

THE POWER OF LANGUAGE: HOW THE WORDS WE USE REFLECT OUR BIASES

A THESIS

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULLFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF SCIENCE

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THE

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY

PSYCHOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES

BY

OTTER DAY B.S.

DENTON, TEXAS

DECEMBER 2018

Copyright © 2018 by Otter Day

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Several individuals have contributed to the completion of this thesis. I would like to acknowledge these individuals and express my gratitude. I would like to thank Dr. Shannon Scott, one of my committee chairs, for her dedication and continuous guidance in developing and carrying out my thesis. I would like to thank Dr. Lisa Rosen, my second committee chair, for her statistical expertise and constructive feedback throughout the writing process. Without both of their constant encouragement and support, I would not have been able to complete my thesis. I would also like to acknowledge my other committee member, Dr. Gabrielle Smith, who offered unique perspectives and challenged me to expand my world view in a way that was most beneficial for my research. Her positivity and professionalism were deeply valued. Additionally, I would like to thank the faculty and staff of Texas Woman's University for exemplifying what it means to be a pioneer. Finally, I would like to thank my wife, Jordann, for her unconditional love, support, patience, and understanding while I completed my thesis.

ABSTRACT

OTTER DAY

THE POWER OF LANGUAGE: HOW THE WORDS WE USE REFLECT OUR

BIASES

DECEMBER 2018

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between language use and attitudes related to sexual orientation. Significant research has demonstrated that the use of microaggressions towards targeted minorities carries detrimental consequences on a societal and individual level. While racially charged and gendered microaggressions have been investigated, a gap exists regarding sexual orientation microaggressions; more specifically, the word “Queer”. Participants were asked to answer questions related to the use of “Queer” along with several measures of related constructs. Results indicate sexual orientation based differences in the use of “Queer” in terms of dynamic language, honesty, frequency, and power. Explicit attitudes, religious fundamentalism, social dominance orientation, and conservatism emerged as predictors of the use of “Queer”. Findings provide insight into the way language is used to perpetuate social norms, suggesting this information can be applied in a variety of settings to foster safer environments for the targeted group.

## TABLE OF CONENTS

	Page
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.....	ii
ABSTRACT.....	iii
LIST OF TABLES .....	vii
Chapter	
I. INTRODUCTION.....	1
Neologisms .....	1
“Bitch” as a Neologism.....	2
N* as a Neologism.....	7
“Queer” as a Neologism.....	10
Neologisms and Microaggressions.....	12
LGBTQ Microaggressions.....	12
“Queer” and “N***a” as Microaggressions.....	13
Social Attitudes Towards the LGBTQ Community.....	13
Social Dominance Orientation.....	16
Religious Beliefs.....	18
Conservatism .....	19
Stigma Consciousness.....	20
Current Study.....	22
II. METHODOLOGY.....	27
Participants.....	27
Measures.....	29
Demographics.....	29
The Attitudes Towards Lesbians and Gay Men Scale.....	29
The LGBQ Microaggressions on Campus Scale.....	30
The 12-item Religious Fundamentalism Scale.....	31
The Social and Economic Conservatism Scale.....	31
Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire.....	32
Social Dominance Orientation.....	33

LGBTQ Temperature Scale.....	34
Queer Usage Questionnaire.....	34
LIWC.....	35
Procedure.....	35
III. RESULTS.....	36
Differences Between Homosexuals and Heterosexuals in the Use of “Queer”...	36
Explicit Attitudes as a Predictor of Use.....	40
Microaggressions as a Predictor of Use.....	42
Exploration of the Predictive Value of Related Variables.....	45
The Effect of Stigma Consciousness.....	48
IV. DISCUSSION.....	50
Differences Between Homosexuals and Heterosexuals.....	50
Explicit Attitudes and “Queer”.....	54
Experiences of Microaggressions and “Queer”.....	56
Exploratory Analysis.....	58
Stigma Consciousness and “Queer”.....	58
Implications.....	59
V: LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS.....	61
VI: CONCLUSION.....	66
REFERENCES.....	68
APPENDICES.....	83
Appendix A.....	83
Open-Ended Questions.....	84
Attitudes Towards Lesbians and Gay Men.....	85
The LGBTQ Microaggressions on Campus Scale.....	86
The 12-item Religious Fundamentalism Scale.....	87
The Social and Economic Conservatism Scale.....	88
Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire-Lesbian.....	89
Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire-Gay Men.....	90
Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire-Bisexual.....	91
Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire-Transgender.....	92
Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire-Queer.....	93
Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire.....	94
Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire-Race/Ethnicity.....	95

Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire-Disability.....	96
Social Dominance Orientation.....	97
Temperature Scale.....	98

## LIST OF TABLES

Table	Page
1. Means, Standard Deviations, and Correlations of Predictor Variables.....	39
2. <i>t</i> -test Results Comparing Homosexuals and Heterosexuals on LIWC Variables..	40
3. Summary of Explicit Attitudes as a Predictor of Usage of “Queer” .....	42
4. Summary of Simple Regression for Microaggressions Predicting Usage of “Queer” .....	44
5. Summary of Stepwise Regression of Variables Predicting Usage of “Queer” .....	47

## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Language has the unique ability to reflect cultural biases, beliefs and attitudes (Chater, Reali, & Christiansen, 2009). While research has demonstrated this within the context of ethnicity (Green, 2002a; Kennedy, 2002; Rahman, 2012) and gender (Angyal, 2011), a gap in the literature exist regarding sexual orientation and its connection to language. To illustrate the similarities, examples within the context of ethnicity and gender will be used. Khan, Sultana, Bughio, and Naz (2014) analyzed textbooks for grades 1 to 10 to illustrate the ways language is used within academic text to perpetuate and preserve gender inequality, or a ‘hidden curriculum.’ Specifically, ‘hidden curriculum’ refers to the frequent assignment of male pronouns to occupational and labor tasks (e.g., he changed the oil) and frequent assignment of female pronouns to nurturing or household tasks (e.g., she ironed the clothes). This serves to enforce stereotypes and inequality by assigning behavior to gendered pronouns, labeling them as exclusively male or female (Wood, 2007). The effects led the generic pronoun ‘he,’ to refer only to men, though it is intended to include men and women (Khan, et al., 2014). The use of gendered pronouns mirrors social norms surrounding gender, which prescribe appropriate behavior for men and women. As demonstrated in the given example, language can be used as a means of communicating aspects of our identity, such as gender. The use of language can also be used to communicate other aspects of identity, including ethnicity and sexual

orientation. Consequently, our language use can also be used to communicate personal biases and attitudes that relate to these identities.

### **Neologisms**

One way language is used for expressing personal beliefs, biases, and attitudes is using Neologisms. Neologisms are newly created words or expressions that enable us to convey attitudes, beliefs, or experiences quickly (Velykoroda & Lyabyga, 2016). They can be the combination of two words, such as brunch (i.e., breakfast and lunch), chillax (i.e., chill and relax), or spork (i.e., spoon and fork) (Kemmer, 2008) or acronyms that express emotions or relationships, such as LOL (Laugh Out Loud) and BFF (Best Friends Forever). More importantly, they include existing terms that have had their meaning altered (Peterson & Ray, 2013). Lui (2014) described neologisms as an extension of meaning. For example, the word “sick” traditionally describes somebody who is ill. One might say, “I got sick at work today.” Others, however, have come to use it to describe something that is cool. For, example, “That Beyoncé concert was sick!” Such words encompass more than a literal translation, they consist of any person or thing it applies too (Lui, 2014). In a sense, “sick” is used ubiquitously; it can describe various experiences and situations, as well as people or objects.

#### **“Bitch” as Neologism**

Other examples of neologisms can be found in gendered terms such as “Bitch.” “Bitch” has traditionally been used to refer to a female dog (Merriam-Webster, 2018), but now serves a dual purpose of communicating animosity towards women while also instilling social inequality (Angyal, 2011). “Bitch” is often used to intentionally demean a

woman by suggesting she has several or too many sexual partners, inadvertently communicating disapproval of deviation from social norms (Kleinman, Ezzell, & Frost, 2009). Examples of this can be seen in the use of “Bitch” by African-American men in hip hop. Lane (2011) investigated language used in rap music to describe women and found that “Bitch” was used by African-American male artists to describe women who break prescribed gender roles and as an overarching term that encompasses all women. In the song *That’s My Bitch*, by Jay-Z and Kanye West (2011), one of the lyrics says, “Get ya own dog, ya heard? That’s my bitch. In this context, women are depicted as property and as inferior to their owner, consistent with traditional ideals within the social hierarchy placing men as superior to women (Glick et al., 2004). Though the use of “Bitch” in this context was meant as a synonym to describe a woman, it inadvertently communicates prejudicial ideals. The use of “Bitch” in this context serves to reinforce the pervasive nature of traditional gender roles that inherently place women below men.

Another interesting point to note, “Bitch” is used ubiquitously, as was seen with the word “Sick.” “Bitch” can now be used as a generic noun (Kleinman et al., 2009). For instance, the phrase “that test was a bitch!” or “Life’s a bitch.” are used to describe situations or tasks that are difficult. In contrast, the phrase, “I bent that test over and made it my bitch.” has a much different connotation, communicating a sense of domination and superiority. This phrase is used to communicate success and would likely be said if the user had received a good grade on the test. Though the use of “Bitch” in this way is not intended to communicate hostility towards women, the theme of domination mirrors

social norms regarding the inferiority of women, leading to the perpetuation of gender-based social inequality.

**Use by in-group members.** Interestingly, though these terms are used predominately to degrade women, it is not found to be offensive when used by in-group members and among close friends (Kleinman et al., 2009). The phrase, “Hey, bitch!” can be viewed as a term of endearment, similar in interpretation as the phrase, “Hey, friend!” when used between in-group members (Kleinman et al., 2009). In this context, “Bitch” is removed from its pejorative history, allowing women to use “Bitch” as a term of empowerment or, in the above case, endearment. As a result, additional uses of “Bitch” have also emerged. Some women use “Bitch” as a self-descriptor (Kleinman et al. 2009), perhaps in effort to reclaim the term (e.g., Boss Bitch, Hey bitch!). The use of “Bitch” by female hip hop artists exemplifies this ideal (Lane, 2011). The song, *Queen Bitch*, by Lil’ Kim (1996) contains the lyric, “I am a diamond cluster hustler. Queen bitch, supreme bitch.” The use of “Bitch” in this context is meant to suggest she is in charge or in control, contradicting the traditional connotations of the term. When a woman uses “Bitch” as a self-identifier, it may be viewed as empowering or as a way of challenging outdated social norms. This allows women to detach “Bitch” from its derogatory roots, further communicating solidarity against sex based discrimination.

Contrarily, “Bitch” has also been used among some women as a means of communicating hostility. This is best illustrated in the bullying tactics typically adopted by women, which usually includes rumor spreading, gossip, name calling, and social exclusion (Miller, 2016). Within this context, “Bitch” may be used in ways that closely

align to its derogatory roots, expressing disapproval of those who are perceived as sexually deviant by asserting their own adherence to status quo (Miller, 2016). Such variability within the group has led to some difficulties in deciphering the users intended message. Though “Bitch” has been used predominately and historically as a derogatory term against women (Angyal, 2011), the malleability of “Bitch” has led to a dispute over who can use the word “Bitch.”

**Who can say “Bitch?”** When combined with the inherent characteristics of a neologism, controversy emerges as far as who can use “Bitch.” The use of “Bitch” by someone outside the group (e.g., man, stranger) is often perceived as highly offensive (Croom, 2013) and is frequently interpreted as an intentional insult. Use by out-group members serves to instill and perpetuate social inequality because the user’s identity as an out-group member prevents them from experiencing the discriminatory experiences that come along with being a woman. Though the use of “Bitch” by out-group members and its use in reference to an object (e.g., test) may be intended to convey positive emotions and experiences, the derogatory history of “Bitch” leads to a covert reinforcement of ideals of inequality and the arbitrary lines dictated in the social hierarchy (Kleinman et al., 2009).

Further complicating the deciphering of “Bitch” is its use within some small in-groups that transcend arbitrarily established social groups (e.g., race, gender). Within this context, “Bitch” may be viewed as a term of endearment (e.g., “Hey bitch!”). This can be illustrated in the way some male musicians use “Bitch.” While some male hip-hop artist use “Bitch” in its more traditional sense, other musicians have also molded the meaning

of “Bitch” to extend beyond reference to women or derogation. Elton John’s (1974) song, *The Bitch is Back*, uses “Bitch” in the way some gay men often deploy the term, as a comical way to poke fun of someone throwing a hissy fit (Powers, 2012). Within the social context referenced in this song, the interpretation of “Bitch” molds to invoke positive emotions. In *The Bitch is Back*, Elton John (1995) uses “Bitch” in reference to himself while among friends. In these instances, “Bitch” is similarly removed from its pejorative roots as it is when used between two women. The use of “Bitch” among out-group members within their smaller social groups (e.g., friends, family) contributes to the ambiguity in use and interpretation by creating a grey area in which in-groups composed of individuals with diverse identities are able to use “Bitch” to communicate endearment and friendship.

The variability in the use of “Bitch” outlined above has created challenges in eradicating the detrimental consequences posed. The interpretation of “Bitch” often relies on the social context of the environment. If the gender of both the user and the target do not align, the subliminal messages attached to “Bitch” often align with its traditional, pejorative connotation. If the user and the target are close friends, “Bitch” is interpreted as a synonym for friend, perhaps sending the message that the user possesses a positive attitude towards the other person. For women who attempt to reclaim “Bitch” as a term of empowerment and comradeship, variability in usage hinders this process. Those who use “Bitch” as an identity or as a synonym for friend blurs the line of acceptable usage by out-group members. Women and small in-groups (i.e. friends) who use “Bitch” more

positively may lead to the impression that “Bitch” has become inoffensive, allowing out-group members to mold “Bitch” in a way that reflects their own meaning.

### **N\*<sup>1</sup> As A Neologism**

**Use by out-group members.** A more common and controversial neologism is N\*. Historically, it is a derogatory term used to communicate superiority and racial bias towards African-Americans (Green, 2002a; Kennedy, 2002). Though it is viewed as the obscenest word in the English language (Henderson, 2003) and its use is strongly discouraged (Allan & Burrige, 2006), it is often used by those who are racially biased. Some out-group members (e.g., not African-American) rationalize that they can use N\* because it is not intended to be derogatory; they may feel that having friends who are African-American or by believing they are not biased strips it of its negative connotation. Most of the African-American community does not tolerate the use of N\* by any person who is not African-American (Asim, 2007). For example, Harley Barber, a White student at the University of Alabama, posted videos on social media in which she repeatedly used the word N\* and other racial slurs (Eltagouri, 2018). Backlash not only included expulsion, it resulted in ostracism and physical threats.

Although some out-group members continue to use N\* despite its pejorative history, other out-group members are in agreeance with the African-American community in saying out-group members should refrain from using N\* (Allan & Burrige, 2006). An example of this can be seen in the National Football League’s (NFL)

---

<sup>1</sup> Because the author identifies as an out-group member from the African-American community, the symbol “N\*” will be used to denote the N-word throughout the remainder of this paper.

attempt to ban the use of N\* by players, coaches and fans. Sheinin and Thompson (2014) found that this process was complicated by N\* being used synonymously with “dude” and “bro,” causing discrepancies in interpretation. The variability in use obscures the line between what is and what is not an acceptable use of N\*, permitting out-group members to adopt N\* in ways that fit their own meaning despite the negative consequences it may pose for the perpetuation of social inequality.

**Use by in-group members.** Although the interpretation of the word N\* is often viewed negatively when used by other ethnic groups, it is often not seen as offensive when used among members of the African-American community. The meaning of the word N\* shifts based on social and cultural context and, despite its pejorative roots, N\* is widely used by some who identify as African-American (Kennedy, 2002) and may be used in an effort to reclaim the term or minimize its negative impact. This process can be seen in variations of N\* adopted within the African-American community. Once such variation is “N\*\*\*a”<sup>2</sup> (Asim, 2007). “N\*\*\*a” is a way for the African-American community to communicate shared discriminatory experiences and solidarity. In this context, “N\*\*\*a” is removed from the discriminatory history of N\*, no longer communicating hostility or inferiority.

Though “N\*\*\*a” is traditionally used among African-American’s, some in-groups may allow the use of “N\*\*\*a” by those who do not identify as African-American. Some in-groups (e.g., friends) contain individuals with diverse racial identities. Within

---

<sup>2</sup> Because the author identifies as an out-group member, the word “Nigga” will be denoted as “N\*\*\*a”.

this context, “N\*\*\*a” may be viewed as a term of endearment, similar to the way “Bitch” is used by some in-groups to communicate affection (Powers, 2012), regardless of the user’s racial identity. Variability in the definition of an in-group contributes to the ambiguity found in the interpretation of “N\*\*\*a”, further blurring the boundaries between who and when “N\*\*\*a” can be used. While “N\*\*\*a” is intended to be used synonymously with “dude” or “bro” within this social context, other individuals who do not belong to this in-group do not interpret its use within the group as detached from its prejudicial roots. Subsequently, controversy has sparked regarding who can use “N\*\*\*a” and whether it can truly be separated from its derogatory past.

