

# Homophobia in non-heterosexuals and their families

Honors Thesis

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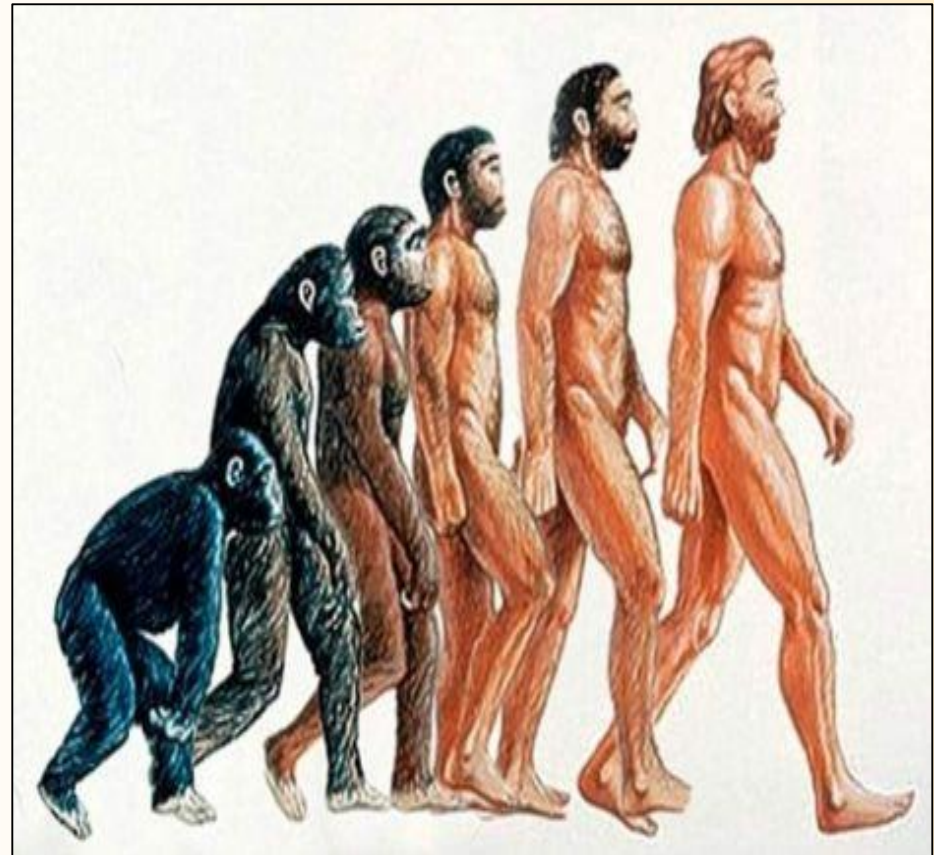
# Overview

- Evolutionary Psychology
- Why homophobia
- Current research
- Methods
- Results
- Discussion and conclusion
- Acknowledgements



# Evolutionary Psychology

- Darwin (1859)
- Survival of the fittest?
- Fit genes
- Behavioral characteristics





# Why Homophobia

- Importance of understanding homophobia
- Evolutionary riddle of sexual orientations
- Kin selection theory (Wilson, 1975)
  - Nieces and nephews
- Imprinting theory (Gallup, 1995)





# Homophobia

- Evolutionary advantage?
- Gallup (1995): Measuring discomfort in contact with children
- *“Imagine yourself as the parent of a son/daughter who was 8/21 years of age and who had spent the night at a friend’s house. How upset would you be to learn that the friend’s mother/father was homosexual?”*



# Current research

1. Reproducing Gallup's 1995 research
  - Age
  - Same-sex pairs vs. opposite-sex pairs
2. Homophobia in non-heterosexual individuals?
3. How do the attitudes of a heterosexual person compare to a non-heterosexual person regarding contact between a child and a gay or lesbian person?
4. Family attitudes towards different sexual orientations



# Current Research: Hypotheses

- Ratings younger niece/nephew < Older niece/nephew
- Ratings same-sex pairs < Opposite sex pairs
- Ratings heterosexuals = Ratings non-heterosexuals
- Non-heterosexual participants experience more resistance from their siblings when spending time with real niece(s) and/or nephew(s), than heterosexual participants
  - Quantitative (less time)
  - Qualitative (less receptive)



# Methodology: Online Questionnaire

- Closeness to family
- Time spent with nieces and nephews (if available)
- *“Imagine yourself as the aunt/uncle of a niece/nephew who was 8/21 years of age and who had spent the night at a friend’s house. How would you feel about learning that the friend’s mother/father was lesbian/gay?”*

Very negative – Negative – Neutral – Positive –  
Very positive



# Methodology

- 138 participants
  - 89 females, 43 males, 6 unknown
  - 50% heterosexual, 8% gay, 6.5% lesbian, and 35.5% other
- Repeated measures ANOVA





# Results

- Replication of Gallup (1995)
  - No main age interaction
    - But interaction child's age and participant's sex
  - More negative ratings same-sex than opposite sex pairs
- Non-heterosexual had more positive ratings than heterosexual, especially “other” group
- Insufficient data on real life experiences



# Discussion and Conclusion

- Study of homophobia is important and needed
- Several predictions of Gallup's research were replicated, but insufficient evidence
- Self-report, social desirability bias
- Future research focused on family members



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