

The Marriage Revolution: The impact of legalized same-sex marriage on non-heterosexual relationships across cultures

by

Shelley Abbott

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_____, Sponsor

Linda Bastone

_____, Second Reader

Lisa-Jean Moore

Abstract

Located within a larger social equality movement, the current global debate over legalizing same-sex marriage has personal implications for non-heterosexuals and their relationships. To understand the impact of legal recognition on individuals' perceptions of self and their relationships, 712 participants across the world were surveyed via the internet about their relationship status, their level of satisfaction, commitment and investment in their current relationship, their feelings towards their sexual orientation, the support they receive from family and friends, and their personal feelings about legalized same-sex marriage. Participants' responses on each of these variables were compared based on the presence or absence of legalized same-sex marriage legislation in their place of residence. Results showed that location was significant regarding levels of investment in relationships, levels of internalized homophobia, involvement in the LGBT community and feelings of social support.

In recent years the psychological community has increasingly acknowledged the detrimental impact of social inequality, bigotry, and hostility by the dominant culture toward sexual minorities. This understanding has guided the American Psychological Association (APA) along with other public health organizations to examine the issue of same-sex marriage as an issue of vital importance to lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) individuals because of the social status legal marriage confers to couples. This status includes over 1300 rights and responsibilities that ensure both legal and financial benefits, access rights to children, medical directives, wills and estates, and many other social privileges and validations that are easily given to and taken for granted by non-stigmatized heterosexual married couples (Lambda Legal, 2009).

According to Kurdek (2005; 2006) this element of discrimination and social invalidation stands alone as the key distinction between heterosexual couples and non-heterosexual couples. Satisfaction levels, positive feelings towards ones partner, expressions of affection and rates of conflict were not significantly different between the heterosexual couples and non-heterosexual couples studied by Kurdek (2005; 2006). What was different between these two groups of couples was that the non-heterosexual couples did not have the same level of family acceptance as their heterosexual counterparts nor did they have ability to legally marry like heterosexual couples. For many non-heterosexuals this climate of discrimination results in a negative impact on their psychological well-being due to culturally sanctioned and ascribed inferior status and social prejudice (Lindquist & Hirabayashi, 1979; Brooks, 1981; Lewis, 2001).

By the decree of the APA it is acknowledged that “discrimination of all kinds takes a toll on people's health and psychological well being” (APA, 2004). The current cultural climate surrounding the debate for legalized same-sex marriage for non-heterosexuals is one in which

much psychological stress can be alleviated with a shift in social policy. Marriage, as a social policy has historically been an agent of shaping people's attitudes and beliefs and with this understanding same-sex marriage can be viewed as a movement toward changed attitudes and increased social acceptance for sexual minorities. Based on the research by Kurdek (2005; 2006) and the understanding of legalized same-sex marriage by the APA (2004) is it reasonable to believe that expanding the definition of marriage to encompass committed non-heterosexual couples would be not only a victory for equality but a sound move towards psychological well-being for same-sex couples.

Deconstructing Marriage

Marriage is a multi-faceted institution complete with layers of cultural, political, financial and religious meaning, as well as personal significance for romantic love, sexual desire and kinship (Snyder, 2006). The romantic bond between two people is often the first dimension to come to mind when one reflects on the meaning of the institution of marriage. However, the remaining dimensions of marriage, because they all reside outside the intimate sphere of a committed relationship, tend to not be as readily visible. Instead they emphasize the power relationship between the governing body (whether political or religious) and the individual who is the governed body. Although not always apparent and often characterized as being in the best interest of the individual (though not always so), this sovereign power has an impact on the self-perception of the individual within a community (Foucault, 1976; Snyder, 2006).

From a sociological perspective marriage can be contextualized as a sovereign instrument of power that has a long history of being used to create and control the means and meaning of human relationships and kinship systems (Foucault, 1976). As a tool of discipline, marriage is not only the tool by which the heteronormative, procreative paradigm is propagated and upheld

but the very matrix from which these normative practices have come into being. Heterosexual marriage has been deemed the only acceptable context for sexual expression and because of this belief, unequal access to socially validated relationships has been used to keep non-normative sexuality at bay and to criminalize and pathologize those who stray from the norm. We see these disciplinary actions cross-culturally; in the American anti-sodomy laws reversed only in the last few decades, to the Middle-Eastern use of the death penalty for committing homosexual acts (Snyder, 2006; ILGA, 2008).

Green (2006) examined the impact of unequal access to legal marriage on the life choices of men and found that regardless of sexual orientation both the heterosexual men and the homosexual men in his sample revealed having had similar adolescent ideals and dreams of heterosexual marriage. Regardless of the sexual orientation of the individual, themes emerged emphasizing the naturalness of heterosexual marriage such as the belief that heterosexual marriage is the ultimate “rite of passage into adulthood,” the pinnacle of living the “American matrimonial dream,” and a “basic assumption of life” (Green, 2006).

Along with religious socialization, Green (2006) asserted that heterosexual marriage is a “master template” sculpting the world view of both heterosexual and homosexual men; however overpowering sexual desires for the same-sex uproot these dreams and divert life choices in the case of the gay male population. The shared vision of these two groups of men regardless of sexual orientation suggests a basic assumption of the normalness and absoluteness of heterosexual marriage as having the power to transform an individual into a mature adult and consequently placing individuals in their rightful position in society. Implied here is the labeling of non-heterosexual desires as inferior and immature, and that it would be in the best interest for homosexual men to abandon those desires and replace them with more ideal desires for members

of the opposite sex. However, as the gay men in Green's study attested choosing to be heterosexual was not something that could be successfully managed without experiencing painful psychological repercussions (2006).

Green (2006) shows us how norms regarding marriage, whether implicitly or explicitly stated in a culture; shape our deeper understanding of self and our place in the world. Marriage has been used to control the sexual body, as the life choices of the heterosexual and homosexual participants in Green's study show us, the availability of legalized marriage sets individuals on very distinct life paths, one group seeking out urban sexual exploration on the gay scene, the other finding marriage partners and raising families. These two groups of men exemplify the powerful institutional gaze that marriage has and the power of surveillance it affords citizens to scrutinize and punish other citizens who fail to stay within rigid lines of sexual normativity and by which we police ourselves from stepping out of such bounds (Foucault, 1976). In the Green (2006) study we see how the gaze operated to create two distinct sexual scripts: one for heterosexuals who were pressured (most often explicitly from family) to settle down and raise children; the other for gay men who without availability of legal marriage, felt the pressure (from other gay men) to be sexually explorative and non-monogamous.

Cultural practices use these sexual scripts to attempt to train good-heteronormative behavior, and punish bad-homosexual behavior by standardizing marriage admittance policies meant to determine who can and who cannot be entered into its precious institution. This stratification based on sexual feelings and practices sets up a value system whereby heterosexuality is rewarded and honored and non-heterosexuality is diminished and closeted, hidden away in shame (Green, 2006). The taken for granted assumption of heterosexual marriage as natural, right and good has explicitly and implicitly informed basic assumptions

regarding sexuality so much so that heterosexual marriage is viewed by many to be the unchanging bedrock of most cultures around the world (Snyder, 2006). However, this standardization of admittance into the institution of marriage has shifted more often than not; arranged marriages, interracial marriages and same-sex marriages have all defined and redefined the norms of marriage. For all of the imagined constants about the institution of marriage, the foremost constant has remained its changing face and most often that change has been one to greater increase social equality for marginalized groups of people. Furthermore, in this unsung legacy of marriage, it has been the individual citizen who has courageously faced down the power of the sovereign to change these rules and boundaries. It is in this negotiation between citizen and sovereign that the meaning of marriage is made, a power struggle between sovereign right over life and personal right to love (Snyder, 2006).

In the current debate over same-sex marriage, the demand for legalized inclusive marriage rights for all couples regardless of the gender of the two people involved has become a political instrument of change, in which the LGBT community is seeking reconciliation with the authority of the land. Couples in committed same-sex relationships are seeking equal access to the recognition, protection and security guaranteed to their heterosexual counterparts by the legally recognized status of marital unions. This attempted redistribution of power from sovereign to self locates the quest for same-sex marriage within a larger historical understanding of the value of the individual citizen in the age of civil rights and civil liberties (Rose, 2007).

Reconstructing Marriage Worldwide

Marriage is at the forefront of social change; countries around the world are questioning the policies that keep same-sex couples from equal recognition under their current marriage laws. Beginning with the Netherlands in 2001, Canada, South Africa, Belgium and Spain are now

offering full marriage equality to their non-heterosexual citizens complete with all of the rights and responsibilities previously offered only to heterosexual couples (Porche & Purvin, 2008). Civil unions and domestic partnerships are currently legal in Croatia, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Iceland, Luxembourg, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Sweden, Switzerland and the United Kingdom. The reality of civil unions and domestic partnerships however is that they offer little in the way of social significance or status and are watered down versions of full marriage benefits; they also vary widely from country to country with regard to the protections they afford same-sex couples (Porche & Purvin, 2008).

The often liberal leaning Canada, a country most similar to the United States in many ways, began offering legalized same-sex marriage in 2004 (though a few of the provinces had started offering the legal status a year prior) (Harder, 2007). The following year the Canadian Supreme Court guaranteed same-sex marriage as a basic human right under the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Alderson, 2004). Under the federal law of Canada it is the jurisdiction of the provinces to discern standardization for same-sex marriages; protection laws most specifically regarding adoption vary slightly from one region to another (Harder, 2007). Regardless of variance between the provinces, legal same-sex marriages are protected at the federal level, giving same-sex couples in Canada the legal option to solidify their relationships.