**Controversy within the community.** While “N\*\*\*a” is typically viewed as an acceptable form of N\* that can be used among in-group members (e.g., African-American’s, friends), controversy exists among members in the African-American community as to whether “N\*\*\*a”, should be used by members within the community and what in-group usage represents (Kennedy, 2002). Kennedy (2002) found that some African-Americans viewed the use of “N\*\*\*a” by a member within the African-American community as a form of self-hatred and internalized anti-black views. According to some members of the African-American community, rappers who use “N\*\*\*a” in their lyrics act as henchmen to white supremacists with song lyrics that present damaging stereotypes of African-Americans that associate them as lazy, criminal, violent, and sexually insatiable (Asim, 2007). Contrarily, some members of the African-American community prefer to divest “N\*\*\*a” of its negative connotation, suggesting that out-group members should be allowed to use “N\*\*\*a” because it is synonymous

with “dude” or “bro” (Sheinin & Thompson, 2014). The discrepancies in beliefs surrounding who can use “N\*\*\*a” present within the African-American community complicates interpretation. Such variability in use and meaning hinders the African-American community from being able to fully reclaim N\* because it creates ambiguity regarding who and when “N\*\*\*a” can be used.

### **“Queer” As A Neologism**

Similar patterns can be seen in the word “Queer,” which shifts in meaning depending on the user’s sexual orientation. The term originated in the 16th century and was initially used to describe something as strange or peculiar (Oxford Dictionary, 2018). During the 20th century, “Queer” became a derogatory synonym for homosexual; similarly used to perpetuate superiority, hostility and inequality. However, in the 1980’s, a movement within the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer (LGBTQ) community began to reclaim the word “Queer.” Much like self-labeling as “N\*\*\*a”, “Queer” allows members of the LGBTQ community to convey their beliefs, attitudes, identity and experiences (Barber & Hildago, 2018; Beemyn, 2018; Hogan, 2005). Similarly, this allows members of the LGBTQ community to instill a sense of unity grounded in shared sexual orientation-based oppression. Though its use has been historically negative, it is widely used by some members of the LGBTQ community. Research has demonstrated that homosexuals are likely to use similar terms such as, fag, fairy, queen or faggot when referring to members of their group (Chauncey, 1994). In the LGBTQ community, it is interpreted much like “N\*\*\*a” within the African-American community. Among some members of the LGBTQ community, “Queer” is stripped of

any negative connotation and interpreted as a term of solidarity when used by community members.

**How “Queer” is used.** Over time, this has translated to the use of “Queer” in a variety of ways, serving as an umbrella term that encompasses a continuum of identity (Hogan, 2005). Queer now refers to anyone who rejects heteronormative social norms, making it probable that some members outside the LGBTQ community identify with the word “Queer.” For example, “Queer” is used by some as a political identity that conveys subversion of sexual orientation based social norms, allowing Queer-identified politicians to organize with other likeminded individuals to propel political agendas (Barber & Hildago, 2018). Additionally, it is used to describe a subset of the LGBTQ community; those who do not fit into the prescribed boxes of male/female and masculine/feminine. These individuals are referred to as gender queer, as they see themselves as falling somewhere in between or outside of both labels (Beemyn, 2018). The broad application of “Queer” to encompass a variety of identities and experiences has led to ambiguity in interpretation. Consequently, individuals within the LGBTQ community adopt differing positions on whether “Queer” should be reclaimed and used as a positive identifier.

**Controversy within the group.** As seen in the African-American community, inconsistencies exist within the LGTBQ community in terms of whether “Queer” should or should not be used. Some individuals use “Queer” purely politically, while some use it as an indicator of sexual identity. As a result, “Queer” is used to encompass a broad range of experiences. This leads to an inability to agree on the proper use of “Queer”, as it is used to communicate a wide array of individual experiences (Zielinski, 2007).

Divergence on the appropriate use of “Queer” has been found primarily between those in academia versus those not in academia. The birth of queer theory, a theoretical approach to cultural studies that rejects traditional norms surrounding sexuality (Merriam-Webster, 2018), led many to connect studies of sexuality to non-normative patterns in other areas of academia (Zielinski, 2007). Many view “Queer” as a better term to critique gender-based oppression.

In this setting, “Queer” describes a broad range of oppressive experiences rather than the limited nature of lesbian or gay, which describe specific discriminatory experiences (Zielinski, 2007). Critiques of this use argue that deconstructing LGBTQ categories erases the unique, lived experiences of LGBTQ identities (Green, 2002b) and its use as an umbrella term may serve to invalidate many of these experiences. Lack of consensus on how “Queer” can and should be used has an impact on the ways in which the term perpetuates social inequality. Discrepancies blur the line of who can say it within and outside the group and may contribute to discriminatory behaviors. Much like the difficulties seen within the African-American community in the reclamation of “N\*\*\*a”, similar problems exist within the LGBTQ community in their attempts to reclaim “Queer.” Such discrepancies lead to variation in meaning and interpretation, making it difficult to solidify who and how “Queer” should be used.

### **Neologisms and Microaggressions**

#### **LGBTQ Microaggressions**

The ambiguity found in the use and interpretation of “Queer,” “N\*\*\*a”, and “Bitch” can lead to an unintentional communication of disapproval and hostility. Such

messages are referred to as microaggressions, which include snubs, slights, or jokes that communicate hostility (Woodford, Howell, Kulick, & Silverschanz, 2013). Interestingly, those who use microaggressions are not consciously aware of their negative implications because their use and interpretation of its meaning are detached from its pejorative connotation. A common LGBTQ microaggression is the phrase “no homo,” which is an unintentional slight or joke targeted at the LGBTQ community. This is typically said after a heterosexual male says something like, “I love you, bro” to a heterosexual friend as a means of mitigating any misconceptions regarding their sexuality. Brown (2011) argues that this is a defense mechanism against an attack on their masculinity, serving as a safe guard against perceived sexual transgressions. Like the way in which the phrase “knock on wood” serves to cure any perceived jinxing, “no homo” seemingly cures any transgressions. Another LGBTQ microaggression can be seen in the phrase, “that’s so gay”, which is often used to describe something as stupid (Woodford et al., 2013). By using the phrase synonymously with stupid, users unintentionally communicate hostility towards LGBTQ individuals by implying that the two are interchangeable. Those who use microaggressions are in some ways reinforcing an implicit negative bias, despite being unaware phrases like “no homo” and “that’s so gay” do so.

### **“Queer” as Microaggressions**

Words such as “Queer” or “N\*\*a” can be considered microaggressions. Therefore, neologisms like “Queer” and “N\*\*a” can carry the same consequences, or harsher, as LGBTQ microaggressions such as “no homo” or “that’s so gay.” Microaggressions, such as “Queer” impact the accessibility of semantic knowledge,

activating negative feelings, and promoting exclusion and avoidance towards the targeted group (Carnaghi & Maass, 2007; Fasoli, Maass, & Carnaghi, 2015). Swim, Johnston and Pearson (2009) linked increased exposure to homophobic language (e.g. comments or phrases that reflect negative attitudes towards the LGBTQ community) to increased anger and anxiety in those who identify as homosexual. Carnaghi and Bianchi's (2017) study indicated that incidental exposure to microaggressions could lead to self-directed prejudice and worries of non-conformity for the targeted group. Within an educational setting, Silverschanz, Cortina, Konik and Magley (2008) found that being called homophobic names or overhearing gay jokes is associated with low levels of social acceptance, low student engagement and increased levels of anxiety. For some members of the LGBTQ community, microaggressions increase the fear of being the target of discrimination, leading them to avoid disclosing their LGBTQ identity (Burn, Kadlec, & Rexer, 2005). Though users may be unaware of the hostility communicated in the use of "Queer", such terms carry detrimental consequences for the targeted group by reinforcing negative biases and attitudes related to sexual orientation.

### **Social Attitudes Towards the LGBTQ Community**

While "Queer," "N\*\*\*a" or "Bitch" can be viewed as microaggressions, some use it as a slur to intentionally insult, degrade or shame members of the targeted group (Merriam-Webster, 2018). Generally, attitudes towards homosexuals are highly negative around the globe; this has been demonstrated in studies conducted in several countries (Chaux & León, 2016; Lim, 2008; Jonathan, 2001; Steffens & Wagner, 2004). The use and endorsement of slurs often reflects negative attitudes towards the targeted group.

Those who hold stronger prejudicial attitudes against the LGBTQ community are more likely to use LGBTQ directed slurs (Poteat, DiGiovanni, & Scheer, 2013). It is often assumed that people who use slurs directed at a targeted group do so to communicate their beliefs about homosexuality, contributing to the perpetuation of sexual orientation-based oppression on a broader social scale. For instance, research conducted by Slenders, Sieben, & Verbakel, (2014) found an association between laws related to same-sex marriage and attitudes, where legislation not only shaped, but reflected public opinion towards homosexuality.

While the use of “Queer” by out-group members may be assumed to reflect negative attitudes towards the targeted group, the widespread use of “Queer” as an indicator of various identities and experiences may invalidate this claim. Since the meaning of “Queer” has expanded, there is an increased reliance on social context and the ability to discern the user’s intent becomes more difficult. For instance, the use of “Queer” as a political ideology, a variation in the use of “Queer” that is detached from its pejorative roots (Barber & Hildago, 2018), is suggestive of more positive attitudes as this ideology emphasizes the eradication of sexual orientation-based oppression. Within the LGBTQ community, the use of “Queer” is less ambiguous as LGBTQ individuals are more likely to identify as genderqueer. On the other hand, the use of “Queer” by out-group members has grown increasingly ambiguous as individuals outside the community begin to adopt and morph “Queer” to reflect their own personal experiences.

Such variation contributes to misinterpretations of the attitudes conveyed in the use of “Queer.” For some, “Queer” may no longer be reflective of personal attitudes. As

such, the work to reclaim “Queer” within the LGBTQ community is blocked because out-group members have taken “Queer” and re-conceptualized it to fit their own ideals. For example, some who use “Queer” in a microaggressive manner unintentionally communicate hostility towards the target group (Woodford et al., 2013). Some may jokingly use “Queer” with their friends to convey the same message the use of words such as ‘stupid’ or ‘dumb’ or ‘weird’ would convey (Woodford et al., 2013) However, these individuals do so unaware that use of “Queer” in this manner also conveys the idea that identifying as LGBTQ is also ‘stupid’, ‘dumb’, or ‘weird’. The variation in use and interpretation is likely influenced by other factors informing our social attitudes. Factors such as social dominance orientation, conservatism, and religiosity are tied to social attitudes and contribute to the use, adoption and interpretation of “Queer.”

### **Social Dominance Orientation**

The theory of Social Dominance Orientation (SDO), first proposed by Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, and Malle (1994) argued that individuals support the dominance of some groups over others at the trait level. SDO has shown to be one of the most useful constructs for understanding intergroup behavior and is one of the most powerful predictors of intergroup attitudes towards marginalized groups (Ho et al., 2012). Those high in SDO believe in the maintenance of hierarchical structure within society, regardless of their position in their group within the hierarchy (Sidanius, Levin, Federico, & Pratto, 2001). For example, Sidanius et al. (2001) found that women higher in SDO preferred the maintenance of male dominance over women, despite the detriment posed to their in-group. SDO has also been applied to understand the preservation of status

boundaries (Ho, Sidanius, Cuddy, & Banaji, 2013), political party preference (Crawford, 2012), excessive use of police force (Perkins & Bourgeois, 2006), and the dehumanization of low-status outgroups (Kteily, Bruneau, Waytz, & Cotterill, 2015). While SDO predicts preference for dominance over other groups in a variety of settings, the trait also influences attitudes towards the marginalized group.

One condition in which the influence of SDO on attitudes is observed is in racial attitudes. Findings from research conducted by Bassett (2010), demonstrated that those high in SDO have stronger negative attitudes towards illegal immigrants. Thomsen, Green, and Sidanius (2008) found that high SDO scores reflect a rejection of immigrants who assimilate into the dominant culture because it disrupts existing boundaries between groups. The literature also demonstrates this influence regarding sexual orientation.

Research suggests that SDO has a strong correlational and predictive relationship with negative attitudes towards homosexuals (Licciardello, Castiglione, Rampullo, & Scolla, 2014; Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth, & Malle, 1994; Poteat et al., 2007; Whitley, 1999). Considering that SDO is a trait characteristic, it is important to acknowledge that some groups are more likely to be higher on this trait continuum than others. For example, Dickins and Sergeant (2008) found differences in SDO scores among heterosexual men, heterosexual women, and homosexual men, with scores in SDO decreasing respectively. Further investigation into these findings establish that SDO mediates individual differences in attitudes towards homosexuals (Guimond, Dambrun, Michinov, & Durate, 2003; Whitley & Ægisdóttir, 2000). Yet, SDO is not the only predictor of attitudes towards homosexuals.

## **Religious Beliefs**

Research has also established a link between religious beliefs and attitudes towards homosexuality (Hunsberger & Jackson, 2005). Many religions are traditionally heteronormative, which view homosexuality as unnatural, disordered, and sinful (Yen & Zampelli, 2016). Because many religions, such as Christianity and Islam, denounce homosexuality, members of such religious faiths are more likely to have negative views of people who have diverse sexualities. Ogland and Verona (2014) found that those who adhered to traditional Protestant, Pentecostal, and Catholic faiths exhibited stronger opposition to LGBTQ rights. Furthermore, according to Jäckle and Wenzelburger (2015), people who are religiously involved are more homonegative (i.e., hold negative attitudes towards homosexuality) in general than people who are not religious, though homonegativity varies in relation to specific ideologies and levels of religiosity. Many of those opposed to LGBTQ equality, rely on religious beliefs and traditions to state their argument. Within the past few years, Brazil legalized same sex marriage. In response, Evangelical Protestant and Catholic groups have begun to exercise political power by organizing anti-gay marches, demonizing homosexuality in the media, and restricting sexual education to exclude homosexual themes (Gajewski, 2011) as a means of reestablishing previously held notions of homosexuality.

As such, the connection between religious beliefs and attitudes towards homosexuals suggests that individual levels of religiosity could influence interpretations of “Queer.” The value placed on heteronormativity within many faiths creates a negative association with homosexuality, which in turn assigns a negative connotation to language

used to describe LGBTQ individuals. Those who are more religious may be less likely to identify with “Queer” in nontraditional ways (e.g. queer as a political ideology). Such associations may lead to interpretations that are in line with traditional views of homosexuality as a sin, increasing the likelihood “Queer” will be used in its historical context as a slur against LGBTQ individuals. Yet, the connection between attitudes towards homosexuality and religion is not free from outside influence; more factors are at play. Findings have shown that those who hold more negative attitudes towards homosexuality are not only more religious, but are often more conservative (Luguri, Napier, & Dovidio, 2012). Thus, conservative ideology may also influence the attitudes towards and the use of “Queer.”

### **Conservatism**

Conservatism is a doctrine characterized by an emphasis on traditional institutions and practices, a resistance to change (Viereck, Ball, & Minogue, 2018) and a desire to preserve ancient moral traditions (Everett, 2013). Homophobia, or extreme negative attitudes towards same-sex relations and opposition to LGBTQ rights (Anderson, 2016) is linked to conservatism (Whitely & Lee, 2000; Wood & Bartkowski, 2004). Additional research shows that conservatives report higher sexual prejudice (Shackelford & Besser, 2007). Luguri et al., (2012) found that participants who self-labeled as conservative held more prejudicial attitudes towards non-normative groups, such as lesbians and gays, as compared to liberals and exhibit more prejudicial attitudes overall (Barth & Parry, 2009; Pacilli, Taurino, Jost, & van der Toorn, 2011). Those who identify as conservative have also been linked to support for social policies that promote

and maintain inequality (Pratto et. al, 1994). McCarthy (2014) found that conservatives were far more resistant to same-sex marriage than liberals, 82% versus 31% respectively.

Due to the strong link between negative attitudes and conservatism (Sherkat, Poweel-Williams, Maddox, & de Vries, 2011), levels of conservatism are likely linked to the use of “Queer.” Those who hold more prejudicial attitudes may endorse more traditional interpretations that are linked to traditional characteristics associated with people who identify as “Queer.” They may be more likely to believe in stereotypical associations with gay men such as pedophilia, promiscuity, HIV, and hyper-femininity (McLaughlin & Rodriguez, 2017). This may lead to more negative usage and interpretations because “Queer” is traditionally used to describe homosexuals. Negatively associating “Queer” with homosexuals could result in usage of “Queer” in a way that is consistent with its historical roots as a slur. This negative bias is a phenomenon of which members of the LGBTQ community are likely to be aware.

