of gay rights will also increase.

Boycotts

The LGBT community also uses other mechanisms, such as boycotts, to engage in protest behavior. Boycotts are social protest strategies that involve the act of withholding the purchase of goods or services because of a feature of their producer, the process of their production, or an intrinsic feature of the good, with the goal of changing policy, the process, or the product so that it conforms to the boycotters' principals (Chasin 2001). The political logic of boycotting is that the market represents economic democracy in which money spent is similar to votes cast, with dollars having the capacity to influence

social change (Vogel 1978). Social movements use boycotts to influence political change, ranging from the Boston Tea Party in colonial America to African Americans boycotting the Montgomery, Alabama bus system. The first national LGBT boycott, or “gaycott,” occurred in 1977, when the gay community boycotted Florida citrus products to protest Anita Bryant, a spokesperson for the Florida Citrus Commission and her “Save Our Children” campaign, which cast gays and lesbians as perverts. This tactic gained national press and brought attention and support to the LGBT quest for equal rights.

Although many boycotts followed the gaycott of Florida citrus, the boycott of Colorado and Colorado-made products following the passage of Colorado Amendment 2, which banned the state from recognizing legislation protecting gays and lesbians from discrimination, was among the most powerful. The boycott following the passage of Amendment 2 is among the largest civil rights boycotts in American history and cost the state of Colorado almost \$120 million (Sen 1996). Following the success of this boycott, which included the cancellation of conferences, conventions, construction projects, sitcoms, official government travel, and city contracts, boycotts have remained a popular strategy within the gay community. Today, gay boycotts range from targeting local businesses, such as those that donated money in favor of Proposition 8, to boycotting national companies such as Chick-fil-A, Urban Outfitters, Exxon Mobil, the Salvation Army, the Boy Scouts of America, Purina, and Cracker Barrel, which are all viewed as having anti-gay policies, donating to anti-gay politicians, and creating a hostile workplace for LGBT employees (*Queerty* 2009; Chatel 2013; Juhasz 2013). This leads to Hypothesis_{1b}:

H_{1b}: Group Consciousness and Boycotts: As an LGBT person reports increasing levels of group consciousness, her likelihood of participating in boycotts in support of gay rights will also increase.

Voting

Throughout the course of the twentieth century, sexual and gender minorities also began to use mainstream political methods, such as voting, to improve their marginalized status. LGBT persons have “vote[d] like our rights depend on it” (Brydum 2013a), viewing the group’s vote as a mechanism for shaping political institutions in their favor. Beginning in the early 1960s, organizations such as San Francisco’s League of Civil Education began focusing on the power of the gay vote and urged gays to cross racial and class lines and vote as a block for gay interests (Ormsbee 2010; Brydum 2013b). By 1969, *Newsweek* recognized the power of the gay voting bloc, publishing an article on the growing faction (Jacobs 1993). During this time, presidential elections, such as those in 1964, 1968, and 1972, became increasingly important to the gay community. Voter registration and mobilization efforts began to heavily concentrate on these elections. By the mid-1990s, researchers demonstrated that self-identified lesbians, gays, and bisexuals comprised a distinctive and highly active voting bloc in electoral politics, voting cohesively across a variety of issues and at higher rates than the general population (Hertzog 1996).

Voter registration and mobilization drives, such as “Gay Vote 1980: The National Convention Project,” reinforced this and worked to get gay rights issues on the national parties’ platforms (NCP 1980). Historians credit Gay Vote 1980 with helping voters select almost a dozen openly gay delegates in the Iowa caucuses (Thompson 1994). Similar efforts, such as “Gay and Lesbian Voters In Coalition for Election (VOICE) ’92,” sponsored by both the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force and the Human Rights

Campaign Fund, coordinated and distributed election year information and maintained a schedule of election-related events for the gay community (QRD 1992a, 1992b). The “Promote the Vote” campaign followed this in 1996, with the goal of registering and mobilizing almost 200,000 LGBT persons for the 1996 presidential election (QRD 1996). Similar efforts also took place at the local level, such as the New York City “Promote the Vote,” which mobilized the gay community to elect five of the six openly gay candidates up for election in the 1995 school board elections (Jacobs 1996). Within its first two years, Promote the Vote registered more than 30,662 people to vote, collecting approximately 7,000 pledges from people already registered, contacting more than 35,733 voters by phone, and sending at least 250,250 mailings (Promote the Vote; Smith & Haider-Markel 2002).

This political activism regarding voter registration and mobilization continued throughout the 1990s and 2000s, with events such as LGBT Vote 2000, which was a grassroots effort to encourage LGBT persons and their allies to register and vote (Smith & Haider-Markel 2002). These effects were perhaps best felt during the 2012 election, with newspapers such as *The New York Times* declaring that the “Gay Vote Proved a Boon for Obama” (Cohen 2012b) and “Gay Vote Seen as Crucial in Obama’s Victory” (Cohen 2012a), and *The Washington Post* referencing “The High Value of the Gay Vote” (Capehart 2012). Further, reports estimate that if Mitt Romney had won 51% of LGBT votes in state elections, he would have won the popular vote and the battleground states of Ohio, Florida, and Virginia (Gates 2012). Given that many gay rights issues, such as job discrimination and the right to public accommodation, are still open for legislative action and present on ballot measures, one should expect politically conscious LGBT

persons to continue to use voting as a uniquely gay political behavior in the future. This leads to Hypotheses_{1c}:

H_{1c}: Group Consciousness and Voting Behavior: As an LGBT person reports increasing levels of group consciousness, his likelihood of voting will also increase.

Donating to LGBT and LGBT-Friendly Candidates

Donating to LGBT and LGBT-friendly political candidates has operated in tandem with voting for much of gay political history. Openly gay persons have been running for office as early as 1961, when Jose Sarria, a drag queen from San Francisco, ran in a local Supervisorial race. Beginning with elections that fall, gays and lesbians in San Francisco began running registration drives, endorsing candidates, and courting politicians that were supportive of gay rights (Ormsbee 2010). By the late 1960s, candidates in urban areas were actively seeking out the “gay vote,” and the LGBT community recognized the importance of both gay and gay-friendly politicians in securing gay rights, as political representation through electoral institutions is essential in achieving gay political victories (Haider-Markel et al. 2000). Although Sarria lost, Kathy Kozachenko became the first openly gay elected politician with her 1973 selection to join the City Council of Ann Arbor, Michigan. Following victories at the local level, the first political action committee supporting and contributing funds to LGBT and LGBT-friendly candidates formed as the Municipal Elections Committee of Los Angeles (MECLA) in 1977 (USC Libraries 2012). Although MECLA primarily focused on state and local issues, organizations would soon form that focused on donating money to gay-friendly politicians at the national level.

By 1980, the first gay and lesbian political action committee, the Human Rights Campaign Fund (HRCF), formed with the goal of contributing money to campaigns and

candidates that advocated for gay rights. HRCF made its first contribution to Jim Weaver (D-Ore.), who defeated his Moral Majority-supported opponent (HRCF 1980). By the 1990s, major campaign efforts extended beyond heterosexual candidates, with the formation of the Gay & Lesbian Victory Fund in 1991. LGBT activists formed the Victory Fund with the explicit purpose of electing openly LGBT persons to public office to advocate on behalf of the LGBT community. Their first major victory came in the fall of that year, with their support leading to the election of the first openly lesbian African-American city council member in the United States (Victory Fund 2015). In 2012 alone, the Victory Fund endorsed 180 LGBT candidates and celebrated over 120 victories, including the election of the first openly LGBT U.S. Senator.

By the 2012 election, gays had made LGBT issues national issues, with most candidates running for public office making statements regarding their support or opposition to gay rights, and the gay community donating significant sums to LGBT-friendly candidates. In between March and May of the 2012 presidential election alone, gay fundraisers raised more than \$8 million for the Obama campaign (Christensen 2012). Following his announcement of support for gay marriage in May 2012, the campaign raised more than \$1 million in the first 90 minutes following his statements (Eggen 2012). Across both gay and gay-friendly politicians, the historical evidence demonstrates that the gay community has used political donations for over four decades as a means of participating in the political process. This leads to Hypothesis_{1d}:

H_{1d}: Group Consciousness and Political Donations: As an LGBT person reports increasing levels of group consciousness, her likelihood of donating to political candidates in support of gay rights will also increase.

LGBT Political Participation

How many LGBT persons participate politically? 83.7% of the respondents in Pew's 2013 "A Survey of LGBT Americans" reported an instance of political participation in their lifetime. This figure derives from answers to the questions displayed in Table 4.1. To derive the total percent of LGBT persons participating politically, I combined all the "yes" responses from the boycotting, protesting, and donating measures with those persons reporting that they "always" vote. Relative to the broader population, where 63% of persons participate politically (Pew 2009), this demonstrates the substantially higher participation rates of gay persons. For the LGBT community, the most common form of political participation is voting, followed by boycotting, marching in support of gay rights, and donating money to a candidate. Table 4.1 demonstrates that many members of the gay community are politically active, with majorities boycotting certain products or services and always voting. The data also demonstrate that there is a great deal of intra-community variance regarding the timing and distribution of these activities, with some activities occurring in the more recent past, such as boycotting, and some activities occurring more infrequently, such as donating money to politicians.

Table 4.1:
Political Participation in “A Survey of LGBT Americans”

| Here are a few activities some people do and others do not. Please indicate whether or not you have done this each of the following: | | | | |
|--|---|--|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| | Happened in the Past 12 Months (<i>N</i>) | Happened, but not in the Past 12 Months (<i>N</i>) | Never Happened (<i>N</i>) | Total |
| Attended a rally or march in support of LGBT rights | 11.1 (119) | 37.2 (400) | 51.8 (557) | 1,076 |
| Decided NOT to buy a certain product or service because the company that provides it is not supportive of LGBT rights | 40.9 (440) | 19.6 (211) | 39.6 (426) | 1,077 |
| Donated money to politicians or political organizations because they are supportive of LGBT rights | 23.4 (251) | 21.4 (229) | 55.2 (592) | 1,072 |
| How often would you say that you vote? | | | | |
| Always (<i>N</i>) | Nearly Always (<i>N</i>) | Part of the Time (<i>N</i>) | Seldom (<i>N</i>) | Total (<i>N</i>) |
| 59.0 (642) | 24.6 (268) | 6.3 (69) | 10.1 (110) | 1,089 |

Using this data, I also constructed a measure that captures a respondent’s overall level of participation. This variable is an additive index of a respondent’s total number of political engagements within her lifetime and captures whether or not a respondent has participated through boycotts, marches, donations, or always voting. It ranges from a score of 0, indicating that the respondent has never boycotted, marched, donated, or always voted, to a score of 4, indicating that the respondent has boycotted, marched, donated, and always voted. Table 4.2 demonstrates the distribution of LGBT respondents’ participation events. This table demonstrates that, although the majority of respondents are politically active, the community demonstrates a large deal of variance regarding the number of activities it participates in. Group consciousness is expected to be the primary motivator of this variance, with respondents reporting the highest levels of

group consciousness consistently demonstrating the highest amount of political engagement. This index is used to test the original hypothesis, H_1 , which concerns overall levels of political participation.

Table 4.2:
Political Participation Index

| # of Participation events | <i>N</i> | % |
|---------------------------|----------|------|
| 0 | 174 | 16.3 |
| 1 | 229 | 21.5 |
| 2 | 195 | 18.3 |
| 3 | 221 | 20.7 |
| 4 | 247 | 23.2 |
| Total | 1,066 | |

Based on both historical evidence and survey data regarding the politically relevant forms of LGBT participation, LGBT group consciousness is expected to influence participation in boycotts, marches, political donations, and voting. This suggests that the variance in participation is best explained by varying levels of group consciousness. As LGBT persons are increasingly conscious of their political identity and are able to identify the discrimination the LGBT community faces, the more, and more frequently, they should participate in politics. Conversely, when they have lower levels of group consciousness, they should be less likely to participate and do so more infrequently. This argument follows the logic of Queer Nation, an LGBT activist organization, which argues that upon recognizing the marginalization facing the gay community, the only way to combat it is through direct action, or to come “Out of the Closets and Into the Streets” (Rand 2004). Both historical evidence and survey data demonstrate that, for decades, LGBT persons with high levels of group consciousness have been doing exactly that.

Data and Methods

To test these hypotheses, I utilize data from the Pew's 2013 "A Survey of LGBT Americans." The survey includes multiple measures of both the independent variable of interest, group consciousness, and the dependent variable of interest, political participation. Chapter 3 outlined the group consciousness measures, including the Positive Identity Index (PII) and the Public Evaluation Index (PEI). These two variables comprise the primary independent variables. Tables 4.1 and 4.2 contain information on the five dependent variables, with each variable representing a distinct measure.

The model also includes numerous controls, such as those that capture socioeconomic status, political awareness, and LGBT subgroup status. The SES controls include measures for education, income, age, and race; persons with higher SES are expected to be more likely to participate politically. This entails that persons with more education, higher incomes, older Americans, and non-racial and ethnic minorities should display the highest levels of political participation. Table 4.3 shows the awareness control variable, which measures the degree to which respondents follow politics; persons who report higher levels of understanding the political world should also report higher levels of political participation. Finally, the LGBT subgroup variables control for lesbian and bisexual subgroup status, as described in Chapter 1. Bisexuals and lesbians are expected to display lower levels of political engagement relative to gay males.

Table 4.3:
Political Awareness in "A Survey of LGBT Americans"

| Would you say you follow what is going on in government and public affairs? | | |
|---|----------|----------|
| | <i>N</i> | <i>%</i> |
| Hardly at all | 75 | 6.9 |
| Now and then | 140 | 12.9 |
| Some of the time | 406 | 37.4 |
| Most of the time | 466 | 42.9 |
| Total | 1,087 | |

One limitation of this analysis is the lack of measures that specifically capture social capital or the role of mobilizing agents, such as contact with political parties or elected officials. The primary reason these variables are not included is because the survey did not contain specific questions relating to these factors. Although this hinders the ability to fully assess the factors that motivate political participation, I argue that their inclusion would not substantially change the output. First, the group consciousness variables capture many of these effects indirectly. For example, Chapter 3 demonstrates that counterpublic engagement, such as being a member of an LGBT organization, attending an LGBT pride event, or having an extensive network of LGBT friends, is directly related to a respondent's level of group consciousness. Many of these factors represent aspects of the social capital and mobilization theories, demonstrating that the group consciousness variables control for many of their expected outcomes. Further, given the conceptual overlap between these theories and group consciousness, there is the potential that including both measures in the same model would create multicollinearity. Additionally, these factors, particularly party mobilization, are most relevant in cases where the minority community is not highly active or politicized. The evidence presented in this dissertation clearly suggests that the LGBT community is both politicized and mobilized, indicating that factors such as party contact may not be the primary drivers of

gay political behavior. Moreover, the historical evidence presented in Chapter 5, which examines the relationship between the LGBT community and party identification, suggests that LGBT persons encouraged the Democratic Party to include them, rather than Democrats encouraging gays to participate in politics. In total, given the lack of distinct survey measures, the fact that group consciousness captures components of both explanations of political participation, and the role that LGBT persons played in encouraging the Democratic Party to include them (as opposed to the reverse relationship), these measures are not directly included in the models. Appendix C contains summary statistics for all variables that were included in the models.

Results

Because each of the dependent variables is ordinal, the models are estimated using ordered logistic regression with robust standard errors. The output in Table 4.4 demonstrates that the group consciousness measures strongly motivate political participation. Aside from political knowledge and education, these two variables are the only consistently significant predictors across all five models, further demonstrating the powerful role they play in motivating political participation. Consequently, the results provide strong support for all five hypotheses, indicating that political participation is largely a function of group consciousness. Because of the utilization of five distinct models, the statistical effects will only be interpreted for the participation index.

Table 4.4:
Ordered Logistic Models of Political Participation

| | Boycott | | Protest | | Donate | | Vote | | Participation Index | |
|---------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------------------|-----------|
| | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> |
| PII | 0.356*** | (0.035) | 0.344*** | (0.035) | 0.327*** | (0.036) | 0.134*** | (0.034) | 0.396*** | (0.033) |
| PEI | 0.653*** | (0.112) | 0.496*** | (0.117) | 0.575*** | (0.126) | 0.213* | (0.122) | 0.693*** | (0.110) |
| Political Awareness | 0.356*** | (0.085) | 0.261** | (0.096) | 0.588*** | (0.109) | 0.886*** | (0.082) | 0.708*** | (0.082) |
| Age | -0.153** | (0.051) | 0.040 | (0.051) | 0.155** | (0.052) | 0.362*** | (0.051) | 0.205*** | (0.042) |
| Education | 0.540*** | (0.098) | 0.360*** | (0.099) | 0.369*** | (0.105) | 0.313** | (0.098) | 0.451*** | (0.092) |
| Income | 0.076** | (0.032) | 0.013 | (0.031) | 0.133*** | (0.032) | 0.083** | (0.036) | 0.087** | (0.030) |
| Black | -1.092*** | (0.286) | -0.224 | (0.258) | -0.689** | (0.304) | 0.548** | (0.274) | -0.466* | (0.281) |
| Hispanic | -0.585** | (0.239) | 0.067 | (0.251) | -0.551** | (0.232) | -0.094 | (0.244) | -0.310 | (0.235) |
| Other Race | -0.037 | (0.266) | -0.173 | (0.255) | 0.123 | (0.263) | 0.016 | (0.285) | 0.141 | (0.233) |
| Lesbian | 0.004 | (0.162) | -0.187 | (0.157) | 0.182 | (0.169) | -0.108 | (0.186) | -0.091 | (0.156) |
| Bisexual | -0.426** | (0.176) | -0.362** | (0.178) | -0.211 | (0.178) | 0.024 | (0.181) | -0.453** | (0.154) |
| N | 1,050 | | 1,050 | | 1,048 | | 1,057 | | 1,043 | |
| χ^2 | 298.04*** | | 241.19*** | | 299.83*** | | 329.00*** | | 517.94*** | |

Note. * $p < .10$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .01$

The results also demonstrate support for many of the control variables. Regarding SES, the results are consistent with the theoretical expectations outlined above, as education, age, income, and non-minority status tend to be associated with higher levels of participation across all five models. Education, which is the most consistent and powerful SES variable in the broader literature (Leighley & Nagler 1992; Wolfinger & Rosenstone 1980), is also the most consistent SES variable in this analysis. Respondents with higher levels of education are considerably more likely to participate politically than their less educated peers. On average, those with the highest levels of education were 14% less likely to lack participation, while also being 13% more likely to participate in all areas. Income's effects are similar, with increasing income being significantly associated with an increase in the probability of boycotting, donating, and voting. On average, the highest income group was 4% less likely to lack participation when compared to the lowest income group, while also being 8% more likely to participate in all four areas. Together, these results demonstrate that education and income are significant and meaningful predictors of political participation.

A respondent's age had similar effects, with older Americans being more likely to participate by making political donations and voting. For both of these variables, increasing age was associated with a higher probability of participation. Conversely, older Americans were significantly less likely to participate in boycotts when compared to the youngest respondents. These findings are somewhat inconsistent with the literature, in that increasing age should be associated with higher rates of participation across all four measures. However, the significantly low rate of boycott participation may be a function of the growing interconnectedness between social media and boycotting, with

information about boycotts becoming increasingly prevalent on social media websites that older Americans access less frequently than younger Americans do (Thayer & Ray 2006; Krishnamurthy & Kucuk 2009; Koku 2011).

The racial and ethnic minority control variables also demonstrate results that are mostly consistent with theory. Traditional SES explanations would suggest that disadvantaged groups, such as racial and ethnic minorities, tend to have lower levels of participation. These results largely support that expectation, with African Americans and Hispanics being 20% less likely to participate in boycotts and 14% less likely to make political donations. African American voting patterns did contrast this finding however, as Blacks were 12% more likely to report that they always vote. This demonstrates that, although LGBT minorities tend to be less politically active, Black gays play an important role in LGBT voter turnout. It also suggests that this sample, while limited in its size, accurately reflects racial and ethnic minority communities. Because the results confirm expectations regarding these groups, it demonstrates that the survey captures gay minorities appropriately.