Spain, once a country that enforced its anti-sodomy laws with capital punishment and death, found reformation with the new socialist government elected in 2004 (Green, 2005). Only one year later in a controversial move, this catholic stronghold legalized same-sex marriage when the Spanish parliament amended the Civil Code giving same-sex citizens the right to marry (Green, 2005). Spain's emphasis on close familial ties and its very conservative religious and political heritage make this country a particularly interesting case study (Green, 2005).

Spain's history is that of strict authoritarian church and government rule contrasted to the democratic history of Canada and the United States both offering constitutional guarantees of equality and the separation of church and state (Heubel, 1977). However, the United States as a whole (currently only two states, Massachusetts and Connecticut, have recognized same-sex marriage on the state level) has yet to pass legislation making marriage legally viable for its residents in same-sex relationships, whereas Canada and Spain have accomplished this task. This disparity between Canada, Spain and the United States raises questions about the underlying social systems in place in the United States which allow popular discrimination to proceed despite constitutional guarantees of fundamental equality for all.

For the majority of the United States, same-sex marriage is only a fantasy (or a nightmare, depending on the side of the issue you stand on). In the backlash over the 1993 ruling of *Baehr v. Lewin*, Hawaii's highest court fumbled an attempt to legalize same-sex marriage by failing to swiftly order legislative change. This mistake allowed a lower court to overturn the ruling in 1996, the same year in which Congress passed the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA, Snyder, 2006). DOMA stipulated that if a state legalized same-sex marriage, other states are exempt from having to recognize those unions and all federal benefits are void. Regardless of the unconstitutionality inherent in this legislation, or perhaps because of the unconstitutionality of this legislation, since the passage of DOMA, 40 states have passed their own DOMA's or other constitutional amendments signifying that marriage is to be defined as existing between "one man and one woman" (Snyder, 2006). The only states to not pass a constitutional amendment further mandating marriage as strictly a heterosexual institution are Wyoming, New Mexico, New York, Vermont, Maryland, Delaware, New Jersey, Rhode Island and the District of

Columbia; on the other hand many of these states are far from making legalized same-sex marriage obligatory (Alliance Defense Fund, 2008).

Goodridge v. Department of Public Health (Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, 2003) provided the Supreme Court of Massachusetts the opportunity to become the first state in the nation to provide same sex couples statewide marriage equality. However, due to DOMA legislation, pension protections and access to benefits provided by a private employer are still restricted for same-sex couples because of inequality on the federal level, and federal taxes must still be filed individually rather than jointly (Clarkson, 2007).

The justices in the case of Goodridge v. Department of Public Health ruled that the dignity and equality of all citizens was affirmed by the Massachusetts state constitution and that the creation of a second-class citizenship for any group of individuals is forbidden under state law (Snyder, 2006). Furthermore, in the opinion of Chief Justice Margaret H. Marshall marriage is discussed as a vital social institution: “The exclusive commitment of two individuals to each other nurtures love and mutual support; it brings stability to our society. For those who choose to marry, and for their children, marriage provides an abundance of legal, financial, and social benefits. In turn it imposes weighty legal, financial, and social obligations (Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court, 2003).” It is important to note that this is not the dissenting opinion of the court; Chief Justice Marshall is using this argument to uphold same-sex marriage as another form the family can inhabit, and that it is vital to the stability of society to hold these same-sex families to the same standards as those families headed by heterosexual couples, thus offering to same-sex unions the same protections that all heterosexual unions intrinsically carry.

Presently the only other state in the US to give legal marriage rights to same-sex couples is Connecticut. Kerrigan v. the state Commissioner of Public Health (Connecticut Supreme

Judicial Court, 2008) issued a concurring opinion echoing the sentiments of the Supreme Court of Massachusetts, and in October 2008 same-sex couples in Connecticut began legally marrying (Grossman, 2008). Three years prior to the Connecticut Supreme Court ruling, civil unions had been awarded to same-sex couples as a tactic to establish legally recognized unions for same-sex couples that came close to the recognition afforded heterosexual marriage. However, it was the opinion of the high court that these civil unions failed to guarantee equal protection to same-sex couples in both status and significance, in effect establishing a legal segregation between heterosexual and non-heterosexual couples, and that this segregation was harmful to those couples in second-class civil unions because of the inequality that it represented (Grossman, 2008).

Civil unions have been established in other US states including Vermont, New Hampshire, and New Jersey. Still other states offer domestic partnerships, including Hawaii, Oregon, Washington, Maine, and the District of Columbia; and then there is California. California is currently at the political epicenter of the same-sex marriage debate in the United States (Clarkson, 2007). Connecticut was not originally the second state to legalize same-sex marriage; that distinction goes to California. Prior to 2008, a ban on same-sex marriage had been imbedded in the state constitution of California. In May of 2008, the California Supreme Court condemned this California Marriage Protection Act as unconstitutional. Seven months after this Supreme Court ruling the Proposition 8 ballot initiative overruled the Supreme Court decision, reinstating the ban on same-sex marriage (Alliance Defense Fund, 2008). Those same-sex couples who were married under California law are now unsure of the legality of their marriages, though promised by state government that their marriages will not be void, California has also

put a freeze on further same-sex marriages and the final outcome of these decisions as of the writing of this paper remain to be seen.

For those regions of the world now offering full same-sex marriage, the ability to marry the partner of one's choosing is being redefined in a consciousness of equality; a basic human right to integrity, dignity and autonomy. The hope lies in changing stereotypes and ending bigotry towards the often maligned LGBT population, thus gaining legitimacy and acceptance for non-heterosexual couples, and full citizenship for individuals within state and country. Legislation is being used as a tool of social agency to improve the lives of the people these laws impact and the personal consequences of this discrimination. Behind the political rabblousing and scare tactics of the conservative crusade against non-heterosexuals are the lives adversely affected by the political and social climate created by homophobia (anti-gay hostility), legislation that does not protect non-heterosexuals from harassment, and discrimination on the job, in housing, in medical care.

The Psychological Impact of Inequality

The theme of socially-induced stress, due to an undervalued and stigmatized status has been the focus of much of the research regarding the lives of non-heterosexuals. Brooks (1981) examined the phenomena of minority stress, characterizing it as resulting from an ascribed state of inferiority that is culturally endorsed, leading to prejudice and discrimination, and having lasting impact on an individual's psychological wellbeing. In the case of non-heterosexuals, minority stress is also theorized to be expressed as discordance between the demands of the dominant cultural norms (i.e., heteronormativity) and the internalized self-identity or minority group affiliation; often it includes feelings of marginalization, alienation, role confusion, dysphoria, stigmatization, disapproval, and rejection from mainstream society (Meyer, 2003).

Lewis, Derlega, Berndt, Morris, and Rose (2001) examined the relationship between frequency of stressors common to gay men and lesbians (i.e., harassment, visibility or level of identification as gay or lesbian to family and friends, reactions from others regarding sexual orientation) and the level of dysphoria experienced. Lesbians reported more stress regarding family issues and family support for themselves and their partners, while gay men reported more stress regarding homophobic violence against them. Regardless of gender, those in relationships reported more stress due to family hostility towards their partners, but less stress was associated with conflicted feelings towards one's sexual orientation when in a relationship. Increased minority stress was linked with increased levels of dysphoria in all of the categories of stress studied (Lewis et al. 2001). The effects of alienation and lack of social support for LGBT individuals may be the reason for these findings. This interpretation is confirmed by the Lewis et al. (2001) study in which participants actively involved with LGBT organizations also showed less stress regarding their feelings about their sexual orientation and overall had lower levels of dysphoria than those who were not actively involved with the LGBT community. Together these findings show the positive impact stable relationships and positive social support can have on non-heterosexual individuals.

Minority stress and the accompanying internalized homophobia (internalized negative attitudes towards homosexuality by non-heterosexuals) materialize in the individual as dissatisfaction with being gay, lesbian, or bisexual, feelings of low self-worth, low self-esteem and increased shame, guilt, self-loathing, dysphoria, and overall feelings of "sickness" or "wrongness" (Ross & Simon-Rosser, 1996). Ross and Simon-Rosser (1996) analyzed gay men on the four most common dimensions of internalized homophobia: resistance to public identification as being gay, perceptions of being a part of a stigmatized group, discomfort being

in the presence of other gay men, and the feeling of being judged as immoral by religious communities. Findings suggest that anticipated discrimination (as opposed to actual discrimination) had an impact on the individuals' comfort level with being gay and the subsequent hiding of sexual orientation from others; this finding was interpreted as representing more internalization of anti-gay bias and stigmatization.

Impact of stigmatization on romantic relationships

The effects of minority stress and internalized homophobia have been seen to impact the quality of relationship stability in the lives of same-sex couples. Rostosky, Riggle, Gray, and Hatton (2007) used the minority stress model (Meyer, 2003) to analyze the areas of life where same-sex couples feel the most anxiety, how they cope with said anxiety and how these stressors impact their relationship. All of the same-sex couples in the Rostosky et al. (2007) study expressed having experienced both real and perceived discrimination, rejection and isolation due to their sexual orientation and felt negative self-feelings because of these experiences. The majority of the couples expressed a lack of legal protection for themselves and their families and they also expressed a lack of visible role models for their relationships due to the unpopular status of homosexuals.