### **Stigma Consciousness**

Research suggests that members of minority groups who are susceptible to discrimination recognize that their group membership influences their interactions with others (Pinel, 1999). A key component of susceptibility to discrimination is the target’s perception of the probability of facing discrimination (Pinel, 1999). Individual differences exist in the expectation of being stereotyped, which is largely influenced by the frequency of interactions with out-group members. If an individual within a minority group has relatively few interactions with out-group members, the individual has less time to reflect on their stereotyped identity, subsequently perceiving less of a probability

of discrimination (Major, 1994). Pinel (1999) coined the term, stigma consciousness to describe the degree to which we expect to be stereotyped. To illustrate this construct, Pinel (1999) asked participants to list as many examples as possible that involved a man being sexist towards a woman. Results indicated that those high in stigma consciousness provided more concrete accounts of instances of discrimination. Stigma consciousness has since been examined within several different ethnic groups, including Asian Americans (Ong, Lee, Cerrada, & Williams, 2017), children (Schmalz & Kerstetter, 2006), women (Pinel, 2004) and staff workers (Pinel & Paulin, 2005),

**Stigma consciousness and microaggressions.** Stigma consciousness also has an influence on experiences of microaggressions. Microaggressions are often linked to stereotypes about the target group. For example, stereotypes about black men are linked to aggression and criminality (Smith, Allen, & Danley, 2007). McCabe (2009) found that Black male college students experienced microaggressions through the omnipresence of campus and city police on resident floors that were predominately Black and often faced harsher penalties than others accused of the same offense. This led Black males to feel the need to be hypervigilant and many participants described several occasions in which they felt others perceived them as threatening. Nadal, Griffin, Hamit, Leon, and Tobio (2012) studied microaggressions towards Muslim Americans and found that a common form of covert discrimination comes in the form of statements linked to the endorsement of the stereotypical assumption that Muslims are terrorists. For example, one participant described a situation in which she was stopped on her way to her gate at the airport and randomly searched by a security guard who said nothing more than, “Ok, you come with

me” (Nadal, et al., 2012, p. 23). While there was no overt mention of her religious background or the security guard’s personal beliefs about Muslims, the woman perceived this as discrimination based on her Muslim identity. The woman’s awareness of the stigma attached to being a Muslim in America impacted how she perceived the security guard’s behavior, resulting in her identifying the experience as a microaggression. Subsequently, extending these findings suggests that stigma consciousness could moderate the relationship between experiences of microaggressions on the use of the word “Queer.” Increased experiences of microaggressions could increase the individual’s awareness of the ways in which others stereotype them, leading them to perceive more instances of covert discrimination. Heightened awareness of experiences of microaggression may lead to increased self-monitoring in efforts to prevent discriminating against other minority groups using microaggressions.

### **Current Study**

Though significant research has demonstrated that microaggressions carry detrimental societal and individual consequences, little attention has been given to the use and perpetuation of sexual orientation microaggressions, more specifically the word “Queer.” Due to comparisons found with the word N\*, exploring its use can provide insightful information on the way language morphs to reflect cultural and social attitudes, while also serving as identity markers. The current study aimed to answer the following research questions: What are the differences between heterosexuals and homosexuals in use of the word “Queer”? What is the relationship between explicit attitudes and microaggressions in shaping interpretation and use of “Queer”? What is the relationship

between the use and interpretation of “Queer” with conservatism, religious fundamentalism, overall warmth towards LGBTQ individuals, and social dominance? And What influence does stigma consciousness have on the relationship between the use of “Queer” and experiences of microaggressions?

The current study had five hypotheses:

H1: Homosexuals will endorse more positive usage of “Queer” as compared to heterosexuals.

H1<sub>a</sub>: Homosexuals will use “Queer” more frequently than heterosexuals in a positive manner.

H1<sub>b</sub>: Homosexuals will use more positive emotion words than heterosexuals in their use of “Queer.”

H1<sub>c</sub>: Homosexuals will use less negative emotion words than heterosexuals in their use of “Queer.”

H1<sub>d</sub>: Homosexuals and heterosexuals will differ in analytical thinking in their use of “Queer.”

H1<sub>e</sub>: Homosexuals and heterosexuals will differ in clarity in their use of “Queer.”

H1<sub>f</sub>: Homosexuals and heterosexuals will differ in authenticity in their use of “Queer”.

H1<sub>g</sub>: Homosexuals and heterosexuals will differ in overall emotional tone in their use of “Queer.”

H2: Explicit attitudes towards homosexuals will predict usage of “Queer.”

H2a: Explicit attitudes will predict the frequency participants use “Queer” in positive manner.

H2b: Explicit attitudes will predict overall positive emotion words in the use of “Queer.”

H2c: Explicit attitudes will predict overall negative emotion words in the use of “Queer.”

H2d: Explicit attitudes will predict analytical thinking in the use of “Queer.”

H2e: Explicit attitudes will predict clout in the use of “Queer.”

H2f: Explicit attitudes will predict authenticity in the use of “Queer.”

H2g: Explicit attitudes will predict emotional tone in the use of “Queer.”

H3: Experiences of microaggressions will predict usage of “Queer.”

H3a: Experiences of microaggressions will predict the frequency participants use “Queer” in a positive manner.

H3b: Experiences of microaggressions will predict overall positive emotion words in the use of “Queer.”

H3c: Experiences of microaggressions will predict overall negative emotion words in the use of “Queer.”

H3d: Experiences of microaggressions will predict analytical thinking in the use of “Queer.”

H3e: Experiences of microaggressions will predict clout in the use of “Queer.”

H3f: Experiences of microaggressions will predict authenticity in the use of “Queer.”

H3g: Experiences of Microaggressions will predict emotional tone in the use of “Queer.”

H4: Explicit attitudes, experiences of microaggressions, conservatism, religious fundamentalism, overall warmth, and social dominance will predict usage of “Queer.”

H4a: Explicit attitudes, experiences of microaggressions, conservatism, religious fundamentalism, overall warmth, and social dominance will predict the frequency participants use “Queer” in a positive manner.

H4b: Explicit attitudes, experiences of microaggressions, conservatism, religious fundamentalism, overall warmth, and social dominance will predict overall positive emotion words in the use of “Queer.”

H4c: Explicit attitudes, experiences of microaggressions, conservatism, religious fundamentalism, overall warmth, and social dominance will predict overall negative emotion words in the use of “Queer.”

H4d: Explicit attitudes, experiences of microaggressions, conservatism, religious fundamentalism, overall warmth, and social dominance will predict analytical thinking in the use of “Queer.”

H4e: Explicit attitudes, experiences of microaggressions, conservatism, religious fundamentalism, overall warmth, and social dominance will clout in the use of “Queer.”

H4<sub>f</sub>: Explicit attitudes, experiences of microaggressions, conservatism, religious fundamentalism, overall warmth, and social dominance will predict authenticity in the use of “Queer.”

H4<sub>g</sub>: Explicit attitudes, experiences of microaggressions, conservatism, religious fundamentalism, overall warmth, and social dominance will predict overall emotional tone in the use of “Queer.”

H5: Stigma consciousness will moderate the relationship between experiences of microaggressions and the usage of “Queer.”

H5<sub>a</sub>: Stigma consciousness will moderate the relationship between experiences of microaggressions and the frequency participants use “Queer” in a positive manner.

H5<sub>b</sub>: Stigma consciousness will moderate the relationship between experiences of microaggressions and overall positive emotion words in the use of “Queer.”

H5<sub>c</sub>: Stigma consciousness will moderate the relationship between experiences of microaggressions and overall negative emotion words in the use of “Queer.”

H5<sub>d</sub>: Stigma consciousness will moderate the relationship between experiences of microaggressions and analytical thinking in the use of “Queer.”

H5<sub>e</sub>: Stigma consciousness will moderate the relationship between experiences of microaggressions and clout in the use of “Queer.”

H5<sub>f</sub>: Stigma consciousness will moderate the relationship between experiences of microaggressions and authenticity in the use of “Queer.”

H5<sub>g</sub>: Stigma consciousness will moderate the relationship between experiences of microaggressions and overall emotional tone in the use of “Queer.”

## CHAPTER II

### METHODOLOGY

#### **Participants**

Participants included undergraduate students from a public university in Texas, as well as from social media sites (e.g., Facebook, Tumblr, Twitter, Reddit). Participants were recruited using various platforms to obtain a representative sample. College students were recruited through the university's SONA-system, which is a secure program ensuring anonymity of participants. Students were provided with a link to PsychData, a secure data collection platform that ensures confidentiality and anonymity, to complete the survey. Students were required to be at least 18 years of age and be enrolled in college courses on-campus. Undergraduate students receive research credit for their participation. Participants collected from social media and email were provided a link that directed them to PsychData, where they completed the survey. No incentive was provided for participants from social media.

The final sample consisted of 353 participants, as 46 of the original 399 participants were excluded from analysis because they did not complete the survey. 40% of participants self-reported as White ( $N = 139$ ), 27% as Hispanic/Hispanic-American ( $N = 94$ ), 15% as African/African-American ( $N = 52$ ), 5%

as other ( $N = 18$ ), 1% as Arab/Arab-American, and .3% as Pacific Islander ( $N = 1$ ).

Participants primarily identified as female ( $N = 311$ ), 31 identified as male, 4 identified as transgender, and the remaining identified as 'other.' Most participants identified as straight (73%,  $N = 256$ ), followed by bisexual (13%,  $N = 47$ ), lesbian (7%,  $N = 24$ ), queer (4%,  $N = 13$ ), and gay (3%,  $N = 11$ ). The mean reported age was 20.5 ( $SD = 5.61$ ), with ages ranging from 17 to 57.

## **Measures**

### **Demographics**

Participants were asked to complete a demographics questionnaire. The questionnaire contained questions related to age, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and level of education.

### **The Attitudes Towards Lesbians and Gay Men Scale**

The Attitudes Towards Lesbians and Gay Men (ATLG; Herek, 1988) was used to assess general attitudes related to sexual orientation (see Appendix A). The ALTG has demonstrated good reliability, with *alpha* coefficients ranging from .77 - .94 ( $M = .89$ ,  $SD = .06$ ) (Phillips, Kivisalu, King, & O'Toole, 2015) and produced an *alpha* of .9 in the current study. It has consistently demonstrated convergent and divergent validity (Moreno, Herazo, Oviedo, & Campo-Arias, 2015). The ATLG is a 20-item scale composed of two subscales, Attitudes Towards Lesbians (ATL) and Attitudes Towards Gay Men (ATG), both consisting of 10 items. Participants rate their level of agreement with each statement on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*Strongly disagree*) to 5 (*Strongly agree*). The ratings are combined to obtain a score for each subscale. A total

score can be obtained by summing the scores of each subscale. Lower scores reflect positive attitudes. Example items include “Female homosexuality is a sin.”, and “I think male homosexuals are disgusting”. Total scores were used for the current study.

### **The LGBQ Microaggressions on Campus Scale**

The LGBQ Microaggressions on Campus Scale (Woodford, Chonody, Kulick, Brennan, & Renn, 2015) was used to assess the frequency of experiencing sexual orientation microaggressions (see Appendix A). The scale contains 20 items and is divided into two subscales: Interpersonal LGBQ Microaggressions and LGBQ Environmental Microaggressions. The LGBQ Environmental Microaggressions scale assesses how frequently participants experience microaggressions within the broader social context, such as social media sites or TV advertisements. The Interpersonal LGBQ Microaggressions subscale assesses experiences of microaggressions in the individuals immediate social setting (e.g., from friends or family members). Scores on the interpersonal subscale were not included in this analysis because some of the scenarios were not applicable to all participants.

The LGBQ Environmental Microaggressions subscale demonstrated good ( $\alpha = .81$ ) reliability and produced an *alpha* of .77 in the current study. Predictive validity along with convergent and discriminant validity have been established (Woodford, et al., 2015). Participants indicate how frequently they have experienced each instance within the past year on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (*Never*) to 5 (*Very frequently*). Scoring is done on each subscale by averaging the respective items. Higher averages

suggest a greater number of perceived microaggressions. An example item is “I heard someone say, ‘that’s so gay’ to describe something as negative, stupid, or uncool.”

### **The 12-item Religious Fundamentalism Scale**

The 12-item Religious Fundamentalism Scale was used to assess religious fundamentalism (Altemeyer & Hunsberger, 2004). The 12-item measure has good inter item correlation ( $M = .37$ ) and reliability, with an *alpha* coefficient of .92. The scale also demonstrated adequate reliability in the current study ( $\alpha = .72$ ). This scale is designed to measure adherence to fundamentalism in many faiths. The Religious Fundamentalism Scale (see Appendix A) has also been shown to correlate with hostility towards homosexuals, with coefficients ranging from .42-.65. Participants indicate their level of agreement with each statement ranging from -4 (*Very strongly disagree*) to 4 (*Very strongly agree*). Scoring is done by summing the ratings of each item together, those who score high adhere more strongly to fundamentalist religious beliefs. Examples items are, “God has given humanity a complete, unfailing guide to happiness and salvation, which must be totally followed.”, and “Satan is just the name people give their own bad impulses. There really is *no such thing* as a diabolical “Prince of Darkness” who tempts us.”

### **The Social and Economic Conservatism Scale**

The Social and Economic Conservatism Scale (SECS), developed by Everett (2013), was used to measure political ideology (see Appendix A). This scale is explicitly designed to measure broad aspects of conservatism and individuals’ support for those aspects of conservatism (Everett, 2013). The SECS is a 12-item measure split into two

subscales, social and economic conservatism, which is assessed with a feeling thermometer. Participants rate how negative or positive they feel towards political issues such as abortion, welfare benefits, and traditional marriage on a scale of 0-100. Scoring is done by averaging the ratings to create an overall score, with ratings for abortion and welfare reverse scored. Higher scores indicate greater political conservatism. The SECS has high convergent validity, positively correlating with the Right-Wing Authoritarian scale (RWA), the Social Dominance Orientation scale (SDO), Dogmatism scale and self-reports of conservatism (Everett, 2013). The scale produced great reliability in the present study ( $\alpha = .83$ ).

### **Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire**

The Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire (SCQ; Pinel, 1999) was used to measure a participant's belief that their stereotyped identity influences interactions with out-group members (Pinel, 2004). The SCQ for Women (Pinel, 1999) was used. Seven other versions of the SCQ were adapted from the SCQ for Women. Participants were asked to specify one of the following as their most salient minority identity: gender, race/ethnicity, disability, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer. Based on participant's responses, they were given the coordinating adaptation of the SCQ (e.g. if lesbian identity selected, completed SCQ designed specifically for lesbians).

The only changes made from SCQ for Women for each of the seven versions was the modification of in-group and out-group references. For example, for the Disability adaptation, able-bodied was used to refer to the out-group (see Appendix A for complete measures). Several others have adopted the same adaption methods to assess stigma

consciousness in special populations. Brown and Lee (2005) created a version to assess stigma consciousness of race that produced a Cronbach's alpha of .85. Additionally, Gates (2014) developed an adaptation to assess stigma consciousness in LGB workers, producing a Cronbach's alpha of .81. Adaptations have also been successfully used to assess stigma consciousness of gender in children (Schmalz & Kerstetter, 2006), service workers (Pinel & Paulin, 2005), and Asian Americans (Ong et al., 2017). Participants indicate their level of agreement with each statement ranging from 0 (*Strongly Disagree*) to 6 (*Strongly Agree*). Scoring is done by averaging the ratings of each item together. Higher scores reflect less stigma consciousness. Five subscales of the SCQ demonstrated acceptable alphas (SCQ-Lesbian,  $\alpha = .73$ ; SCQ-Bisexual,  $\alpha = .90$ ; SCQ-Women,  $\alpha = .86$ ; SCQ-Race/Ethnicity,  $\alpha = .80$ ; SCQ-Disabled). The SCQ-Gay Men ( $\alpha = .5$ ) did not demonstrate acceptable reliability, and the SCQ-Transgender and the SCQ-Queer, which could not be determined as there were not enough cases to analyze ( $N = 2$  and  $N = 5$ , respectively).