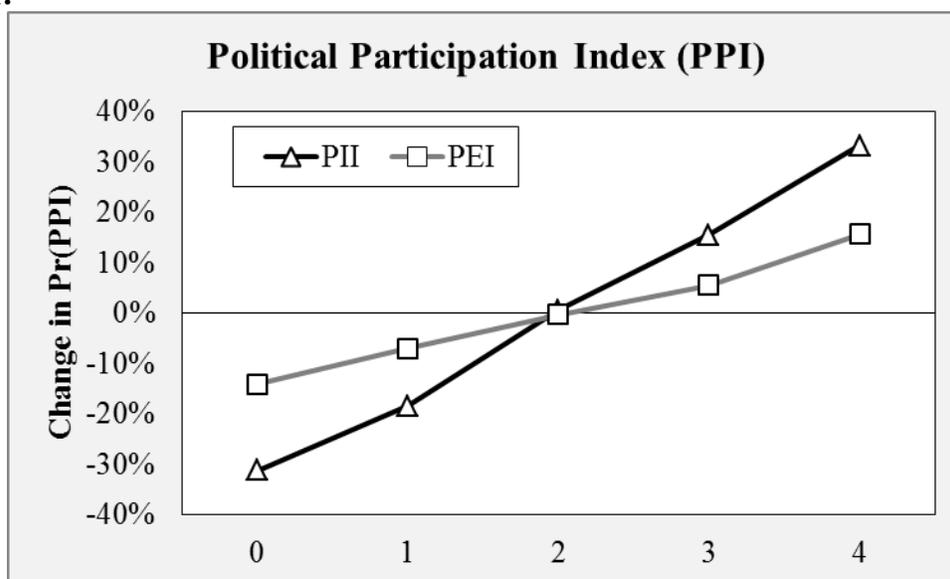
Similar to most of the SES variables, political awareness displayed significant effects across all five dependent variables that were consistent with theoretical expectations. Across boycotting, attending protests, donating money, and voting, respondents who reported higher levels of political awareness also reported higher levels of political engagement. Those with the most political awareness were 24% less likely to lack participation, while simultaneously being 19% more likely to participate in all four areas.

Finally, the sexual orientation controls displayed mixed results. Lesbians were statistically similar to gay men across all five measures, indicating that gay men and lesbians participate in politics at similar rates. Bisexuals displayed less consistent results, as bisexuality does not play a significant role in driving political donations or voting, but it does significantly decrease the probability of boycotting or protesting. For the political participation index, bisexuals were 3% more likely to lack political participation while also being 5% less likely to participate in all four areas. This result is not particularly surprising, as the historical record demonstrates that gays and lesbians often excluded bisexuals from activities such as protests and marches (Nathanson 2001; McKlean 2008). In general, this suggests that bisexuals are less politically engaged than other members of the LGBT community.

Although political awareness, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic status play an important role in shaping political participation, the substantive effects of the Positive Identity Index and Public Evaluation Index demonstrate their powerful influence. Figure 4.1 displays the change in the predicted probability of political engagement when moving from the minimum score to the maximum score for values of the PII and the PEI. It demonstrates that the PII has particularly powerful effects on political participation, as a person with no group consciousness has a 36% probability of lacking political participation, while a person with the highest level of group consciousness has only a 2% probability of reporting the same response. This indicates a difference of more than 30%, showing that persons with low scores on the PII are 15.7 times more likely to lack political participation. At the other end of the spectrum, persons with the lowest score on the PII have only a 2% chance of participating in all four areas, while persons with the

highest score on the PII have a 37% probability of reporting complete participation. Thus, persons with high levels of group consciousness are 35%, or 15.3 times, more likely to participate in all four areas. Overall, respondents with the highest levels of group consciousness have a 98% probability of engaging in at least one political activity. This demonstrates support for all five hypotheses and indicates that political participation dramatically increases as levels of the PII increase.

Figure 4.1:

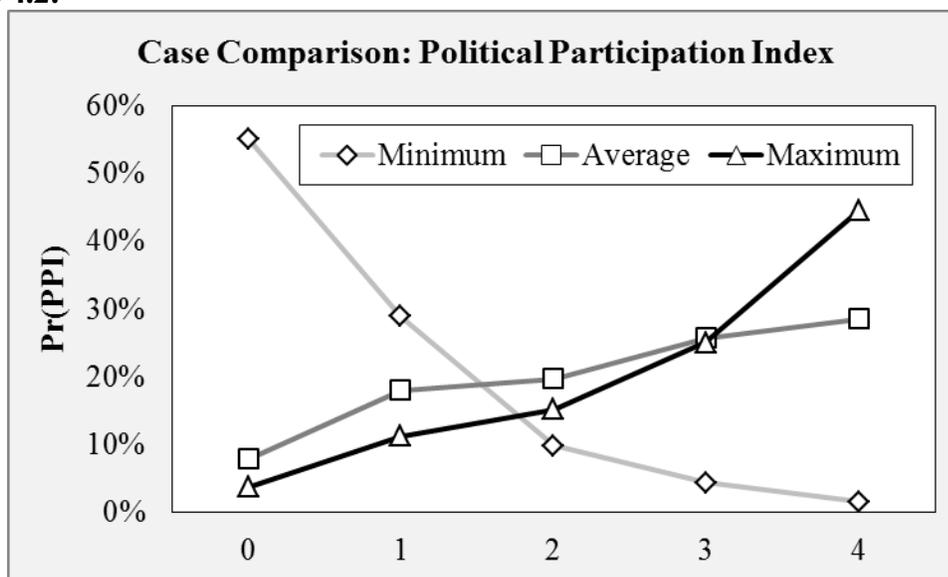


The Public Evaluation Index is similarly impactful. Respondents who report that there is little/no discrimination facing LGBT persons have a 19% probability of never politically engaging, while persons reporting that there is a lot of discrimination facing LGBT people have only a 6% probability of reporting the same outcome. This demonstrates that persons with no group consciousness are 13%, or 3.4 times, more likely to lack political participation. Conversely, respondents who report that there is little/no discrimination facing LGBT persons have a only a 6% probability of participating in all four areas, while persons who believe that LGBT persons face a lot of discrimination have an 19% chance of engaging in all four areas. These effects are particularly strong at

middling levels of engagement, with respondents who recognize the discrimination facing LGBT persons having a 76% probability of engaging in one to three areas. This demonstrates that, overall, respondents with strong perceptions of negative out-group treatment are 16.8 times more likely to engage politically than to lack engagement. This confirms all five hypotheses and indicates that, as LGBT persons become increasingly aware of the discrimination that their community faces, they also become increasingly likely to participate in politics.

Comparing respondents with the lowest levels of group consciousness to those with the highest levels of group consciousness further supports these findings. The maximum case (PII score of 8, PEI score of 2), average case (PII score of 5, PEI score of 2), and minimum case (PII score of 0, PEI score of 0) are excellent examples of this. Figure 4.2 demonstrates that respondents in the minimum case had a nearly a 60% probability of lacking political engagement, while those in the average (5%) and maximum (2%) cases had considerably lower rates of reporting that response. This relationship reverses for predicting high levels of engagement, as respondents in the maximum case had a 46% probability of engaging in all four areas. In contrast, respondents in the minimum case had only a 1% probability of reporting that outcome. Therefore, respondents with the highest levels of LGBT group consciousness are 45%, or nearly 50 times, more likely to engage in all four areas than respondents with lower levels of group consciousness. This demonstrates that group consciousness is a significant, influential, and substantively meaningful predictor of LGBT participation.

Figure 4.2:



All five models confirm that group consciousness is the most consistent and powerful predictor of political participation within the LGBT community. Not only are the group consciousness measures the only significant predictors across all four dependent variables aside from education and political awareness, but they also demonstrate the most powerful substantive effects. At the highest levels of group consciousness, respondents become more than 30% more likely to participate in politics, while also becoming almost 30% less likely to abstain from participation. Therefore, all five models confirm the central hypothesis of this article, which is that group consciousness fundamentally influences political participation within oppressed minority communities.

Discussion

To summarize, this chapter began with a discussion of the sexuality gap in American politics, with a relatively large body of evidence suggesting that self-identified LGBT persons engage in politics at a significantly higher rate than non-SGM persons do. Examples of the increasingly important role that gays and lesbians play in electoral

politics are abundant, with the media recognizing the important role the gay community played in raising money for President Obama and helping him win the 2012 presidential election. Although scholars and pundits recognize that LGBT persons matter for electoral politics and participate more frequently than other Americans do, we currently lack any explanation of why LGBT persons actively engage in politics. This chapter contributes to this discussion by analyzing the role that group consciousness plays in motivating LGBT political participation.

In focusing on the relationship between group consciousness and political participation, the evidence demonstrates that higher levels of group consciousness, measured as both positive in-group evaluations and perceptions of negative out-group treatment, drive political participation across multiple forms of participation, such as participating in boycotts, attending protests or marches, voting, or donating money to LGBT-friendly politicians. This finding makes an important contribution to the political science literature because it offers the first explanation for LGBTs' high rates of political participation. LGBT persons participate in politics because of their heightened levels of group consciousness, particularly regarding LGBT-relevant forms of political participation. Therefore, as long as politics is the arena in which the culture wars are waged, LGBT persons with high levels of group consciousness will engage politically in an effort to win those political battles.

Overall, the group consciousness measures were among the most powerful measures across all four models, particularly the Positive Identity Index. Respondents scoring the highest value on the Positive Identity Index were 35% more likely to participate in all four areas relative to those with the lowest scores. This is the most

powerful substantive effect across any variable in the models, with approximately twice as much impact as any other variable. The Public Evaluation Index was similarly meaningful and, aside from the Positive Identity Index, was more powerful and consistent than any other variable across all five models. In general, respondents who recognize the discrimination facing the LGBT community are almost 14% more likely to participate politically. Therefore, both measures of group consciousness display significant, consistent, and powerful effects, demonstrating their continued relevance to understanding minority politics.

Similar to the findings detailed in Chapter 3, these results may help inform our understanding of the future of the gay rights movement. Reflecting the power of counterpublic engagement in predicting LGBT group consciousness, the Positive Identity Index is the strongest predictor of gay political participation. This suggests that, although discrimination plays an important role in fostering heightened levels of LGBT-related group consciousness, positive in-group associations are the most powerful driver of political engagement. Consequently, even as discrimination against gays and lesbians diminishes, LGBT political participation should remain high as long as gay people self-identify with the community, think of their group label as positive, understand their LGBT identity as important to their overall sense of self, and feel close to other LGBT subgroups.

Conclusion

This chapter provided the first explanation for gays' disproportionately high rates of political participation. The results suggest that LGBT persons are highly active in politics when they have high levels of group consciousness, regardless of whether that

consciousness captures positive in-group associations or an understanding of the discrimination the community faces. However, given the disproportionate impact of the Positive Identity Index, the results help inform our understanding of minority politics by suggesting that positive in-group associations may be the strongest driver of political participation. Across other minority groups, we should expect those with the highest levels of identification, attachment, importance, and closeness to other group members to be the most politically active. With this chapter establishing that group consciousness drives political participation, the next chapter explores how group consciousness impacts gay partisan identity.

CHAPTER FIVE

GAY REPUBLICANS ARE AN OXYMORON: LGBT GROUP

CONSCIOUSNESS AND PARTISANSHIP

How does group consciousness influence the partisan identity and ideology of LGBT Americans? The previous chapter demonstrated that group consciousness fundamentally structures LGBT political participation, with higher levels of group consciousness increasing participation in boycotting, protesting, making political donations, and voting. With these high levels of group consciousness, gays and lesbians have evolved into politically powerful actors with the ability to influence a wide range of political outcomes. How this power translates to political partisanship, however, remains largely unexplored. Descriptively, the LGBT community appears to be strongly aligned with the Democratic Party, with lesbians, gays, and bisexuals offering President Obama 76% of their votes in the 2012 presidential election (Grindley 2012). Although gays and lesbians have “supported the Democratic Party for the last 45 years” (Otterbein 2015), the foundations of this relationship remain unexamined. To address this limitation, this chapter explores the relationship between LGBT group consciousness and partisanship. Using data from Pew’s 2013 “A Survey of LGBT Americans,” the results demonstrate that group consciousness provides the foundation for LGBT alignment with the Democratic Party. Because group consciousness operates as a strong and consistent predictor of party identification, the findings suggest that, as long as LGBT identity remains salient to gay Americans, gays and lesbians will maintain high levels of Democratic alignment that is historically grounded and unlikely to change without significant and long-term changes in party platforms.

Sources of Political Partisanship

Political participation, such as engaging in protest activities, voting, or donating money to candidates, is only one form of political behavior. In addition to engaging in direct action, citizens also influence the political arena by engaging in partisan behaviors. Partisanship refers to the psychological attachments that individuals hold toward political parties (Campbell et al. 1960), or the political self-identification that structures one's understanding of politics (Miller & Klobucar 2000). Partisanship matters for political behavior because it fundamentally organizes governing power and policy outputs, serves as a signal of personal ideological preferences (Abramowitz & Saunders 1998), and is among the most powerful factors in explaining how people vote and view the political world (Campbell et al. 1960; Bartels 2000, 2002). Research consistently demonstrates that partisanship is essential to citizens' political beliefs (Campbell et al. 1960; Converse 1964; Goren 2005; Stokes 1966; Bartels 2002), that it helps people understand the political system and influences their political decisions (Campbell et al. 1960; Bartels 2000; Miller 1991), and that party differentiation is tied to differences in opinion on a variety of social welfare and economic issues (Layman 2001; Abramowitz & Saunders 2005).

Theoretical explanations of partisanship primarily derive from two approaches, the "Michigan" model, which views party membership as the result of childhood socialization and historical context, and the Rational Choice model, which views party membership as the result of ideology and rational preferences. The Michigan model is rooted in *The American Voter* (Campbell et al. 1960) and argues that party identification is largely stable, resistant to change, and formed early in life. The formation of party

identification primarily occurs through a “funnel of causality” (Campbell et al. 1960: p.24) in which party identification results largely from familial, social, and economic socializations. These early attachments develop over the course of one’s life and solidify in adulthood, when they become salient group identities. Following the logic of group identification (Tajfel 1974, 1981, 1982; Tajfel & Turner 1979), people develop a tendency to exhibit in-group favoritism, and use the party’s values to guide their personal behaviors and attitudes (Campbell et al. 1960; Brewer & Brown 1998; Gerber et al. 2010).

Under this framework, rather than issue-positions driving partisan attachment, party identification often motivates these positions. Although ideology may influence partisanship and preferences in a portion of the electorate, for many people, party identification will play a larger role in supplying the cues for interpreting politics. Thus, party identification provides the lens through which citizens understand new political information (Carsey & Layman 2006). Empirical evidence from this approach demonstrates that upon identification with a political party, individuals become more likely to support that party’s preferences, policies, and candidates (Green & Palmquist 1994; Greene 1999; Green et al. 2004). Consequently, party identification is viewed as a function of life experiences, historical context, and group attachment, rather than a function of well-reasoned ideological positions.

The Rational Choice approach challenges these assumptions, however, by arguing that ideology is the primary driver of partisanship (Downs 1957; Fiorina 1981, 2002; Brody & Rothenberg 1988; Achen 1992, 2002; Norrander & Wilcox 1993). Ideology refers to the set of beliefs a person holds about the proper order of society and his

preferred methods for achieving those outcomes (Erikson & Tedin 2003; Jost et al. 2009). Ideology is relevant to the study of political outcomes because it signals a shared set of beliefs that helps a group of individuals interpret the political world (Campbell et al. 1960; Parsons 1951; Jost et al. 2009). Political scientists tend to place ideology along a left-right (liberal-conservative) continuum, with conservative ideology representing support for tradition, order, the status quo, and capitalism and liberal ideology representing support for change, equality, socialism, and progressive values (Fuchs & Klingemann 1990).

Using ideology, this approach to explaining partisanship emphasizes that citizens “keep score” and maintain a “running tally” when observing the political world and affiliate with political parties based on the degree to which they reflect their own beliefs (Fiorina 1981). Therefore, party alignment is a function of economic logic in which voters choose a party or candidate based on their expectations about the future benefits of making a particular selection (Downs 1957; Achen 1992, 2002). In this approach, partisanship is the result of an individual’s ideological inclination, with individuals thinking through political issues and taking stances based on their personal preferences. Therefore, individuals are acting strategically when they identify with a political party by choosing the party that best represents their ideological orientation.

Unlike the stable, long-term partisanship proposed by the Michigan model, the Rational Choice model does not assume that partisanship will be stable. As parties’ platforms change, people will update their partisan logic and reevaluate their party attachments to reflect the changing environment. To demonstrate, evidence suggests that vote choice is increasingly a function of ideological orientations and issue-based

preferences (Palfrey & Poole 1987; Saunders & Abramowitz 2007; Bélanger et al. 2006), and that party identification and ideological orientations are becoming increasingly aligned (Abramowitz & Saunders 1998; Carsey & Layman 2006).

Group Consciousness and Partisanship

The role of group consciousness in shaping party identification draws heavily upon both explanations for partisanship, while offering an alternative explanation. This approach for explaining party identification emphasizes the rational attachment between group labels and party affiliations. Similar to the Michigan model, group consciousness explanations of partisanship emphasize the role that in-group identification and social identity play in shaping political attitudes and behaviors. Similar to the Rational Choice model, group consciousness influences partisanship through a thoughtful process in which a group member is making a rational link between their group identity and a particular political party. Although this approach does not link group identities to parties through ideology, it does focus on the process of attaching well-reasoned and thoughtful political preferences to a specific political party. Therefore, using group consciousness as an explanation for partisanship offers a multi-pronged approach to understanding party affiliations that recognizes that social identities and rational preferences operate at the same time among politicized identity groups (Highton & Kam 2011).

Group consciousness explanations of party identification emphasize that highly conscious group members will align with the political party that best represents the group and has a history of doing so (Jones 2014). Rather than being driven by broader ideological motivations concerning liberal and conservative values, group consciousness leads minorities to align with the political party that best represents their group-specific

interests. African American partisanship provides an example of this relationship.

Although an increasingly large number of African Americans demonstrate support for black conservatism and conservative political causes like opposition to abortion and gay marriage (Wallace et al. 2009; Kidd et al. 2007; Lewis 2005; Welch & Foster 1992; Jones 2014), they have maintained strong and consistent support for the Democratic Party (Abramowitz and Saunders 2006; Wallace et al. 2009; Kidd et al. 2007). Therefore, even though the group's ideological orientations would suggest greater variability in party identification, with a sizeable portion of African Americans supporting Republicans for ideological reasons, reality does not reflect this assumption. Rather, for African Americans, social identity and the relationship between the parties and the broader Black community continues to structure their alignment (Abramowitz and Saunders 2006; Wallace et al. 2009; Kidd et al. 2007; Jones 2014).

Although the evidence is mixed for other identity-based groups (Abramowitz and Saunders 2006), this link between group consciousness and partisanship is expected to hold for LGBT persons. Given the unique historical context in which LGBT political engagement evolved, with intense Republican opposition and slow, yet steady, incorporation by Democrats, LGBTs are expected to align with Democrats regardless of their ideological orientations. Because gays are able to recognize that Republicans oppose gay rights and that Democrats support gay rights, and LGBT persons with high levels of group consciousness prioritize gay rights above other issue-orientations, LGBT group consciousness is expected to serve as the primary motivator of party identification within the gay community. Therefore, for LGBT persons, gay identity overrides other aspects of

political identity, such as ideology, and the political affiliations of gays are primarily structured around sexual orientation.