Approximately half of the respondents admitted to feelings of internalized homophobia and stated that those feelings had a negative effect on their relationship satisfaction, with one-fourth of the respondents expressing low expectations and a defeatist attitude towards their relationship due to negative stereotypes about the longevity of same-sex relationships (Rostosky et al. 2007). Rostosky et al. (2007) found that gay and lesbian couples insulated themselves from outside homophobia by creating support systems of accepting family, friends and other same-sex

couples in their communities to make up for the lack of support from other social, political and religious institutions.

Jordan and Deluty (2000) analyzed the level of openness about sexual orientation and its correlation with relationship satisfaction. The level of self-disclosure about sexual orientation was positively correlated with relationship satisfaction; those who were more open about their sexual orientation tended to be more satisfied with their relationship (Jordan & Deluty, 2000). It is hard to say whether those who are more open about their same-sex relationship are more satisfied because they are open about their sexual orientation thus removing the stress of being closeted, or whether those individuals in happy committed relationships are more likely to be open about their relationships; regardless those couples who are open about their same-sex relationship also experience more social support and this was correlated with satisfaction (Jordan & Deluty, 2000).

Todosijevic, Rothblum and Solomon (2005) also found low levels of openness about ones sexual orientation, the rejection of family and friends, and an internal conflict with ones sexual orientation to be significant predictors of increased dysphoria, furthermore those individuals who were not experiencing dysphoria due to internalized homophobia reported increased satisfaction with their current relationship (Todosijevic et al., 2005). Both Jordan and Deluty (2000) and Todosijevic et al. (2005) suggests the importance of acceptance from friends and family on same sex-relationships and the stress buffering effect of support from others even when relationships are marginalized (Schwarzer & Knoll, 2007).

To be certain that it was the marginalization of the relationships influencing the findings of these previous studies and not an internal flaw of same-sex relationships it is important to look at Lehmiller and Agnew (2006) who examined the impact of social disapproval on three different

types of stigmatized romantic relationships. Using the Investment Model (Rusbult et al. 1980; 1983; 1998) Lehmiller and Agnew (2006) analyzed same-sex couples, interracial couples and couples with a significant age-gap as the three relationship styles that are stigmatized. The authors hypothesized that negative social stigmatization would predict a lower level of investment in an individual's romantic relationships.

Investment as defined in terms of both the substantial resources (money, children) and the insubstantial resources (time, energy) that would be dissolved if the relationship were to end (Rusbult et al. 1980; 1983; 1998) was significantly less in all three types of marginalized relationships (Lehmiller & Agnew, 2006). Lehmiller and Agnew (2006) found evidence that individuals in marginalized relationships did not feel less committed to their partner than those in unmarginalized relationships, in fact, evidence suggested that couples overcompensate for this lower investment by being significantly more committed to the relationship in terms of attachment, long-term goals and persistence for the success of the relationship. This suggests that feelings of marginalization and perceived social acceptance do affect investment in and commitment to romantic relationships for all stigmatized couples, not just same-sex couples. (Lehmiller & Agnew, 2006).

Sprecher (1988) examined the level of couples' commitment to their relationship on the quality of social support they received from friends and family and the effect of this social support on the level of relationship satisfaction. Not looking exclusively at marginalized couples, Sprecher (1988) found evidence that married couples reported more social support from family and friends than unmarried couples, and that the level of social support received was positively correlated with the level of relationship satisfaction and commitment (Sprecher, 1988). The implications of Sprecher's (1988) research is that legally married couples benefit greatly

from the perception (as opposed to the reality) of their relationships as more secure, more committed and more socially accepted than non-married couples whether heterosexual or non-heterosexual, even for those relationships that are committed and long-lasting, but do not have a marriage license. This finding has much to tell us about the emphasis placed on marriage as a validation of relationships. Since Sprecher (1988) and Lehmiller and Agnew (2006) both examined the effects of social support on couples in general and not only same-sex couples, this evidence further supports the suggestion that it is the social value placed on the relationship and not the relationship itself that is the key difference between a marginalized relationship and a non-marginalized relationship.

Rostosky et al. (2007), Jordan and Deluty (2000), Todosijevic et al. (2005), Lehmiller and Agnew (2006), and Sprecher (1988) point to the effect of the social environment on relationship investment, satisfaction and the commitment level in couple's relationships, and the impact of acceptance or rejection from family and friends. These studies suggest that social acceptance is a significant predictor for the stability of relationships for not just same-sex couples but other marginalized and non-marginalized couples. For same-sex couples not only dealing with the immediate effects of low social support from family and friends but an institutionalized and politicized disdain for non-heterosexual relationships exacerbated feelings of internalized homophobia and inferiority can further negatively impact the quality of the relationships they are involved in (Lewis et al. 2001; Ross & Simon-Rosser, 1996).

Social support is not only the number and quality of social support networks consisting of family and friends but also the extent to which an individual feels included and integrated into society. Sprecher (1988) suggested that marriage is the ultimate system of social support which enhances an individual's sense of belonging, responsibility to society and a feeling of being

intimately embedded into the world around him or her. With these increased feelings of social inclusivity also come increase feelings of satisfaction and commitment for heterosexual couples who marry and it can be assumed that the same would hold true for same-sex couples if this option became universally available to them.

The Marriage Revolution

Meyer (2003) cites the unequal access to marriage for non-heterosexuals as an example of the internalized conflict between the culturally dominant heteronormative ideal and stigmatized sexual minority. In the United States the absence of an equivalent institution for same-sex couples in a committed relationships leads to an internal incongruence and psychological distress due to the distance between one's perceptions of oneself (as within a committed couple) and expected norms of one's culture (for that couple to be heterosexual). For Meyer (2003) this wide dissonance in the psyche of non-heterosexuals, who see the heteronormative ideal as unattainable, leads to dysphoria and feelings of self-loathing due to the lack of social inclusivity and concurrent alienation.

Meyer (2003) suggests that congruence between self and the expectations of one's culture act as a social buffer. This protective buffer reinforces feelings of integration and acceptance into society. The stigmatization experienced by non-heterosexuals enforces these incongruent feelings and it within reason to believe that legalized same-sex marriage would increase feelings of being fully integrate into the fabric of society for non-heterosexuals. In turn, legalized same-sex marriage would increase feelings of internal congruence between oneself and one's culture and thus increasing positive feelings towards oneself and ones relationship. This legitimization of non-heterosexual individuals and their relationships through legal marriage is vital to the psychological health of non-heterosexual individuals. However, limited research has been

conducted on the impact of legalized same-sex marriage on the relationships involved, especially as it applies across cultures.

The Current Research

Building on the understanding of the effects of stigmatization on same-sex couples, the current research attempts to understand the impact of legalized same-sex marriage on non-heterosexuals and their relationships across cultures. Regions where same-sex marriage is legal at the federal or state level (i.e., the countries of Spain and Canada, the US states of Massachusetts and Connecticut) were compared to regions where same-sex unions are not legally recognized (i.e., Australia, Latin America, and the majority of the United States) to analyze the extent to which legality predicts non-heterosexual satisfaction with self and ones relationship. It is hypothesized that due to an increased societal acceptance, the availability of legal same-sex marriage would lead individuals to have increased positivity towards their sexual orientation, to be more committed, invested and satisfied with their current romantic relationship, to have lower levels of internalized homophobia, and to feel more socially supported by family, friends and country than when legal same-sex marriage is not available. For those individuals living in regions of the world where same-sex marriage is not legal at the federal or state level it is predicted that individuals will feel less committed, invested and satisfied in their current romantic relationship, feel greater internalized homophobia and feel less social support from friends and family.

Method

Participants

A sample of 712 non-heterosexual participants responded from October 2008 through February of 2009 representing Spain (N =121), Canada (N = 53), Australia (N = 82), the United

States [N = 298; excluding Massachusetts (N = 45), Connecticut (N = 6) and California N = 144)], Latin America (N = 106) and other European and Asian countries (N = 21). Mean age for participants was thirty-eight years old with a range from 18 – 75 years of age (SD = 13). Fifty-two percent of our participants identified their gender as male, 46 percent identified their gender as female, and 2 percent identified themselves as transgender. Our sample was highly educated, 70 percent had completed a minimum of an undergraduate degree or achieved a graduate level degree. The majority of the participants were "out" to friends and family about their sexual orientation, only 4.5 percent were not open about their sexual orientation to anyone. Sixty-five percent of the participants were in romantic relationships, 53 percent of those relationships were considered committed relationships or married (both legally and non-legally, many participants had gone through commitment ceremonies but were not yet legally married to their partner). The mean length for all relationships was 6.9 years with a range of a few months up to 44 years in length. Sixty-three percent of all couples lived together.

Procedure

To capture the widest possible sample of participants representing countries around the world, an internet survey tool called surveymonkey.com and a snowball technique was used whereby we asked our participants to forward the survey to any non-heterosexual individuals (identifying as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, polysexual, or undecided) they knew who would be interested in taking part. Participants could complete either the Spanish or English language survey and answered questions regarding the level of investment in, commitment to and satisfaction towards their current relationship (if they were involved in one), their sexual orientation, the feelings they have about their sexual orientation, the acceptance level they feel

from family and friends regarding their sexual orientation, their participation in the LGBT community and their personal feelings towards same-sex marriage.

The online survey was distributed through American, Spanish, Canadian and international LGBT listserves, websites and organizations as well as through email addresses collected during prior phases of research for this study. Accompanying the survey URL was a letter describing that the purpose of the study was to more deeply understand the personal significance of legalized same-sex marriage. Participants were made aware that the survey was confidential, that they could choose not to participate and could receive the final result of the study upon request.