### **Social Dominance Orientation**

The 4-item Social Dominance Orientation scale (SSDO; Pratto, et al., 2012) is an adaptation of the 16-item Social Dominance Scale. The SSDO is designed to assess preference for group-based dominance and inequality and has been used to help understand the psychology of prejudice (Ho et al., 2012). The SSDO has demonstrated good reliability, producing an alpha of .65 (Pratto et al., 2012). The SSDO demonstrated adequate reliability in the current study ( $\alpha = .61$ ), as outlined by Rodriguez and Maeda's (2006) formula for brief scales. Additionally, the SSDO has demonstrated good

predictive validity, with those high in social reporting increased levels of opposition to protecting minorities, providing aid to the poor, and showing less support for women in leadership (Pratto et al., 2012). Participants were asked to rate how much they support or oppose the ideas about groups in general on a scale of 1 (*Extremely Oppose*) to 10 (*Extremely Favor*). Example items include, “In setting priorities, we must consider all groups.” and “Group equality should be our ideal” (see Appendix A). Higher scores reflect greater support for group inequality.

### **LGBTQ Temperature Scale**

A temperature scale in which participants rated their level of warmth towards different sexual orientations was utilized as an additional measure of social attitudes. This scale was an adaptation of a temperature scale used by Esses, Haddock and Zanna (1993). Esses, et al., (1993) asked participants to indicate their feelings of warmth towards different social groups on a scale of 0 (*cold*) to 100 (*warm*), with a midpoint of 50. In this study, participants were asked to rate their feelings of warmth on a scale of 1 (*very cold*) to 10 (*very warm*), towards heterosexuals, lesbians, gays, bisexuals, transgender, and queers.

### **Queer Usage Questionnaire**

An experimenter generated questionnaire was used to assess the usage of “Queer”. Participants were asked two frequency questions: “How frequently do you use the word queer to say something negative about someone or something?” and “How frequently do you use the word queer to say something positive about someone or something”? Participants indicate how frequently they use “Queer” in this manner on a 6-

point Likert scale ranging from 0 (*never*) to 5 (*very frequently*). The first question was reverse scored and the scores from both questions were averaged together. Higher scores indicate using the word more positively. The questionnaire also contained seven open-ended questions that aimed to examine how participants defined and used “Queer” in different social settings and what they believed were the benefits and consequences of reclaiming “Queer”. Example questions are, “Define the word “Queer.” and “Describe a situation in which you have used the word “Queer?” (See Appendix A for complete measure). Responses to the open-ended questions are evaluated in the current study using the program Linguistic Inquiry and Word Count (LIWC).

#### **LIWC categories.**

LIWC is a program that has been used to categorize and interpret words in a psychologically meaningful way (Pennebaker, Boyd, Jordan, & Blackburn, 2015). Previous research has also used LIWC to assess differences in linguistic patterns between heterosexuals and homosexuals (Groom & Pennebaker, 2005). Groom and Pennebaker’s (2005) findings showed that heterosexuals used more first and third person pronouns, in turn highlighting the differences between the speaker and audience. In contrast, the decreased use of first and third person pronouns by lesbians and gay men indicates a greater focus on similarities. Validity and reliability have been demonstrated in a multitude of studies (Tausczik & Pennebaker, 2010). The LIWC was used to assess the emotional and cognitive analyses of participants written responses to the open-ended questions on the Queer Usage Questionnaire. Responses were analyzed on four dimensions (analytical thinking, clout, authenticity, and emotional tone).

**Analytical thinking.** Analytical thinking scores reflect the degree to which participants use categorical versus dynamic language as an indicator of complex organization of objects and concepts (Pennebaker, Chung, Frazee, Lavergne, Beaver, 2014). Higher usage of articles and prepositions (e.g., on, after, the) indicates categorical language use, while high use of auxiliary verbs, pronouns, adverbs, and conjunctions (e.g., be, do, I, she, and) indicates dynamic language. Categorical language reflects more formal and hierarchical processing, while dynamic language reflects a more narrative style focused on the present and personal experiences.

**Authenticity.** Authenticity scores reflect how honest participants are in their written responses and were used as an indicator of social desirability. Scores are obtained by analyzing correlations between 29 different LIWC dictionaries (e.g., psychological processes, relativity), positive scores indicate truthful responses, while negative scores indicate untruthfulness (Newman, Pennebaker, Berry, Richards, 2003).

**Clout.** Clout scores reflect power and leadership in one's writing and is calculated by analyzing the use of pronouns (e.g., I, we, you, she) (Kacewicz, Pennebaker, Davis, Jeon, & Graesser, 2013). Lower use of first person pronouns indicates higher power and confidence. This score does not indicate desire for power, but instead reflects social standing, leadership, and confidence that one displays through language output.

**Emotional tone.** Lastly, emotional tone scores reflect underlying emotions in participants' written responses (Cohn, Mehl, & Pennebaker, 2004). The difference in participant's use of more positive emotion words (e.g., love, nice, sweet) versus negative emotion words (e.g., hurt, ugly, nasty) indicates their overall positivity score. Higher

scores reflect more positive emotional tone in the participant's response. This provides a comparative score as opposed to the positive emotion and negative emotion scores in LIWC, which reflect solely the use of each category of word.

### **Procedure**

Participants completed the study online through PsychData. Participants began by completing an informed consent form. Following the consent procedure, the participants completed a basic demographics form, the Queer Usage Questionnaire. Participants then completed the SEC (Everett, 2013), the SSDO (Pratto, et al, 2012), ATLG (Herek, 1988), the 12-item Religious Fundamentalism Scale (Altemeyer & Hunsberger, 2004), the LGBTQ Microaggressions on Campus Scale (Woodford et al., 2015) the LGBTQ Temperature scale, and the SCQ (Pinel, 1999). Upon completion of the survey, participants were thanked for their participation and were provided with researcher contact information as well as information on local counseling services.

## CHAPTER III

### RESULTS

#### **Differences Between Homosexuals and Heterosexuals in the Use of “Queer”**

Independent-Samples *t*-tests were used to analyze Hypothesis 1: Homosexuals will endorse more positive usage of “Queer” as compared to heterosexuals (see Appendix B, Table 2). For this analysis, participants were split into two groups. Those who identified as straight were in the heterosexual group and all others (LGBTQ) were in the homosexual group. Analysis of frequency of use indicated that heterosexuals ( $M = 2.7$ ,  $SD = .03$ ) used “Queer” less frequently in a positive manner, as indicated by scores on the frequency questions in the Queer Usage Questionnaire, than homosexuals ( $M = 3.3$ ,  $SD = .09$ ),  $t(123.98) = 6.46$ ,  $p < .01$ . Levene’s test indicated unequal variances ( $F = 56.3$ ,  $p < .00$ ), so degrees of freedom were altered from 349 to 123.98. Homosexuals ( $M = 2.21$ ,  $SD = 1.29$ ) used more positive emotion words in their writings than heterosexuals ( $M = 1.97$ ,  $SD = 1.3$ ), but this difference was not significant,  $t(349) = 1.55$ ,  $p = .122$ . Homosexuals ( $M = 1.36$ ,  $SD = 1.49$ ) used less negative emotion words in their writings about “Queer” than heterosexuals ( $M = 1.95$ ,  $SD = 1.49$ ), but this difference was not significant,  $t(258.68) = -4.33$ ,  $p < .01$ . Levene’s test indicated unequal variance ( $F = 12.79$ ,  $p < .01$ ), so degrees of freedom were altered from 349 to 258.68. Though participants did not differ in raw positive emotion and negative emotion word scores, a significant difference was found in overall tone in written responses about “Queer.” Results indicated that

heterosexuals ( $M = 33$ ,  $SD = 25.93$ ) had significantly lower tone scores than homosexuals ( $M = 41.9$ ,  $SD = 24.92$ ),  $t(349) = -2.89$ ,  $p < .005$ , using less positive language in comparison to negative language in their written responses about “Queer.”

In addition to the LIWC analyses related to the use of emotionality, other summary variables revealed significant differences. Results revealed a significant difference between homosexuals and heterosexuals in dynamic language,  $t(349) = -4.11$ ,  $p < .001$ . Homosexuals ( $M = 41.27$ ,  $SD = 20.81$ ) used more dynamic language, characterized by formal and logical thinking patterns, in their written responses than heterosexuals ( $M = 31.07$ ,  $SD = 20.63$ ). A significant difference was also found on clout scores  $t(349) = -3.46$ ,  $p < .001$ , with homosexuals ( $M = 32.86$ ,  $SD = 17.88$ ) written responses reflecting greater certainty, confidence and reference to others, as compared to heterosexuals ( $M = 25.33$ ,  $SD = 18.25$ ). No significant difference emerged between groups on authenticity scores (i.e., more personable, humble and vulnerable in writings about “Queer”),  $t(349) = .21$ ,  $p = .83$ .

Table 1

*MEANS, STANDARD DEVIATIONS, AND CORRELATIONS OF PREDICTOR VARIABLES*

Variable	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. ATLG	69.82	15.50							
2. Environmental Microaggressions	3.90	1.32	.150*						
3. SSDO	7.60	5.43	.05	-.10					
4. Religious Fundamentalism	57	16.62	-.74**	-.07	-.11*				
5. SEC	51.85	17.63	-.28**	-.22**	.17**	.15**			
6. Frequency of use	2.86	.71	.10	.22**	-	.04	-		
					.23**		.27**		
7. SCQ	3.30	1.14	.000	-.30**	.22**	.17**	.35**	-.21**	
8. LGBT Temperature Scale	8.20	3.48	-.02	.24**	-	.08	-	.18**	-.10
					.29**		.18**		

*Notes.* \* indicates  $p < .05$ . \*\* indicates  $p < .01$ .

Table 2

*T-TEST RESULTS COMPARING HOMOSEXUALS AND HOMOSEXUALS AND  
HETEROSEXUALS ON LIWC VARIABLES*

	Heterosexuals		Homosexuals		<i>t</i> -test
	M	SD	M	SD	
Frequency	2.7	.03	3.3	.09	6.46*
Positive Emotion Words	1.97	1.3	2.21	1.29	1.55
Negative Emotion Words	1.95	1.49	1.36	1.49	-4.33*
Analytical Thinking	31.07	20.63	41.27	20.81	-4.11**
Clout	25.33	18.25	32.86	17.88	-3.46**
Authenticity	61.45	23.83	60.85	22.86	.21
Overall Tone	33	25.93	41.9	24.92	2.89**

*Notes.* \* indicates  $p < .05$ . \*\* indicates  $p < .001$ .

### **Explicit Attitudes as a Predictor of Use**

An ANOVA was used to analyze Hypothesis 2: Explicit attitudes will predict usage of “Queer.” See Appendix B, Table 3 for a summary of the results. Scores on the ATLG were bimodal; therefore, the variable was dichotomized into high and low groups by median split. Hypothesis 2a: Explicit attitudes will predict the frequency participants use “Queer” in a positive way was not supported. Explicit attitudes did not significantly predict frequency of use,  $F(1, 214) = .25, p = .62$ , as assessed by the Queer Usage Questionnaire.

Hypothesis 2b: Explicit attitudes will predict overall positive emotion words in the use of “Queer” was not supported. Explicit attitudes did not significantly predict positive emotion words,  $F(1, 199) = .19, p = .66$ .

Hypothesis 2c: Explicit attitudes will predict overall negative emotion words in the use of “Queer” was not supported. Explicit attitudes did not significantly predict negative emotion words,  $F(1, 188) = .01, p = .91$ .

Hypothesis 2d: Explicit attitudes will predict analytical thinking in the use of “Queer” was supported. Explicit attitudes significantly predicted analytic thinking,  $F(1, 214) = 4.66, p < .05$ . Those with more negative attitudes ( $M = 38.37, SD = 21.9$ ) scored higher in analytical thinking than those with more positive attitudes towards LGBTQ ( $M = 32.00, SD = 21.4$ ). Participants with negative attitudes towards homosexuals used more logical and formal language in their written responses.

Hypothesis 2e: Explicit attitudes will predict clout (i.e. confidence, leadership, social status) in the use of “Queer” was not supported. Explicit attitudes did not predict clout,  $F(1, 214) = .70, p = .40$ .

Hypothesis 2f: Explicit attitudes will predict authenticity in the use of “Queer” was supported. Explicit attitudes significantly predicted authenticity,  $F(1, 214) = 4.10, p < .05$ , with those possessing more positive attitudes ( $M = 65.56, SD = 23.30$ ) scoring higher than those with more negative attitudes ( $M = 62.28, SD = 23.28$ ). Those who hold more positive attitudes toward homosexuality were more personable, vulnerable, and honest in their written responses about “Queer.”

H2g: Explicit attitudes will predict overall emotional tone in the use of “Queer” was not supported. Explicit attitudes did not predict overall emotional tone,  $F(1, 214) = .51, p = .48$ .

Table 3

*SUMMARY OF EXPLICIT ATTITUDES AS A PREDICTOR OF USAGE OF “QUEER”*

Variable	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	$\eta^2$	<i>p</i>
Frequency	1	.25	.001	.62
Positive Emotion	1	.19	.001	.66
Negative Emotion	1	.01	.00	.91
Analytical	1	4.66	.02	.03*
Thinking				
Clout	1	.70	.003	.40
Authenticity	1	4.08	.02	.05*
Overall Tone	1	.51	.002	.48

*Notes.* \* indicates  $p < .05$ .

**Microaggressions as a Predictor of Use**

Regression analysis was used to assess Hypothesis 3: Experiences of microaggressions will predict usage of “Queer.” For this analysis, scores on the LGBTQ Environmental Microaggressions subscale were used. Hypothesis 3a: Experiences of microaggressions will predict how frequently the word “Queer” is used in a positive way was supported. Experiences of microaggressions significantly predicted frequency of use

( $\beta = .22, p < .001$ ), accounting for 4.7% of the variance in frequency of use,  $F(1, 350) = 17.12, p < .001, R^2 = .047$ , adjusted  $R^2 = .044$ .

Hypothesis 3b: Experiences of microaggressions will predict overall use of positive emotion words in the use of “Queer” was not supported. Experiences of microaggressions did not significantly predict overall positive emotion words ( $\beta = .04, p = .50$ ).

Hypothesis 3c: Experiences of microaggressions will predict overall use of negative emotion words in the use of “Queer” was not supported. Experiences of microaggressions did not significantly predict overall negative emotion words ( $\beta = -.04, p = .54$ ).

Hypothesis 3d: Experiences of microaggressions will predict analytical thinking (i.e. dynamic language) in the use of “Queer” was supported. Experiences of microaggressions significantly predicted analytic thinking, accounting for 1.2% of the variance,  $F(1, 350) = 4.39, p < .05, R^2 = .012$ , adjusted  $R^2 = .01$ .

Hypothesis 3e: Experiences of microaggressions will predict clout in the use of “Queer” was supported. Experiences of microaggressions significantly predicted clout, or participants’ relative confidence and social status, ( $\beta = .16, p < .005$ ), accounting for 2.4% of the variance,  $F(1, 350) = 8.78, p < .005, R^2 = .024$ , adjusted  $R^2 = .022$ .

Hypothesis 3f: Experiences of microaggressions will predict authenticity in the use of “Queer” was not supported. Experiences of microaggressions did not significantly predict authenticity ( $\beta = -.02, p = .70$ ).

Hypothesis 3g: Experiences of microaggressions will predict tone in the use of “Queer” was not supported. Experiences of microaggressions did not significantly predict tone used in writing about “Queer” ( $\beta = -.02, p = .79$ ).

Table 4

*SUMMARY OF SIMPLE REGRESSION FOR MICROAGGRESSIONS PREDICTING USAGE “QUEER”*

Variable	Microaggressions		
	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$
Frequency	.12	.03	.22**
Positive Emotion	.01	.01	.04
Negative Emotion	-.01	.01	-.04
Analytical Thinking	1.78	.85	.11*
Clout	2.19	.74	.16**
Authenticity	-.37	.96	-.02
Overall Tone	-.29	1.05	-.02

*Notes.* \* indicates  $p < .05$ . \*\* indicates  $p < .01$ .

**Exploration of the Predictive Value of Related Variables**

Due to the exploratory nature of hypothesis 4, a stepwise regression was utilized in this analysis (Fields, 2013). See Appendix B, Table 5 for a summary of these results.

Hypothesis 4a: Explicit attitudes, experiences of microaggressions, SEC, religious fundamentalism, overall warmth, and SDO will predict how frequently the word “Queer” is used. The model was significant and accounted for 9.9% of the variance in frequency of use,  $F(2, 192) = 10.59, p < .001, R^2 = .099$ , adjusted  $R^2 = .090$ . SDO ( $\beta = -.23, p < .001$ ) and SEC ( $\beta = -.18, p < .03$ ) emerged as significant predictors in the model, while all other variables were excluded from the model.

Hypothesis 4b: Explicit attitudes, experiences of microaggressions, conservatism, religious fundamentalism, overall warmth, and social dominance will predict overall use of positive emotion words in the use of “Queer.” The hypothesis was not supported, all variables were excluded from the model.

Hypothesis 4c: Explicit attitudes, experiences of microaggressions, conservatism, religious fundamentalism, overall warmth, and social dominance will predict the overall use of negative emotion words in the use of “Queer” was not supported. All variables were excluded from the model.