Group Consciousness, Partisanship, and LGBT Americans

The LGBT community represents an interesting and important case for examining theories of party identification, as LGBT people should be a least likely case for cohesive party alignment to occur. Gays are a strong test case for these theories because they are born into a diaspora (Smith & Haider-Markel 2002) and socialized in non-LGBT households and communities. Because of this, the partisan identities of their families are highly diverse, unlike other primordial identity groups, which are born into environments where they are socialized from birth into certain partisan attachments. Therefore, the community is among the most politically diverse oppressed minority groups and, if it demonstrates high levels of group cohesion, the argument that group membership and the rational party attachment that accompanies it lend themselves to highly partisan identities will be strongly supported. For group consciousness to demonstrate relevance to LGBT persons, LGBT people with the highest levels of group consciousness must adhere the most strongly to the group's partisan identity, even in the face of competing political interests and ideologies.

Just as group consciousness is a product of the political process, how it shapes partisanship is also a function of this process. For members of minority communities, such as LGBT persons, the historical relationships between Democrats, Republicans, and their group will structure their current partisan alignment. For the LGBT community, a long history of leftist ideology and incorporation into the Democratic fold has led to an alliance between Democrats and gays. Conversely, this has made the LGBT community a

common target of conservatives and Republicans, with animosity between conservatives and LGBTs being so strong that dozens of commentators have claimed that gay Republicans are an “oxymoron” (Goldstein 2002; Cimino 2012; Petrow 2014). Therefore, in addition to helping gays clearly recognize that their group-based interest is to support Democrats, Republicans have further entrenched this alliance by casting themselves as an enemy to gay rights.

Historical evidence demonstrates that, since its inception, the gay rights movement has strongly aligned with the Left. When Henry Hay, a Communist Party activist and leader for more than 15 years, founded the first gay political organization in 1950, he based the group on his communist ideological foundations. Hay adopted many communist principals, such as the idea of organizing collective movements on the basis of social class, and applied them specifically to gay people. Using communist logic, Hay became the first person to publicly frame homosexuals as an oppressed minority group (Miller 2006; D’Emilio 1983). Under Hay’s leadership, his political group, the Mattachine society, built the gay rights movement upon a foundation of Leftist ideology. Since the dawn of gay political organization, its leaders have advocated for group consciousness based on common oppression with the goal of unifying gays and lesbian, educating the public, and promoting political action on behalf of LGBT rights (Valocchi 2001; Meeker 2001; Eaklor 2008).

From the very beginning of its formation, the nascent gay movement faced significant opposition from conservative and Republican forces. Chapter 2 outlines the severe discrimination facing gays at the hands of the Religious Right, which first aligned with Republicans against gays during the 1950s and 1960s. During this period,

Republican President Dwight Eisenhower signed Executive Order 10450, which made homosexuality grounds for dismissal from the federal government, the Republican led State Department passed the McCarran-Walter Act, which became the first federal immigration policy to explicitly ban homosexual immigrants (Francoeur 2007; Canaday 2009), Republican Senator Joseph McCarthy led the persecution of homosexuals as security risks, and conservative police departments led the raids and arrests of LGBT persons around the country (D'Emilio 1983). This discrimination did not immediately create an alignment between gays and Democrats, however, as the Democratic Party did not yet lobby on behalf of gay and lesbian rights. Nevertheless, it did lay the foundation for animosity between Republicans and the gay community and create an opportunity for Democrats to foster an alliance with LGBTs.

As described in Chapter 2, this discrimination inadvertently helped foster group consciousness within the LGBT community and pushed the community further toward Democrats. Beginning in the early 1960s, gays and lesbians began to engage in direct confrontational political action against conservative discrimination, such as picketing military induction centers for banning gays and lesbians (Faderman 1991). This aggressive political behavior continued throughout the decade and exploded following the Stonewall Riots of 1969. During this period, gay and lesbian activists became strongly aligned with the New Left, including the student movement, the anti-war movement, radical feminism, and the hippie movement. Gays and lesbians began to argue for the complete transformation of American society (Miller 2006) and became even more radical than their Mattachine predecessors. By the end of 1969, gays had successfully formed a gay liberation organization, the Gay Liberation Front (GLF). The

GLF adopted the ideology of collective identity, revolutionary organization, a desire for the “complete sexual liberation of all people” (Valocchi 2001), and strong opposition to the postwar ideal of the nuclear family (Tobin & Wicker 1975; Jay & Young 1977; Hertzog 1996). The ideology of gay liberation would dominate the gay political movement until late 1980s and solidify the association of LGBT persons with Democratic politics. This movement laid the foundation for the future pursuit of gay rights, as it called for equality and full citizenship and demonstrated a willingness to be politically confrontational on behalf of these rights (Faderman 1991).

During this time, Republicans and conservatives continued their persecution of gays and lesbians. The historical record demonstrates that the 1970s was a time of strong Republican backlash against the gay community. This included the formation of Jerry Falwell’s Moral Majority in 1979, which adamantly opposed LGBT rights and political inclusion. These burgeoning conservative movements moved quickly to restrict gay rights through legislative action, with Republicans introducing items such as the McDonald amendment to the Legal Assistance Act (1977), the Family Protection Act (1979), and the Briggs Initiative (1978). The McDonald amendment and the Family Protection Act sought to deny federal funds for any persons, group, or action linked to promoting, protecting, or defending homosexuals (Eaklor 2008), while the Briggs Initiative attempted to mandate the firing of homosexual schoolteachers in California. Conversely, Democrats slowly began to open their party to the inclusion of gay and lesbian members, with liberal groups beginning to view homosexuals as a powerful voting bloc (D’Emilio 1983; Chauncey 2009).

The alignment of religious conservatives and Republicans defined the “New Right’s” politics of the 1980s onward, with Republican President Ronald Reagan winning the 1980 election on a platform of family values. This Republican takeover of both Congress and the Presidency coincided with the emergence of the AIDS epidemic, solidifying conservative opposition to homosexuals. During this time, public opinion regarding homosexuals reached historic lows (Smith 2008; Mucciaroni 2009) and Republicans adopted increasingly aggressive stances towards the gay community. Leaders, such as former White House Communications Director Pat Buchanan, stated that AIDS was “nature’s revenge” on homosexuals, that “the sexual revolution has begun to devour its children,” and that “homosexual diseases threatened American families” (Miller 2006). Similarly, conservative thinker and leader William Buckley proposed tattooing people with AIDS to make it impossible for them to pass in public (D’Emilio 1983). Intense legislative action followed these sentiments, with Republican legislators introducing more than 200 antigay referendums and initiatives between 1974 and 2008 (Stone 2010).

This discrimination inadvertently helped lesbians and gays unify in political action by encouraging them to develop politicized group consciousness. By casting all members of the LGBT community as perverts, disparate components of the gay community began to work together on behalf of LGBT rights. Perhaps unintentionally, the backlash of the New Right and the emergence of AIDS pushed LGBT persons towards conscious, political action. It also pushed them toward a political alliance with the Democratic Party, with gays viewing Democrats as their best option for working within the political system. Although Democrats were not always supportive of gay rights

issues in the past, with the intense animosity towards LGBT persons growing among Republicans, many LGBT persons viewed the Democrats as their only political option (Fetner 2008). By the early 1970s, a few lesbian and gay Democratic clubs had formed. This culminated with two openly gay persons, Madeline Davis and Jim Foster, addressing the Democratic National Convention in 1972. Evidence of Democrats' growing inclusiveness of gays is abundant, such as when President Carter appointed openly lesbian Margaret Costanza as his assistant for Public Liaison, when Democratic politicians began marching in gay pride parades, and when President Carter convened a White House meeting with gay movement leaders (Eaklor 2008; Chauncey 2009)

This pattern of gay inclusion in the Democratic coalition continued throughout the 1980s, but in an unsystematic fashion. That trend changed abruptly in 1992, when President Clinton actively pursued the LGBT vote, raised more than \$3 million in campaign donations from the gay community, and made direct promises on behalf of LGBT rights. Throughout the next decade, LGBT alignment with the Democratic Party continued to grow stronger, while Republicans maintained a strong opposition to gay rights. For example, during his two-term presidency, President George H.W. Bush proposed a Constitutional amendment banning gay marriage. Similarly, in the 2008 and 2012 presidential elections, all major Republican candidates opposed gay marriage, with the majority also opposing gay military service, gay adoption rights, and hate-crimes legislation. Conversely, Democrats evolved into strong supporters of gay rights, culminating in President Obama becoming the first acting president to endorse gay marriage. Congressional legislative action follows this pattern, with the majority of Republicans currently opposing measures such as the Employment Non-Discrimination

Act, the appointment of Staci Yandle as the first openly gay judge within the Seventh Circuit, the Respect for Marriage Act, and the Student Non-Discrimination Act. Further, in the 113th Congress, only one Republican scored the highest score on the Human Rights Campaign's Equality Scorecard (Richard Hanna – New York), while the vast majority scored the lowest score (HRC 2015). On the contrary, the majority of Democrats scored the highest HRC Equality Index score, indicating the Democratic Party's ongoing support for gay rights issues.

Taken together, evidence from the past sixty years demonstrates the long arc of LGBT alignment the Democratic Party. Born from Communist ideology and progressive politics and rooted in the radical movements of the New Left, the LGBT movement has a long history of alignment with Democrats. Conversely, vilified by the Religious Right and persecuted by Republican politicians ranging from President Eisenhower to President George H. W. Bush, LGBT persons have been unwelcome within the Republican Party for nearly six decades. Therefore, gay persons with the highest levels of LGBT group consciousness will recognize and internalize these trends, and be significantly less likely to identify as Republicans. This leads to the following hypothesis:

H₁: Group Consciousness and Party Identification: As an LGBT person reports increasing levels of group consciousness, his likelihood of identifying as a Republican will decrease.

LGBT Party Alignment

Anecdotal, descriptive, and historical evidence demonstrates that LGBT persons are expected to align with Democrats and against the Republican Party. However, scholars have currently failed to test this relationship in a systematic fashion, or explain why this alignment occurs. Using Pew's 2013 "A Survey of LGBT Americans," I demonstrate that group consciousness lays the foundation for Democratic alignment within the LGBT

community and that LGBT persons with the highest levels of consciousness consistently display the strongest partisan effects.

Based on survey data of LGBT Americans, how do gay people align politically? Table 5.1 shows that 58.4% of the respondents in Pew’s data identified as Democrats, with an additional 71.8% of Independents leaning toward the Democratic Party. In total, 81.7% of survey respondents reported that they identified as Democrats or leaned Democratic. Conversely, only 7.0% of respondents reported that they identified as Republicans. When contrasted with the broader American public, where only 48% of the population is a Democrat or leans Democratic (Pew 2015a; Jones 2015), the overwhelming alignment of gays with Democrats becomes even more evident. Gays, lesbians, and bisexuals are almost twice as likely to align with Democrats as other Americans are. This demonstrates that the LBGT community is almost uniformly Democratic. Therefore, there is limited variability regarding partisan alignment, with a vast majority of the sample reporting a Democratic allegiance.

Table 5.1:

Party Identification in “A Survey of LGBT Americans”

| Party Identification Questions | Response Options | <i>N</i> | % |
|---|----------------------|----------|------|
| In politics today, do you consider yourself a . . . ? | Republican | 76 | 7.0 |
| | Democrat | 635 | 58.4 |
| | Independent | 320 | 29.4 |
| | Something else | 56 | 5.2 |
| [For Independents and Something else] | The Republican Party | 102 | 28.2 |
| As of today, do you lean more to . . . | The Democratic Party | 260 | 71.8 |
| Party Identification | <i>N</i> | % | |
| Republican | 76 | 7.0 | |
| Lean Republican | 102 | 9.4 | |
| Independent/Other | 16 | 1.5 | |
| Lean Democrat | 260 | 23.4 | |
| Democrat | 635 | 58.3 | |
| Total | 1,089 | | |

Given the traditional relationship between partisanship and ideology, with many scholars arguing that ideology forms the basis of partisan attachments (Fiorina 1981; Downs 1957; Achen 1992, 2002; Saunders & Abramowitz 2007; Abramowitz & Saunders 1998, 2006), an analysis of the relationship between ideology and partisanship in the LGBT community is also warranted. Table 5.2 demonstrates the distribution of ideology within the gay community. The data show that the gay community reported considerably higher levels of ideological variability than partisan variability. To demonstrate, while nearly 82% of respondents identified as Democrats, only 55.9% reported that they were liberal or very liberal. Although this represents a majority of respondents, it also indicates that over 10% of LGBTs reported being conservative and more than one-third reported being moderate.^{xi} Therefore, while one may be safe to assume that most LGBTs are Democrats, greater caution should be used when generalizing about LGBT ideology. This also further supports the argument that ideology is not the primary driver of partisanship within the LGBT community, as there is a significant gap between the number of moderates and conservatives and the number of Democrats.

Table 5.2:
Ideology in “A Survey of LGBT Americans”

| Ideology Question | Response Options | <i>N</i> | % |
|--|-------------------|----------|------|
| In general, would you describe your political views as . . . | Very Conservative | 19 | 1.8 |
| | Conservative | 93 | 8.6 |
| | Moderate | 368 | 33.8 |
| | Liberal | 412 | 37.9 |
| | Very Liberal | 196 | 18.0 |

The relationship between ideology and partisanship displayed in Table 5.3 further supports the finding that there is a limited relationship between ideology and partisanship

in the gay community, particularly for conservatives. While there is a strong relationship between liberal ideology and Democratic alignment, with nearly 78% of liberals identifying as Democrats, this relationship is considerably weaker for moderates and conservatives. To demonstrate, although 44.9% of moderates identify as Democrats, a larger proportion identifies as Independent or Republican. Although this variance may be somewhat expected for moderates, the relationship between conservatism and party identification demonstrates unexpected effects, as conservatives are nearly evenly distributed across the three partisan alignments. Therefore, conservatives were nearly as probable to identify as Independents or Democrats as they were to identify as Republican. The correlation between these variables further demonstrates this, as ideology and party identification are relatively weakly related in the LGBT community ($r(1,029) = .43, p < .05$). Consequently, the results further demonstrate that, while ideology remains an important variable in explaining party identification in the gay community, it is unlikely to be the strongest driver of partisanship among LGBTs. Rather, the theory outlined above argues that group consciousness is expected to most strongly motivate this relationship.

Table 5.3:

The Relationship between Ideology and Party Identification

| Ideology | Party Identification | | | Total |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|----------|-------|
| | Republican | Independent | Democrat | |
| Conservative/Very Conservative | 43 | 32 | 28 | 103 |
| % | 41.8 | 31.1 | 27.2 | |
| Moderate | 29 | 161 | 155 | 345 |
| % | 8.4 | 46.7 | 44.9 | |
| Liberal/Very Liberal | 4 | 127 | 452 | 583 |
| % | 0.7 | 21.8 | 77.5 | |
| Total | 76 | 320 | 635 | 1,031 |
| % | 7.4 | 31.0 | 61.6 | |

Given the lack of variance in the party identification variable, with nearly 82% of respondents reporting that they were Democrats or leaned Democratic, and the particularly powerful overlap between Democratic identification and liberal ideology, I examine only Republican partisanship as the dependent variable for party identification. Because of the lack of variability across responses, with a nearly monolithic majority reporting that they identify as Democrats, the full range of partisanship lacks the variability to effectively model its outcomes. To measure Republican partisanship, I created a dichotomous measure that captures whether a respondent identified as Republican or leaned Republican, as opposed to all other party alignments. In total, 178 (16.4%) of respondents reported that they were, or leaned, Republican out of 1,089 respondents who reported their party identification. Table 5.4 displays this variable.

Table 5.4:
Republican Identification

| | <i>N</i> | <i>%</i> |
|----------------------------|----------|----------|
| Not Republican | 911 | 83.6 |
| Republican/Lean Republican | 178 | 16.4 |
| Total | 1,089 | |

Based on both historical evidence and survey data regarding partisanship among LGBTs, LGBT group consciousness is expected to significantly decrease identification with the Republican Party. As gays become more conscious of their in-group identity, they become more likely to recognize that Democrats best represent their self-interest. Therefore, as gays become conscious of their subordinate status as LGBT, they become more likely to engage politically on behalf of their identity by aligning with Democrats and not aligning with Republicans. Conversely, when they have lower levels of group consciousness, gays should be less likely to identify with the broader community's political norms or recognize that Democrats have historically represented the LGBT

community's interests within electoral institutions. Descriptive data and historical evidence support this argument, with LGBT persons with the highest levels of group consciousness consistently aligning with the Democratic Party.

Data, Methods, and Results

I used the Positive Identity Index and Public Evaluation Index described in the previous chapters to test this hypothesis. Both measures are expected to be associated with a decrease in the probability of identifying as Republican. In addition to the primary independent variable of interest, group consciousness, I also included numerous controls, such as income, age, education, race and ethnicity, and LGBT subgroup status. Summary statistics for all additional variables are displayed in Appendix C. Increasing income (McCarty et al. 2003, 2006), age (Watts 1999; Fisher 2008; Van der Brug 2010; Binstock 2012), and bisexual identity (Lewis 2011) are expected to be positively associated with the probability of Republican alignment. Conversely, higher levels of education (Pew 2015b), racial and ethnic minority status (Luks & Elms 2005; de la Garza & Cortina 2007), and lesbian identity (Kaufman 2002; Shapiro & Mahajan 1986; Conover & Sapiro 1993; Fite et al. 1990; Herek 2002) are expected to be associated with a lower probability of identifying as Republican.

To reflect the arguments of the Rational Choice model, I include ideology as a predictor of Republican alignment. Following the logic of the Rational Choice model, as a respondent's liberalism increases, his probability of reporting that he is Republican is expected to decrease. Therefore, the ideology variable should have a significant and negative relationship with the probability of reporting Republican party identification, as liberals should be less likely to identify as Republicans.

Because the Republican partisanship measure is dichotomous, the partisanship model is estimated using logistic regression. Using this dependent variable, the output in Table 5.5 demonstrates that the Positive Identity Index and the Public Evaluation Index strongly motivate party identification among LGBT respondents. Consequently, the results provide strong support for Hypothesis 1, indicating that partisanship is primarily a function of group consciousness within the gay community.

Table 5.5:

The Impact of Group Consciousness on Republican Party Identification

| Variable | B | SE |
|------------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Independent Variables | | |
| PII | -0.156** | (0.050) |
| PEI | -0.297* | (0.161) |
| Controls | | |
| Ideology | -1.796*** | (0.164) |
| Age | -0.117 | (0.073) |
| Education | -0.330** | (0.141) |
| Income | 0.131** | (0.053) |
| Black, Non-Hispanic | -3.485** | (1.039) |
| Hispanic | -0.316 | (0.347) |
| Other & Multi-Racial, Non-Hispanic | -0.679* | (0.408) |
| Lesbian | -0.509 | (0.309) |
| Bisexual | 0.278 | (0.256) |
| Constant | 4.561*** | (0.665) |
| X^2 | 311.97*** | |

Note. $N = 1,057$. * $p < .10$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .01$

Post-estimation analysis demonstrates that the model fits the data well. With a statistically insignificant Hosmer and Lemeshow's goodness of fit test, the results indicate that the model displays good model fit (Hosmer & Lemeshow 1980; Hosmer et al. 1988). Further, the model correctly classifies the majority of observations, with an overall classification rate of 87.8%. It correctly classifies 97.1% of non-Republicans and 38.9% of Republicans. Because classification is sensitive to the relative size of each

group and favors classification into the larger group (non-Republicans), this lack of sensitivity for Republican specification is expected (Hosmer et al. 2013; Kohler & Kreuter 2012).