Materials

The global items of the Investment Model Scale (Rusbult et al., 1998) measured relationship satisfaction, personal investment in and commitment to the individuals' current relationship. Rusbult (1998) defined relationship satisfaction as the experience of positive affect versus negative affect in a relationship; investment was defined as the importance attached to the resources that are created or enhanced by the relationship, and the detrimental cost of losing those resources should the relationship end; commitment level includes psychological attachment and is defined as the intention to persist in the relationship.

The Internalized Homophobia Scale (IHS) measured the extent to which generalized negative attitudes towards homosexuality have been internalized and negatively impact the self-perception of the non-heterosexual individual (Wagner, 1994). Two measures of social support were used, the Identification and Involvement with the Gay Community Scale (Vanable, 1993) and the Berlin Social Support Scale (Schwartz & Schulz, 2000). The Identification and Involvement with the Gay Community Scale (IGCS) evaluated feelings towards belonging to the

lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender community (the family of choice for many LGBT individuals). The Berlin Social Support Scale (BSSS) assessed actual and perceived social support received from close relationships with family and friends (Schwartz & Schulz, 2000). Follow-up questions assessed the level of satisfaction with the support given by family, friends, the LGBT community, and society in general.

Finally, individuals were asked to rate on a Likert-scale (1 = not important, 5 = very important, 3 = neutral), how important having the availability of legalized same-sex marriage was to them personally. Then participants were given space to describe in their own words, what legalized same-sex marriage means or would mean to them. This was done to deepen the insight gained from the previous questions and to give the respectful opportunity for participants to tell their often unheard stories (See Appendix B & C for complete English and Spanish surveys).

Results

A location variable was created to reflect the same-sex marriage legislation in the region in which the participant resided, as it stood during the period in which this survey was conducted. The designation SSMLegal comprised regions guaranteeing legalized same-sex marriage, understood as legislation enabling same-sex couples to obtain the recognized legal status as wedded spouses at the federal or state wide level, and included participants residing in the countries of Spain, Canada and the American states of Massachusetts and Connecticut. The SSMNonLegal group consisted of regions in which either no standing legislation was established to allow for same-sex couples to be recognized as wedded spouses or regions in which legislation strictly forbidding the recognition of same-sex marriage had been established, including participants from the countries of Latin America, Australia, and the majority of the United States but not including Massachusetts, Connecticut and California. Due to the timing of

this survey in which data was collect both before and after the passage of the proposition 8 ballot referendum, California was analyzed separately as SSMCal.

A series of one-way analyses of variance (ANOVA's) compared the SSM Location groups' scores on the Rusbult Investment Model relationship variables of satisfaction, commitment and investment (Rusbult, 1980; 1983; 1998), the Internalized Homophobia Scale (Wagner, 1994), the Identification and Involvement with the Gay Community Scale (Venable, 1993) and the Berlin Social Support Scale (Schwartz & Schulz, 2000). Post hoc (Least Significant Difference) tests were then run for all of the significant ANOVAs. Of the Rusbult relationship variables, the location groups differed significantly only on investment, $F(2, 492) = 7.57, p = .001$. The least significant difference test revealed that individuals in location SSMNonLegal ($M = 6.43, SD = 1.73$) reported significantly more investment in their relationships than individuals in the SSMLegal group ($M = 5.80, SD = 1.49$), $p = .000$. LSD tests revealed the SSMCal group ($M = 6.55, SD = 1.80$) also reported significantly higher investment levels in their relationships than those in the SSMLegal group ($M = 5.80, SD = 1.49$), $p = .001$. SSM location was also a significant predictor of internalized homophobia, $F(2, 709) = 9.78, p = .000$. The SSMLegal group ($M = 1.52, SD = .502$) showed significantly lower levels of internalized homophobia than the SSMNonLegal group ($M = 1.65, SD = .534$), $p = .003$. The SSMCal group ($M = 1.45, SD = .392$) showed significantly lower levels of internalized homophobia than the SSMNonLegal group ($M = 1.65, SD = .534$), $p = .000$ as well.

The groups also differed significantly in involvement with the LGBT community, $F(2, 709) = 7.31, p = .001$. LSD tests revealed that the SSMLegal group ($M = 3.94, SD = .772$) showed higher levels of involvement with the LGBT community than did the SSMNonLegal ($M = 3.76, SD = .775, p = .007$), and SSMCal ($M = 4.02, SD = .745$) showed higher levels of

involvement with the LGBT community than the SSMNonLegal group ($M = 3.76$, $SD = .775$; $p = .001$). The SSM location groups also differed significantly on the social support measure, $F(2,693) = 4.09$, $p = .017$. LSD tests showed that SSMCal participants reported higher levels of social support ($M = 4.67$, $SD = .452$) than SSMNonLegal participants ($M = 4.49$, $SD = .647$), $p = .005$; SSMCal participants also showed significantly more social support than SSMLegal participants ($M = 4.51$, $SD = .626$), $p = .021$.

Though relationship satisfaction did not differ significantly across our SSM locations, over 50 percent of all participants said that they feel "very satisfied" with their relationship, another 20 percent felt "satisfied" with their relationship. Seventy-six percent of the participants were "committed" or "very committed to their relationships. Eighty-eight percent of all participants agreed that legalized same-sex marriage was "somewhat important" or "very important" to them.

Open-Ended Responses

All participants of the survey were given an opportunity to express in their own words the personal impact they felt the issue of legalized same-sex marriage had on their lives and their relationships, and any thoughts or feelings they had regarding the meaning of inclusive marriage rights. Those qualitative responses were analyzed using a Modified Grounded Theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1990) approach, whereby the frequency with which similar words reoccurred between participants and the underlying meaning of those words was interpreted from both the frequency and the emotional laden content of the individual responses. Several themes emerged, most frequently mentioned were the themes of equality, legal protection, the significance of marriage and psychological well-being. These themes, when analyzed alongside the quantitative portion of

the study, give increased insight into the dynamic lived experience of the LGBT community (see Appendix A for excerpts of the open-ended responses).

Discussion

Using Rusbult's Investment Model (1998) the current research hypothesized that people living in the SSMLegal regions would experience greater feelings of commitment, satisfaction and investment in their current relationships than people living in the SSMNonLegal regions due to the possible lessening of stigmatization towards same-sex relationships in regions where legislation validated those relationships. Results on the Rusbult (1998) measure suggest that legalization does not have an impact on the level of satisfaction or commitment in same-sex relationships; levels of satisfaction and commitment with the current relationship tended to be high regardless of the location in which the couples lived. Kurdek (2005, 2006) compared satisfaction among gay and lesbian couples to that of heterosexual couples and also found that satisfaction was at least equal to that of heterosexual married spouses, suggesting that couples, regardless of sexual orientation, are capable of having satisfying worthwhile relationships.

Many participants in their open-ended responses expressed a commitment to their relationship whether they had access to legal marriage or not. Others did comment that not having had the choice to legally marry had a negative impact on how they have treated their relationships, stating that access to marriage would have encouraged them to strengthen the commitments they made. Those who have been able to marry discussed the personal and social meaning placed on marriage and how marrying their spouse stabilized their feelings about their relationship.

The meaning placed on marriage has long been a stabilizing force in relationships and a key stabilizer of social order. Marriage as an integral aspect of social order is situated as a total

institution at the core of other societal norms. In short, marriage is a tool to corral sexual promiscuity, assure the next generation is provided for, and strengthen both economies and moral values. In their own words, participants expressed not only the desire to have the legal access to participate in this process but insisted that they do participate in this system regardless of the stereotypes of same-sex couples as being incapable of maintaining healthy and long lasting relationships and regardless of the fact that they often punished for their participation in their relationships by family and society.

Marriage is an institution that creates a family, both in the procreative sense and in the sense that families are blended and bonded together through the joining of two individuals in matrimony. These assigned family-making responsibilities are another aspect of how the legal status of marriage and of who constitutes a family has changed from generation to generation. Themes such as "family", "love", "unity", "commitment" and "stability" make "marriage" and the words associated with it such as "spouse", "husband", "wife" emotionally laden and significantly meaningful in society. Many participants expressed the importance of having access to these terms because it helped clarify to others the exact nature of their relationship and the relationship of their children to their partner. Also expressed was how being able to use these terms affirmed their personal feelings about their relationship, its longevity, its viability and its legitimacy.

Even though the Rusbult (1998) measure did not show increased feelings of commitment and satisfaction for those living with legal access to marriage, those that were legally married did express in their own words increased feelings of commitment, satisfaction and stability in their relationship and increased validation from the community around them because they were now legally married, reaffirming that indeed marriage is a tool that stabilizes both the couple and society.

Investment was shown to be higher for those living in the SSMNonLegal and the SSMCal regions than the SSMLegal regions, this finding contradicts the findings of Lehmilller and Agnew (2006) that associated an increased marginalization with decreased investment in relationships due to increased barriers to tangible investment resources such as children, real estate, insurance and tax benefits which are readily available to legally married heterosexual couples.

These results can be interpreted within the Compensation Model used by Lehmilller and Agnew (2006) whereby contextual factors cause compensation in one relationship factor that overcorrects perceived weakness in the relationship due to its status as a stigmatized union. In the case of the current research it can be reasoned that couples living without the full benefits of legalized same-sex marriage have been forced to use other costly and time consuming legal measures such as domestic partnership agreements, advanced legal directives, estate planning documents, durable power of attorney, and second parent adoptions to gain a sense of stability in their relationship, protection for their families and to override the non-legal status of their relationships, thus increasing the level of both tangible and intangible investment in their relationship. It can also be reasoned that these tangible investments are the only access individuals have to a contractual relationship with their partner and thus more significance could be placed on the simple act of opening a joint bank account.