Hypothesis 4d: Explicit attitudes, experiences of microaggressions, conservatism, religious fundamentalism, overall warmth, and social dominance will predict analytical thinking in the use of “Queer” was supported. The model was significant and accounted for 4% of the variance in analytical thinking scores,  $F(1, 193) = 8.69, p < .005, R^2 = .04$ , adjusted  $R^2 = .04$ . Religious fundamentalism ( $\beta = -.21, p < .005$ ) emerged as the only significant predictor in the model, while all other predictors were excluded from the model.

Hypothesis 4e: Explicit attitudes, experiences of microaggressions, conservatism, religious fundamentalism, overall warmth, and social dominance will predict overall clout in the use of “Queer” was supported. The model was significant, accounting for 3% of the variance in clout scores,  $F(1, 193) = 5.87, p < .03, R^2 = .03$ , adjusted  $R^2 = .02$ . Experiences of microaggressions ( $\beta = .17, p < .03$ ) was the only significant predictor in the model and all other variables were excluded.

Hypothesis 4f: Explicit attitudes, experiences of microaggressions, conservatism, religious fundamentalism, overall warmth, and social dominance will predict overall authenticity in the use of “Queer” was supported. The model was significant and accounted for 2% of the variance in authenticity scores,  $F(1, 193) = 4, p < .05, R^2 = .02$ , adjusted  $R^2 = .02$ . Explicit attitudes ( $\beta = -.14, p < .05$ ) significantly predicted authenticity scores, while all other variables were excluded from the model.

Lastly, hypothesis 4g: Explicit attitudes, experiences of microaggressions, conservatism, religious fundamentalism, overall warmth, and social dominance will predict overall tone in the use of “Queer” was not supported. All predictor variables were excluded from the model.

Table 5

*SUMMARY OF STEPWISE REGRESSION OF VARIABLES PREDICTING USAGE OF "QUEER"*

	Frequency	Positive Emotion	Negative Emotion	Analytical Thinking	Clout	Authenticity	Overall Tone
	Step 1	Step 2	Step1	Step 1	Step 1	Step 1	Step 1
	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$
SDO	-.26**	.23**					
SEC		.181*					
Religious Fundamentalism					-.21*		
Microaggressions						.172*	
Explicit Attitudes							-.14*
Overall Warmth							

*Notes.* \* indicates  $p < .05$ . \*\* indicates  $p < .001$ .

## **The Effect of Stigma Consciousness**

Regression analysis was used to examine Hypothesis 5: Stigma consciousness will moderate the relationship between experiences of microaggressions and the usage of “Queer.” Both independent variables were centered before completing the analyses.

Hypothesis 5a: Stigma consciousness will moderate the relationship between experiences of microaggressions and how frequently participants use “Queer” in a positive manner was not supported,  $F(3, 339) = 8.16, p < .001$ . A main effect was found for stigma consciousness ( $\beta = -.16, p < .005$ ), and experiences of microaggressions ( $\beta = .15, p < .01$ ), however the interaction term was not significant, ( $\beta = -.06, p = .29$ ).

Hypothesis 5b: Stigma consciousness will moderate the relationship between experiences of microaggressions and overall positive emotion words in the use of “Queer” was not supported,  $F(3, 311) = 1.24, p = .3$ . No significant main effects or interaction effects were found.

Hypothesis 5c: Stigma consciousness will moderate the relationship between experiences of microaggressions and overall negative emotion words in the use of “Queer” was not supported,  $F(3, 296) = .49, p = .69$ . No significant main effects or interaction effects were found.

Hypothesis 5d: Stigma consciousness will moderate the relationship between experiences of microaggressions and analytical thinking, or the degree to which participants use logical or formal language, in the use of “Queer” was not supported,  $F(3, 339) = 1.63, p = .18$ . No main effects or interaction effects emerged.

Hypothesis 5e: Stigma consciousness will moderate the relationship between experiences of microaggressions and clout in the use of “Queer” was not supported,  $F(3, 339) = 2.68, p > .05$ . A significant main effect was found for experiences of microaggressions ( $\beta = .15, p < .01$ ). The main effect for stigma consciousness was not significant ( $\beta = -.01, p < .95$ ), nor was the interaction effect ( $\beta = .03, p < .60$ ).

Hypothesis 5f: Stigma consciousness will moderate the relationship between experiences of microaggressions and authenticity (i.e. honesty, vulnerability) in the use of “Queer” was not supported,  $F(3, 339) = 1.32, p = .29$ . No main effects or interaction effects were identified.

Hypothesis 5g: Stigma consciousness will moderate the relationship between experiences of microaggressions and tone, an overall positivity index, in the use of “Queer” was not supported,  $F(3, 339) = 1.23, p = .3$ . No significant main effects or interaction effects were found.

## CHAPTER IV

### DISCUSSION

The current study aimed to examine the relationships between language use and attitudes related to sexual orientation. Each of the five hypotheses was partially supported. Predictive relationships were established between attitudes related to sexual orientation and writings about “Queer.” Similarly, predictive relationships were found between experiences of microaggressions and writings about “Queer.” SDO, conservatism, and religious fundamentalism were also found to be predictive of writings about “Queer.” Though several variables emerged as predictors, variability exists in the LIWC variables predicted. Predictive relationships emerged between explicit attitudes and experiences of microaggressions and analytical thinking, authenticity, clout and overall tone. No predictive relationships emerged related to overall positive emotion words, overall negative emotion words, or overall emotional tone.

#### **Differences Between Homosexuals and Heterosexuals**

Language has been shown to reflect cultural biases and attitudes (Chater, et al., 2009) and is a powerful tool for promoting social inequality within society. Hypothesis 1 compared the differences between heterosexuals and homosexuals in frequency and word choice surrounding “Queer”. Homosexual participants used “Queer” more frequently than heterosexuals in a positive manner. This is likely due to the embedded nature of “Queer” within the LGBTQ community (Hogan, 2005). As it becomes increasingly more common to use “Queer” as a gender identity marker, sexual orientation, or political

ideology (Barber & Hildago, 2018; Beemyn, 2018; Hogan, 2005), more members within the LGBTQ community have come to embrace the term. If not through self-identification, it is likely they know another LGBTQ individual who uses it as a descriptor. As such, LGBTQ individuals are more likely to encounter “Queer” in ways that are unassociated with its historical roots, potentially contributing to the increase in positive usage observed.

Homosexuals were also shown to use more positive emotion words and less negative emotion words in writing about “Queer” than heterosexuals, but neither of these differences was significant. Though this difference was not significant, a significant difference did emerge between groups in overall emotional tone (i.e., positivity index), with heterosexuals exhibiting lower positivity scores. While this falls in line with what can be assumed about differences between groups in usage, the lack of significance found between groups in overall positive and negative emotion words is intriguing. Based on the overlap between measuring positive and negative emotion words and overall tone, higher positivity scores would correlate with a greater use of positive emotion words. Previous research outlining the different ways “Queer” has morphed to reflect a sense of comradery and empowerment (Chauncey, 1994; Barber & Hildago, 2018; Beemyn, 2018; Hogan, 2005), further supports this notion.

This may be accounted for by the phrasing of the questions in the Queer Usage Questionnaire. Overall emotional tone scores capture the overall level of positivity in an individual’s response, while overall positive and negative emotion words reflect the

quantity of words that fit into those categories. Questions on the Queer Usage Questionnaire were not designed to inquire about positive or negative associations participants' may have had with the term "Queer," which may have encouraged an increase in the use of positive and negative words. Participants were asked questions like, "Define the word 'Queer.'" and "What do you think the consequences of reclaiming the word 'Queer' are?". Such questions may prompt participants to answer in ways that reflect negative ideals without the use of negative emotion words. For example, in response to the question "What do you think the consequences of reclaiming the word 'Queer' are?" participants may reference the loss of civil rights and an increase in discriminatory behaviors rather than a detailed account of a specific event that may occur, eluding to an overall negative emotional tone without the use of several negative emotion words.

Additionally, homosexuals were found to use more dynamic language in their written responses than heterosexuals. This is likely due to the personal connection many LGBTQ individuals may have with the topic (Barber & Hildago, 2018; Beemyn, 2018). This may have influenced LGBTQ participants to reflect more on their personal experiences, which led to the adoption of a more narrative style of language. Members of the LGBTQ community are more likely to have an experience related to "Queer". Those who may not have a personal experience with "Queer" (e.g., discrimination, self-identification) likely know the derogatory nature of the term (Oxford Dictionary, 2018),

perhaps leading them to share personal experiences linked to close friends or family who have had these experiences.

Lastly, homosexuals were also higher in overall clout as compared to heterosexuals, using more social words (i.e., reference to others). Higher scores in clout generally indicate power dynamics in which the user feels they are in a higher status relative to others. Due to the arbitrarily set boundaries within society that places homosexuals as inferior to heterosexuals (Licciardello et al., 2014; Poteat et al., 2007), this may not necessarily be reflective of LGBTQ individual's perceptions of themselves within the social hierarchy. Rather, it may be that individuals who identify as LGBTQ feel a greater connection to the word "Queer" or feel that they have a better understanding of how "Queer" can be used. It is possible that individuals within the LGBTQ community reflected more on the term "Queer" as an umbrella term used to describe the community (Hogan, 2005), while others differed in interpretation. The derogatory history and subsequent movement to reclaim "Queer" could make LGBTQ individuals consider the community and its experiences as a whole in relation to the use of "Queer" (Hogan, 2005). In contrast, the historical usage of "Queer" may have lead heterosexual participants to be more tentative in their writing's about "Queer." Heterosexuals are likely less educated about the use of "Queer" in ways that are removed from its historical context. This combined with the widespread disapproval in expressing hostile attitudes towards homosexuality could have contributed to the lack of confidence and power dynamics expressed in heterosexuals' writings about "Queer."

## **Explicit Attitudes and “Queer”**

The second hypothesis assessed whether explicit attitudes predicted frequency and word use in participants’ written responses. Although past research demonstrates the connection between language and attitudes (Poteat et al., 2013), current results did not fully support this claim. Explicit attitudes were only found to predict analytical thinking and authenticity. Results suggest that those who held more negative attitudes towards homosexuals used more categorical language in their written responses and exhibited heightened abstract thinking and cognitive complexity in formulating their responses. This may be accounted for by a lack of personal experience associated with “Queer” in those with more negative attitudes (Barber & Hildago, 2018).

The historical connotation of “Queer” has created a stigma that is commonly acknowledged by members of the LGBTQ community, but such stigma has a lesser effect on members outside the community. As mentioned above, homosexuals contrasted heterosexuals by adopting a narrative language style, linking their responses to time-based stories and personal experience. Those high in negative attitudes are less likely to have had a negative experience with “Queer” in the sense that it is not a word used to describe experiences held by those outside the community. This lack of experience may have guided them in their written responses, leading them to formulate more complex answers (Barber & Hildago, 2018; Beemyn, 2018; Hogan, 2005).

Additionally, those with more negative attitudes scored lower on overall authenticity, reflecting honest responses. This can likely be explained by social desirability, a response bias in which participants answer in ways they think will be

viewed favorably by others (Bhattacharjee, 2012). Asserting negative attitudes towards the LGBTQ community is becoming frowned upon more and more as changes in legislation outlaw LGBTQ based discrimination (Slenders et al., 2014). This could serve as a deterrent for many of those opposed to LGBTQ equality, encouraging them to be dishonest in their expression of those views.

While language possesses the ability to reflect social attitudes, the lack of a predictive relationship with other constructs assessing usage was contrary to what research has suggested. Poteat et al, (2013) found those who hold prejudicial attitudes towards LGBTQ individuals are more likely to endorse and use LGBTQ directed slurs. As such, significant differences in negative emotion words and clout were expected. The increased endorsement of slurs by those who hold prejudicial attitudes suggests that they would use more negative language in their responses. Moreover, overall clout scores were intended to reflect perceived power dynamics. Those who hold negative attitudes towards homosexuals likely ascribe to the idea that their group is superior to the target group (Sidanius & Pratto, 1999, p. 61), suggesting a power dynamic would be present more so in heterosexuals' writings about "Queer." This, again, may have been due to the phrasing of the questions on the Queer Usage Questionnaire. Questions inquired about situational use, consequences, and benefits of reclaiming "Queer". Heterosexuals are likely less attached to "Queer" because it does not align with their personal experiences. This may have led them to be less unsure of their responses because they are detached from the negative connotation of "Queer", leading to low scores in clout and lower use of negative emotion words.

### **Experiences of Microaggressions and “Queer”**

Hypothesis 3 aimed to assess the predictive power of experiences of microaggressions. Microaggressions were predictive of increased positive usage, clout and analytical thinking, though effect sizes were small, 4.7%, 2.4%, and 1.2% respectively. Such findings could be explained by the impact microaggressions have on the saliency of one’s LGBTQ identity (Major, 1994). Increased perceptions of microaggressions can serve as a reminder of one’s marginalized identity (McCabe, 2009; Nadal et al., 2012). It is possible that those who have increased exposure to microaggressions have a stronger negative connection to the word “Queer,” making them less likely to use “Queer” in ways that reflect its positive connotation. Interesting to note, experiences of microaggressions also predicted increased positive usage by heterosexuals. One explanation for this could be the existence of an interaction with other marginalized identities (e.g., ethnicity, sex). Heterosexuals who also identify as a marginalized group may be more aware of ethnic based discriminatory behavior in their environment, regardless of whether it is directed towards their in-group. Individuals who identify as a minority other than LGBTQ may also be less likely to use derogatory language targeted at other minorities, leading to a similar endorsement of “Queer” as LGBTQ individuals who have a strong negative connection to “Queer.”

The relationship between experiences of microaggressions and clout can be attributed to the power dynamics that exist within the social hierarchy of society, which places homosexuals below heterosexuals. Experiences of microaggressions, whether they are said directly to an individual or are phrases overheard from friends, family, or

strangers, can serve as a reinforcement of the social inequality that permeates our society. Though the user may be unaware of the underlying consequences of the language they use, it can lead to the activation of negative feelings and exclusion and avoidance of LGBTQ individuals (Carnaghi & Maass, 2007; Fasoli et al., 2015). Previous research has shown that this has a negative effect (e.g., anxiety, depression, self-directed prejudice) on members of the targeted group (Carnaghi & Bianchi's, 2017; Swim et al., 2009). If interpreted based on the results of hypothesis one, in which a significant difference was found between homosexuals and heterosexuals in overall clout in writings about "Queer," higher experiences of microaggressions may be linked to an awareness of the discrimination faced by the LGBTQ community, leading them to focus on the group in their writings about "Queer." Such an awareness may have come about due to this increased exposure, as it may create a personal link to the term "Queer" or other LGBTQ microaggressions. This may encourage one to focus on the global impact such language can have, though future research is needed to explore this claim.

Lastly, experiences of microaggressions predicted analytical thinking, which can possibly be accounted for by personal experience. As seen in previous research, experiences of microaggressions can increase one's awareness of their minority identity (Nadal et al., 2012). Dynamic language is reflective of personal experiences, which may have been influenced by previous experiences with LGBTQ directed microaggressions. Those who have increased experiences of microaggressions likely draw on those experiences in their use of "Queer," potentially in ways connected to negative experiences related to their sexual orientation.

## **Exploratory Analysis**

Hypothesis 4 was an exploratory analysis to assess the predictive power of related constructs and their possible combined predictive power. SDO and conservatism emerged as the only significant predictors of frequency. Though SDO and conservatism emerged as significant predictors, the model only accounted for 9.9% of the variance in frequency, suggesting that other factors are likely responsible for the remaining variance. SDO and conservatism are highly correlated with attitudes towards out-groups (Ho et al., 2012; Luguri, et al., 2012), suggesting that they may contribute more to the use of “Queer” than the other related constructs used in this analysis.

Conservatism is linked to a strong opposition to LGBTQ rights (Anderson, 2016) and a desire to preserve historical and traditional institutions (Viereck, et al., 2018), suggesting that those higher in conservatism would be more likely to endorse “Queer” in a manner that reflects its traditional use. Similarly, SDO deals with overall beliefs about the structure of social hierarchy and maintains that some groups should be dominant over others while some are inherently inferior (Sidanius et al., 2001). SDO is also linked to negative attitudes towards homosexuality (Licciardello, et al., 2014). As such, this could lead to a similar endorsement of “Queer” as those high in SEC. Those high in SDO and/or conservatism may be less likely to use “Queer” in a positive manner due to their endorsement of traditional ideals linked to core beliefs about the structure and maintenance of society.