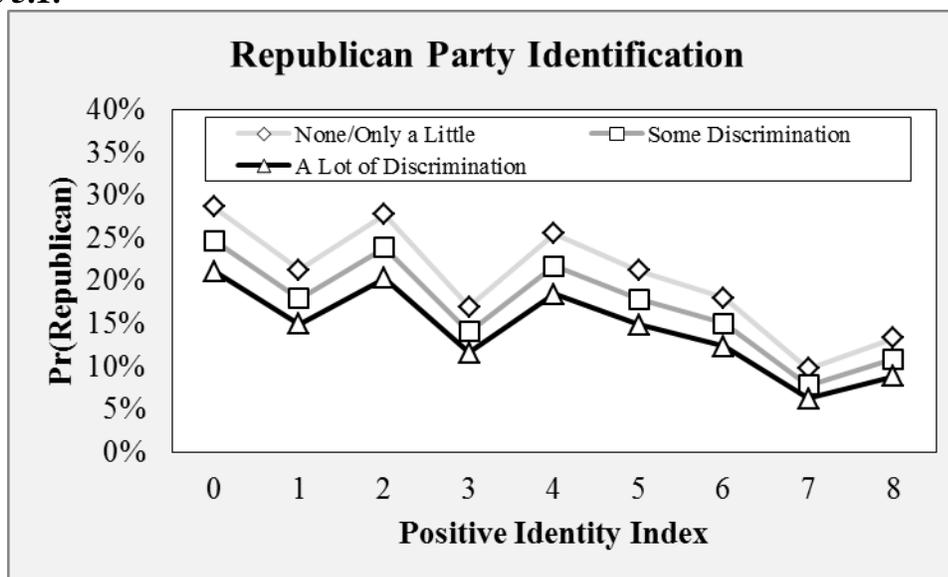
Within LGBTs, income, age, and minority racial identity structure partisanship, while age, ethnicity, and LGBT subgroups do not. This suggests that, while some demographic factors influence LGBT partisanship, the gay community may be more motivated by group consciousness and ideology than other factors. Within demographic factors, African American identity demonstrated the strongest effects, with self-identified Blacks being 16% less likely to identify as Republican than their White peers. This may suggest that gay African Americans are particularly partisan, as both their African American identity and LGBT identity make them significantly more inclined to identify as Democratic. Income and education have similarly impactful substantive effects, as the wealthiest respondents were 8% more likely to identify as Republican than the poorest respondents, while the best-educated respondents were 10% less likely to identify as Republican those with the lowest levels of education. Overall, these findings suggest that income, race, and education are the most powerful demographic predictors of partisanship within the LGBT community.

Ideology also demonstrated very powerful effects, supporting the Rational Choice argument that ideology fundamentally structures partisanship. For LGBTs, conservative and very conservative respondents were approximately 50% more likely to identify as Republican than liberal or very liberal respondents were. They were also approximately 30% more likely to identify as Republican than moderates were. Overall, this demonstrates that moderate and liberal gays are highly likely to align with Democrats,

while conservatives are considerably more likely to identify as Republicans. With that said, however, even conservative LGBTs remain relatively Democratic, with very conservative and conservative respondents having only a 57% probability of identifying as Republican. Given that the other 43% of conservatives identified as Independents or Democrats, this suggests that the vast majority of gays do not support or identify with the Republican Party.

The group consciousness measures maintained similarly powerful effects. Figure 5.1 displays the relationship between the Positive Identity Index, the Public Evaluation Index, and the probability of identifying as Republican. Respondents who reported the minimum levels of group consciousness across both variables had a 29% probability of reporting Republican identification, while those reporting the highest levels of both variables had only a 9% probability of doing so. This demonstrates that LGBTs without group consciousness were 20% more likely to identify as Republican than LGBTs with high levels of group consciousness. This effect is particularly pronounced for the Positive Identity Index, with respondents reporting the highest levels of the PII being 2 times less likely to be Republicans than respondents reporting the lowest levels. The effect of the Public Evaluation Index is similar, with respondents who reported that there was no or only a little discrimination against gays being 6% more likely to identify as Republican than respondents who reported that there was a lot of discrimination against LGBTs.

Figure 5.1:



Discussion

This chapter examined the sources of partisanship within gay Americans, with a focus on the political foundations of LGBT party identification. It began with an argument that the partisan associations of LGBT persons are rooted in their group label. As identification with the LGBT community grows and awareness of the subordinate status of LGBTs increases, gay identity overrides other factors and group members become increasingly likely to identify with the party that best represents their group. Therefore, the group label becomes the primary link between the group member and political parties.

For LGBTs, identifying with the gay community entails that a person has a vested interest in supporting the Democratic Party. While this relationship has not always been seamless, in that Democrats did not actively seek the gay and lesbian vote until the 1990s, there has been a longstanding political alignment between gays and Democrats. Over time, this relationship has culminated in outcomes such as the repeal of the discriminatory “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell” policy, the nationwide legalization of gay

marriage, and the first endorsement for gay marriage by a sitting President. Additionally, this relationship is further entrenched by Republicans, who have actively opposed gay rights for nearly a century. Taken together, most gays demonstrate that they have a clear idea of the party that best represents their group, as well as the party that actively opposes their group.

The statistical relationship between group consciousness and party identification confirms this expectation, with LGBT persons who report higher levels of group consciousness consistently reporting that they do not align with Republicans. These effects are consistent across both measures of group consciousness, including the Positive Identity Index, which captures positive in-group associations, and the Public Evaluation Index, which captures recognition of negative out-group treatment. Similar to the previous chapter, the PII displayed the most consistent and powerful effects by cutting the probability of identifying as Republican in half, demonstrating the powerful role that positive in-group associations play in shaping partisanship. The Public Evaluation Index also maintained substantively meaningful effects, indicating that both dimensions of group consciousness influence political outcomes.

Although the data demonstrate a strong relationship between LGBT group consciousness and partisan alignment, one limitation of this analysis is its inability to account for changes in ideology and party identification over time. This is particularly important regarding the link between LGBT group consciousness and ideology. To demonstrate, there is considerable evidence suggesting that the process of identifying as gay fundamentally structures one's worldview and place within society (Chauncey 1994; Miller 2006; Hertzog 1996; D'Emilio 1983). This entails that it is possible for gay

identity to encourage one's values and ideology to change to reflect their LGBT identity, implying that LGBT group consciousness may shape and influence one's ideology. This is particularly true for gays, as the historical record shows the longstanding and ongoing relationship between gay identity and liberalism, such as communists founding the first gay political movement or gays being associated with the New Left and radical liberalism for decades. Therefore, it is possible that many conservative and moderate people develop more liberal ideologies and worldviews as a function of their participation in the LGBT community.

There is some preliminary evidence within this dataset that suggests that LGBT identity may at least influence a respondent's ideology. For example, in the general population, conservatives represent the largest ideological group, with 38% of Americans reporting a conservative ideology (Saad 2015). When this is contrasted with the LGBT community, where only 10% of respondents reported a conservative ideology, the size of the ideological chasm between gays and other Americans is increasingly abundant. Further, only 24% of Americans identify as liberal (Saad 2015), compared to 56% of gays. This demonstrates that LGBTs are approximately 30% less likely to identify as conservative and approximately 30% more likely to identify as liberal. These statistics suggest that there is an association between gay identity and ideology, implying that joining the LGBT community may encourage the adoption of a liberal worldview. It is likely that, if these respondents were not gay, many of them would have reported considerably more moderate and/or conservative ideologies.

This has important implications for the interpretation of this model and its effects. In modeling partisanship, although numerous demographic controls and the group

consciousness measures were significant, the ideology measure demonstrated the most powerful substantive effects. Based on the argument outlined above, the data suggest that interpreting ideology without the context of LGBT influence is problematic. Therefore, future analyzes should examine how identifying as LGBT influences and changes ideological orientations. The historical record implies that many people likely identify as conservative or moderate before identifying as gay, and change their ideology to reflect their group identity. If this is true, ideology may operate as an additional dimension or extension of LGBT group consciousness, rather than a distinct worldview that exists separately from being gay. If LGBT group consciousness motivates changes in ideology,^{xiii} these results imply an even more powerful effect for group consciousness than can be captured using the data in “A Survey of LGBT Americans.” Consequently, it is possible that this model overestimates the impacts of ideology, as the effects of LGBT group consciousness in fostering ideology must be removed before the independent effect of ideology can be assessed.

Taken together, it is likely that the LGBT community will continue to align with Democrats for the foreseeable future. Similar to the African American community, most gays associate their group interests with the Democrats, and nearly 90% view Republicans in unfavorable terms (Pew 2013). With near monolithic support throughout the gay community and nearly 80% of gays reporting that they are Democrats, it will be very difficult for the Republican Party to make inroads into the gay community. Further, LGBT group consciousness, particularly positive in-group associations, is strongly related to this allegiance. As long as gays continue to view their self-interest in group terms, and Democrats best represent the group’s interest, the majority of the community

will continue to demonstrate these partisan trends. Without substantial changes in party platforms and political rhetoric, it is unlikely that Republicans will gain a significant number of LGBT supporters.

Conclusion

This chapter has provided the first explanation for the political foundations of partisan alignment among gay Americans. In doing so, it has also provided the first statistical examination of gays' alignment with Democrats, and confirmed that LGBT persons are very likely to report Democratic partisanship. The results suggest that LGBTs with the highest levels of group consciousness are the least likely to align with Republicans. Positive in-group associations, as measured by the Positive Identity Index, play a particularly powerful role in shaping this relationship, suggesting that, as long as gays identify with their community, view their LGBT label as important, assess the community in a positive way, and feel attached to other gays, they will continue to identify as Democrats. Perceptions of negative out-group treatment also play an important role, implying that discrimination against gays, particularly at the hands of Republicans, also contributes to this process. Building upon the foundation of group consciousness and political outputs, the next chapter expands this examination and explores the relationship between group consciousness and public opinion.

CHAPTER SIX

I CAN'T EVEN THINK STRAIGHT: LGBT GROUP CONSCIOUSNESS AND PUBLIC OPINION

How does group consciousness influence the public opinion of LGBT Americans?

The previous chapters tested the link between group consciousness, partisanship, and political participation. The results demonstrate that LGBT group consciousness strongly motivates the political activities of gay people, such as encouraging them to boycott or fostering their alignment with the Democratic Party. While these are important contributions to understanding LGBT politics, explaining how gays think about politics remains unexplored. This is particularly puzzling given the abundance of evidence that analyzes how heterosexuals regard gays and gay politics (Avery et al. 2007; Baunach 2011; Haider-Markel & Joslyn 2008; Hicks & Lee 2006; Lewis 2003; Lewis & Gossett 2008; Yang 1997; Herek 2002; Brewer 2003, 2008; Lax & Phillips 2009; Alvarez & Brehm 2002). Although we know a great deal about heterosexuals' approval of homosexuality and support for gay political issues, we lack an understanding of how LGBT persons view these same issues. To address this limitation, this chapter examines the relationship between group consciousness and public opinion. Using data from Pew's 2013 "A Survey of LGBT Americans," the results demonstrate that LGBT persons care deeply about issues that directly affect the gay community, such as adoption rights, marriage rights, employment rights, LGBT youth services, support for HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention, and transgender medical coverage. Across all of these topics, group consciousness remains the strongest and most consistent predictor of gay public opinion. These findings demonstrate that gay public opinion is the result of positive in-

group associations and the perception of negative out-group treatment, demonstrating that as long as LGBT persons maintain high levels of group consciousness, they will prioritize and support the political issues that benefit their community.

Explaining Public Opinion

Public opinion refers to the preferences of individuals about political issues (Davison 1958; Key 1961; MacDougall 1952; Erikson & Tedin 2014), which are often controversial and of interest to broad segments of society (Allport 1937; Hyman 1957). Public opinion is relevant to the study of politics because the concept is fundamentally rooted in the political process, as it revolves around attitudes toward government and governmental policy. Further, public opinion has demonstrated important effects on a variety of political outcomes, such as party platforms (Monroe 1983; Adams et al. 2004), state policy (Erikson et al. 1989, 1993; Wright et al. 1987; Lax & Phillips 2009; Arceneaux 2002), national policy (Monroe 1979, 1998; Page & Shapiro 1983), foreign policy (Sobel 2001; Entman 2004; Baum 2003; Baum & Potter 2008), and Supreme Court decisions (Barnum 1985; Mishler & Sheehan 1993, 1996; Casillas et al. 2011; Giles et al. 2008; McGuire & Stimson 2004), among a multitude of other factors.

Ideology, party affiliation, and group identification are among the most central explanations for describing the formation of political attitudes. Regarding ideology, scholars argue that ideology serves as an important source of policy orientations (Campbell et al. 1960; Jacoby 1988, 2006; Ansolabehere et al. 2008). Ideology refers to the set of beliefs an individual holds about the correct order of society and how to best achieve those preferences (Erikson & Tedin 2014; Jost et al. 2009), and it matters because it facilitates the development of political attitudes. In the American context,

ideology tends to fall along a liberal-conservative axis with two key dimensions, one that captures the degree to which a person opposes or supports change and another that captures the degree to which a person supports benevolence in their approach to others versus seeking power or status over them (Kilburn 2009). In general, people support specific issue positions that reflect their liberal-conservative tendencies because it is efficient; ideological orientations not only lower the information costs of supporting a particular position, but using ideology as a “yardstick” (Campbell et al. 1960) for politics also helps promote consistency across issues (Jacoby 1991). Therefore, ideology helps people interpret political outcomes and defines what the individual will view as a “good” or “bad” outcome (Rokeach 1973; Jacoby 2006). In sum, political ideology influences public opinion because people often support policies that align with their ideological preferences while opposing policies that conflict with their ideological preferences.

The effects of ideology on public opinion are mixed, however, with some people reporting that their attitudes are structured in terms of their ideology (Sears et al. 1979, 1980; Kilburn 2009), while others remain unable to explain their political attitudes in ideological terms (Converse 1964). Given the contradictory effects of ideology, many argue that additional variables, such as education and the strength of ideological orientations, are essential in understanding when ideology will significantly influence attitudes (Jacoby 1991; Luskin 1990; Schoon et al. 2010; Deary et al. 2008). Regarding the strength of ideological orientations, results demonstrate that the influence of ideology is most pronounced for strong ideologues, while being relatively weak for persons who fall along the center of the ideological spectrum (Jacoby 1991). This occurs not only because the most ideological persons have the highest levels of political awareness, but

also because they are best able to link political issues back to their ideological orientations (Jacoby 1995). Education and cognitive capacity play an important role in this, as the ability to cognitively link an issue to one's ideology requires a certain degree of sophistication. Therefore, the best-educated and most intelligent members of the public often report the most ideologically motivated attitudes (Jacoby 1991; Luskin 1990; Schoon et al. 2010; Deary et al. 2008).

Party affiliations play a similar role in motivating public opinion. Similar to the Michigan model described in previous chapters, this approach to explaining public opinion argues that party identification helps to shape political attitudes, with people using a party's preferences as a guideline for their personal preferences (Brewer & Brown 1998; Gerber et al. 2010; Slothuus & De Vreese 2010). Unlike ideology, which demonstrates the strongest effects for the most intellectually sophisticated and ideologically oriented Americans, party identification operates at a relatively low-cost and requires only a low level of sophistication, as elites signal and translate information to the public (Jacoby 1988, 1995; Slothuus & de Vreese 2010). Essentially, when a person does not have the time, information, and/or capacity to form a firm political attitude, a particular party's stance on the issue helps inform her personal opinion. Party identification has demonstrated strong effects on public opinion, such as vote choice (Bartels 2000) and perceptions of political figures and events (Bartels 2002), with the strongest effects occurring when the issue is not particularly salient (Carsey & Layman 2006).

In addition to ideology and party affiliations, group characteristics are consistently linked to public opinion. This approach to explaining attitudes argues that

group identification is a powerful driver of political attitudes and behaviors (Conover 1984; Conover & Feldman 1984; Wilcox 1989). Demographic factors, such as race (Dawson 1994; McClain et al. 2009; Sanchez 2006a), gender (Conover 1984; Norrander & Wilcox 2008; Norrander 1999; Kaufmann & Petrocik 1999), social class (Stonecash 2000), and age (Rhodebeck 1993) demonstrate the strongest effects, as many of these factors structure the distribution of political, economic, social, and psychological goods throughout society. Following this logic, people relate to political issues differently based on how that issue affects their group's power and receipt of resources (Downs 1957). In general, members of social groups are more likely to support policies they perceive to benefit their group, while opposing policies they perceive to harm their group. For example, Latinos are more supportive of bilingual education than other Americans are, because they perceive bilingual education to preserve Latino culture (Houvouras 2001; Sanchez 2006a), making the issue more salient for them. This demonstrates the general effects of group membership on public opinion, with group identity structuring political thought and encouraging groups to favor policies that benefit their group.

Group Consciousness and Public Opinion

Group consciousness is strongly connected to theories that tie group characteristics to political attitudes, as many scholars argue that group consciousness is the link that connects group membership to specific political preferences (Gurin 1985; Sanchez 2006a; Conover 1984, 1988; Conover & Feldman 1984; Conover & Sapiro 1993). In this approach, by increasing a group member's "ability to act" and "need to act" (Gamson 1968: p.48), group consciousness begins to fundamentally structure how minority communities think about politics. This explanation of public opinion focuses on

group members' individual schemas, or their set of cognitive generalizations about the world that are derived from past experiences and organize how they process new information and experiences (Conover 1984, 1988; Conover & Feldman 1984; Markus 1977; Markus et al. 1982; Fiske & Linville 1980). Group consciousness structures the political attitudes of group members because it integrates their self-schemas and their group-schemas, allowing them to view themselves in group terms and to view the group in a favorable way.

Schemas matter for political thought because people rely on them to interpret political events efficiently, as they contain previously stored information and provide a framework for judging issues (Conover 1988). This is particularly relevant for members of minority groups, who tend to develop schemas that favor their group. Because group consciousness captures both positive in-group associations and recognition of negative external treatment, it encourages members of minority groups to feel favorably toward their group and blame others for their deprived status (Conover 1984, 1988; Miller et al. 1981). For a member of a minority group, this not only improves the group's image, but also makes group-specific political issues personally relevant. As people begin to develop schemas that connect their identity to the group's identity, they begin to cognitively tie political issues that affect the group to their personal status. This triggers in-group bias that favors that group and leads persons with high levels of group consciousness to support pro-group policies and oppose anti-group policies. Overall, the schemas that result from group consciousness define the viewpoint that group members apply to political outcomes (Conover 1984). Therefore, persons with the highest levels of group

consciousness will develop the strongest schemas regarding political issues that affect their group.

Not all issues will develop personal significance, however, as some issues will fail to invoke the group's schema. According to this theory of attitude formation, group consciousness will most strongly influence attitudes about political issues that directly invoke the group and are related to the group's receipt of resources (Conover 1984, 1988; Markus et al. 1982, 1985). This occurs because, when the group is explicitly tied to the issue, it gives the issue personal political salience and directly affects group members' lives (Duncan 2005). Not only does this increase the meaningfulness of political issues, but it also makes it cognitively easier for group members to connect the issue directly to the group. Using the LGBT community as an example, the issue of "gay marriage" explicitly names the gay community, signaling that gay marriage will prime schemas relating to positive affect for being gay and displeasure with discrimination against gays, while also being easy for LGBT persons to identify as a gay-related political issue. Conversely, a non-gay issue, such as gun rights, may be harder to cognitively tie to LGBT politics, as this issue does not directly name LGBT persons or specifically target LGBT's resources. Therefore, group consciousness' effects are most relevant for issues that are explicitly tied to the group's resources.

This link between group consciousness and political issues, in which persons with high levels of group consciousness are primed to view political issues in group terms and support issues that favor the group, has demonstrated strong effects across a variety of demographic groups. Regarding gender, for example, studies demonstrate that women who frequently think about gender also tend to process gender-relevant material faster,

interpret somewhat ambiguous situations as having gender relevance, and consider the gendered implications of political issues (Gurin & Markus 1989; Duncan 2005). Race and ethnicity demonstrate similar effects, with the history of economic and racial policies shaping issues such as African American support for economic redistribution (Tate 1991, 1993; Dawson 1994) and Latino support for immigration (Sanchez 2006a). In general, a large body of research demonstrates that, for many demographically based minority groups, heightened levels of group consciousness consistently motivate pro-group public attitudes across a variety of issue areas that are relevant for the group. This argument leads to Hypothesis 1:

H₁: Group Consciousness and Public Opinion: As an LGBT person reports increasing levels of group consciousness, her likelihood of supporting public policies that favor LGBTs will also increase.

