

GAY AND LESBIAN CANDIDATE ELECTABILITY

By

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Abstract:

There is a sizable literature researching how individual's demographics (gender, age, race/ethnicity, religiosity, and political ideology) affect their opinions toward gays and lesbians, homosexuality, and LGBT rights. However, there is little to no literature regarding how these variables affect whether an individual would vote for a gay or lesbian candidate for elected office (candidate electability). That is what this research sets out to do in addition to determining how gay and lesbian candidate electability compares to that of their straight counterparts. To accomplish this an experimental design was used where each respondent was given two hypothetical candidate biographies with one being the control candidate (straight man) and the other being one of four randomly assigned candidates (straight man, straight woman, gay, or lesbian). The respondents were then asked to choose which candidate they preferred to vote for and how strongly they felt about their decision. This information was compiled to create an electability scale for each of the four types of candidates. Respondents were also asked about their demographic information. The results indicate that gay and lesbian candidates have lower electability than their straight counterparts with gay candidates having slightly higher electability than lesbian candidates. A person's religiosity (how religious they are) has a significant negative relationship with both gay and lesbian candidate electability. There is also evidence that the more conservative an individual is the less likely they would be to vote for both a gay or a lesbian candidate. At minimum, some support was found for all of the hypotheses concerning respondent demographic variables and their effects on gay candidate electability. Less consistent results were found concerning lesbian candidate electability.

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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

“No taxation without representation!” This slogan was popularized in the mid-1700s by disgruntled colonists in the American colonies. As the slogan implies, they were so agitated because they were not represented in the British Parliament yet they still had to abide by the laws, primarily tax laws, passed through it. This same sentiment could easily be transferred to the LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) population in America today. Out of the 535 members of the United States House and Senate only seven of them are openly gay or lesbian.<sup>1</sup> In a nation with a population that currently stands at approximately 320 million people<sup>2</sup>, this is an abysmally low number, but I guess it is not quite zero. Maybe LGBT Americans could tweak the slogan to this: No taxation without adequate representation!

Today there are approximately 500 openly LGBT politicians holding office across the United States with the overwhelming majority of them holding local office or seats in state legislatures.<sup>3</sup> As was mentioned above, there are only seven openly LGBT members at the national level with six in the U.S. House and one in the U.S. Senate.

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<sup>1</sup>Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund, [www.victoryfund.org](http://www.victoryfund.org)

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.census.gov/popclock/>

<sup>3</sup> Gay and Lesbian Victory Fund, [www.victoryfund.org](http://www.victoryfund.org)



There has still never been any openly gay or lesbian politicians elected governor, Vice President, or President in the United States. In the 2014 election, Mike Michaud (D – Maine), an openly gay man, ran for, but lost, his bid for the governorship of the state of Maine.<sup>4</sup> Jim McGreevey (D – New Jersey) was the first, and so far only, openly gay Governor in the United States. He served from 2002 until his resignation in 2004. He came out as gay in August 2004 at a press conference admitting to a sexual affair with another man, and at that same press conference announced that he would resign the office of governor in November of that same year.<sup>5</sup> In 2015, Kate Brown, who is openly bisexual, became the Governor of Oregon after a scandal caused the sitting Governor to resign. She was originally elected to a statewide office in Oregon in 2008 as Oregon’s Secretary of State.<sup>6</sup>

Elaine Noble became the first openly LGBT politician elected in the United States when she was elected to the Massachusetts House of Representatives in 1975. Three years later the first openly gay man elected in the United States, Harvey Milk, was elected to the San Francisco Board of Supervisors. Since then the number of openly gay and lesbian politicians successfully being elected to office has increased. In the beginning they were only elected to local offices and state legislatures like the two examples above. Though there have been a handful of gay and lesbian members of the U.S. House and Senate over the years, the first openly gay/lesbian non-incumbent to win

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<sup>4</sup> Samantha Lachman, The Huffington Post: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/11/05/mike-michaud-election-results\\_n\\_5896570.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2014/11/05/mike-michaud-election-results_n_5896570.html)

<sup>5</sup> Laura Mansnerus, The New York Times: <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/08/13/nyregion/a-governor-resigns-overview-mcgreevey-steps-down-after-disclosing-a-gay-affair.html?pagewanted=1>

<sup>6</sup> Teresa Blackman, USA Today: <http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/2015/02/13/oregon-new-governor-kate-brown/23372995/>

election at that level was Tammy Baldwin (D – WI) who was elected to the U.S. Senate in 2012.<sup>7</sup>

Electing openly gay and lesbian politicians, like the examples above demonstrate, is very important not only for the LGBT community, but also for the advancement of the United States as a whole. The research presented in this thesis could be greatly beneficial to this process by helping more gays and lesbians get elected to office. This research can accomplish this by better informing potential gay and lesbian candidates and their strategists on where to run, where their support and opposition will come from, how to run their campaigns. This is information critical for any successful campaign and will produce better prepared gay/lesbian candidates and campaigns. This information and preparation will lead to more successful bids for office by gay and lesbian candidates.