The open responses of the participants bear out the importance of investing in "home, hearth and health" (participant SSMNonLegal – US) for same-sex couples who are denied over one thousand state and federal legal benefits and protections (Lambda Legal, 2009). For no more than the exchanging of rings and the filing of a marriage license, family-centric economies grant heterosexual married couples access to reduced tax rates, medical power of attorney,

shared property, guardianship of children and the right to insurance benefits should one member of the couple pass away. For same-sex couples those legal and financial protections come with a price tag of thousands of dollars in lawyers' fees, and countless hours drawing up contracts in an attempt to mimic the rights given freely to heterosexual married couples. For those same-sex couples unable to pay these hefty expenses, equality becomes a socio-economic class issue, leaving the couple and their children even more vulnerable.

Albelda, Lee Badgett, Schneebaum, and Gates (2009) in their nationwide study on poverty in the lesbian, gay and bisexual community, found that 24 percent of lesbians and bisexual women age 18-44 live at the poverty line compared to 19 percent of heterosexual women. Lesbians 65 years old and older are twice as likely to live at the poverty line as heterosexual married women (who have married men and benefited financially from their marital arrangement). In spite of the myth of gay male affluence, Albelda et al. (2009) also found that 15 percent of gay males in the 18-44 age range live at the poverty level compared to 13 percent of heterosexual males. For both gay and lesbian same-sex couples with children, the rate of poverty doubles that of heterosexual married couples with children (Albelda et al., 2009). According to Albelda et al. (2009) one-in-five children raised by same-sex couples is living under the poverty line and beyond the inequality of the family wage, the implication here is that the unequal access to legal marriage is also responsible for much of the unequal access to tax breaks, family assistance and insurance benefits, and this can be to blame for this increased rate of poverty for same-sex families.

Investment in the case of same-sex couples is positioned within the theme of protection; protection for the families that these same-sex couples create and protection from the families these couples were born into; to invest in the relationship is to protect the security of the

relationship from outside forces. As the findings indicate, same-sex couples are no less concretely invested in their relationships when living in the SSMNonLegal or SSMCal regions, in fact the opposite seems to be the case; it may be that same-sex couples without legal protections have had to work harder than same-sex couples in SSMLegal locations to establish some resemblance of financial security and stability in their relationships because they are more vulnerable to outside threat without the guaranteed protections of marriage.

As was hypothesized, those living in SSMLegal and SSMCal regions did show less internalized homophobia than those living in SSMNonLegal regions, further suggesting that legality does positively influence perceived perceptions of stigmatization for non-heterosexuals and may help to decrease actual homophobic responses to same-sex couples. Internalized homophobia and minority stress are the psychological components of the same-sex marriage debate. The psychological impact of living life with the ingrained feelings of inferiority, stigmatization and dehumanization because of one's sexual orientation is often unknowingly imprinted upon the psyche by a disapproving social gaze consisting of composite pro-heterosexual, and anti-homosexual, anti-bisexual, anti-transsexual social message (Ross & Simon-Rosser, 1996; Wagner, 1994). It can be reasoned that in the SSMLegal regions the availability of same-sex marriage decreased the feelings of the participants' discordance between expected norms of society and the actual norms of their lives, thus decreasing feelings of internalized homophobia and stress (Meyer, 2003). Consistent with this theory, SSMCal participants, having had marriage equality even in the short period in which this survey was being conducted, could have benefited from being validated by society through marriage legalization.

In the open-ended responses participants showed the depths of internalized homophobia when they discussed the distinct experience of many non-heterosexual people as being labeled “criminal”, “sick”, “immoral”, or “dirty”. They remarked about how increased acceptance of their sexual orientation by others has increased their feelings of self-acceptance. They spoke of looking forward to their feeling of self-acceptance increasing or how they felt it increased after legalization of same-sex marriage. Many also spoke of the hope they feel for the next generation of LGBT youth who have the potential to grow up having marriage equality, knowing that their relationships are validated, and how they could be valued in society as human beings. The hope for many is that legalized same-sex marriage would eradicate homophobia and stigmatization towards LGBT individuals and this would insulate lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender youth from having to experience the negative impact of internalized homophobia.

SSMCal, along with decreased internalized homophobia and increased LGBT involvement, also showed the highest level of social support. Those living in SSMLegal and SSMCal also showed an increased involvement in the LGBT community, suggesting that a decreased fear of societal homophobia may lead to an increased visibility of the LGBT community and more opportunity for non-heterosexual individuals to participate in the LGBT community without fear of physical danger and social repercussions. It is possible to interpret these results as showing a cohort effect in the wake of the reversal of same-sex marriage legalization by way of the referendum Proposition 8 and the fate of the Californian status regarding same-sex marriage in legal and judicial flux. Politically motivated and mobilized by the upset at having legalized same-sex marriage revoked, Californians have amassed large protests and rallies to have Prop 8 overturned and reestablish same-sex marriage. This high feeling of social support could be derived from the intensified feelings of solidarity the rallies

have evoked around the same-sex marriage issue (though certainly feelings of anger and resentment are also evident in the open-ended responses towards those who voted to reverse legal unions).

Even participants who felt that marriage was not a personal choice they would make for themselves stated that legalized same-sex marriage was something they wanted to see happen because having the choice to marry was an issue of being treated as an equal in society. Many participants positioned the movement within the larger civil rights movement often citing pivotal court cases of the 1950's and 1960's. The segregation of African Americans was found unconstitutional because “separate is not equal” as stated in the 1954 United States Supreme Court case *Brown v. Board of Education* (Grossman, 2008). Constitutionally guaranteed separation of church and state, equal protection clauses from the US Constitution and other national constitutions, as well as the UN Declaration of Human Rights were repeatedly used by participants as proof of injustices being done to the LGBT community through non-legalization of same-sex marriage.

Participants around the world view legalized same-sex marriage as a stepping stone towards ending discrimination towards non-heterosexuals. Words like “dignity” and “respect” are strung together with emotionally laden sentiments like "second-class citizen," all within a theme of unequal status in society for LGBT individuals and the anger, resentment and underlying fear of a society where legislation validates the oppressor not the oppressed. The argument for equality and ending discrimination against LGBT individuals is the argument most often used by those fighting the legal battle for marriage equality, and as such the consistency with which participants repeated these phrases was not a surprise. However, those responding from regions where federal legislation has guaranteed their basic human right to marry validated

the idea that marriage equality breeds acceptance for non-heterosexuals on a societal level based on their own personal experience in their home country.

Legalized same-sex marriage in this context not only becomes a catalyst by which equality and legal recognition of relationships are gained, but through which the healing of deep seated psychological inferiority can be facilitated. Public policy can be enacted in which long standing psychic wounds can begin to heal, transforming the lived experience and ultimately the potential of individuals who are held back by oppressive institutions. Being able to fully participate as equal citizens with the self-agency to make legitimate choices, LGBT individuals can fully embrace all the aspects of life they have been long denied. According to our participants, legalized same-sex marriage means no longer living with the explicit discrepancy between self and societal expectations and the stress and shame that accompanies this discrepancy (Lewis et.al 2001; Meyer, 2003).

Young lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender individuals can have role models in the LGBT community who mirror back to them what healthy committed same-sex relationships look like. No longer living in the margins and closets of society, non-heterosexuals can access all the dimensions of a well-rounded life. This is the greatest potential for legalized same-sex marriage, when used as a tool to transform the deep-seated inequality and the stigmatization of non-heterosexual individuals now and generations from now can begin to build healthy self-concepts and feel integrated into both their families and society.

Appendix A: Select Open-Ended Responses

SSMLegal:

"Since same-sex marriage was legalized throughout Canada 5 ½ years ago, the [straight] Canadian attitudes towards queer people has been revolutionary. Legalizing marriage for any two people, legitimized not only their relationship, but also their sexual orientation in the eyes of the law and more importantly, in the eyes of public policy. Straights could talk openly about gays without it being "edgy", newscasters could mention the sexual orientation of someone without it "outing" them. Even being in the closet has begun to lose its justification (participant SSMLegal – Canada)."

"Homosexuals have had the dubious historical distinction of being simultaneously mentally ill and guilty criminals, so there was a distinct period in my life that I came to know that society regarded me as a dirty, mentally ill, criminal that did a dirty crime with other dirty mentally ill criminals. A lot has changed since then, but we are not legally fully equal to heterosexuals. We have to create our equality in our own minds; marriage is the final frontier of full legal equality for gays and lesbians" (participant from SSMLegal – Massachusetts).

"People who want to get married *are* pro-family (duh)" (participant SSMLegal – Canada).

SSMNonLegal:

"Equality. It's that simple." (participant SSMNonLegal – Australia)

"Because personhood in the US is so bound up with legal status, codified legal discrimination implies inferior or unacceptable behavior or innate being. That is why 'separate but equal' did nothing to undermine racism and will do little (ala, civil unions) to undermine gay oppression and homophobia in society" (participant SSMNonLegal – US).