Group Consciousness, Public Opinion, and LGBT Americans

Using group consciousness to explain public opinion emphasizes the relationship between group identities, group schemas, and the politics that affect the group. This approach to explaining attitudes argues that the broader political environment fundamentally molds the political issues that are personally relevant for group members. Similar to the logic outlined in Chapter 2, these political issues will commonly arise surrounding the patterns of discrimination facing the group. Specifically, when a political policy unduly burdens the group or explicitly excludes it from full democratic participation, group members will actively oppose the policy. Conversely, when a policy expands the group's rights or offers them protection, the group is expected to actively support the policy. For the LGBT community, debates over the explicit rights and restrictions of gay people have created an abundance of issues that trigger group schemas and encourage LGBT group consciousness to structure public opinion. In the current

political environment, these issues center on the political issues of gay marriage, gay adoption rights, equal employment rights, support for organizations that service LGBT youth, HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention, and transgender health insurance coverage.

Gay Marriage

Gay marriage is among the most important political issues of the past century, with dozens of studies describing the importance of gay marriage to politics (Campbell & Monson 2008; Franke 2006; Sherkat et al. 2011; Olson et al. 2006; Smith 2005, 2008; Lewis & Gossett 2008; Lewis 2005; Soule 2004; Haider-Markel 2001; Smith et al. 2006). Yet, LGBT attitudes toward gay marriage, and the political foundations of these attitudes, remain largely unexplored. Gay marriage matters for LGBT persons because gay people have been fighting for the right to be legally married since at least 1970, when the first gay couple attempted to marry in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Their marriage license was denied, which sparked the beginning of a decades long fight for marriage equality that continues today. By the mid-1990s, 40 states had statutory language or constitutional provisions limiting marriage to a man and a woman (Chauncey 2009; Mohr 2005). The federal government reflected these restrictions with the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), which prevented the federal government from recognizing any marriages between same-sex couples for the purposes of federal programs. This even included couples that were legally married in their home state and allowed individual states to deny legal recognition of same-sex marriages that were recognized in different states (Ruskay-Kidd 1997; Adam 2003).

Gay marriage bans are particularly important to gays because they explicitly target the group for a denial of government benefits. When gay marriage is illegal, the

government denies LGBT couples at least 1,138 federal benefits, not including the thousands of benefits guaranteed by state law. These benefits span many issue areas that are fundamental to full participation in society, including death rights, divorce, family leave, health, immigration, portability, parenting, and taxes (Wolfson 2004). Across all of these areas, LGBT persons lack protection and equal treatment when the government denies their right to marry. Examples of the negative concrete effects of marriage bans are abundant, and range from the inability of an unmarried partner to collect a deceased partner's Social Security to the inability to use family leave to care for a spouse or child, the inability to be considered next-of-kin and notified in the event of an emergency medical decision, the inability to use U.S. residency to sponsor family unification if a partner is from another country, the inability to have an automatic right to joint adoption, joint foster care, or visitation rights, and the inability to file joint tax returns. Although the Supreme Court struck down a key component of DOMA in June 2013 and declared that same-sex marriage was a Constitutional right in June 2015, DOMA was in effect under federal law when Pew administered "A Survey of LGBT Americans" in April 2013. Further, even with the nationwide legality of gay marriage, there is controversy over its enforcement, as some county clerks have refused to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples (Blinder & Lewin 2015). Given the prominence of the issue and the nationwide fight for gay marriage that culminated in a recent victory at the U.S. Supreme Court, LGBT group consciousness and attitudes towards gay marriage are deeply intertwined. This leads to Hypothesis 1a:

H_{1a}: Group Consciousness and Support for Gay Marriage: As an LGBT person reports increasing levels of group consciousness, his likelihood of supporting legally sanctioned same-sex marriage will also increase.

Adoption Rights for Same-Sex Couples

Similar to marriage rights, adoption rights for same-sex couples represent an additional area of family law where gays and lesbians have faced overtly group-based discrimination. LGBT couples have historically faced explicit bans on adoptive rights, with LGBT couples being denied the right to adopt children because of their sexuality. Numerous court cases publicized same-sex adoption rights during the 1980s and 1990s, making gay adoption rights an important political issue. In these cases, such as a 1986 Arizona Court of Appeals case that upheld the right of the state to ban a bisexual man from adopting, a 1995 Florida Supreme Court case that upheld the state's decades long ban on gay adoption, and a Virginia Supreme Court 1985 ruling that expressed that LGBT parents were *per se* unfit parents (Baumle & Compton 2011; Chambers & Polikoff 1999), the government routinely ruled that it was legal, and perhaps preferred, to ban gay parents from adopting.

Although LGBT activists successfully challenged many of these laws by the early 2000s, same-sex couples continue to face barriers to becoming adoptive parents. Explicitly, Mississippi and Utah maintain outright bans on adoption by same-sex couples (HRC 2015c). Four states, Virginia, Michigan, Arizona, and Montana, have enacted laws that support discrimination against gay couples in placing foster and adoptive children (HRC 2015c). And, prior to the Supreme Court's June 2015 decision to legalize gay marriage nationwide, five states, Michigan, Ohio, Kentucky, Mississippi, and Nebraska, continued to create obstacles to joint adoption and second parent adoption for LGBT couples (HRC 2015c). In all 50 states, a birthparent in an independent open adoption, where the birthparent chooses the adoptive parents rather than a child welfare agency, has

the discretion to reject applicants on the basis of their sexuality (Hicks 1996). Implicitly, child welfare agencies retain a great deal of discretion in placing children in adoptive and foster homes, with traditional heterosexual families being preferred and favored over LGBT couples (Ryan et al. 2004). International bans on same-sex adoption only exacerbate this problem, with a growing number of countries banning gay couples from adopting children. This includes countries that send (or previously sent) a large number of children to the United States for adoption, such as Russia, China, South Korea, Ethiopia, and Ukraine (Mertus 2011). Taken together, LGBT couples continue to face a series of barriers to adopting or fostering children, where they are often viewed as unfit and improper parents. Because individuals, government agencies, and independent agencies have denied LGBT persons the right to adopt for decades, and some continue to do so, LGBT group consciousness should be strongly linked to opinions on gay adoption rights. This leads to Hypothesis 1b:

H_{1b}: Group Consciousness and Support for Gay Adoption: As an LGBT person reports increasing levels of group consciousness, her likelihood of supporting adoption rights for same-sex couples will also increase.

Workplace Discrimination

In addition to family law, LGBT persons have faced explicit and ongoing discrimination in the workplace for more than a century. Chapter 2 details the United States' history of employment discrimination against LGBTs, or the nation's set of behaviors and practices that advantages heterosexuals over LGBTs in the workplace (Tilcsik 2011; Badgett 2001; Rubenstein 2002; Hull 2005). The United States has a long history of outright exclusion and mandatory dismissal of homosexuals in the workplace, such as banning LGBTs from working for the federal government (D'Emilio 1983; Johnson 2009), serving in the U.S. armed forces (Humphrey 1990; Shilts 1993; Bérubé

2010), or working as teachers (Ragusea 2014; Machado 2014; Brydum 2013). Over the past century, more Americans were removed from their jobs for being LGBT than for being communists (D'Emilio 1983; Shilts 1993; Johnson 2009), over 14,000 LGBT persons were discharged from the armed forces (Kolenc 2013), and dozens of teachers were removed from their positions for their LGBT status in 2013 alone (Ragusea 2014; Machado 2014; Brydum 2013). On a more systematic level, 29 states continue to allow employment discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in 2015.

This discrimination against LGBT persons in the workplace continues today and affects compensation, hiring, and experiences of workplace discrimination. Beginning with the hiring process, LGBT persons routinely face discrimination in securing jobs, and experiments demonstrate that employers are consistently more likely to select heterosexual employees over homosexual employees (Crow et al. 1998; Tilcsik 2011). When LGBT persons are able to secure employment, they systematically earn less than their heterosexual counterparts, such as gay men earning 10-32% less than heterosexual men, and routinely report hearing jokes about gays and lesbians in their office (Badgett et al. 2007; Klawitter & Flatt 1998; Badgett 2001; Clain & Leppel 2001; Berg & Lien 2002; Black et al. 2003; Carpenter 2007; Antecol 2008; Tilcsik 2011; Fidas & Cooper 2013). Because employment discrimination creates a persistent barrier to equal employment for LGBT persons, LGBT group consciousness should strongly motivate gays' attitudes toward employment non-discrimination policies. This leads to Hypothesis 1c:

H_{1c}: Group Consciousness and Support for Equal Employment Rights: As an LGBT person reports increasing levels of group consciousness, his likelihood of supporting equal employment rights for LGBT people will also increase.

Support for LGBT Youth

Although many of the political issues surrounding the LGBT community relate to adults, the experiences of LGBT youth are particularly important to the gay community. LGBT youth, and the expansion of services to support them, is an important political issue for the gay community because LGBT youth are considerably more likely to face violence and experience difficulties in their school and family environments (CDC 2014). To demonstrate, while non-LGBT youth describe classes, exams, grades, college or career choices, and financial pressures relating to college or their job as their most important problems, LGBT youth describe non-accepting families, school or bullying problems, and fear of being out or open as their most important problems (HRC 2015b). These issues translate into stark outcomes for LGBT youth, with LGBT youth being two times less likely to report that they are happy than their heterosexual peers, being twice as likely to experiment with alcohol and drugs, and having a 50% probability or better of reporting that they have been verbally harassed or called slurs such as “fag” (HRC 2015b). Data demonstrate that LGBT youth are also considerably more likely to be threatened with a weapon on school property, experience dating violence, experience forced sexual intercourse, experience bullying in school, report higher levels of homophobic victimization, feel depressed or suicidal, or attempt suicide (Coker et al. 2010; Kann et al. 2011; Russell & Joyner 2001; Russell et al. 2011; Grossman & D’Augelli 2007; Birkett et al. 2009; CDC 2014; Ryan et al. 2009).

A lack of federal and state protections aimed at protecting LGBT youth intensifies these problems. Currently, only 14 states and the District of Columbia explicitly protect students from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity (Miller

2015). Because of this, leading gay rights organizations, such as the Human Rights Campaign, are actively campaigning for a federal law, The Equality Act, that would explicitly prohibit discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity within education, as well as in the workplace, housing, federal funding, credit, public spaces, and jury service (Miller 2015). Gay rights organizations have also supported an amendment to the Safe Schools Improvement Act and the Student Non-Discrimination Act, which would require schools that receive federal funds to prohibit bullying and harassment on the basis of sexual orientation or gender identity, among other factors (Pike Bailey 2015). In total, not only do many LGBT persons experience harassment and discrimination as youths, but gay political organizations are also increasingly championing for benefits, services, and legal protections that would shield gay youth from discrimination. Because of the growing political spotlight on LGBT youth issues, LGBT group consciousness should structure gays' political attitudes toward LGBT youth services. This leads to Hypothesis 1d:

H_{1d}: Group Consciousness and Support for LGBT Youth: As an LGBT person reports increasing levels of group consciousness, her likelihood of supporting services for LGBT youth will also increase.

HIV/AIDS Prevention and Treatment

Although many gay rights issues concern political, social, and economic discrimination, medical rights and disease-related discrimination are additional important political issue areas for LGBTs. For the gay community, issues relating to HIV/AIDS (human immunodeficiency virus infection/acquired immune deficiency syndrome) and transgender health insurance coverage are the two most pressing politicized medical issues. HIV/AIDS, which was also referred to as gay-related immune deficiency (GRID),

gay cancer, and the gay plague (Chibbaro 1982; Cichocki 2009; Kher 1982; Atلمان 1982), emerged in the early 1980s and served as one of the greatest medical threats, and political catalysts, to the gay community in the past century (Shilts 1987). Gay politics and HIV/AIDS are so related that some scholars have argued that HIV/AIDS is “the single most outstanding issue affecting gay men” (Watney 2000: p.12). This is predominately because HIV/AIDS disproportionately affects gay and bisexual men, who continue to represent 63% of all new HIV infections (CDC 2010). Not only has the disease ravaged the gay community, contributing to nearly 500,000 LGBT deaths and nearly 900,000 LGBT people currently living with HIV (CDC 2014a),^{xiii} but it also sparked an intense backlash against the gay community. This backlash included a historic low in public support for homosexuality (Herek & Capitanio 1999), calls from religious leaders that AIDS was “God’s punishment” for the sin of homosexuality, a rise in the AIDS-related loss of employment, the frequent refusal by physicians and other medical providers to treat patients living with HIV/AIDS, and funeral homes refusing to accept the bodies of patients who died from HIV/AIDS (HRSA 2015).

Although AIDS represented one of the largest public health issues in United States history, neither the media nor the federal government dedicated resources or attention towards AIDS research or funding until the mid-1980s (Shilts 1987; Cohen 1999, 2015). Given the lack of external resources, the increasing death toll, and the enormous emotional, social, and financial burden of HIV/AIDS, the gay community developed internal organizations to help fight the disease. These organizations, such as the Gay Men’s Health Crisis (GMHC), ACT UP, the Gay Liberation Front (GLF), and the Lesbian Avengers, among many others, engaged in public protest, attempted to raise

LGBT political consciousness, and pushed the government to increase funding for AIDS research and prevention (Smith & Haider-Markel 2002). Although the social climate surrounding AIDS has changed considerably over the past two decades and federal funding for HIV/AIDS research has drastically increased, there has been a resurgence of HIV/AIDS infections in the gay community, with the infection rate increasing 132.5% among gay and bisexual men between 2001 and 2011 (Johnson et al. 2014). This has motivated a renewed focus on combating HIV/AIDS within the gay community, leading to Hypothesis 1e:

H_{1e}: Group Consciousness and Support for HIV/AIDS Prevention: As an LGBT person reports increasing levels of group consciousness, his likelihood of supporting increased efforts to prevent and treat HIV/AIDS will also increase.

Health Insurance Coverage of Transgender Health Issues

Transgender insurance coverage is another important politicized medical issue within the LGBT community. Although transgender persons face high levels of discrimination across most areas of their lives, including physical and sexual violence (Stotzer 2009; Russell et al. 2011), discrimination employment (Herman 2011), and high levels of public disapproval (Flores 2014), they face particularly problematic conditions within the medical setting. Evidence demonstrates that transgender persons are frequently refused medical care, face harassment in the medical setting, and experience physical and emotional violence from their providers (Grant et al. 2011). Further, more than 50% of transgender persons report having to teach their providers about transgender-specific medical issues (Grant et al. 2011). The disproportionate disease burden of the transgender community only exacerbates this negative treatment, with transgender persons reporting higher levels of substance abuse (Hughes & Eliason 2002; Jordan 2000; Lombardi 2000),

HIV/AIDS (Herbst et al. 2008; Clements-Noll et al. 1999; Nemoto et al. 2004), and mental health issues (Clements-Noll et al. 2006; Mustanski et al. 2010; Rotondi et al. 2012).

The lack of medical coverage for transgender persons only enhances these negative conditions, with transgender persons having a higher medical need yet experiencing lower, and poorer, levels of medical care. Historical evidence demonstrates that transgender persons have routinely been denied health insurance coverage solely on the basis of their transgender identity (Transgender Law Center 2015). Further, when transgender persons are able to receive health insurance, the majority of insurers exclude transgender-related services, such as those relating to medical transitions (e.g., hormone therapy, sex reassignment surgery; Transgender Law Center 2015; NCTE 2015). To demonstrate, Medicare, one of the largest insurance programs in the United States, excluded coverage for medical care for transgender people until 2014 (Molloy 2014b). Because of the negative treatment facing the transgender community, their disproportionate need to access high quality medical care, and their historical exclusion from insurance coverage, expanding access to insurance coverage for the transgender population has become an important LGBT political issue. This leads to Hypothesis 1f:

H_{1f}: Group Consciousness and Support for Transgender Medical Coverage: As an LGBT person reports increasing levels of group consciousness, her likelihood of supporting coverage of transgender health issues by health insurance companies will also increase.

LGBT Public Opinion

Although there is an abundance of evidence suggesting that LGBT persons with high levels of group consciousness should support gay-friendly political issues and oppose anti-gay issues, the relationship between LGBT identity and public opinion

remains untested. Using Pew's 2013 "A Survey of LGBT Americans," I demonstrate that group consciousness forms the foundation of LGBT public opinion, as LGBT persons with the highest levels of group consciousness consistently display the strongest support for gay-friendly political issues.

How many gays support LGBT political issues? 87.0% of the respondents in Pew's data reported that at least one LGBT political issue was a top priority. Support for equal employment rights was the most important political issue for respondents, with 67.6% reporting that equal employment rights for LGBT people was a top priority. Legally sanctioned marriages for LGBT people followed, with more than 60% of respondents reporting that gay marriage was a top priority. Approximately half of respondents supported adoption rights for same-sex couples (50.1%), more efforts aimed at treating and preventing HIV/AIDS (47.4%), support for organizations that provide services to LGBT youth (45.6%), and coverage of transgender medical issues by health insurance companies (45.6%) as a top political priority. Table 6.1 displays the survey questions that form the basis of this data.

Table 6.1:
Political Issue Prioritization in “A Survey of LGBT Americans”

| Category | Top priority | Very important but not a top priority | Somewhat important priority | Not a priority at all | Total |
|--|--------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------|-------|
| | % (N) | % (N) | % (N) | % (N) | N |
| Equal employment rights for LGBT people | 67.6 (725) | 24.2 (259) | 6.2 (67) | 2.1 (22) | 1,073 |
| Legally sanctioned marriages for same-sex couples | 61.3 (663) | 23.2 (251) | 9.7 (105) | 5.7 (62) | 1,081 |
| Adoption rights for same-sex couples | 50.1 (538) | 34.4 (370) | 11.7 (126) | 4.0 (43) | 1,077 |
| Support for organizations that provide services to LGBT youth | 45.6 (490) | 36.3 (390) | 15.0 (161) | 3.2 (34) | 1,075 |
| More efforts aimed at prevention and treatment of HIV and AIDS | 47.4 (510) | 37.4 (402) | 12.9 (139) | 2.2 (24) | 1,075 |
| Coverage of transgender health issues by health insurance | 45.6 (490) | 36.3 (390) | 15.0 (161) | 3.2 (34) | 1,075 |

The data demonstrate that gay people have varying attitudes regarding gay issues and their importance. As Table 6.1 shows, while there is consensus around supporting issues such as equal employment rights, there is a greater deal of variability regarding issues that appear to be more subgroup specific, such as services for LGBT youth (primarily youth specific), the prevention of HIV/AIDS (primarily male specific), adoption rights (primarily female specific; Patterson et al. 1998; Flaks et al. 1995; Golombok et al. 2003), and coverage of transgender health issues (primarily transgender specific). Therefore, while the vast majority of respondents agree that all of these issues are at least somewhat important, their level of prioritization varies across issues.

Overall, the argument detailed above argues that LGBT group consciousness best explains this variance in prioritization. Respondents with the highest levels of in-group politicization should demonstrate the strongest support for prioritizing all of these group-salient issues as top priorities. As LGBT persons become more conscious of the relationship between these political issues, their personal resources, and the broader gay community, they will become more likely to recognize that these are important political issues that they must support. Conversely, when gays have lower levels of group consciousness, they will often fail to connect these political issues to their demographic group, indicating that they will maintain considerably lower levels of political importance and personal support. The argument that group consciousness motivates political attitudes is particularly well suited for testing with these data, because most of these issues directly name the LGBT community and clearly link the group to political outcomes.