Additionally, religious fundamentalism emerged as the only significant predictor of analytical thinking and authenticity, though the effect was small, accounting for only

4% of the variance in analytical thinking and 3% of the variance in authenticity. These findings can potentially be explained by the values held by various faiths regarding homosexuality. Many faiths hold heteronormative views, upholding ideals like marriage as a sacred union between one man and one woman and homosexuality as sinful or disordered (Yen & Zampelli, 2016). Depending on the saliency of those beliefs, how truthful a participant is in their responses could vary. Those high in religious fundamentalism may be less likely to fall victim to social desirability because those beliefs are integral to their identity. Furthermore, the link between analytical thinking and religious fundamentalism may be due to the way traditional views of homosexuality influence behavior. Those who are high in religious fundamentalism may avoid contact and relations with homosexuals (Jäckle & Wenzelburger, 2015), leading them to detach themselves from LGBTQ directed language, such as “Queer.” As such, those individuals would be less likely to draw on personal experiences, rather a focus might be placed on personal religious ideals.

The predictive relationships between religious fundamentalism, SDO, and conservatism and writings about “Queer” are intriguing because explicit attitudes were excluded from the model. Strong correlational and predictive relationships exist between explicit attitudes and religious fundamentalism (Ogland & Verona, 2014), SDO (Bassett, 2010), and conservatism (Shackelford & Besser, 2007). Results from this study indicated that explicit attitudes also predicted authenticity and analytical thinking. As such, researchers expected to find combined predictive power, accounting for more of the variance in in writings about “Queer.” This may be due to the importance of SDO, SEC,

and religious fundamentalism in shaping our interpretations and use of language. SDO, SEC, and religiosity may be more stable over time as compared to explicit attitudes, allowing them to exert a stronger influence on the ways in which language is interpreted.

### **Stigma Consciousness and “Queer”**

The fifth hypothesis aimed to investigate the effects of stigma consciousness on the relationship between experiences of microaggressions and the use of “Queer.” Stigma consciousness did not significantly influence the predictive power of experiences of microaggressions in the use of “Queer.” This finding is puzzling considering the implications associated with an awareness of one’s marginalized identity. In the current study, those who identified as LGBTQ had significantly higher SCQ scores ( $M = 3.40$ ,  $SD = 1.12$ ) than heterosexuals ( $M = 2.92$ ,  $SD = 1.15$ ), suggesting that stigma consciousness plays a role in the use of “Queer.” A possible explanation may be that, rather than strengthening or weakening the relationship, stigma consciousness could be accounting for some of the variance seen in the use of “Queer.” Those who are aware of their marginalized identity are more likely to be aware of the negative associations between LGBTQ slurs and their impact on members of the LGBTQ community. This is an avenue of future research that should be explored further as differences may exist between various minority identities. If the language is not specifically directed towards their group, stigma consciousness may not have the same effect.

An alternative explanation worth noting concerns the overlap in minority identities that were present. Several versions of the SCQ were used in this study and participants completed the version that aligned with their self-reported salient identity

(e.g., lesbian, gay, disabled, race). It is likely that some of those in the LGBTQ group took an SCQ that did not align with their sexual orientation, as it was not viewed as their most salient identity. This could account for some of the differences seen between homosexuals and heterosexuals in stigma consciousness scores, contributing to the lack of influence stigma consciousness had on the relationship between experiences of LGBTQ microaggressions on the use of “Queer.”

### **Implications**

Findings from this study provide implications for the reclamation process of “Queer.” Research has demonstrated the ways in which N\* is used and the detrimental impact variations have on the ability of the African American community to completely remove N\* from its pejorative past (Asim, 2007; Kennedy, 2002). Although similarities exist between the use of “N\*\*\*a” and “Queer,” results from this study do not completely support the notion that “Queer” is regarded as a neologism in the same manner as N\*\*\*a. The lack of predictive power suggests that discrepancies in the use of “Queer” are not omnipresent. This could be due to a lack in use by out-group members who would be most likely to align with traditional usage. Also, the variability in the use of “Queer” (e.g. political ideology, umbrella term, gender identity) could contribute to the differences seen between “Queer” and “N\*\*\*a”. “N\*\*\*a” is commonly used to refer to African-American’s, whether used by an in or out-group member. This may be a factor that continues to hinder the reclamation of N\*. The use of “Queer” by out-group members may be more acceptable because the various ways in which it is used does not limit it as a reference to homosexuality, potentially making it easier to detach from its derogatory

history. This lack of usage by out-group members may serve as a benefit to the LGBTQ community, possibly streamlining the reclamation process.

Moreover, there could be differences in the acceptability in promoting equality for the LGBTQ community as compared to the African American community. While racism and homophobia are common themes within our culture (Anderson, 2016; Smedley, 2017), racism may be more deeply engrained into society, preventing African Americans from fully separating themselves from the negative stereotypes that are associated with them. Additionally, LGBTQ rights have had a constant presence in the media over the years leading up to legalization of same-sex marriage. While racism is an issue we see time and time again, there is a normalization of racism within society that has yet to be erased (Kennedy, 2002). In 2016, the FBI reported 6,121 hate crimes, 58% of which were racially or ethnically motivated. Only 17% of those were based in hostility towards LGBTQ individuals (FBI, 2016). Though hate crimes occur against both groups (i.e., African-Americans, LGBTQ individuals), the fact that nearly 60% of all hate crimes are racially motivated supports the notion that racism is more pervasive and acceptable within our society.

## CHAPTER V

### LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

As with all psychological research, limitations to the current study exist. To begin, the majority of participants were collected from a public university whose population is 88% female (Texas Woman's University, 2015). Though participants were recruited from various social media platforms, the current study had roughly 10 times as many female participants ( $N = 311$ ) as male participants ( $N = 31$ ). Therefore, the results of this study may only be suited to generalize to women or a university with similar demographics. Gender differences exist between men and women and their level of negativity towards homosexuals, with men traditionally holding more negative attitudes than women (Ratcliff, Lassiter, Markman, & Snyder, 2006). As such, this avenue should be explored to increase the generalizability of these findings while also exploring the potential gender differences in the use of "Queer." Men may be more likely to endorse negative use of "Queer" as compared to women, due to the increase in negative attitudes seen in men.

While this sample of LGBTQ participants is similar in size to those in other studies (Dickins & Sergeant, 2008; Feinstein et al., 2016; Silverschanz et al., 2016; Woodford et al., 2012), the sample contained significantly less participants who identified as homosexual ( $N = 95$ ) than heterosexual ( $N = 256$ ). It is possible that individuals who identify within the LGBTQ population will have lower willingness to participate in the current study, or lower willingness to disclose their true sexuality.

Furthermore, the individual subgroup samples within the homosexual group were not equally represented. Within the 95 participants who identified as LGBTQ, 47 identified as bisexual, 24 identified as lesbian, 13 as queer, 11 as gay, and 0 identified as transgender. Consequently, participants had to be split into two groups (homosexuals and heterosexuals) for analysis, hindering the generalizability of the findings.

Moreover, due to the variety of identities within the gender and sexuality spectrums, the identities that fit outside of these parameters of this study were also under-represented. Despite some of the differences seen in this study between homosexuals and heterosexuals, various sexual orientation identities (e.g., asexual, pansexual, demisexual) could alter the results obtained. Future research should focus on obtaining a representative sample of the LGBTQ community to allow for exploration of within group, as well as a more accurate representation of the differences between homosexuals and heterosexuals. It is possible that variability exists within the LGBTQ community in regard to negative views of certain identities within the community. For instance, Feinstein, Dyar, Bhatia, Latack, and Davila (2016) investigated participant's willingness to engage in romantic relationships with bisexual individuals and found an overall unwillingness to date bisexuals, which may be due to society's rejection of the existence of bisexuality. This may influence some bisexual participants to adopt a different sexual orientation marker, such as "Queer." Future research could examine if certain subpopulations within the LGBTQ community are more likely to identify with and use "Queer," especially those who identify with less common sexual orientation markers (e.g.

pansexual, asexual, demisexual) as they may be more likely to use “Queer” as a means of communicating a unique experience within the LGBTQ community.

The use of an online survey also hinders the validity of these results. Several variables exist outside of researcher control in any study, but more so in online, self-report surveys. Conducting the survey in a lab would allow for control of some extraneous variables and allow participants to clarify instructions and ask questions. Another potential limitation of the current study may exist within the structure and order of survey itself. Participants completed the open-ended questions prior to the ATLG. This may have served as a prime, causing participants to be more aware of their attitudes towards homosexuals, thus resulting in an increase in extremely low and high scores. Furthermore, an enhanced awareness of one’s attitudes may have been complicated by social desirability. Answers may not be truthful representations of a participant’s attitudes because it is not acceptable to express negative attitudes towards homosexuality or LGBTQ rights in our society (Slenders et al., 2014). This could have contributed to the increase in scores reflecting positive attitudes. Future research could work to better hide the true nature of the study as a means of diminishing the effects of social desirability.

As a result, concerns in the accuracy of interpretations between homosexuals and heterosexuals in the use of “Queer” exist due to limitations in the interpretation and analysis of explicit attitudes. Explicit attitude scores were bimodal, leading participants to be split into a high and low group. This hinders our interpretation of the influence of explicit attitudes on the use of “Queer” because it diminishes the differences seen between responses. It is possible that participant’s in the high group differ from

participants in the low group by just one point. Future research could restructure the survey in a manner that reduces the effect open-ended questions may have on subsequent questions. In doing so, researchers can obtain more accurate scores of explicit attitudes. Additionally, researchers may want to consider adopting a new measure of attitudes towards homosexuals. While the ATLG is widely used (Phillips et al., 2015), the language used makes the scale more applicable to lesbians and gay men. Finding a scale that is more inclusive to other LGBTQ identities may yield different and more generalizable results.

While LIWC is a highly reliable and valid program to evaluate written responses (Pennebaker et al., 2015), analyses were not conducted on each individual question because several participants did not reach the word count requirement. This hindered our ability to analyze differences in responses to each question and all written responses had to be grouped together for an overall analysis of use. To counteract this limitation, future research can focus on developing a design (e.g. focus groups) that will promote thoughtful responses to ensure questions can be analyzed individually. Such analysis will likely bring about results that strengthen those seen in this study and provide more information on the ways “Queer” is used. Researchers could also utilize a different written response analysis, such as a thematic analysis. A theme analysis would identify commonalities that could guide in the development of survey questions aimed at understanding how “Queer” is used.

Furthermore, many of the survey questions appear to be targeted towards individuals who identify with the LGBTQ population. For example, participants

responded to the question, “Do you identify with the word “Queer?”. Individuals who have less exposure to the LGBTQ community may be unaware of the ubiquitous use of “Queer.” Therefore, some of the questions may have been irrelevant or confusing to heterosexual participants. More clarification could be given that prompts participants to consider identities not related to gender or sexual orientation (i.e., political ideology).

Lastly, effect sizes found were small. Given the small effect sizes, the results should be interpreted with caution. While this study demonstrates that these relationships exist, future research is needed to verify and replicate these results. Future research could include other measures to increase validity. Measures of social desirability and an implicit biases test can be used to control for effects on self-reported explicit attitudes. This would allow for a more accurate interpretation of the effects of explicit attitudes on the use of “Queer.”

## CHAPTER VI

### CONCLUSION

Results from this study provide vital information on the way neologisms form as a function of cognitive bias and the prevalence of negative attitudes towards the LGBTQ community, indicating that more research is needed to understand the differences between in-groups and out-groups in interpretations of “Queer” and other minority targeted slurs. This will aid in our understanding of how and if a reclamation process is beneficial or potentially harmful in the perpetuation of inequality. Additionally, such research may expose differences in the effects minority directed language has on different groups within the LGBTQ community. This could identify the saliency of specific prejudicial attitudes and the factors that fuel them. By establishing relationships between slurs and related constructs (e.g., religious beliefs, attitudes, SDO) we can better understand how language morphs to reflect and implement cognitive biases and inequality.

In doing so, more information can be provided to practitioners to eliminate the impact such language has on minority populations, such as students who are bullied because of their LGBTQ identity. Those who suffer more extreme consequences (e.g. self-directed prejudice) because of increased exposure to microaggressions, such as “Queer,” can also benefit from the results of similar studies. Understanding the ways in

which language perpetuates social inequality and bias can aid in the development of programs that educate the public about the importance of not using certain derogatory terms directed at certain minority groups (e.g., Queer, Bitch, N\*). While the reclamation of terms such as “Queer” or N\* may not be fully achievable, further research and the dissemination of educational resources can provide a collective understanding of their pejorative roots, potentially decreasing its use in a fashion consistent with its derogatory history.

## REFERENCES

- Allan, K., & Burrige, K. (2006). *Forbidden words: Taboo and the censoring of language*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Altemeyer, B., & Hunsberger, B. (2004). A revised religious fundamentalism scale: The short and sweet of it. *The International Journal for The Psychology of Religion*, *14*, 47-54. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1207/s15327582ijpr1401\\_4](http://dx.doi.org/10.1207/s15327582ijpr1401_4)
- Anderson, E. (2016). Homophobia. *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/homophobia>
- Angyal, C. (2011). A few words about reclaiming “slut”. *Feministing*, Retrieved from <http://feministing.com/2011/05/16/a-few-words-about-reclaiming-%E2%80%9Cslut%E2%80%9D/>
- Asim, J. (2007). *The N word: Who can say it, who shouldn't, and why*. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin.
- Barber, K. & Hildago, D. A. (2018). Queer. In *Britannica Academic*. Retrieved from <http://academic.eb.com.ezp.twu.edu/levels/collegiate/article/queer/607850>
- Barth, J., & Parry, J. (2009). Political culture, public opinion, and policy (non)diffusion: The case of gay- and lesbian-related issues in arkansas. *Social Science Quarterly*, *90*, 309-325. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-6237.2009.00619.x>

- Bassett, J. F. (2010). The effects of mortality salience and social dominance orientation on attitudes toward illegal immigrants. *Social Psychology, 4*, 52-55.  
<https://doi.org/10.1027/1864-9335/a000008>
- Beemyn, G. (2018). Genderqueer. In *Britannica Academic*. Retrieved from  
<http://academic.eb.com.ezp.twu.edu/levels/collegiate/article/genderqueer/607836>
- Bhattacharjee, A. (2012). *Social science research: Principles, methods, and practices*. Tampa, FA: Creative Commons Attribution.
- Bitch. (2018). In *Merriam-Webster*. Retrieved from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/bitch>
- Brown, J. R. (2011). No homo. *Journal of Homosexuality, 58*, 299-314.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2011.546721>
- Brown, R. P. & Lee, M. N. (2005). Stigma consciousness and the race gap in college academic achievement. *Self and Identity, 4*, 149-157.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/13576500444000227>
- Burn, S. M., Kadlec, K., & Rexer, R. (2005). Effects of subtle heterosexism on gays, lesbians, and bisexuals. *Journal of Homosexuality, 49*, 23–38.  
[https://doi.org/10.1300/J082v49n02\\_02](https://doi.org/10.1300/J082v49n02_02)
- Carnaghi, A. & Bianchi, M. (2017). Group Labeling. *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Communication*, 1-27. DOI: 10.1093/acrefore/9780190228613.013.435
- Carnaghi, A., & Maass, A. (2007). In-group and out-group perspectives in the use of derogatory group label: Gay versus fag. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology, 26*, 142–156. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0261927X07300077>

- Chaux, E., & León, M. (2016). Homophobic attitudes and associated factors among adolescents: A comparison of six Latin American countries. *Journal of Homosexuality*, *63*, 1253-1276. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2016.1151697>
- Chater, N., Reali, F., & Christiansen, M. H. (2009). Restrictions on biological adaptation in language evolution. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America*, *106*, 1015–1020. <http://doi.org.ezp.twu.edu/10.1073/pnas.0807191106>
- Chauncey, G. (1994). *Gay New York: Gender, urban culture, and the making of the gay male world, 1890- 1940*. New York, NY: Basic Books.
- Cohn, M. A., Mehl, M. R., & Pennebaker, J. W. (2004). Linguistic markers of psychological change surrounding september 11, 2001. *Psychological Science*, *15*, 687-693. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0956-7976.2004.00741.x>
- Crawford, J. T. (2012). The ideologically objectionable premise model: Predicting biased political judgments on the left and right. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *48*, 138–151. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2011.10.004>
- Croom, A. M. (2013). How to do things with slurs: Studies in the way of derogatory words. *Language and Communication*, *33*, 177–204. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.langcom.2013.03.008>
- Cunt. (2018). In *Merriam-Webster*. Retrieved from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/cunt>

- Dickins, T. E. & Sergeant, M. J. T. (2008). Social dominance and sexual orientation. *Journal of Evolutionary Psychology*, 6, 57-71.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1556/JEP.2008.1003>
- Eltagouri, M. (2018). She was expelled from college after her racist rants went viral. Her mother thinks she deserves it. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from  
[https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/grade-point/wp/2018/01/19/she-was-expelled-from-college-after-her-racist-rants-went-viral-her-mother-thinks-she-deserves-it/?utm\\_term=.d2a2dee0e483](https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/grade-point/wp/2018/01/19/she-was-expelled-from-college-after-her-racist-rants-went-viral-her-mother-thinks-she-deserves-it/?utm_term=.d2a2dee0e483)
- Esses, V. M., Haddock, G., & Zanna, M. P. (1993). Values, stereotypes, and emotions as determinants of intergroup attitudes. In D. M. Mackie (Ed.) & D. L. Hamilton(Ed.), *Affect, cognition and stereotyping: Interactive processes in group perception* (137,166). San Diego, CA: Academic Press, Inc.  
<https://doi.org/10.1016/B978-0-08-088579-7.50011-9>
- Everett, J. A. C. (2013). The 12 item social and economic conservatism scale (SECS). *Plos One*, 8, 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0082131>
- Fasoli, F., Maass, A., & Carnaghi, A. (2015). Labelling and discrimination: Do homophobic epithets undermine fair distribution of resources? *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 54, 383– 393. <https://doi.org/10.1111/bjso.12090>
- Federal Bureau of Investigation. (2016). Hate crime statistics, 2016. Washington, DC: U. S. Department of Justice. Retrieved from <https://ucr.fbi.gov/hate-crime/2016>.