"I have mentored many gay young people who are just coming out. Often, they do not see a "family" future for themselves, because society simply does not make it easy to envision. The thought of forming a family is laughed at, mocked, made fun of, often by their own families. There is nothing in our society that encourages gay couples to seek permanent relationships. In most places, such a couple cannot even hold hands in public, much less kiss. How can we expect young gay people to form lasting partnerships when they must hide their relationships from most of society? Their relationships must seem to "disappear" when they walk out their front door. Literally, that's what happens in my relationship. When I say goodbye to my boyfriend, we must kiss inside. He is afraid of the backlash if we kiss outside. The official recognition by society that gay couples can be married is so important to the future of gay relationships and to the future dreams of gay young people. They must know it is WORTH it to put the effort into having a permanent relationship, forming a family, making sacrifices. I believe this will go a long way towards improving the self-esteem of gay people, resolving a great deal of depression and improving their ability to make positive contributions to society. They already do contribute, but

imagine how much more they could if they didn't have to hide their relationship and fear for their job, societal approval and sometimes even their safety and their lives" (participant from SSMNonLegal – US).

"Being gay is not openly talked about or if it is talked about it is a punch line or comic relief. Gays are portrayed in the media as either funny or tragic. There is nothing normal about being gay in society as far as the media is concerned. Society treats gay relationships as "unnatural" and "throw away" relationships. They are not worthy of time investment. Imagine what it would be like being a child, then a teenager, and then a young adult with no relationship role models either in real life or in the media where having a stable monogamous relationship is the norm. Where is it expected that we settle down and get married? It is not. We are taught that there is no expectation and as a result only a few of us are really lucky enough to learn these basic skills for having a successful loving relationship like those in the heterosexual world. Instead, we must learn these skills much later in our lives and falter more often. Surely, there are many that break this mold and do form lasting relationships, but there is NO expectation for normalcy. So, instead many gay men may have great careers, great friends but something is missing... something deep and profound. Who do we share our lives with? Who do we grow old with? And who legitimizes these relationships for generations of young gay men and women who can slowly but surely learn that their love is just as important as anyone else and society places a value on stability for all" (participant from SSMNonLegal – US).

"We are not Broken humans" (participant SSMNonLegal – US)

SSMCal:

"Marriage is one of the basic civil rights of man" Loving v. Virginia 1967. No one should be excluded from basic human rights. Excluding one group of people from the rights and protections everyone else gets only encourages discrimination. They can say this is not about hate or discrimination but it is definitely not about love (participant SSMCal).

"Legal marriage makes our lives MUCH easier" (participant from SSMCal).

Appendix B: English Opening Letter and Survey

Hello,

I am writing to ask you to participate in my survey about the meaning of marriage equality for gay and lesbian couples around the world. This survey is part of my senior thesis at Purchase College, State University of New York.

The survey takes about ten minutes to complete, and all responses are entirely anonymous. If you are willing to participate, just follow the link below and answer the questions to the best of your ability.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=Opdb3fKqX3WyBnWeeKEppQ_3d_3d

If you know of others in the LGBT community who would be willing to participate in this survey, please forward the above URL to them.

Please, feel free to contact me (shelley.abbott@purchase.edu) or my thesis sponsor, Professor Linda Bastone (linda.bastone@purchase.edu) if you have any questions.

Personal Relationships and Same-Sex Marriage Survey (English)

Introduction

Thank you for participating in this survey.

The issue of same-sex marriage is important to many and your responses to these questions will give us insight into the benefits and consequences of legally recognized inclusive marriage rights.

To help us better understand your personal experience please answer the following questions to the best of your ability; you will be given space at the end of the survey to qualify any of your answers and to provide us with your personal thoughts and feelings towards same-sex marriage.

Thank you very much for your participation.

Shelley Abbott

1. Your gender (check one):

- Male
- Female
- Transgender
- Other (please specify) _____

2. Your age: _____

3. Your nationality (e.g., American, Spanish, Dutch): _____

4. The city and county where you currently live (e.g., NY, NY; Madrid, Spain): _____

5. Your race (e.g. White/Caucasian, Black/African American): _____

6. Your education level (check one):

- Some high school
- High school diploma
- Some college
- College degree
- Some grad school
- Graduate/Professional degree

7. Your sexual orientation (check one):

- Heterosexual
- Homosexual
- Bisexual
- Other (please specify) _____

8. To whom are you open ("out" to) about your sexual orientation? (check all that apply)

- Parents
- Siblings
- Friends
- LGBT community
- I am not open about my sexual orientation
- Other (please specify) _____

9. Your marital status (check one):

- Single (Never Married)
- Committed relationship (Not Legally Married)
- Married
- Separated
- Divorced
- Widowed
- Other (please specify) _____

10. Are you currently in a romantic relationship? (check one):

- No
- Yes [Please indicate for how long: _____ year(s) _____ month(s)]

11. Do you currently live with your romantic partner? (check one):

- No
- Yes

Your Current Relationship

Please indicate below the statement that most closely matches your personal attitudes towards your current relationship.

12. I feel satisfied with our relationship.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Do Not Agree At All				Agree Somewhat				Agree Completely

14. My relationship is much better than others' relationships.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Do Not Agree At All				Agree Somewhat				Agree Completely

15. My relationship is close to ideal.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Do Not Agree At All				Agree Somewhat				Agree Completely

16. Our relationship makes me very happy.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Do Not Agree At All				Agree Somewhat				Agree Completely

17. Our relationship does a good job of fulfilling my needs for intimacy, companionship, etc.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Do Not Agree At All				Agree Somewhat				Agree Completely

18. I have put a great deal into our relationship that I would lose if the relationship were to end

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Do Not Agree At All				Agree Somewhat				Agree Completely

19. Many aspects of my life have become linked to my partner (recreational activities, etc.), and I would lose all of this if we were to break up.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Do Not Agree At All				Agree Somewhat				Agree Completely

20. I feel very involved in our relationship – like I have put a great deal into it.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Do Not Agree At All				Agree Somewhat				Agree Completely

21. My relationship with friends and family members would be complicated if my partner and I were to break up (e.g., partner is friend with people I care about).

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Do Not Agree				Agree				Agree

22. Compared to other people I know, I have invested a great deal in my relationship with my partner.

	At All				Somewhat				Completely
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Do Not Agree At All				Agree Somewhat				Agree Completely	

23. I want our relationship to last for a very long time.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Do Not Agree At All				Agree Somewhat				Agree Completely	

24. I am committed to maintaining my relationship with my partner.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Do Not Agree At All				Agree Somewhat				Agree Completely	

25. I would not feel very upset if our relationship were to end in the near future.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Do Not Agree At All				Agree Somewhat				Agree Completely	

26. I am oriented toward the long-term future of my relationship (e.g., I imagine being with my partner several years from now).

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Do Not Agree At All				Agree Somewhat				Agree Completely	

27. It is likely that I will date someone other than my partner within the next year.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Do Not Agree At All				Agree Somewhat				Agree Completely	

28. I feel very attached to our relationship – very strongly linked to my partner.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Do Not Agree At All				Agree Somewhat				Agree Completely	

29. I want our relationship to last forever.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
Do Not Agree At All				Agree Somewhat				Agree Completely	

Your attitudes towards your sexual orientation

Please check the selection below each statement that most closely matches your personal attitudes.

30. It is very important to me that at least some of my friends are gay, lesbian or bisexual.

1		2		3		4		5
Strongly		Somewhat		Neutral		Somewhat		Strongly

Disagree Disagree Agree Agree
 31. Being gay or lesbian makes me feel part of a community.
 1 2 3 4 5
 Strongly Somewhat Neutral Somewhat Strongly
 Disagree Disagree Agree Agree

32. Being attracted to the same-sex is important to my sense of who I am.
 1 2 3 4 5
 Strongly Somewhat Neutral Somewhat Strongly
 Disagree Disagree Agree Agree

33. I feel very distant from the gay community.
 1 2 3 4 5
 Strongly Somewhat Neutral Somewhat Strongly
 Disagree Disagree Agree Agree

34. Homosexuality is a natural expression of sexuality in humans.
 1 2 3 4 5
 Strongly Somewhat Neutral Somewhat Strongly
 Disagree Disagree Agree Agree

35. I wish I were heterosexual.
 1 2 3 4 5
 Strongly Somewhat Neutral Somewhat Strongly
 Disagree Disagree Agree Agree

36. When I am sexually attracted to someone of the same sex, I do not mind if someone else knows how I feel.
 1 2 3 4 5
 Strongly Somewhat Neutral Somewhat Strongly
 Disagree Disagree Agree Agree

37. Most problems that homosexuals have come from their status as an oppressed minority, not from their homosexuality per se.
 1 2 3 4 5
 Strongly Somewhat Neutral Somewhat Strongly
 Disagree Disagree Agree Agree

38. Life as a homosexual is not as fulfilling as life as a heterosexual.
 1 2 3 4 5
 Strongly Somewhat Neutral Somewhat Strongly
 Disagree Disagree Agree Agree

39. I am glad to be gay or lesbian.
 1 2 3 4 5
 Strongly Somewhat Neutral Somewhat Strongly
 Disagree Disagree Agree Agree

40. Whenever I think a lot about being gay or lesbian, I feel critical about myself.
 1 2 3 4 5
 Strongly Somewhat Neutral Somewhat Strongly

Disagree Disagree Agree Agree
 41. I am confident that my homosexuality does not make me inferior.
 1 2 3 4 5
 Strongly Somewhat Neutral Somewhat Strongly
 Disagree Disagree Agree Agree

42. Whenever I think a lot about being gay or lesbian, I feel depressed.
 1 2 3 4 5
 Strongly Somewhat Neutral Somewhat Strongly
 Disagree Disagree Agree Agree

43. If it were possible, I would accept the opportunity to be completely heterosexual.
 1 2 3 4 5
 Strongly Somewhat Neutral Somewhat Strongly
 Disagree Disagree Agree Agree