In addition to testing the influence of group consciousness on LGBT salient issues, it is also important to test the boundaries of this relationship. Given the theoretical argument made above, along with the historical evidence regarding gay-specific political issues, group consciousness should not demonstrate significant effects on issues that are not specifically relevant to the gay community. If the group consciousness measures significantly influence non-gay issues, it potentially indicates that they lack specificity and incorrectly measure the concept of LGBT group consciousness. To verify the validity of the group consciousness measures, to test the theoretical link between group consciousness and political outcomes, and to examine the boundaries of LGBT group consciousness, I also examine the effects of LGBT group consciousness on a non-gay political issue, gun control. To validate the argument regarding group consciousness and

public opinion, there should be no relationship between LGBT group consciousness and support for gun control. Hypothesis 2 demonstrates this relationship:

H₂: Group Consciousness and Support for Gun Control: As an LGBT person reports increasing levels of group consciousness, there will be no effect on his likelihood of supporting increased gun control.

Table 6.2 displays the survey question that captures attitudes toward gun control.

The data demonstrate that, although the majority of LGBTs support increasing gun control, a sizeable minority supports protecting the right of Americans to own guns. To support the argument outlined above, group consciousness should not be statistically associated with attitudes toward gun rights.

Table 6.2:

Gun Control in “A Survey of LGBT Americans”

| What do you think is more important? | <i>N</i> | % |
|---|----------|------|
| To protect the right of Americans to own guns | 328 | 30.3 |
| To control gun ownership | 757 | 69.7 |
| Total | 1,086 | |

Data and Methods

To test the relationship between group consciousness and public opinion, I utilize the Positive Identity Index and Public Evaluation Index that were described in previous chapters. Both measures of group consciousness demonstrate important effects on political behavior, such as motivating political participation and party identification, and the measures are similarly expected to structure public opinion. These indices should both be associated with an increase in reporting that a group-related issue is a top priority and should not be associated with attitudes toward general political issues, such as gun control. To test the primary hypothesis, Hypothesis 1, I use an additive index of the total number of issues the respondent identified as a top priority, as displayed in Table 6.3. This table reiterates that LGBT persons report varying levels of prioritization regarding

gay rights issues. Although 20.0% of respondents reported that all six issues were a top priority, many respondents prioritized fewer issues. In general, respondents were nearly equally distributed across prioritization levels, with many gays reporting that few or no issues were a top priority, while others considered all aspects of the gay rights platform to be important.

Table 6.3:
Issue Prioritization Index

| | # of LGBT-Related Top Priorities | <i>N</i> | % |
|-------|----------------------------------|----------|------|
| 0 | | 137 | 13.0 |
| 1 | | 148 | 14.0 |
| 2 | | 142 | 13.5 |
| 3 | | 159 | 15.1 |
| 4 | | 121 | 11.5 |
| 5 | | 138 | 13.1 |
| 6 | | 211 | 20.0 |
| Total | | 1,056 | |

The models also include a number of demographic and theoretical controls. Unlike previous chapters, where the demographic controls generally failed to display consistently significant and strong effects, demographic labels should significantly structure public attitudes towards LGBT policies. Following the logic of the schema model outlined above, many of these LGBT issues have varying levels of relevance for different LGBT demographic groups. Therefore, because the issues may invoke subgroup specific schemas, different demographic groups may prioritize, or deprioritize, different LGBT issues. For each issue, demographic subgroups that perceive a group specific benefit should significantly support a policy, groups that perceive a group specific cost should significantly oppose a policy, and groups that do not link the issue to their subgroup should demonstrate insignificant effects.

To demonstrate, lesbians are expected to exhibit significantly higher levels of support for lesbian-related issues, such as family rights policies or employment discrimination. For example, evidence demonstrates that lesbians are more likely to be legally married (Solomon et al. 2004), to have children residing in their household (Patterson et al. 1998; Flaks et al. 1995; Golombok et al. 2003), and that women face greater levels of employment discrimination than their male counterparts (Murrell et al. 1995; Heilman 2008). Because these issues disproportionately affect lesbians, lesbians should display significantly higher levels of prioritization for these issues. Conversely, lesbians have among the lowest rates of HIV/AIDS infection in the United States (Chan et al. 2014), demonstrating that they may view investing resources in HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment as diverting funds from the policies that benefit their subgroup, making lesbians inclined to oppose HIV/AIDS prioritization.

Another factor that may demonstrate similar effects is the relationship between race/ethnicity and support for HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention. Because racial and ethnic minorities, particularly African American and Hispanic males, have the highest HIV/AIDS infection rates (CDC 2015a, 2015b), supporting prevention and treatment may be particularly important to these populations. For example, African Americans are the racial/ethnic group with the highest HIV infection rates and are 8 times more likely to be newly infected with HIV than Whites are (CDC 2015a). This is particularly true for gay and bisexual African Americans, who account for most new HIV infections among African Americans (CDC 2015a). Similarly, for Hispanics, Hispanics are disproportionately affected by HIV, with 7 in 10 new HIV diagnoses occurring among gay and bisexual Hispanics (CDC 2015b). Given the disproportionate need for

HIV/AIDS treatment and prevention in both of these demographic groups, one would expect these communities to prioritize HIV/AIDS treatment.

Therefore, these two examples demonstrate that many LGBT subgroups may have different issue prioritizations that are subgroup specific. Following the logic of the schema model, when these subgroups are able to connect LGBT issues to their other identities, such as their gender, race, or age, they will be more likely to support policies that benefit them and oppose policies that they perceive as coming at their group's expense. Consequently, the demographic controls are expected to play a more important role in influencing LGBT political opinion than they played in molding other political behaviors.

The models also control for ideology and partisanship, as both variables are considered powerful motivators of public opinion (Campbell et al. 1960; Jacoby 1988, 2006; Ansolabehere et al. 2008; Brewer & Brown 1998; Gerber et al. 2010; Jacoby 1988, 1995; Slothuus & de Vreese 2010). The ideology measure is a four-point scale that ranges from "very conservative/ conservative" to "very liberal." Partisanship is measured using a party identification variable, which ranges from "Republican" to "Democrat" and captures the extent to which Independents lean toward either party. Table 6.4 displays the distributions of both variables. For these models, both stronger identification as Democrats and stronger identification as "very liberal" should be associated with higher prioritization for all six political issues and the additive index.

Table 6.4:
Political Ideology and Party Identification in “A Survey of LGBT Americans”

| Ideology | | |
|--------------------------------|----------|------|
| | <i>N</i> | % |
| Very Conservative/Conservative | 112 | 10.3 |
| Moderate | 368 | 33.8 |
| Liberal | 412 | 37.9 |
| Very Liberal | 196 | 18 |
| Party Identification | | |
| | <i>N</i> | % |
| Republican | 76 | 7 |
| Lean Republican | 102 | 9.4 |
| Independent/Other | 16 | 1.5 |
| Lean Democrat | 260 | 23.4 |
| Democrat | 635 | 58.3 |

Results

Because all six prioritization variables and the additive index are ordinal, these models were estimated using ordered logistic regression with robust standard errors. Given the lack of respondents who reported that the issues were not a priority for the six prioritization variables (as shown in Table 6.1), responses for the six issue-specific measures were collapsed into three-point scales with the “not a priority” and “somewhat a priority” responses combined. A summary of the recoded variables is contained in Appendix D. Because the gun control measure is binary, the model that examines the relationship between group consciousness and gun control was estimated using logistic regression with robust standard errors.

Using the eight dependent variables described above, the output in Table 6.5 demonstrates support for all eight hypotheses. Not only do both the Positive Identity Index and the Public Evaluation Index powerfully influence the development of LGBT-specific public attitudes, but they also fail to influence general political attitudes. In

predicting attitudes towards gay specific political issues, these two variables were the only consistently significant predictors across all seven issue-prioritization models. This not only demonstrates support for all eight hypotheses, but also further demonstrates the consistently influential role that group consciousness plays in motivating LGBT political behavior. In total, the results demonstrate that LGBT public attitudes towards group related issues are primarily a function of LGBT group consciousness.

Table 6.5:
The Effects of Group Consciousness on Public Opinion

| | Equal Employment Rights | | Marriage Rights | | Adoption Rights | | LGBT Youth Services | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|-----------------|-----------|---------------------|-----------|
| | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> |
| Independent Variables | | | | | | | | |
| PII | 0.162*** | (0.035) | 0.236*** | (0.033) | 0.166*** | (0.032) | 0.186*** | (0.031) |
| PEI | 0.608*** | (0.119) | 0.699*** | (0.106) | 0.649*** | (0.107) | 0.571*** | (0.103) |
| Controls | | | | | | | | |
| Ideology | 0.400*** | (0.096) | 0.346*** | (0.090) | 0.468*** | (0.087) | 0.281*** | (0.078) |
| Party ID | 0.007 | (0.063) | 0.142** | (0.061) | 0.093 | (0.059) | 0.089 | (0.056) |
| Age | 0.090* | (0.047) | -0.052 | (0.044) | -0.088** | (0.042) | 0.098** | (0.041) |
| Education | 0.167* | (0.099) | 0.082 | (0.095) | 0.002 | (0.091) | 0.101 | (0.087) |
| Income | -0.021 | (0.035) | 0.046 | (0.033) | 0.020 | (0.031) | -0.073** | (0.031) |
| Black, Non-Hispanic | -0.422 | (0.261) | -0.855** | (0.261) | -0.044 | (0.267) | 0.195 | (0.261) |
| Hispanic | -0.586** | (0.220) | -0.718** | (0.220) | -0.492** | (0.216) | -0.041 | (0.193) |
| Other, Non-Hispanic | -0.342 | (0.293) | -0.194 | (0.265) | -0.285 | (0.244) | -0.163 | (0.220) |
| Lesbian | 0.351* | (0.192) | 0.396** | (0.181) | 0.459** | (0.163) | -0.105 | (0.157) |
| Bisexual | -0.205 | (0.174) | 0.128 | (0.170) | 0.092 | (0.162) | -0.393** | (0.159) |
| N | 1,046 | | 1,053 | | 1,050 | | 1,049 | |
| X^2 | 141.75*** | | 205.49*** | | 191.88*** | | 167.96*** | |

Note. * $p < .10$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .01$

| | HIV/AIDS Support | | Transgender Medical Coverage | | Issue Prioritization Index | | Gun Control | |
|-----------------------|------------------|-----------|------------------------------|-----------|----------------------------|-----------|-------------|-----------|
| | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> |
| Independent Variables | | | | | | | | |
| PII | 0.097** | (0.031) | 0.186*** | (0.031) | 0.185*** | (0.030) | 0.000 | (0.043) |
| PEI | 0.272** | (0.107) | 0.571*** | (0.103) | 0.646*** | (0.093) | 0.054 | (0.135) |
| Controls | | | | | | | | |
| Ideology | 0.097 | (0.085) | 0.281*** | (0.078) | 0.358*** | (0.079) | 0.562*** | (0.109) |
| Party ID | 0.173** | (0.061) | 0.089 | (0.056) | 0.058 | (0.053) | 0.678*** | (0.080) |
| Age | 0.107** | (0.042) | 0.098** | (0.041) | 0.064 | (0.039) | 0.115** | (0.057) |
| Education | -0.246** | (0.096) | 0.101 | (0.087) | 0.048 | (0.093) | 0.529*** | (0.110) |
| Income | -0.069** | (0.031) | -0.073** | (0.031) | -0.040 | (0.028) | 0.099** | (0.040) |
| Black, Non-Hispanic | 0.985*** | (0.270) | 0.195 | (0.261) | 0.209 | (0.282) | 0.153 | (0.362) |
| Hispanic | 0.619** | (0.228) | -0.041 | (0.193) | -0.276 | (0.205) | 0.743** | (0.305) |
| Other, Non-Hispanic | 0.211 | (0.244) | -0.163 | (0.220) | -0.329 | (0.256) | 0.088 | (0.334) |
| Lesbian | -0.694*** | (0.153) | -0.105 | (0.157) | 0.049 | (0.143) | -0.258 | (0.229) |
| Bisexual | -0.493*** | (0.159) | -0.393** | (0.159) | -0.225 | (0.145) | -0.580** | (0.221) |
| Constant | | | | | | | -5.680*** | (0.601) |
| N | 1,048 | | 1,049 | | 1,030 | | 1,053 | |
| X^2 | 110.70*** | | 167.96*** | | 240.52*** | | 221.95*** | |

Note. * $p < .10$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .01$

Unlike previous chapters, in which demographic controls were mostly insignificant, many of the demographic controls display significant effects on public opinion. Although none of the demographic controls is significant across all seven models of prioritization, every demographic control aside from “Other race” displays significance in at least one model. Overall, demographic groups appear to significantly support prioritizing policies that favor their subgroup, while displaying insignificant or negative effects for other policies. This reflects the theory outlined above regarding the link between LGBT group consciousness and LGBT issue prioritization. Following the logic of this model, groups should prioritize issues that favor their group, deprioritize issues that may negatively affect their group, or remain neutral regarding issues they view as irrelevant. To demonstrate, groups such as older gays, African Americans, and Hispanics significantly support prioritizing the treatment and prevention of HIV/AIDS, considering their disproportionate rates of HIV infection (CDC 2015a, 2015b), while groups such as lesbians oppose increasing support for HIV/AIDS, considering their significantly lower rates of HIV infection (Chan et al. 2014). Similarly, groups, such as lesbians, which would benefit the most from increased protection for families, like the legalization of gay marriage and gay adoption, demonstrate the highest prioritization of these issues. This demonstrates that, unlike many other aspects of gay political behavior, the demographics of LGBT subgroups may significantly structure public attitudes within the community. Moving forward, we should expect LGBT subgroups to demonstrate variance in LGBT policy support that at least partially depends on how that policy issue affects their additional identities (e.g., elderly, well-educated, African American, Hispanic, lesbian, etc.).

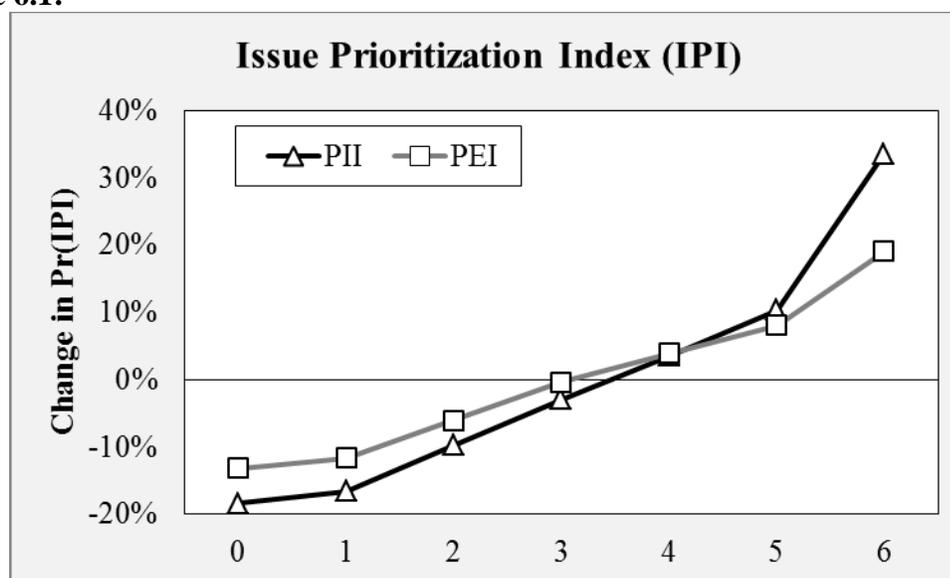
Of the theoretical controls, ideology demonstrates the only consistently significant effects. Ideology strongly motivates the development of LGBT political attitudes, with liberal ideologies significantly increasing the probability of reporting that LGBT political issues are top priorities. The effects of ideology also show substantively important effects. Regarding the priority index, persons who reported very liberal ideologies were 10% less likely to report that no issues were top priorities while being 15% more likely to report that all six issues were top priorities. This demonstrates that ideology motivates attitudes towards gay political issues within the gay community, with liberals consistently reporting that gay political issues are important to them.

Although ideology shapes LGBT public opinion, group consciousness maintains the most powerful and consistent effects on the attitudes of gay persons. Across all seven models, LGBT group consciousness is the strongest driver of LGBT attitudes towards gay rights issues. Figure 6.1 displays the change in the predicted probability of issue prioritization when moving from the minimum score to the maximum score for values of the Positive Identity Index and the Public Evaluation Index. The results establish the powerful effects of group consciousness, with highly conscious respondents being significantly more likely to prioritize LGBT issues, and low-conscious respondents being significantly more likely to deprioritize LGBT issues.

Similar to the previous two chapters, the Positive Identity Index displays the most powerful effects across all seven models, further reiterating the role that solidarity and closeness within the LGBT community play in motivating gay political behavior. The data show that a person with a score of 0 on the Positive Identity Index has a 22% probability of reporting that no issues were a top priority, while having only an 8%

probability of reporting that all six issues were top priorities. These effects are even more powerful on recognizing gay rights as a priority, with persons scoring the highest PII score (8) having only a 3% probability of saying that none of these issues were top priorities, while having a 42% probability of reporting that all of them were. Therefore, respondents with the highest levels of LGBT group consciousness were 5.2 times more likely to recognize these political issues as priorities to the LGBT community and report that they strongly support the expansion of gay rights and services.

Figure 6.1:



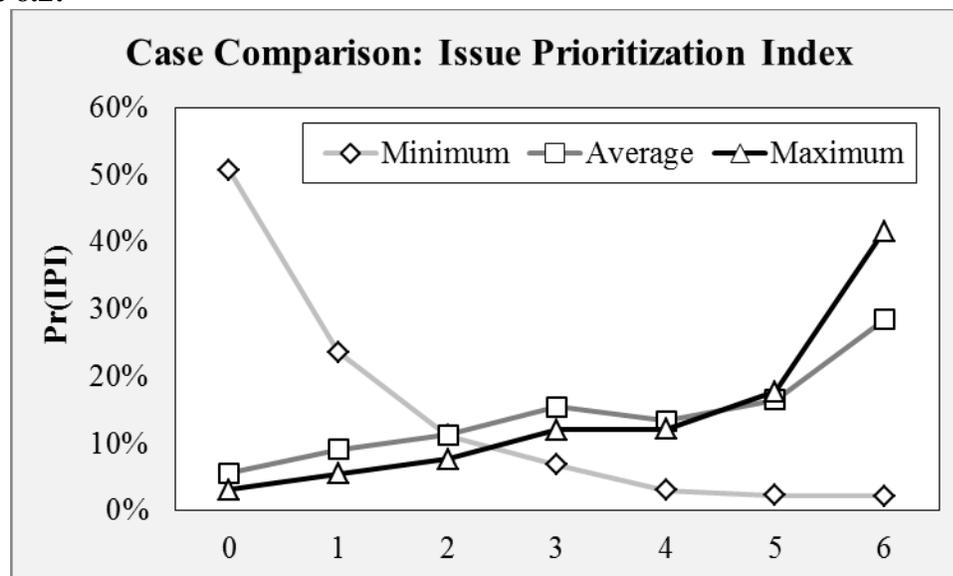
Although the Positive Identity Index is the most powerful predictor of LGBT public opinion, the effects of the Public Evaluation Index tracked very closely to the PII's effects and also demonstrated a meaningful impact. Overall, persons who recognize the discrimination facing gays and lesbians are significantly more likely to prioritize gay rights issues. Respondents who reported that there was no or only a little discrimination facing gays and lesbians had 19% probability of reporting that none of the issues were a top priority, while having only a 9% probability of reporting that they were all priorities. This shows that persons who fail to recognize the discrimination facing gays and lesbians

are 2 times more likely to de-prioritize gay rights issues. This relationship reverses for prioritizing the expansion of gay rights, with respondents who report that there is a lot of discrimination facing gays and lesbians consistently demonstrating their support for gay rights issues. These respondents had a 28% probability of prioritizing all six gay rights issues, while having only a 6% probability of reporting that no issues were a top priority. Therefore, persons who recognize the discrimination facing gays and lesbians were 5 times more likely to prioritize gay rights issue. This demonstrates the strong effects of public evaluation in motivating political attitudes and further shows the powerful role that group consciousness plays in shaping political behavior.