- Feinstein, B. A., Dyar, C., Bhatia, V., Latack, J. A., & Davila, J. (2016). Conservative beliefs, attitudes toward bisexuality, and willingness to engage in romantic and sexual activities with a bisexual partner. *Archives of sexual behavior*, 6, 1535-1550. doi: [10.1007/s10508-015-0642-x](https://doi.org/10.1007/s10508-015-0642-x)
- Fields, A. (2013). *Discovering statistics using ibm spss statistics*. London, England, UK: Sage Publications Ltd.
- Gajewski, K. A. (2011). Worth noting. *The Humanist*, 71, 48.
- Gates, T. G. (2014). Assessing the relationship between outness at work and stigma consciousness among LGB workers in the Midwest and the resulting implications for counselors. *Counseling Psychology Quarterly*, 27, 264-276. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09515070.2014.886998>
- Glick, P., Lameiras, M., Fiske, S. T., Eckes, T., Masser, B., Volpato, C....Wells, R. (2004). Bad but bold: Ambivalent attitudes toward men predict gender inequality in 16 nations. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 86, 713–728. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.86.5.713>
- Green, L. (2002a). *African-American 75akista: A linguistic introduction*. Cambridge, England, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Green, A. I. (2002b). Gay but not queer: Toward a post-queer study of sexuality. *Theory and Society*, 31, 521-545. Retrieved from <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3108514>
- Groom, C. J., & Pennebaker, J. W. (2005). The language of love: Sex, sexual orientation, and language use in online personal advertisements. *Sex Roles*, 52, 447-461. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-005-3711-0>

- Guimond, S., Dambrun, M., Michinov, N., & Duarte, S. (2003). Does social dominance generate prejudice? Integrating individual and contextual determinants of intergroup cognitions. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *84*, 697-721. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.84.4.697>
- Henderson, A. (2003). What's in a slur?. *American Speech*, *78*, 52–74. <https://doi.org/10.1215/00031283-78-1-52>
- Herek, G. M. (1988). Heterosexuals' attitudes toward lesbians and gay men: Correlates and gender differences. *The Journal of Sex Research*, *25*, 451-477. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00224498809551476>
- Ho, A. K., Sidanius, J., Pratto, F., Levin, S., Thomsen, L., Kteily, N., & Sheehy-Skeffington, J. (2012). Social dominance orientation: Revisiting the structure and function of a variable predicting social and political attitudes. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *38*, 583-606. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167211432765>
- Ho, A. K., Sidanius, J., Cuddy, A., & Banaji, M. (2013). Status boundary enforcement and the categorization of Black-White biracials. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, *49*, 940–943. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2013.04.010>
- Hogan, M. (2005). Radical queers: A pop culture assessment of montreal's anti-capitalist ass pirates, the panteres, and lesbians on ecstasy. *Canadian Women Studies*, 154-159.

- Hunsberger, B. & Jackson, L. M. (2005). Religion, meaning, and prejudice. *Journal of Social Issues*, 61, 807-26. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1540-4560.2005.00433.x>
- Jäckle, S. & Wenzelburger, G. (2015). Religion, religiosity, and the attitudes toward homosexuality – A multilevel analysis of 70 countries. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 65, 207-241. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2014.969071>
- John, E. (1995). The bitch is back. On *Caribou* [CD]. Nashville, TN: Mercury Records.
- Jonathan, K. (2001). Attitudes towards homosexuality in 29 nations. *Australian Social Monitor*, 5, 15-22.
- Kacewicz, E., Pennebaker, J. W., Davis, M., Jeon, M., & Graesser, A.C. (2014). Pronoun use reflects standings in social hierarchies. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 3, 125-143. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0261927X13502654>
- Kemmer, S. (2008). *The Rice University Neologism Database*. Retrieved from <http://neologisms.rice.edu/index.php>
- Kennedy, R. (2002). *Nigger: The strange career of a troublesome word*. New York, NY: Vintage Books
- Khan, Q., Sultana, N., Bughio, Q., & Naz, A. (2014). Role of language in gender identity formation in Pakistani school textbooks. *Indian Journal of Gender Studies*, 21, 55-84. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0971521513511200>
- Kim, L. (1996). Queen bitch. On *Hard core* [CD]. New York, NY: Undeas, Big Beat, & Atlantic.

- Kleinman, S., Ezzell, M., & Frost, C. (2009). Reclaiming critical analysis: The social harms of “bitch”. *Sociological Analysis*, 3, 46–68. Retrieved from [https://fusiondotnet.files.wordpress.com/2013/12/ezzell.reclaiming\\_critical\\_analysis.pdf](https://fusiondotnet.files.wordpress.com/2013/12/ezzell.reclaiming_critical_analysis.pdf)
- Kteily, N., Bruneau, E., Waytz, A., & Cotterill, S. (2015). The ascent of man: Theoretical and empirical evidence for blatant dehumanization. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 109, 901-931. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/pspp0000048>
- Lane, N. (2011). Black women queering the mic: Missy Elliot disturbing the boundaries of racialized sexuality and gender. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 58, 775-792. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2011.581921>
- Licciardello, O., Castiglione, C., Rampullo, A., & Scolla, V. (201). Social dominance orientation, cross-group friendship and prejudice towards homosexuals. *Procedia-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 116, 4988-4992. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2014.01.1060>
- Lim, V. K. G. (2008). Gender Differences and Attitudes Towards Homosexuality. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 43, 85-97. [https://doi.org/10.1300/J082v43n01\\_05](https://doi.org/10.1300/J082v43n01_05)
- Luguri, J. B., Napier, J. L., & Dovidio, J. F. (2012). Reconstruing intolerance: Abstract thinking reduces conservatives’ prejudice against non-normative groups. *Psychological Science*, 23, 756-763. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0956797611433877>
- Lui, H. (2014). A probe into translation strategies of tech English neologism in petroleum engineering field. *Studies in Literature and Language*, 9, 33-37.

- Major, B. (1994). From social inequality to personal entitlement: The role of social comparisons, legitimacy appraisals, and group membership. In M. P. Zanna (Ed.), *Advances in experimental psychology*, 26, 293-335. San Diego, CA: Academic Press.
- McCabe, J. (2009). Racial and gender microaggressions on a predominantly-white campus: Experiences of black, Latina/o, and white undergraduates. *Race, Gender, & Class*, 16, 133-151. Retrieved from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283833019\\_Racial\\_And\\_Gender\\_Microaggressions\\_On\\_A\\_Predominantly-White\\_Campus\\_Experiences\\_Of\\_Black\\_LatinaO\\_And\\_White\\_Undergraduates](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/283833019_Racial_And_Gender_Microaggressions_On_A_Predominantly-White_Campus_Experiences_Of_Black_LatinaO_And_White_Undergraduates)
- McCarthy, J. (May, 2014). *Same-sex marriage support reaches new high at 55%*. Retrieved from <https://news.gallup.com/poll/169640/sex-marriage-support-reaches-new-high.aspx>
- McLaughlin, B., & Rodriguez, N. S. (2017). Identifying with a stereotype: The divergent effects of exposure to homosexual television characters. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 6), 1196-1213. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2016.1242335>
- Miller, S. A. (2016). “How you bully a girl”: Sexual drama and the negotiation of gendered sexuality in high school. *Gender & Society*, 30, 721-744.
- Moreno, A., Herazo, E., Oviedo, H., & Campo-Arias, A. (2015). Measuring homonegativity: Psychometric analysis of herek’s attitudes toward lesbians and gay men scale (ATLG) in columbia, south america. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 62, 924-935. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2014.1003014>

- Nadal, K. L., Griffin, K. E., Hamit, S., Leon, J., & Tobio, M. (2012). Subtle and overt forms of islamophobia: Microaggressions toward Muslim Americans. *Journal of Muslim Mental Health, 6*, 15-37.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/jmmh.10381607.0006.203>
- Newman, M. L., Pennebaker, J. W., Berry, D. S., & Richards, J. M. (2003). Lying words: Predicting deception from linguistic styles. *Society for Personality and Social Psychology, 29*, 665-675. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167203029005010>
- Ogland, C. P. & Verona, A. P. (2014) Religion and the rainbow struggle: Does religion factor into attitudes towards homosexuality and same-sex civil unions in brazil?. *Journal of Homosexuality, 61*, 1334-1349.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2014.926767>
- Ong, A. D., Lee, R. A., Cerrada, C., & Williams, D. R. (2017). Stigma consciousness, racial microaggressions, and sleep disturbance among asian americans. *Asian Journal of Psychology, 8*, 72-81. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/aap0000062>
- Pacilli, M. G., Taurino, A., Jost, J. T., & van der Toorn, J. (2011). System justification, right-wing conservatism, and internalized homophobia: Gay and lesbian attitudes toward same-sex parenting in Italy. *Sex Roles: A Journal of Research, 65*, 580-595. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11199-011-9969-5>
- Pennebaker, J. W., Boyd, R. L., Jordan, K., & Blackburn, K. (2015). *The development and psychometric properties of LIWC2015*. Austin, TX: University of Texas at Austin. doi: 10.1578/T29G6Z. Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/2152/31333>

- Pennebaker, J. W., Chung, C. K., Frazee, J. Lavergne, G. M., & Beaver, D. I. (2014). When small words foretell academic success: The case of college admissions essays. *Plos One*, 1-10. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0115844>
- Perkins, J. E., & Bourgeois, M. J. (2006). Perceptions of police use of deadly force. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 36, 161–177. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0021-9029.2006.00056.x>
- Peterson, C. M., & Ray, C. M. (2013). Andragogy and metagogy: The evolution of neologisms. *Journal of Adult Education*, 42, 80-85. Retrieved from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1047343>
- Phillips, C. E., Kivisalu, T. M., King, C., O’Toole, S. K. (2015). A reliability generalization of the attitudes toward lesbians and gay men (ATLG) scale. *Race, Gender & Class*, 22, 189-214. Retrieved from <http://ezp.twu.edu/docview/1757045818?accountid=7102>
- Pinel, E. (1999). Stigma Consciousness: The psychological legacy of social stereotypes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 76, 114-128. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.76.1.114>
- Pinel, E. C. (2004). You’re just saying that because I’m a woman: Stigma consciousness and attributions to discrimination. *Self and Identity*, 3, 39-51. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13576500342000031>
- Pinel, E., & Paulin, N. (2005). Stigma consciousness at work. *Basic and Applied Social Psychology*, 27, 345-352. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1207/s15324834basp2704\\_7](http://dx.doi.org/10.1207/s15324834basp2704_7)

- Poteat, V. P., DiGiovanni, C. D., & Scheer, J. R. (2013). Predicting homophobic behavior among heterosexual youth: Domain general and sexual orientation-specific factors at the individual and contextual level. *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *42*, 351–362. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10964-012-9813-4>
- Poteat V., Espelage D.L., & Green Jr. H.D. (2007). The socialization of dominance: Peer group contextual effects on homophobic and dominance attitudes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *92*, 1040-1050.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.92.6.1040>
- Powers, A. (2012, September 6). Who you calling a b--?. *National Public Radio*.  
Retrieved from:  
<https://www.npr.org/sections/therecord/2012/09/06/160672019/who-you-calling-a-b>
- Pratto, F., Sidanius, J., Stallworth, L. M., & Malle, B. F. (1994). Social dominance orientation: A personality variable predicting social and political attitudes. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *67*, 741-763.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.67.4.741>
- Pratto, F., Cidam, A., Stewart, A. L., Zeineddine, F. B., Aranda, M., Aiello, ..., & Henkel, K. (2012). Social dominance in context and in individuals: Contextual moderation of robust effects of social dominance orientation in 15 languages and 20 countries. *Social Psychological and Personality Science*, *4*, 587-599.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1948550612473663>

- Queer (2018). In *Oxford Dictionary*. Retrieved from <https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/queer>
- Queer theory (2018). In *Merriam-Webster*. Retrieved from [https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/queer theory](https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/queer%20theory)
- Rahman, J., (2012). The N word: Its history and use in the African-American community. *Journal of English Linguistics*, 40, 137–171. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0075424211414807>
- Ratcliff, J. J., Lassiter, G. D., Markman, K. D., & Snyder, C. J. (2006). Gender differences in attitudes toward gay men and lesbians: The role of motivation to respond without prejudice. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 32, 1325–1338. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167206290213>
- Rodriguez, M. C. & Maeda, Y. (2006). Meta-analysis of coefficient alpha. *Psychological Methods*, 11, 306-322. <https://doi.org/10.1037/1082-989X.11.3.306>
- Schmalz, D. L., & Kerstetter, D. L. (2006). Girlie girls and manly men: Children’s stigma consciousness of gender in sports and physical activities. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 38, 536-557. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.2006.11950091>
- Shackelford, T. K. & Besser, A. (2007). Predicting attitudes toward homosexuality: Insights from personality psychology. *Individual Differences Research*, 5, 106-114.

- Sheinin, D. & Thompson, K. (2014). Redefining the word: Examining a racial slur entrenched in american vernacular that is more prevalent than ever. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from [http://www.washingtonpost.com/sf/national/2014/11/09/the-n-word-an-entrenched-racial-slur-now-more-prevalent-than-ever/?utm\\_term=.b76074e51dc0](http://www.washingtonpost.com/sf/national/2014/11/09/the-n-word-an-entrenched-racial-slur-now-more-prevalent-than-ever/?utm_term=.b76074e51dc0)
- Sherkat, D. E., Powell-Williams, M., Maddox, G., & de Vries, K. M. (2011). Religion, politics, and support for same-sex marriage in the United States, 1988-2008. *Social Science Research, 40*, 167-180. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssresearch.2010.08.009>
- Sidanius, J., & Pratto, F. (1999). *Social dominance: An intergroup theory of social hierarchy and oppression*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Sidanius, J., Levin, S., Federico, D. M., & Pratto, F. (2001). Legitimizing ideologies: The social dominance approach. *The psychology of legitimacy: Emerging perspectives on ideology justice and intergroup relations* (pp. 307-331). New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Slenders, S., Sieban, I. & Verbakel, E. (2014). Tolerance towards homosexuality in Europe: Population composition, economic affluence, religiosity, same-sex union legislation and HIV rates as explanations for country differences. *International Sociology, 29*, 348-367. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0268580914535825>
- Slur (2018). In *Merriam-Webster*. Retrieved from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/slur>

- Smedley, A. (2017). Racism. *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/racism>
- Smith, W. A., Allen, W. R., & Danley, L. L. (2007) “Assume the position...you fit the description”: Psychological experiences and racial battle fatigue among African-American male college students. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 51, 551-578. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0002764207307742>
- Steffens, M. C. & Wagner, C. (2004). Attitudes towards lesbians, gay men, bisexual women and bisexual men in Germany. *Journal of Sex Research*, 4, 137-149. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00224490409552222>
- Swim, J. K., Johnston, K., & Pearson, N. B. (2009). Daily experiences with heterosexism: Relations between heterosexist hassles and psychological well-being. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 28, 597–629. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1521/jscp.2009.28.5.597>
- Tausczik, Y. R. & Pennebaker, J. W. (2010). The psychological meaning of words: LIWC and computerized text analysis methods. *Journal of Language and Social Psychology*, 29, 24-54. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0261927X09351676>
- Texas Woman’s University. (2015). Fact Book. *Office of Institutional Research & Data Management*.
- Thomsen, L., Green, E. G., & Sidanius, J. (2008). We will hunt them down: How social dominance orientation and right-wing authoritarianism fuel ethnic persecution of immigrants in fundamentally different ways. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 44, 1455–1464. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2008.06.011>