44. I wish I could become more sexually attracted to the opposite sex.
 1 2 3 4 5
 Strongly Somewhat Neutral Somewhat Strongly
 Disagree Disagree Agree Agree

45. If there were a pill that could change my sexual orientation, I would take it.
 1 2 3 4 5
 Strongly Somewhat Neutral Somewhat Strongly
 Disagree Disagree Agree Agree

45. I would not give up being gay or lesbian even if I could.
 1 2 3 4 5
 Strongly Somewhat Neutral Somewhat Strongly
 Disagree Disagree Agree Agree

47. Homosexuality is deviant.
 1 2 3 4 5
 Strongly Somewhat Neutral Somewhat Strongly
 Disagree Disagree Agree Agree

48. I would not bother me if I had children who were gay.
 1 2 3 4 5
 Strongly Somewhat Neutral Somewhat Strongly
 Disagree Disagree Agree Agree

49. Being gay or lesbian is a satisfactory and acceptable way of life for me.
 1 2 3 4 5
 Strongly Somewhat Neutral Somewhat Strongly
 Disagree Disagree Agree Agree

50. If I were heterosexual, I would probably be happier.
 1 2 3 4 5
 Strongly Somewhat Neutral Somewhat Strongly
 Disagree Disagree Agree Agree

51. Most gay people end up lonely and isolated.

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

52. For the most part, I do not care who knows I am gay or lesbian.

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

53. I have no regrets about being gay or lesbian.

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

Your social support

Please check the selection below the statement that most closely matches your personal attitudes.

54. There are some people who truly like me.

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

55. Whenever I am not feeling well, other people show me that they are fond of me.

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

56. Whenever I am sad, there are people who cheer me up.

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

57. There is always someone there for me when I need comforting.

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

58. I know some people upon whom I can always rely.

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

59. When I am worried, there is someone who helps me.

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

60. There are people who offer me help when I need it.

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

61. When everything becomes too much for me to handle, other are there to help me.

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

Quality of social support

Check the selection below that most closely matches how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the quality of support you receive from the following relationships.

62. How satisfied are you with the support you receive from your family of origin (mother, father, siblings, etc.?)

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neutral	Somewhat Satisfied	Satisfied	Extremely Satisfied

63. How satisfied are you with the support you receive from your friends (include co-workers, acquaintances)?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neutral	Somewhat Satisfied	Satisfied	Extremely Satisfied

64. How satisfied are you with the support you receive from the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender (LGBT) community in your area?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neutral	Somewhat Satisfied	Satisfied	Extremely Satisfied

65. How satisfied are you with the support you receive from society in general?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Extremely Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Somewhat Dissatisfied	Neutral	Somewhat Satisfied	Satisfied	Extremely Satisfied

Same-Sex Marriage

66. How important is having the availability of legalized same-sex marriage to you?

1	2	3	4	5
Very Important	Somewhat Important	Neutral	Somewhat Unimportant	Very Unimportant

67. In order to help us fully understand all of the dimensions of legalized same-sex marriage and its personal impact on you and your relationships, in your own words, please describe any of your thoughts and feelings about what inclusive marriage rights mean or would mean to you.

Thank You!

That concludes our survey.

Thank you for helping us better understand the impact of inclusive marriage rights and how people feel about being able to or not able to marry the person that they love. Your survey will help us make a difference!

To help us further, please forward the survey URL to other members of the LGBT community who might wish to take part in our important research.

Thank you!
Shelley Abbott

Appendix C: Spanish Opening Letter and Survey

Hola,

Les estoy escribiendo para pedirles que por favor sean parte de este estudio acerca de la igualdad matrimonial entre parejas gays y lesbianas al rededor del mundo. Este estudio es parte de mi tesis en la Universidad de Nueva York Purchase College.

Este estudio les tomara aproximadamente 10 minutos y todas sus respuestas seran completamente anonimas. Si esta dispuesto(a) a participar, por favor dirijase al link que aparece abajo y conteste las preguntas a su mayor habilidad.

https://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=_2fkb_2fOPf1yFmmKSr8fKPbrA_3d_3d

Si conoce a otros en la comunidad LGBT que esten interesados y dispuestos a participar en este estudio, por favor de informarles y enviarles el link.

Por favor si tiene alguna pregunta o necesita mas informacion sobre este estudio, tenga la confianza de ponerse en contacto conmigo (shelley.abbott@purchase.edu) o con la Profesora que me esta patrocinando Linda Bastone (linda.baston@purchase.edu).

¡Muchas Gracias!
Shelley Abbott

Estudio de Relaciones Personales de Matrimonio Entre el Mismo-Sexo

Introducción

Gracias por tomar parte en este estudio.

El asunto matrimonial entre el mismo-sexo es importante para muchos y sus respuestas a estas preguntas nos dará mejor entendimiento o beneficios y consecuencias legales de los derechos matrimoniales.

Para ayudarnos a comprender mejor sus experiencias personales, contesta por favor las preguntas siguientes a lo mejor de su capacidad. Al final de este cuestionario, usted será dado un espacio para que nos pueda decir con sus propias palabras su opinion sobre el matrimonio entre el mismo-sexo.

Gracias por su participación.
Shelley Abbott

1. Su sexo (escoja uno):

- Masculino
- Femenino
- Transgender
- Otro (especifique por favor) _____

2. Su edad: _____

3. Su nacionalidad (por ejemplo: Española, Americana): _____

4. La ciudad y el país donde vive en este momento (por ejemplo, Burgos, España):

5. Su raza (por ejemplo: Blanco/Caucásico, Negro/Afro-Americano): _____

6. Su nivel de educación (por favor, escoja uno):

- Algunas materias de la escuela secundaria
- Graduado de la escuela secundaria
- Algunas materias de la Universidad
- Graduado de Universidad
- Algunas materias de posgrado
- Graduado/Profesional

7. Su orientación sexual (escoja uno):

- Heterosexual
- Homosexual
- Bisexual
- Otro (especifique por favor) _____

8. ¿Con quien a usted comentado acerca de su orientación sexual? (verifique todo lo que aplica)

- Padres
- Hermanos
- Amigos
- Comunidad LGBT: Lesbiana, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender
- Yo no he comentado a nadie acerca de mi orientación sexual
- Otro (especifica por favor) _____

9. Su estado civil (escoja uno):

- Soltero (nunca casado)
- En un relación (pero sin estar casado)
- Casado
- Separado
- Divorciado
- Viudo
- Otro (especifique por favor) _____

10. ¿Esta usted actualmente en una relación romántica? (escoja uno)

- No
- Si

11. ¿Por cuánto tiempo ha estado usted en su relación actual?

Año (años): _____

Mes (meses): _____

12. ¿Esta Ud. actualmente viviendo con su pareja? (elijá una)

- No
 Si

Mi relacion romantica

Para las siguientes preguntas, por favor indique su actitud personal sobre su relación actual.

13. Estoy satisfecha con mi relación romántica.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No Estoy De Acuerdo				De Acuerdo Un Poco				De Acuerdo Completamente

14. Mi relación es mejor que la de otras parejas.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No Estoy De Acuerdo				De Acuerdo Un Poco				De Acuerdo Completamente

15. Mi relación es casi ideal.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No Estoy De Acuerdo				De Acuerdo Un Poco				De Acuerdo Completamente

16. Nuestra relación me hace muy feliz.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No Estoy De Acuerdo				De Acuerdo Un Poco				De Acuerdo Completamente

17. Nuestra relación completa mi compañerismo, mis necesidades íntimas, etc.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No Estoy De Acuerdo				De Acuerdo Un Poco				De Acuerdo Completamente

18. Yo he puesto mucho de mi parte en mi relación y perdería mucho si la relación se terminara.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No Estoy De Acuerdo				De Acuerdo Un Poco				De Acuerdo Completamente

19. Muchos aspectos de mi vida han llegado a ser ligados con mi pareja (actividades recreativas, etc.), y perdería todo si nos separáramos.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No Estoy De Acuerdo				De Acuerdo Un Poco				De Acuerdo Completamente

20. Estoy muy involucrado en nuestra relación - pongo mucho de mi parte.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No Estoy De Acuerdo				De Acuerdo Un Poco				De Acuerdo Completamente

21. Mi relación con miembros de mi familia o amistades se complicaría si nuestra relación con mi pareja terminara.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No Estoy De Acuerdo				De Acuerdo Un Poco				De Acuerdo Completamente

22. Comparado con otras personas, he puesto mucho de mi parte en el relación con mi pareja.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No Estoy De Acuerdo				De Acuerdo Un Poco				De Acuerdo Completamente

23. Quiero que mi relación dure por mucho tiempo.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No Estoy De Acuerdo				De Acuerdo Un Poco				De Acuerdo Completamente

24. Estoy comprometido a quedarme en mi relación con mi pareja.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No Estoy De Acuerdo				De Acuerdo Un Poco				De Acuerdo Completamente

25. No voy a estar triste si mi relación se terminara en el futuro.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No Estoy De Acuerdo				De Acuerdo Un Poco				De Acuerdo Completamente

26. Estoy orientado acerca de un futuro largo con mi relación (yo me imagino estar con mi pareja por varios años desde ahora).