The combination of positive in-group associations and the perception of negative out-group treatment powerfully shape the development of public opinion. Comparing the minimum (PII score of 0, public evaluation score of 0), average (PII score of 5, public evaluation score of 2), and maximum (PII score of 8, public evaluation score of 2) cases best demonstrates these effects. Figure 6.2 demonstrates that the minimum case had a 51% probability of reporting that none of the issues were a top priority, while having only a 3% probability of reporting that all six issues were a top priority. This is drastically different from both the average and maximum cases. The average case had only a 6% probability of reporting that none of the issues were a top priority, while having a 28% probability of reporting that all six issues were a top priority. This shows that the average case was 9 times less likely to report that none of the issues was a priority while being 13.1 times more likely to report that all of the issues were a top priority. The maximum case demonstrates results that are even more dramatic. Respondents in the maximum case had only a 3% probability of reporting that none of the gay rights issues was a top

priority, while having a 42% probability of reporting that all of the issues were a top priority. Therefore, the maximum case was 15.9 times less likely to report that none of the issues were a top priority while being 19.1 times more likely to report that all of the issues were a top priority. Overall, this demonstrates that persons who lack group consciousness are very likely to deprioritize gay rights issues, with more than half reporting that the expansion of gay rights is not a priority for them. Conversely, persons with high levels of group consciousness are significantly more likely to prioritize the expansion of gay rights, with more than 40% prioritizing all six issues as top priorities and nearly 97% prioritizing at least one issue. Therefore, group consciousness strongly shapes the public attitudes of LGBT persons, particularly regarding the prioritization and expansion of gay rights.

Figure 6.2:



In addition to demonstrating that LGBT group consciousness is the strongest driver of attitudes toward gay-specific political issues, the models also show that these effects do not extend beyond gay politics. For the gun control model, neither the Positive Identity Index nor the Public Evaluation Index demonstrates significant effects. Because

LGBT group consciousness should only influence attitudes that are specifically relevant to the gay community, this result confirms Hypothesis 2 and demonstrates support for the theoretical argument outlined above. Additionally, the fact that these measures significantly influence only those dependent variables that they are theoretically supposed to further supports the argument that they appropriately measure group consciousness. Overall, the lack of a statistical relationship between group consciousness and non-gay political issues, such as gun control, upholds the argument that group consciousness structures only those political attitudes that are group-specific and that both the Positive Identity Index and the Public Evaluation Index accurately capture this relationship.

Discussion

This chapter explored the relationship between LGBT group consciousness and public opinion. It began with an examination of the theoretical underpinnings of public attitudes, with a specific focus on partisanship, group membership, and group consciousness. The role that group consciousness plays in structuring public opinion was of particular focus, with group consciousness influencing the development of group-centric schemas that shape the worldview of minorities and contribute to their adoption of pro-group policy positions. These pro-group attitudes will be strongest when issues directly name the group (i.e., gay marriage) and when the group's political, social, economic, or psychological issues are being contested (i.e., the rights of LGBT persons to adopt children).

For LGBT persons, an extensive history of state-sponsored discrimination informs gay-specific political issues. The majority of gay political issues center on combating this discrimination by expanding gay rights and removing discriminatory policies. This

chapter explored the history of employment discrimination, marriage discrimination, discrimination in adoption law, the oppressive environment facing LGBT youth, the unique burden of HIV/AIDS in the gay community, and discrimination in insurance coverage for transgender persons. The historical evidence shows that persons with high levels of LGBT group consciousness should be able to recognize the importance of these gay political issues and organize their political attitudes accordingly. To summarize, LGBT persons who report high levels of positive in-group associations and the perception of negative out-group treatment will recognize the importance of these political issues and prioritize them in their political thoughts.

The data confirmed these expectations, with gay persons who report higher levels of group consciousness consistently prioritizing the expansion of gay rights. Although the Positive Identity Index, which measures positive in-group associations, most strongly motivated the link between group consciousness and opinion, the Public Evaluation Index demonstrated similarly impactful effects. Generally, both measures increased the probability of prioritizing all gay rights issues and decreased the probability of prioritizing no issues by approximately 20%. Taken together, more than 40% of persons who reported the highest Positive Identity Index score and the strongest perception of external discrimination stated that all six issues were top priorities. This demonstrates that as long as gay persons report high levels of group consciousness, the gay community will maintain strong support for the gay rights platform. Because group consciousness did not influence political issues that were not specific to the gay community, such as gun control, the results also show that group consciousness influences only LGBT-related issues. This helps confirm the boundaries of the relationship between group

consciousness and political thought, with schemas that result from group consciousness influencing political thought most powerfully when political issues directly name a specific group and its rights.

An additional interesting finding relates to the relationship between LGBT demographic groups and issue prioritization. In the previous chapters, demographic labels, such as age, income, education, race, gender, and LGBT subgroup, displayed limited effects on political behavior. Across the majority of statistical models, these variables displayed inconsistent and insignificant effects. For public opinion, however, there appears to be a stronger link between demographic groups and the prioritization of LGBT issues. Following the logic of the schema model, LGBT subgroups appear to prioritize issues that offer subgroup specific benefits and deprioritize issues that do not benefit their group. This has important implications for the gay community moving forward, as it demonstrates that LGBT persons do not unanimously support gay-related policies. Although group consciousness strongly encourages LGBT persons to support all gay-related policies, the community does maintain a large deal of internal variance regarding issue prioritization that is subgroup specific. This may present a potential area for fractionalization within the community, as not all demographic groups may uniformly prioritize gay political issues.

Conclusion

Overall, this chapter provided the first exploration of the political attitudes of gay Americans, explaining gay public opinion as a function of LGBT group consciousness. The statistical examination of gay political attitudes confirmed that LGBT persons are significantly more likely to prioritize the expansion of gay rights when they report high

levels of LGBT group consciousness. The results demonstrate that highly conscious gay persons are significantly more likely to prioritize same-sex marriage rights, same-sex adoption rights, equal employment protections for LGBT persons, the expansion of youth services to LGBT youth, increased efforts aimed at preventing and treating HIV/AIDS, and insurance coverage for transgender persons. Regarding group consciousness, both positive in-group associations and the perception of negative out-group treatment strongly motivate these connections, with both the Positive Identity Index and the Public Evaluation Index demonstrating consistent and powerful impacts. As long as gay identity remains a defining feature of gay life, LGBT persons are likely to strongly support the expansion of gay rights and prioritize these topics as important political issues. In combination with the previous chapters, this chapter further confirms that group consciousness fundamentally structures the political behaviors of the gay community.

CHAPTER SEVEN

MADE WITH PRIDE: THE CREATION OF LGBT GROUP CONSCIOUSNESS AND WHY IT MATTERS FOR POLITICS

The LGBT community has played an integral role in American politics, with gay rights issues dominating political media, public opinion, and election cycles. Given this prominence, one would expect gay politics to play a similarly important role within the study of minority politics and political behavior. This has not been the case, however, with very few studies examining the relationship between politics and gay identity. The goal of this dissertation has been to address this limitation by identifying the political conditions that fostered the development of a uniquely gay political identity and how this matters for political outcomes. In analyzing the relationship between politics and gay identity, I have made three major contributions by: (1) expanding on theories of group consciousness formation and its measurement, (2) detailing how and why group consciousness matters for political behavior, and (3) applying these theories to an understudied, yet politically important, community. Using these results, I argue that LGBT group consciousness is the result of a longstanding, and ongoing, political process. From this process, LGBT group consciousness has emerged to structure gay identity and LGBT political behavior, including participation, partisanship, and public opinion.

The Foundations and Measurement of Group Consciousness

This dissertation began with an examination of the conceptualization and measurement of group consciousness. Scholars have defined group consciousness using dozens of different concepts and measures, with many focusing on the factors of self-categorization, evaluation, importance, and attachment (Ashmore et al. 2004). To

summarize, self-categorization refers to identification as a member of a particular social group (Deaux 1996; Ashmore et al. 2004), evaluation refers to the positive or negative attachments a person holds about her social group (Eagly & Chaiken 1993; Ashmore et al. 2004), importance refers to the degree of significance and meaning a person assigns to her group label (Ashmore et al. 2004), and attachment refers to the sense of closeness a person feels toward other members of her social group (Ashmore et al. 2004; Heere & James 2007). Although this literature contributes greatly to our ability to understand the concept of group consciousness, the relationship between many of group consciousness's components remains untested within political science.

To address this limitation, I examined the statistical relationship between these four factors and utilized confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to examine if these components are, in fact, conceptually distinct. Using CFA, I demonstrate that, rather than four distinct factors, group consciousness operates along only two dimensions within LGBTs. These two factors are comprised of: (1) positive in-group associations and (2) the perception of negative out-group treatment. Positive in-group association is signified by self-identification as a group member, positive private evaluation of the group, a high degree of importance associated with the identity, and strong attachment to other group members. The perception of negative out-group treatment refers to negative public evaluation, which occurs when a person perceives a large amount of discrimination or disapproval associated with his group membership (Crocker et al. 1994; Miller et al. 1981; Stokes 2003; Masuoka 2006; Sanchez 2006a).

Moving forward, this analysis provides a foundation for measuring group consciousness using these two distinct dimensions. This not only challenges traditional

explanations and measurements of group consciousness, but it also provides a well-tested and theoretically grounded methodology for measuring group consciousness within minority communities. Further, it offers a theoretically and statistically grounded methodology that encourages uniformity in the measurement of group consciousness within political science research.

In addition to lacking validated and consistent measures of group consciousness, we also lack a poor theoretical understanding of the foundations of group consciousness. Although scholars generally agree that factors like discrimination matter for the formation of group consciousness, we lack a unified or well-tested theory regarding the emergence of group consciousness. To address this gap, I also expand our theoretical understanding of group consciousness by modeling its relationship to political processes. I offer a new theory of group consciousness formation that explains group consciousness as a function of: (1) discrimination, (2) counterpublic engagement, and (3) a well-defined political enemy. Rather than simply treating group consciousness as an independent variable that explains multiple political outcomes, I demonstrate how political conditions lead the formation of group consciousness.

In demonstrating the impact of these three factors, I tested three hypotheses about the foundations of group consciousness using data from Pew's "A Survey of LGBT Americans:"

H₁: Group Consciousness and Discrimination: As a member of a marginalized group experiences an increasing level of discrimination on the basis of her group membership, her level of group-specific political consciousness will also increase.

H₂: Group Consciousness and Counterpublic Engagement: As a member of a marginalized group increasingly engages in group-specific counterpublic spaces, his level of group-specific political consciousness will also increase.

H₃: Group Consciousness and a Well-Defined Enemy: As a member of a marginalized group increasingly faces, and recognizes the influence of, an opposing social movement, her level of group-specific political consciousness will also increase.

The statistical results, supplemented by a detailed analysis of the historical record, demonstrate strong support for each hypothesis. Regarding discrimination, I show the role that state-sponsored discrimination plays in motivating LGBT identity by examining over a century of explicit discrimination against gays. This discrimination permeates all aspects of gay life, from social interactions to political engagement and economic prosperity. This ongoing unequal treatment of gays creates a situation in which LGBT persons are clearly subordinate within American society, and provides gays with the “need to act” (Gamson 1968: p.48) that propels them into the political arena. Statistical analysis confirmed the historical record, with nearly three-quarters of LGBT persons experiencing discrimination within their lifetime and this discrimination more than doubling their levels of self-reported group consciousness.

Discrimination alone, however, cannot explain the formation of LGBT political consciousness, as gays face extreme levels of discrimination across the globe, including the threat of execution. To develop group consciousness that has political meaning, minorities must also be able to freely associate in group-specific public spheres, or counterpublics (Fraser 1990, 1997; Cohen 1999; Lee 2002; Warner 2002; Harris-Perry 2010). These counterpublics facilitate a minority’s “ability to act” (Gamson 1968: p.48) by providing space for her to form social ties, share information, develop a distinct worldview, and pool financial resources (Jenkins 1983; McCarthy & Zald 1977). Gays have engaged in gay counterpublics for over a century, including gay bars, gay organizations, gay pride, and gay friendship networks. More than 94% of LGBTs report

engaging in these spaces. Further, gay counterpublics play an enormous role in motivating LGBT group consciousness, with high engagers reporting levels of group consciousness that are eight times higher than those who lack engagement in gay-specific spaces.

Discrimination and counterpublic engagement are necessary and sufficient for the development of group consciousness, but they alone can rarely thrust a minority group's interests onto center stage. The role of an opposing social movement, or a group that engages in collective action to challenge the group politically (Lo 1982; Meyer & Staggenborg 1996, 2008; Mottle 1980; Rohlinger 2002; Fetner 2001, 2008; Dugan 2004), is also a fundamental component of the development of politicized group consciousness. Opposing social movements, or well-defined political enemies, enhance both the "need to act" (Gamson 1968: p.48), by challenging and sometimes outright discriminating against the group, and the "ability to act" (Gamson 1968: p.48), by pushing the groups' interests to the forefront of politics, providing them a target on which to place blame, increasing their internal cohesion, and raising commitment to the cause (Miller et al. 1981; Reese & Brown 1995). The LGBT community has faced a powerful opponent for nearly four decades in the Religious Right (Fetner 2001, 2008; Herman 1998; Bull & Gallagher 1996). Nearly 97% of LGBTs recognize the Religious Right as their political enemy and highly conscious gays have nearly a 60% probability of reporting high levels of group consciousness.

In total, I presented an argument for group consciousness formation based on three factors, discrimination, counterpublic engagement, and a well-defined political enemy. The historical record demonstrated strong support for each hypothesis, with gay

persons consistently facing pervasive oppression, engaging regularly in gay-specific public spaces, and combating the Religious Right in public forums. Survey data from LGBT persons strongly supports this argument and the data demonstrated that these three factors powerfully motivate the development of group consciousness within LGBT persons. Across these three factors, counterpublic engagement had the strongest effects, which suggests that, even if discrimination and challenges from the Religious Right decline, LGBTs will continue to develop politicized group consciousness as long as gay people need to engage in gay spaces to meet other sexual minorities.

How Group Consciousness Matters for Politics

In addition to expanding the theoretical foundation and measurement of group consciousness, I also contribute to the study of minority politics by examining how group consciousness structures political behavior. In doing so, I focused on the cognitive and social processes that connect group members to political outcomes and argued that the political context in which the group develops and evolves organizes its political outputs. I offer a theory of the effects of group consciousness that contends that group consciousness will motivate: (1) political participation, (2) partisanship, and (3) public opinion. These effects are expected to be uniquely related to the group's contextual environment.

To examine the effects of group consciousness on political outcomes, I tested three additional hypotheses using data from Pew's "A Survey of LGBT Americans:"

H₄: Group Consciousness and Political Participation: As a member of a marginalized group reports increasing levels of group consciousness, his willingness to participate politically on behalf of the marginalized group will also increase.

H₅: Group Consciousness and Partisanship: As a member of a marginalized group reports increasing levels of group consciousness, her willingness to support political parties that favor the marginalized group will also increase.

H₆: Group Consciousness and Public Opinion: As a member of a marginalized group reports increasing levels of group consciousness, his willingness to support public policies that favor the marginalized group will also increase.

Both the historical record and the survey data confirm all three hypotheses, with group consciousness serving as the strongest and most powerful predictor of political behavior across all dimensions of political behavior. This demonstrates that the nexus of positive in-group associations and the perception of negative out-group treatment combines to push minorities into the political arena to combat the unequal conditions that helped create their group identities.

Concerning political participation, group consciousness is connected to actions such as voting or protesting because of the powerful mix of political mistrust and efficacy that develops in minority communities (Shingles 1981). Mistrust develops because of the inequality the group faces, which leads to frustration and a desire to change the status quo. This gives members of minority communities a reason to engage in politics. Efficacy develops because, through engaging together, the group pools community resources, increases their knowledge, and increases their interactions with mobilizing agents (Leighley 1995). This gives members of minority communities the cognitive and political ability to engage in politics. Together, these factors combine to encourage political participation within minority communities. Evidence demonstrates that this participation will be rooted in historical processes and strongest regarding forms of political participation that the group has traditionally utilized.

For LGBTs, these methods include boycotting, protesting, donating money to political candidates and organizations, and voting. Statistical evidence confirms these expectations, with group consciousness serving as the most powerful predictor of LGBT political participation. Positive in-group associations increase LGBT participation by more than 15 times, with persons reporting the highest levels of positive in-group associations having nearly a 95% probability of participating in at least one political activity. The perception of negative out-group increases LGBT participation by nearly 17 times, with persons who report the strongest perceptions of discrimination having more than an 88% probability of engaging in at least one political activity.

For partisanship, group consciousness motivates political outcomes along two axes, social identity (Campbell et al. 1960; Tajfel 1974, 1981, 1982; Tajfel & Turner 1979) and rational preferences (Fiorina 1981, 2002; Downs 1957; Achen 1992, 2002). Social identity structures partisan alignment because association with the group creates additional emotional attachments to other labels that are frequently associated with the group. For LGBTs, commentators and community leaders have labelled gays as Democratic for more than five decades. Rational preferences strongly motivate this relationship, however, as this emotional party attachment is often fundamentally rooted in group-specific preferences. Not only does attachment to the Democratic Party have social significance, but this alignment also favors members of the group and best represents shared group interests. For many decades, not only have Democrats represented and supported gay rights, but Republicans have also adamantly opposed them. Therefore, LGBTs clearly recognize that the Democratic Party is their only rational option for securing group-based political rights. Statistical evidence demonstrates strong support for

this argument, with nearly 82% of LGBTs identifying as Democratic. Group consciousness powerfully shapes this relationship, with positive in-group associations decreasing gays' Republican alignment by approximately 20% and the perception of negative out-group treatment decreasing gays' Republican alignment by approximately 10%.

Group consciousness maintains a similar role in motivating public opinion. Group consciousness structures public opinion because it encourages members of minority communities to develop group-favorable schemas, or sets of cognitive generalizations about the world that organize how they process new information and view events (Conover 1984, 1988; Conover & Feldman 1984; Markus 1977; Markus et al. 1982; Fiske & Linville 1980). These schemas matter for influencing political thought because group members rely on them to develop political preferences and interpret political activities. As group-favorable schemas develop, members of the group begin to view politics through a personal lens and favor policies that benefit their group, while opposing policies that are costly to their group. These effects are strongest for issues that directly affect the group and their resources, such as issues that name the group explicitly (Conover 1984, 1988; Markus et al. 1982, 1985).

For gays, group consciousness is the primary driver of their pro-gay public opinion. Across areas such as same-sex marriage, same-sex adoption rights, equal employment rights, support for LGBT youth services, increased prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS, and expanding transgender medical coverage, gays consistently report that they prioritize gay rights issues in their political thoughts. Across all six issues, group consciousness remained the most important and powerful predictor. Positive in-group

associations increased gay rights issue prioritization by more than five times, with persons who reported the highest levels of positive in-group associations having a 97% probability of prioritizing at least one gay rights issue. Similarly, the perception of negative out-group treatment also increased gay rights issue prioritization by five times, with persons who reported the strongest perceptions of discrimination having a 94% probability of prioritizing at least one gay rights issue. This demonstrates the incredibly powerful role that group consciousness plays in motivating gay-related public attitudes, with highly conscious LGBT persons overwhelmingly prioritizing gay political issues.

Taken together, the results demonstrate the powerful and important role that group consciousness plays in driving political outcomes. Through the process of recognizing the inequalities facing their community, gays understand the role that politics plays in structuring their exclusion. This engenders a desire to combat that discrimination in the political arena and encourages gays to take political action. By fostering the growth of intra-community skills, gays develop the capacity to act on their frustrations within politics. Together, this helps gay group consciousness translate into important political outcomes by fundamentally molding how and why gays participate, which partisan identities or ideologies they espouse, and the distinctly gay political thoughts they develop.