- Velykoroda, V. B., & Lyabyga, N. O. (2016). Abbreviation as a way of coining neologisms in mass media. *Journal of Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian Nation University*, 3, 16-19. doi: [10.15330/jpnu.3.4.16-19](https://doi.org/10.15330/jpnu.3.4.16-19)
- Viereck, P., Ball, T., Minogue, R. D. (2018). Conservative. *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/conservatism>
- West, K. & Jay-Z. (2011). That's my bitch. On *Watch the throne* [CD]. New York, NY: Def Jam, Roc Nation, & Roc-A-Fella.
- Whitley, B. E. & Ægisdóttir, S. (2000). The gender belief system, authoritarianism, social dominance orientation, and heterosexuals attitudes toward lesbians and gay men. *Sex Roles*, 42, 947-967. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1023/A:1007026016001>
- Whitley, B. E. (1999). Right-wing authoritarianism, social dominance orientation, and prejudice. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 77, 126-134. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/0022-3514.77.1.126>
- Whitley, B. J., & Lee, S. E. (2000). The relationship of authoritarianism and related constructs to attitudes toward homosexuality. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology*, 30, 144–170. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.1559-1816.2000.tb02309.x>
- Wood, J. T. (2007). *Gendered lives: Communication, gender and culture*. Stamford, CT: Cengage Learning.
- Wood, P. B., & Bartkowski, J. P. (2004). Attribution style and public policy attitudes toward gay rights. *Social Science Quarterly*, 85, 58–74. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.0038-4941.2004.08501005.x>

- Woodford, M. R., Howell, M. L., Silverschanz, P., & Yu, L. (2012). "That's so gay!" Examining the covariates of hearing this expression among gay, lesbian, and bisexual college students. *Journal of American College Health, 60*, 429-434.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/07448481.2012.673519>
- Woodford, M. R., Howell, M. L., Kulick, A., & Silverschanz, P. (2013). "That's so gay: heterosexual male undergraduates and the perpetuation of sexual orientation microaggressions on campus. *Journal of Interpersonal Violence, 28*, 416-435.  
<https://doi.org/10.1177/0886260512454719>
- Woodford, M. R., Chonody, J. M., Kulick, A., Brennan, D. J., & Renn, K. (2015). The LGBTQ microaggressions on campus scale: A scale development and validation study. *Journal of Homosexuality, 62*, 1660-1687.  
<https://doi.org/10.1080/00918369.2015.1078205>
- Yen, S. T. & Zampelli, E. M. (2016). Religiousness and support for same-sex marriage: An endogenous treatment approach. *Social Science Quarterly, 98*, 196-211.  
<https://doi.org/10.1111/ssqu.12306>
- Zielinski, G. (2007). "Queer theory." In *The Encyclopedia of Activism and Social Justice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publication, Inc.

## APPENDIX A

### Open-Ended Questions

- Attitudes Towards Lesbians and Gay Men (Herek, 1988)
- The LGBTQ Microaggressions on Campus Scale (Woodford et al., 2015)
- The 12-item Religious Fundamentalism Scale (Altemeyer & Hunsberger, 2004)
- The Social and Economic Conservatism Scale (Everett, 2013)
- Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire – Lesbian
- Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire – Gay Men
- Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire – Bisexual
- Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire – Transgender
- Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire – Queer
- Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire (Pinel, 1999)
- Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire – Race/Ethnicity
- Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire - Disability
- Social Dominance Orientation (Whitley & Ægisdottir, 2000)
- Temperature Scale

## Open-Ended Questions

Please answer the following questions to the best of your ability. Please provide as much detail as you can.

1. Define the word queer.
2. Describe a situation in which you have used the word “Queer”?
3. Do you identify with the word “Queer”? In what way?
4. Do you use the word “Queer” around your family? Why or why not?
5. Do you use the word “Queer” around your close friends? Why or why not?
6. What do you think the benefits of reclaiming the word “Queer” are?
7. What do you think the consequences of reclaiming the word “Queer” are?
8. How frequently do you use the word queer to say something negative about someone or something?

*0= never 1= very rarely 2= rarely 3= occasionally 4= frequently 5= very frequently*

9. How frequently do you use the word queer to say something positive about someone or something?

*0= never 1= very rarely 2= rarely 3= occasionally 4= frequently 5= very frequently*

### Attitudes Towards Lesbians and Gays (Herek, 1988)

Please indicate your level of agreement with the items below using the following scale:

1=Strongly Agree    2=Agree    3=Neutral    4=Disagree    5=Strongly Disagree

1. Lesbians just can't fit into our society.
2. A woman's homosexuality should *not* be a cause for job discrimination in any situation.
3. Female homosexuality is detrimental to society because it breaks down the natural divisions between the sexes.
4. State laws regulating private, consenting lesbian behavior should be loosened.
5. Female homosexuality is a sin.
6. The growing number of lesbians indicates a decline in American morals.
7. Female homosexuality in itself is no problem, but what society makes of it can be a problem.
8. Female homosexuality is a threat to many of our basic social institutions.
9. Female homosexuality is an inferior form of sexuality.
10. Lesbians are sick.
11. Male homosexual couples should be allowed to adopt children the same as heterosexual couples.
12. I think male homosexuals are disgusting.
13. Male homosexuals should *not* be allowed to teach school.
14. Male homosexuality is a perversion.
15. Just as in other species, male homosexuality is a natural expression of sexuality in human men.
16. If a man has homosexual feelings, he should do everything he can to overcome them.
17. I would *not* be too upset if I learned that my son were a homosexual.
18. Homosexual behavior between two men is just plain wrong.
19. The idea of male homosexual marriages seems ridiculous to me.
20. Male homosexuality is merely a different kind of lifestyle that should *not* be condemned.

### **The LGBTQ Microaggressions on Campus Scale (Woodford, et al., 2015)**

Please indicate how frequently you have experienced each instance within the past year.

*0= never 1= very rarely 2= rarely 3= occasionally 4= frequently 5= very frequently*

1. Someone said or implied that all LGBTQ people have the same experiences.
2. I was told I should act “less lesbian, gay, bisexual, or queer.”
3. People said or implied that I was being overly sensitive for thinking I was treated poorly or unfairly because I am LGBTQ.
4. Someone told me they were praying for me because they knew or assumed I am lesbian, gay, bisexual, or queer.
5. People seemed willing to tolerate my LGBTQ identity but were not willing to talk about it.
6. Others thought I would not have kids because they knew or assumed I am lesbian, gay, bisexual, or queer.
7. Someone said they couldn’t be homophobic, biphobic, or queerphobic because they have (a) lesbian, gay, bisexual, or queer friend(s).
8. I was told that being lesbian, gay, bisexual, or queer is “just a phase.”
9. Straight people assumed that I would come on to them because they thought or knew I am lesbian, gay, bisexual, or queer.
10. I have heard people say that they were tired of hearing about the “homosexual agenda.”
11. Someone said or implied that LGBTQ people engage in unsafe sex because of their sexual orientation.
12. Other people said, “that’s just the way it is” when I voiced frustration about homophobia, biphobia, or queerphobia.
13. Someone said or implied that my sexual orientation is a result of something that went “wrong” in my past (e.g., “your mother was too overbearing”).
14. People assumed that I have a lot of sex because of my sexual orientation.
15. Others have said that LGBTQ people should not be around children.
16. I saw negative messages about LGBTQ people on social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter) posted by contacts or organizations, or in advertisements.
17. I heard the phrase, “no homo.”
18. In my school/workplace it was OK to make jokes about LGBTQ people.
19. I heard someone say “that’s so gay” to describe something as negative, stupid, or uncool.
20. I received information about sexual health that was limited to heterosexual sex.

## 12- item Religious Fundamentalism Scale (Altemeyer & Hunsberger, 2004).

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements using the following scale.

*-4 = very strongly disagree -3 =strongly disagree -2= moderately disagree -1= slightly disagree +1= slightly disagree +2= moderately agree +3 strongly agree +4= very strongly agree*

1. God has given humanity a complete, unfailing guide to happiness and salvation, which must be totally followed.
2. No single book of religious teachings contains all the intrinsic, fundamental truths about life.
3. The basic cause of evil in this world is Satan, who is still constantly and ferociously fighting against God.
4. It is more important to be a good person than to believe in God and the right religion.
5. There is a particular set of religious teachings in this world that are so true, you can't go any "deeper" because they are the basic, bedrock message that god has given humanity.
6. When you get right down to it, there are basically only two kinds of people in the world: the Righteous, who will be rewarded by god; and the rest, who will not.
7. Scriptures may contain general truths, but they should NOT be considered completely, literally true from beginning to end.
8. To lead the best, most meaningful life, one must belong to the one, fundamentally true religion.
9. "Satan" is just the name people give to their own bad impulses. There really is *no such thing* as a diabolical "Prince of Darkness" who tempts us.
10. Whenever science and sacred scripture conflict, *science* is probably right.
11. The fundamentals of God's religion should never be tampered with, or compromised with other's beliefs.
12. *All* of the religions in the world have flaws and wrong teachings. There is *no* perfectly true, right religion.

### **The Social and Economic Conservatism Scale (Everett, 2013)**

Please indicate the extent to which you feel positive or negative towards each issue. Scores of 0 indicate greater negativity, and scores of 100 indicate greater positivity. Scores of 50 indicate that you feel neutral about the issue.”

1. Abortion
2. Limited government
3. Military and national security
4. Religion
5. Welfare benefits
6. Gun ownership
7. Traditional marriage
8. Traditional values
9. Fiscal responsibility
10. Business
11. The family unit
12. Patriotism

## Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire - Lesbian

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

*1 = strongly agree 2 = moderately agree 3 = slightly agree 4 = neutral 5 = slightly disagree*

*6 = moderately disagree 7 = strongly disagree*

1. Stereotypes about lesbians have not affected me personally.
2. I never worry that my behaviors will be viewed as stereotypically lesbian.
3. When interacting with others, I feel like they interpret all my behaviors in terms of the fact that I am a lesbian.
4. Most people do not judge lesbians on the basis of their sexuality.
5. My being a lesbian does not influence how heterosexuals act with me.
6. I almost never think about the fact that I am lesbian when I interact with others.
7. My being a lesbian does not influence how people act with me.
8. Most people have a lot more homophobic thoughts than they actually express.
9. I often think that others are unfairly accused of being homophobic
10. Most people have a problem viewing lesbians as equals.

## Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire – Gay Men

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

*1 = strongly agree 2 = moderately agree 3 = slightly agree 4 = neutral 5 = slightly disagree*

*6 = moderately disagree 7 = strongly disagree*

1. Stereotypes about gay men have not affected me personally.
2. I never worry that my behaviors will be viewed as stereotypically gay.
3. When interacting with others, I feel like they interpret all my behaviors in terms of the fact that I am gay.
4. Most people do not judge gay men on the basis of their sexuality.
5. My being gay does not influence how heterosexuals act with me.
6. I almost never think about the fact that I am gay when I interact with others.
7. My being gay does not influence how people act with me.
8. Most people have a lot more homophobic thoughts than they actually express.
9. I often think that others are unfairly accused of being homophobic.
10. Most people have a problem viewing gay men as equals.

## Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire – Bisexual

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

*1 = strongly agree 2 = moderately agree 3 = slightly agree 4 = neutral 5 = slightly disagree*

*6 = moderately disagree 7 = strongly disagree*

1. Stereotypes about bisexuals have not affected me personally.
2. I never worry that my behaviors will be viewed as stereotypically bisexual.
3. When interacting with others, I feel like they interpret all my behaviors in terms of the fact that I am bisexual.
4. Most people do not judge bisexuals on the basis of their sexuality.
5. My being bisexual does not influence how heterosexuals act with me.
6. I almost never think about the fact that I am bisexual when I interact with others.
7. My being bisexual does not influence how people act with me.
8. Most people have a lot more bi-phobic thoughts than they actually express.
9. I often think that others are unfairly accused of being bi-phobic.
10. Most people have a problem viewing bisexuals as equals.

## Social Consciousness Questionnaire – Transgender

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

*1 = strongly agree 2 = moderately agree 3 = slightly agree 4 = neutral 5 = slightly disagree*

*6 = moderately disagree 7 = strongly disagree*

1. Stereotypes about transgender individuals have not affected me personally.
2. I never worry that my behaviors will be viewed as stereotypically transgender.
3. When interacting with others, I feel like they interpret all my behaviors in terms of the fact that I am transgender.
4. Most people do not judge transgender individuals on the basis of their sexuality.
5. My being transgender does not influence how heterosexuals act with me.
6. I almost never think about the fact that I am transgender when I interact with others.
7. My being transgender does not influence how people act with me.
8. Most people have a lot more transphobic thoughts than they actually express.
9. I often think that others are unfairly accused of being transphobic.
10. Most people have a problem viewing transgender individuals as equals.

## Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire – Queer

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

*1 = strongly agree 2 = moderately agree 3 = slightly agree 4 = neutral 5 = slightly disagree*

*6 = moderately disagree 7 = strongly disagree*

1. Stereotypes about queers have not affected me personally.
2. I never worry that my behaviors will be viewed as stereotypically queer.
3. When interacting with others, I feel like they interpret all my behaviors in terms of the fact that I am queer.
4. Most people do not judge queers on the basis of their sexuality.
5. My being queer does not influence how heterosexuals act with me.
6. I almost never think about the fact that I am queer when I interact with others.
7. My being queer does not influence how people act with me.
8. Most people have a lot more queer-phobic thoughts than they actually express.
9. I often think that others are unfairly accused of being queer-phobic.
10. Most people have a problem viewing queers as equals.

### Stigma Consciousness Questionnaire (Pinel, 1999)

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

*1 = strongly agree 2 = moderately agree 3 = slightly agree 4 = neutral 5 = slightly disagree*

*6 = moderately disagree 7 = strongly disagree*

1. Stereotypes about women have not affected me personally.
2. I never worry that my behaviors will be viewed as stereotypically female.
3. When interacting with men, I feel like they interpret all my behaviors in terms of the fact that I am a woman.
4. Most men do not judge women on the basis of their gender.
5. My being female does not influence how men act with me.
6. I almost never think about the fact that I am female when I interact with men.
7. My being female does not influence how people act with me.
8. Most men have a lot more sexist thoughts than they actually express.
9. I often think that men are unfairly accused of being sexist.
10. Most men have a problem viewing women as equals.

### Stigma Consciousness – Race/Ethnicity

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

*1 = strongly agree 2 = moderately agree 3 = slightly agree 4 = neutral 5 = slightly disagree*

*6 = moderately disagree 7 = strongly disagree*

1. Stereotypes about my race/ethnic group have not affected me personally.
2. I never worry that my behaviors will be viewed as stereotypical of my race/ethnic group.
3. When interacting with others, I feel like they interpret all my behaviors in terms of my race/ethnic group.
4. Most people do not judge my race/ethnic group the basis of their race/ethnicity.
5. My race/ethnicity does not influence how Caucasian's act with me.
6. I almost never think about my race/ethnicity when I interact with others.
7. My race/ethnicity does not influence how people act with me.
8. Most people have a lot more racist thoughts than they actually express.
9. I often think that others are unfairly accused of being racist.
10. Most people have a problem viewing members of my race/ethnic group as equals.

## Stigma Consciousness – Disability

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements.

*1 = strongly agree 2 = moderately agree 3 = slightly agree 4 = neutral 5 = slightly disagree*

*6 = moderately disagree 7 = strongly disagree*

1. Stereotypes about disabilities have not affected me personally.
2. I never worry that my behaviors will be viewed as stereotypically disabled.
3. When interacting with others, I feel like they interpret all my behaviors in terms of the fact that I am a disabled.
4. Most people do not judge others on the basis on their disability.
5. My being disabled does not influence how those who are able-bodied act with me.
6. I almost never think about the fact that I am disabled when I interact with others.
7. My being disabled does not influence how people act with me.
8. Most people have a lot more prejudice thoughts about disabled people than they actually express.
9. I often think that others are unfairly accused of being prejudiced against the disabled.
10. Most people have a problem viewing disabled people as equals.

### **Social Dominance Orientation (Whitley & Ægisdottir, 2000)**

There are many kinds of groups in the world: men and women, ethnic and religious groups, nationalities, political factions. How much do you support or oppose the ideas about groups in general? Next to each statement, write a number from 1 to 10 to show your opinion. 1 indicates greater opposition, while 10 indicates greater support.

1. In setting priorities, we must consider all groups.
2. We should not push for group equality.
3. Group equality should be our ideal.
4. Superior groups should dominate inferior groups.

## **Temperature Scale**

Please indicate how warm you feel towards the following sexual orientations on a scale of 1 to 10. A score of 1 indicates very cold, while a score of 10 indicates very warm.

1. Heterosexual
2. Gay Men
3. Lesbian
4. Bisexual
5. Transgender
6. Queer