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No Estoy De Acuerdo				De Acuerdo Un Poco				De Acuerdo Completamente

27. Es muy posible que voy a estar con otras personas en el recurso de un año.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No Estoy De Acuerdo				De Acuerdo Un Poco				De Acuerdo Completamente

28. Yo me siento muy conectado con nuestra relación - ligado totalmente con mi pareja.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No Estoy De Acuerdo				De Acuerdo Un Poco				De Acuerdo Completamente

29. Quiero que nuestra relación dure para siempre.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
No Estoy De Acuerdo				De Acuerdo Un Poco				De Acuerdo Completamente

Su actitud hacia su orientación sexual

Por favor revise la selección de abajo e indique su actitud personal.

30. Es muy importante para mí que algunas de mis amistades sean gay, lesbianas, o bisexuales.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy	Un Poco	Neutral	Un Poco	Muy
Desacuerdo	Desacuerdo		Acuerdo	De Acuerdo

31. Ser gay, lesbiana o bisexual me hace sentir parte de una comunidad.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy	Un Poco	Neutral	Un Poco	Muy
Desacuerdo	Desacuerdo		Acuerdo	De Acuerdo

32. Ser atraído(a) por el mismo-sexo es importante en el sentido de quien soy.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy	Un Poco	Neutral	Un Poco	Muy
Desacuerdo	Desacuerdo		Acuerdo	De Acuerdo

33. Yo me siento muy distante de la comunidad gay.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy	Un Poco	Neutral	Un Poco	Muy
Desacuerdo	Desacuerdo		Acuerdo	De Acuerdo

34. Homosexualidad es una expresión natural de la sexualidad humana.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy	Un Poco	Neutral	Un Poco	Muy
Desacuerdo	Desacuerdo		Acuerdo	De Acuerdo

35. Deseo ser heterosexual.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy	Un Poco	Neutral	Un Poco	Muy
Desacuerdo	Desacuerdo		Acuerdo	De Acuerdo

36. Cuándo me siento atraído(a) sexualmente a alguien del mismo sexo, yo no tengo inconveniente si otra persona sabe cómo yo me siento.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy	Un Poco	Neutral	Un Poco	Muy
Desacuerdo	Desacuerdo		Acuerdo	De Acuerdo

37. La mayoría de problemas que los homosexuales tienen, viene de su estatus de una minoría oprimida, no de su homosexualidad.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy	Un Poco	Neutral	Un Poco	Muy
Desacuerdo	Desacuerdo		Acuerdo	De Acuerdo

38. La vida homosexual no es tan entera como la vida heterosexual.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy	Un Poco	Neutral	Un Poco	Muy
Desacuerdo	Desacuerdo		Acuerdo	De Acuerdo

39. Estoy contento(a) de ser gay, lesbiana o bisexual.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy Desacuerdo	Un Poco Desacuerdo	Neutral	Un Poco Acuerdo	Muy De Acuerdo

40. Cuando pienso mucho sobre mi sexualidad gay, lesbiana, o bisexual, me pongo critico(a) de yo mismo.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy Desacuerdo	Un Poco Desacuerdo	Neutral	Un Poco Acuerdo	Muy De Acuerdo

41. Me siento seguro que mi homosexualidad no me hace sentir inferior.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy Desacuerdo	Un Poco Desacuerdo	Neutral	Un Poco Acuerdo	Muy De Acuerdo

42. Cuando pienso mucho que soy gay, lesbiana o bisexual me pongo deprimido.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy Desacuerdo	Un Poco Desacuerdo	Neutral	Un Poco Acuerdo	Muy De Acuerdo

43. Si fuera posible, aceptaría la oportunidad de ser completamente heterosexual.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy Desacuerdo	Un Poco Desacuerdo	Neutral	Un Poco Acuerdo	Muy De Acuerdo

44. Quisiera sentirme mas atraído(a) al sexo opuesto.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy Desacuerdo	Un Poco Desacuerdo	Neutral	Un Poco Acuerdo	Muy De Acuerdo

45. Si hubiese una píldora que pudiera cambiar mi orientación sexual, yo la tomaría.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy Desacuerdo	Un Poco Desacuerdo	Neutral	Un Poco Acuerdo	Muy De Acuerdo

46. Yo no abandonaré el ser gay, lesbiana o bisexual aunque pudiera.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy Desacuerdo	Un Poco Desacuerdo	Neutral	Un Poco Acuerdo	Muy De Acuerdo

47. Homosexualidad es perversión.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy Desacuerdo	Un Poco Desacuerdo	Neutral	Un Poco Acuerdo	Muy De Acuerdo

48. No me molestaría si tuviera niños que fueran gay.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy Desacuerdo	Un Poco Desacuerdo	Neutral	Un Poco Acuerdo	Muy De Acuerdo

49. El ser gay, lesbiana o bisexual es un estilo de vida satisfactorio y aceptable para mí.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy Desacuerdo	Un Poco Desacuerdo	Neutral	Un Poco Acuerdo	Muy De Acuerdo

50. Si fuera heterosexual, probablemente sería más feliz.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy Desacuerdo	Un Poco Desacuerdo	Neutral	Un Poco Acuerdo	Muy De Acuerdo

51. La mayoría de las personas gay terminan solos y aislados.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy Desacuerdo	Un Poco Desacuerdo	Neutral	Un Poco Acuerdo	Muy De Acuerdo

52. En la mayor parte, no me importa quien sabe que soy gay, lesbiana o bisexual.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy Desacuerdo	Un Poco Desacuerdo	Neutral	Un Poco Acuerdo	Muy De Acuerdo

53. No tengo ningún arrepentimiento acerca de ser gay, lesbiana o bisexual.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy Desacuerdo	Un Poco Desacuerdo	Neutral	Un Poco Acuerdo	Muy De Acuerdo

Su Apoyo Social

Por favor revise la selección de abajo e indique su actitud personal.

54. Hay algunas personas que de verdad les gusta mucho.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy Desacuerdo	Un Poco Desacuerdo	Neutral	Un Poco Acuerdo	Muy De Acuerdo

55. Siempre que yo no me siento bien, otras personas me muestran que ellos son aficionados de mí.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy Desacuerdo	Un Poco Desacuerdo	Neutral	Un Poco Acuerdo	Muy De Acuerdo

56. Siempre que me siento triste, hay personas que me hacen sentir alegre.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy Desacuerdo	Un Poco Desacuerdo	Neutral	Un Poco Acuerdo	Muy De Acuerdo

57. Siempre hay alguien allí cuando necesito sentirme mejor.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy Desacuerdo	Un Poco Desacuerdo	Neutral	Un Poco Acuerdo	Muy De Acuerdo

58. Conozco a algunas personas quienes yo siempre puedo confiar.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy Desacuerdo	Un Poco Desacuerdo	Neutral	Un Poco Acuerdo	Muy De Acuerdo

59. Cuándo yo estoy preocupado(a), hay alguien que me ayuda.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy Desacuerdo	Un Poco Desacuerdo	Neutral	Un Poco Acuerdo	Muy De Acuerdo

60. Hay personas que me ofrecen su ayuda cuando yo la necesito.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy Desacuerdo	Un Poco Desacuerdo	Neutral	Un Poco Acuerdo	Muy De Acuerdo

61. Cuándo todo llega a ser demasiado para mí manejar, otros están allí para ayudarme.

1	2	3	4	5
Muy Desacuerdo	Un Poco Desacuerdo	Neutral	Un Poco Acuerdo	Muy De Acuerdo

Calidad de Apoyo Social

Verifique la selección de abajo que mejor le satisface o no le satisface sobre la calidad de apoyo que Ud. a recibido de sus relaciones.

62. ¿Cuán satisfecho(a) esta Ud. con el apoyo que recibe de su familia de origen (madre, el padre, los hermanos, etc.)?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Muy Desatisfecho	Desatisfecho	Un Poco Desatisfecho	Neutral	Un Poco Satisfecho	Satisfecho	Muy Satisfecho

63. ¿Cuán satisfecho esta usted con el apoyo que recibe de sus amigos (inclusive colegas, conocidos)?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Muy Desatisfecho	Desatisfecho	Un Poco Desatisfecho	Neutral	Un Poco Satisfecho	Satisfecho	Muy Satisfecho

64. ¿Cuán satisfecho(a) esta usted con el apoyo que recibe de la comunidad LGBT (Lesbiana, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) en su área?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Muy Desatisfecho	Desatisfecho	Un Poco Desatisfecho	Neutral	Un Poco Satisfecho	Satisfecho	Muy Satisfecho

65. ¿Cuán satisfecho esta usted con el apoyo que recibe de la sociedad en general?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Muy Desatisfecho	Desatisfecho	Un Poco Desatisfecho	Neutral	Un Poco Satisfecho	Satisfecho	Muy Satisfecho

Casamiento entre el mismo-sexo

66. ¿Cuán importante es para Ud. la avilidad de tener legalizado el casamiento entre el mismo-sexo?

1	2	3	4	5
Sin	Un Poco	Neutral	Un Poco	Muy
Importancia	Sin Importancia		Importante	Importante

67. Para ayudarnos a comprender completamente todas las dimensiones sobre legalizar el matrimonio entre el mismo-sexo y su impacto personal en Ud. y sus relaciones, por favor en sus propias palabras, describa lo que piensa y como se siente acerca de lo que significa para Ud. los derechos matrimoniales.

¡Gracias!

Esto concluye nuestro estudio.

Gracias por ayudarnos a comprender mejor el impacto de derechos matrimoniales entre el mismo sexo y cómo personas se sienten acerca de poder o no poder casarse con la persona que ellos aman. ¡Sus respuesta nos ayudarán a hacer la diferencia!

Para ayudarnos aún más, les agradeceríamos si informan a otros de la comunidad LGBT la importancia de este estudio.

¡Muchas Gracias!
Shelley Abbott

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