Understanding LGBT Politics

In addition to making important contributions regarding the measurement, theoretical foundations, and political outputs of group consciousness, I also make an important contribution to the study of gay and lesbian politics. Namely, I provide the first analysis of the foundations of gay political identity, discuss how this matters for politics,

and provide an analysis of the future of politicized gay identity. I demonstrate that LGBT identity and politics did not simply emerge randomly; rather, politicized gay identity is the result of a long and difficult political process. This is an important contribution, as media outlets and political commentators regularly comment on the rapid emergence of gay rights issues and the swift political success of gays, treating these events as if they arose without a political context. These sentiments are demonstrated by comments such as, “Gays may have the fastest of all civil rights movements” (Barabak 2012). I challenge these sentiments and demonstrate that gay rights neither arose randomly nor succeeded swiftly. Rather, changes in the political landscape for LGBTs were the result of over a century of oppression against gays and a determined effort to combat that oppression.

Therefore, gay political identity developed in relation to America’s political environment and will evolve with the changing context. Formal, state-sponsored discrimination against gays, combined with the treatment of homosexuality as a mental illness, led persons with same-sex attractions and behaviors to develop distinctly gay identities. Because political discrimination formed the basis of this identity, the gay community became distinctly politicized in nature. Further, the combination of oppression and a desire to meet other gays led LGBTs to develop distinctly gay public places where they could meet, share their stories, and forge a positive self-evaluation. This space allowed gays to develop intra-community resources and develop political strategies for combating their oppression.

The political arena became the focus on this fight, as politics formed the foundation of discrimination against gays. Within this context, the Religious Right played a key role in pushing gay issues to the forefront. Without the Religious Right challenging

and opposing gay rights, giving gays a platform to debate and present gay issues, and putting a niche political movement at the center of America's political battles, the expansion of gay rights would be almost unthinkable. The Religious Right played an essential role in giving gay rights political prominence, and it may be the reason that many political commentators believe gay rights happened quickly. To the larger public, gay rights issues have only mattered for as long as the Religious Right has said they have mattered, and the influence that LGBTs have in politics today would be unimaginable without this influence.

This dissertation also discussed the specific forms of discrimination, engagement, and Religious Right opposition that defined the LGBT movement. These factors ranged from formal employment exclusions to the growth of the gay bar and hundreds of anti-gay ballot measures. Although many factors played a role in the formation of gay politics, many have also recently evolved and changed. The repeal of the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy, the nationwide legalization of gay marriage, the spread of anti-discrimination statutes, and the decline of the gay bar all evidence this changing landscape. How can the results from this analysis help inform our understanding of what will happen next?

I argue that, given the particularly important role of positive in-group associations, gay politics are likely to remain important even within a changing political context. Although many areas of discrimination against gays are lessening, particularly regarding formal discrimination, gay politics will matter to gay people as long as they continue to utilize gay-specific public spaces. Because positive in-group associations are the strongest drivers of gay group consciousness, as long as gays visit gay bars, attend

gay pride, form gay friendship networks, and join LGBT organizations, gays will continue to participate heavily in politics and maintain a clearly gay worldview.

Perhaps the greatest threat to the future of gays' positive in-group associations is the decline of the American gay bar. For decades, the gay bar was the only public space where gays could interact and meet in public. Over the past decade, particularly as discrimination against gays has lessened, the gay bar has faced a steady decline, with business magazines stating that gay bars could face extinction (Williams 2007). This would signify a significant loss for gays, as bars are often the primary gateway into the gay community. Further, they facilitate access to other areas, such as helping gays develop friendships and relationships or fostering membership in gay organizations. They are among the only spaces that allow gays to be "fully gay" (June 2011) and, without these spaces, engendering gay political identity will face significant challenges. Although the internet also provides a forum for gays to meet, the proliferation and adoption of gay culture is likely to decline as the gay bar declines if gays do not develop a parallel counterpublic space.

In the near term, however, the gay counterpublic, discrimination against gays, and the influence of the Religious Right are likely to remain. Together, they will continue to help sexual minorities develop group consciousness. This group consciousness will encourage gays to be highly political active and regularly participate in activities such as boycotting, protesting, donating money, and voting. Their partisanship is likely to remain strongly Democratic, unless Republican politicians make dramatic changes to their rhetoric regarding the LGBTs. Similarly, until gays experience full equality, in both formal rights and lived experience, gays will maintain distinct levels of support for gay

rights issues, with significantly high levels of support for the expansion and prioritization of gay rights. These factors are all open to change but, without significant changes in the current political environment, the current levels of group consciousness and their corresponding behaviors are likely to remain relatively constant in the gay community.

Expanding on this Foundation

This work provides the foundation for understanding the emergence, meaning, and effects of gay political behavior. Using this foundation, there are future directions that research on both political behavior and gay politics could pursue to expand this knowledge base. From a behavior standpoint, future research should test these theories relative to other minority groups and standardize the inclusion of sexual orientation measures in surveys. Regarding gay politics, future research should examine the intersectionality of gay identity and other identities and examine the temporal sequencing of politicized identity development.

Beginning with political behavior, these results demonstrate that LGBT persons constitute a unique and important political actor in American politics. While research has suggested this since as early as the mid-1990s (Hertzog 1996) and pundits have been focusing on gay rights since the 1980s, many behavioralists continue to ignore the importance of sexual identity in explaining political outcomes. Because of this, surveys almost uniformly fail to ask about respondents about their sexual orientation or gender identity. Without these foundational questions, political scientists cannot even begin to understand the effects of LGBT group identity, nonetheless group consciousness. This dissertation has demonstrated that significant limitations arise when we fail to capture gay identity, as gay group consciousness is important to a wide spectrum of political

behaviors, ranging from voting to party identification. Until we incorporate sexual orientation into surveys, we cannot account for these important effects. For example, how can scholars accurately explain a person's attitude toward gay marriage without accounting for a respondent's sexual orientation? This dissertation makes an important call for future surveys to incorporate questions about sexual identity and use these factors to predict political behavior.

This research has also made important contributions to the understanding of the theoretical drivers of group consciousness and how the concept should be appropriately measured. Future research should build on this foundation and work to verify the accuracy of these arguments by applying them to additional minority communities. Understanding how discrimination, counterpublic engagement, and the role of a well-defined enemy influence identity formation across other groups would refine this theory and demonstrate its usefulness beyond LGBTs. Additionally, examining the relevance of in-group associations and the perception of negative out-group treatment to other minority groups would further improve our measurement of group consciousness and may help develop consensus within this field of research.

In addition to these two areas, there are also numerous venues for research on gay politics to expand on the findings of this dissertation. First, future analyses on gay rights should include a more detailed focus on intersectional identities, such as the nexus between sexual orientation, gender, race/ethnicity, age, and social class. Although many of the demographic variables were insignificant across the majority of models, others demonstrated significant and meaningful effects. This was particularly true for racial/ethnic identity, LGBT subgroup identification, and for explaining public opinion.

Regarding race/ethnicity, African Americans and Hispanics were significantly different from White gays across a number of issues. For example, African Americans were significantly less likely to engage in various forms of political participation or identify as Republican. Similarly, both African Americans and Hispanics were significantly more likely to prioritize gay rights issues that disproportionately benefit their specific racial/ethnic communities, such as demonstrating statistically high levels of support for HIV/AIDS prevention and treatment. These differences are important and can only be fully understood with a more detailed analysis of the intersectionality between race and sexual orientation. Similarly, gay men and lesbians appear to be statistically similar across most forms of political behavior, with comparable behavioral outcomes across a variety of areas. Regarding public opinion, however, lesbians and gay men appear to support and oppose different gay rights issues. Lesbians demonstrated stronger support for issues that primarily affected their community, such as family-related policies and employment discrimination. Conversely, gay men demonstrated stronger support for gay male specific issues, such as HIV/AIDS research and prevention. Additionally, bisexuals were fundamentally different from other gays across a variety of issues, such as being significantly less likely to engage politically. Together, these differences demonstrate that there is important intra-community variance across a variety of issues and that this variance should be explored in greater detail.

Finally, an important area of future research would analyze the temporal sequencing of gay identity and political behavior. This is important because some research suggests that there is significant selection bias regarding who self-identifies as gay, stating that liberals are more likely to identify as LGBT (Egan 2012). If this research

is accurate, it makes studying the LGBT community difficult, as its members suffer from severe selection bias that may distort samples and results. This research implies that political attitudes and behaviors cause LGBT identification, which is the reverse of the argument outlined in this dissertation. However, other research suggests that many non-liberals identify as LGBT and that being LGBT structures political outcomes (Hertzog 1996), implying that LGBT identity causes political outcomes. Case studies, experiments, and time series data would help us clarify this story. For example, future research could track this temporal sequencing by examining how attitudes change relative to changes in identification as LGBT.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the goal of this dissertation was to explain the emergence and meaning of LGBT political identity. Rather than treating gay political identity as assumed and random, I problematized its origination and examined the political context that created the gay politics of today. I argue that over a century of oppression and engagement in gay-specific spaces combined with the influence of a powerful political opponent to create the modern contest of gay politics. This political context fostered group consciousness within the gay community that has led to a highly mobilized and politicized community. Therefore, politics created gay group consciousness and gay group consciousness has transformed to influence politics. Across a variety of political behaviors, gay persons with high levels of group consciousness are consistently more likely to engage in politics in distinctly gay ways. As long as gays face discrimination, engage in group-specific public spaces, and face a well-defined enemy, they will continue to participate, foster partisan alignments, and develop pro-gay political opinions.

NOTES

- i. The terms LGBT and “gay” will be used interchangeably throughout the dissertation. This usage helps eliminate redundancy regarding the LGBT acronym and also reflects historical usage of the word “gay.” Although other acronyms, such as LGBTQ, LGBTQIA, and SGM (sexual and gender minority), are also frequently used to describe gays and lesbians, LGBT remains the most commonly used and prevalent acronym within the political science literature. Further, it is the acronym used by the majority of gay political and social organizations, such as the Human Rights Campaign, the statewide Equality programs (i.e., Equality Maryland, Equality New Mexico, etc.), and some of the largest gay pride organizations (e.g., San Francisco Pride, New York City Pride, Washington, D.C. Pride).
- ii. See Chapter 2 for a more extensive discussion.
- iii. The total differs from Table 1.1 because one observation is missing a response for self-reported gender.
- iv. Because of a sample size of only 43, transgender respondents were not included for analysis. Refer to Chapter 1 for more details regarding this methodological issue.
- v. This is not to imply that gay bars are not sites for discrimination. Particularly during the mid-twentieth century, they were frequently sites of police raids, arrests, and violence. See Agee (2006) and D’Emilio (1983) for a more extensive discussion. Even in the twenty-first century, they continue to be targets for anti-gay violence and harassment. For example, in October 2010 alone, there were two

violent attacks against gays in gay bars. See Grace and Parascandola (2010) for details.

- vi. Appendix A contains the factor loadings for M_3 .
- vii. Estimates are standardized to improve interpretation of the model. Namely, standardized coefficients facilitate the comparison of coefficients across predictors and improve the ability to gauge relative impact. They are particularly useful in cases when the researcher wants to assess which variables have the greatest effect when the variables are measured using different units. Because these coefficients are being directly compared to a 0.40 threshold, the models use standardized coefficients to create a useful format for comparison.
- viii. Appendix B contains the factor loadings for M_1 .
- ix. Due to a lack of variability within each index, which is discussed in subsequent paragraphs, responses were collapsed before creating the additive measure. CFA using these collapsed measures was statistically identical to the models described in Chapter 2. Collapsing the variables before creating the additive index did not alter the absolute model fits or factor loadings.
- x. Refer to Tables 3.1 through 3.4 for a more detailed description of these categories. The values for attachment represent the average score across all outgroups.
- xi. Due to the limited number of respondents who reported being “Very Conservative,” very conservative and conservative respondents were combined into one category for analytical purposes.
- xii. Appendix E displays the effects of group consciousness, along with a variety of control variables, on self-reported ideology. The results demonstrate that the

group consciousness measures have a very powerful impact on ideology, with increasing levels of both variables associated with significantly increased levels of liberalism. The substantive effects further demonstrate this relationship, with respondents reporting the highest levels of the PII being 23% more likely to identify as very liberal than those lacking group consciousness and respondents reporting the highest levels of perceived discrimination being 13% more likely to identify as very liberal. Therefore, there is preliminary evidence showing that group consciousness may also inform the development and formation of ideology in minority communities.

- xiii. The U.S. government estimates that 658,507 people have died from AIDS over the course of the disease (CDC 2014). Given that gay men and bisexual have accounted for approximately 65-80% of all AIDS cases, I estimate that 72.5% of all AIDS related deaths and new HIV infections stem from the LGBT population.

APPENDIX A

Appendix A: Factor Loadings for M₃

| Observed Variable | Latent Construct | Sample 1 | | Sample 2 | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|----------|-----------|----------|-----------|
| | | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> |
| Attacks+ | Discrimination | 0.65 | 0.03 | 0.63 | 0.03 |
| Slurs | Discrimination | 0.70 | 0.03 | 0.68 | 0.03 |
| Bad Service | Discrimination | 0.63 | 0.03 | 0.65 | 0.03 |
| Employment | Discrimination | 0.56 | 0.04 | 0.58 | 0.04 |
| Church | Discrimination | 0.62 | 0.03 | 0.65 | 0.03 |
| Family | Discrimination | 0.58 | 0.04 | 0.59 | 0.04 |
| LGBT Organizations+ | Counterpublic Engagement | 0.69 | 0.04 | 0.69 | 0.04 |
| LGBT Pride | Counterpublic Engagement | 0.69 | 0.04 | 0.72 | 0.04 |
| LGBT Friends | Counterpublic Engagement | 0.49 | 0.04 | 0.54 | 0.04 |
| Evangelical+ | Religious Right | 0.45 | 0.05 | 0.52 | 0.04 |
| Catholic | Religious Right | 0.41 | 0.05 | 0.53 | 0.04 |
| Muslim | Religious Right | 0.62 | 0.04 | 0.62 | 0.04 |
| Mormon | Religious Right | 0.68 | 0.05 | 0.77 | 0.03 |
| Jewish | Religious Right | 0.20 | 0.05 | 0.22 | 0.05 |
| Non-Evangelical | Religious Right | 0.24 | 0.05 | 0.26 | 0.05 |

Note. All estimates are completely standardized and are significant at $\alpha < 0.05$. The symbol + indicates a constrained parameter.

APPENDIX B

Appendix B: Factor Loadings for M₁

| Observed Variable | Latent Construct | Sample 1 (N=545) | | Sample 2 (N=546) | |
|----------------------|---------------------|------------------|-----------|------------------|-----------|
| | | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> |
| Self-Categorization+ | Group Consciousness | 0.59 | 0.04 | 0.53 | 0.04 |
| Private Evaluation | Group Consciousness | 0.51 | 0.04 | 0.46 | 0.05 |
| Importance | Group Consciousness | 0.68 | 0.04 | 0.75 | 0.04 |
| Attachment | Group Consciousness | 0.42 | 0.05 | 0.40 | 0.05 |
| Public Evaluation | Group Consciousness | 0.29 | 0.05 | 0.33 | 0.05 |

Note. All estimates are completely standardized and are significant at $\alpha < 0.05$. The symbol + indicates a constrained parameter.

APPENDIX C

Appendix C: Summary Statistics

| Variable | <i>N</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | Minimum | Maximum |
|--|----------|----------|-----------|---------|---------|
| Age | 1,091 | 3.610 | 1.640 | 1 | 7 |
| Attended Boycott | 1,077 | 1.013 | 0.897 | 0 | 2 |
| Attended Rally or March | 1,076 | 0.593 | 0.680 | 0 | 2 |
| Bisexual | 1,091 | 0.386 | 0.487 | 0 | 1 |
| Black, Non-Hispanic | 1,091 | 0.069 | 0.253 | 0 | 1 |
| Counterpublic Engagement Index | 1,069 | 1.700 | 1.136 | 0 | 3 |
| Discrimination Index | 1,083 | 2.130 | 1.885 | 0 | 6 |
| Education | 1,091 | 3.352 | 0.782 | 1 | 4 |
| Gay Male | 1,091 | 0.361 | 0.481 | 0 | 1 |
| Hispanic | 1,091 | 0.104 | 0.306 | 0 | 1 |
| Ideology | 1,088 | 2.636 | 0.894 | 1 | 4 |
| Income | 1,075 | 4.056 | 2.214 | 1 | 8 |
| Issue Prioritization Index | 1,056 | 3.171 | 2.067 | 0 | 6 |
| Lesbian | 1,091 | 0.253 | 0.435 | 0 | 1 |
| Made Political Donation | 1,072 | 0.682 | 0.828 | 0 | 2 |
| Other Race, Non-Hispanic | 1,091 | 0.071 | 0.258 | 0 | 1 |
| Party Identification | 1,089 | 4.172 | 1.254 | 1 | 5 |
| Political Awareness | 1,087 | 3.162 | 0.899 | 1 | 4 |
| Political Participation Index | 1,066 | 2.129 | 1.410 | 0 | 4 |
| Positive Identity Index | 1,077 | 4.723 | 2.282 | 0 | 8 |
| Public Evaluation Index | 1,087 | 1.480 | 0.624 | 0 | 2 |
| Religious Right Index | 1,083 | 1.529 | 0.719 | 0 | 2 |
| Support for Adoption Rights | 1,077 | 2.343 | 0.735 | 1 | 3 |
| Support for Equal Employment Rights | 1,073 | 2.593 | 0.638 | 1 | 3 |
| Support for Gun Control | 1,086 | 0.697 | 0.460 | 0 | 1 |
| Support for HIV/AIDS Prevention | 1,075 | 2.323 | 0.723 | 1 | 3 |
| Support for Marriage Rights | 1,081 | 2.459 | 0.747 | 1 | 3 |
| Support for Transgender Medical Coverage | 1,075 | 2.274 | 0.750 | 1 | 3 |
| Support for Youth Services | 1,075 | 2.274 | 0.750 | 1 | 3 |
| Voting Frequency | 1,089 | 2.324 | 0.976 | 0 | 3 |
| White, Non-Hispanic | 1,091 | 0.755 | 0.430 | 0 | 1 |

Appendix D

Appendix D: Political Issue Priority, Combined Responses Summary Statistics

Thinking about some policy issues, do you think each of the following should be a top priority, a very important priority but not a top priority, a somewhat important priority, or not a priority at all?

| Category | Top priority | Very important but not a top priority | Somewhat important/ Not a priority | Total |
|---|--------------|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------|-------|
| | % (N) | % (N) | % (N) | N |
| Equal employment rights for LGBT people | 67.6 (725) | 24.2 (259) | 8.3 (89) | 1,073 |
| Legally sanctioned marriages for same-sex couples | 61.3 (663) | 23.2 (251) | 15.4 (167) | 1,081 |
| Adoption rights for same-sex couples | 50.1 (538) | 34.4 (370) | 15.6 (169) | 1,077 |
| Support for organizations that provide services to LGBT youth | 45.6 (490) | 36.3 (390) | 18.1 (195) | 1,075 |

APPENDIX E

Appendix E: The Impact of Group Consciousness on Ideology

| Variable | <i>B</i> | <i>SE</i> |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|
| Independent Variables | | |
| PII | 0.233*** | (0.030) |
| PEI | 0.579*** | (0.101) |
| Controls | | |
| Age | -0.008 | (0.041) |
| Education | -0.011 | (0.030) |
| Income | 0.235** | (0.087) |
| Black, Non-Hispanic | -0.492 | (0.270) |
| Hispanic | -0.361 | (0.230) |
| Other & Multi-Racial, Non-Hispanic | 0.010 | (0.214) |
| Lesbian | -0.096 | (0.142) |
| Bisexual | 0.289* | (0.154) |
| X^2 | 128.47*** | |

Note. $N = 1,057$. * $p < .10$. ** $p < .05$. *** $p < .01$

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