Electing open gays and lesbians has a tremendous positive effects on traditional, surrogate, and symbolic representation of gays and lesbians (Herrick 2009; Herrick 2010; Haider-Markel 2002; Haider-Markel, Joslyn, and Kniss 2000; Reynolds 2013). These three types of representation require some further explanation. What I have referred to as traditional representation simply references to an elected official representing the constituents from their district as either a delegate or trustee. Mansbridge (2003) describes surrogate representation as legislators that represent constituents outside of their own district. These types of representatives, of course, represent the people in their elected district, but they are also representing people all across the nation who agree with them on issues or are members of the same minority group. Symbolic representation is the idea of an elected official as a symbol (Pitkin 1967). Examples of this would be an

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<sup>7</sup> Brandy Zadrozny, The Daily Beast: <http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2013/11/05/history-s-progressive-gay-politicians-that-paved-the-way-for-mike-michaud.html>

elected official being seen as a symbol of democracy or, in the case of the above referenced literature, openly gay and lesbian elected officials symbolize the LGBT community and its' causes. Herrick (2009) ultimately found that a political candidate's sexual orientation and, to a lesser extent surrogate representation, electoral conditions, and ambition, greatly affect whether they will work to advance gay and lesbian issues.

State legislators are mixed in their positions on gay and lesbian issues and base their positions on both personal beliefs and values and on political calculation, but overall are found to be less supportive of them than the general public indicating that state legislatures lag behind public opinion (Herrick 2010). This is why it is crucially important that more openly gay and lesbian candidates are elected so this lag can be corrected or at least shortened. The presence of even a small number of openly gay and lesbian legislators influences the types of gay related bills introduced, the outcomes of those bills (increases the likelihood of future passage), and the adoption of specific gay related policies even after controlling for legislative make-up/ideology, interest group strength, public opinion/social values, and electoral system (Haider-Markel 2002; Reynolds 2013). Though there is initial backlash of varying degrees that comes with this increase in representation, once openly gay legislators are in office they have a positive effect on the views and voting behavior of their straight colleagues that can then transfer to the opinions of the public at large (Haider-Markel 2002; Reynolds 2013). The literature review will further discuss research on topics concerning gays and lesbians and gay/lesbian candidates such as gay and lesbian stereotypes, contact theory, and deracialized campaigns.

Elected officials are responsible for making laws pertaining to a wide range of issues. Gays and lesbians have been a topic in the United State for many decades and were brought to the fore of modern American politics with the Stonewall riots in 1969. Public opinion about homosexuality, the LGBT community, and LGBT rights have changed tremendously through the years. The largest and fastest changes have come relatively recently with the issue of same-sex marriage. Since 1996, the year the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) was enacted and three years after Don't Ask Don't Tell was implemented, support for same-sex marriage has increased from just 27% nationwide to 55% in 2014.<sup>8</sup> Pew Research Center found, as would be expected, that there are regional differences on the opinion toward same-sex marriage.<sup>9</sup> The regions include the East, West, Midwest, and South. The South is by far the region with the lowest favorability rating for same-sex marriage and the only region where less than half of the population supports it (44%). The other three regions have a majority of their populations supporting it with all four regions seeing increases in popularity similar to that of the nation as a whole over the past two decades. Recent precipitous change has occurred with this issue. In the past two years same-sex marriage has been legalized in 36 states and Washington, D.C., and same-sex marriages are now recognized by the national government.

Given the increased involvement of openly gay and lesbian candidates in elections and the rapid changes regarding public opinion toward homosexuality and LGBT rights, one would be reasonable in assuming that there is a great deal of research on these topics. They would be wrong. There is a reasonable amount of literature

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<sup>8</sup> Gallup Polling: <http://www.gallup.com/poll/117328/marriage.aspx>

<sup>9</sup> Pew Research Center: <http://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2014/10/15/gay-marriage-arrives-in-the-south-where-the-public-is-less-enthused/>

concerning homosexuality and public opinions toward homosexuality. However, the literature on gay and lesbian candidates and the electability of those candidates is relatively scant and a decade old; well before the sea-change of opinion on these issues began. That is another reason why research on this topic is so important. This research will work to fill this void in the literature. A void that reflects a gap of considerable time where much has changed in the way of public opinion toward gay rights and members of the LGBT community without research to see if those changes have affected gay and lesbian candidate electability.

For further clarification, candidate electability is simply a combination of characteristics, of both the candidate and the electorate, that affect a candidate's ability to win election. One of the best and most recent articles researching gay candidate electability was published in 2002.<sup>10</sup> This seems far outdated given the recent, significant changes in public opinion toward gays and lesbians and LGBT rights leaving a significant gap in the political science literature concerning gay and lesbian candidates and their electability.

It is important to know whether a candidate's sexual orientation affects their electability or not. This is because, in the near future, more and more openly gay and lesbian candidates will choose to run for office and it is critically important to know whether they will be perceived on equal footing with their straight counterparts or at a clear disadvantage through no fault of their own. That is why this research is so imperative; because, as was mentioned above, it will help to inform gay and lesbian candidates as well as their campaigns which will increase their ability to win. The more

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<sup>10</sup> Herrick, Rebekah and Sue Thomas. 2001. "Gays and Lesbians in Local Races." *Journal of Homosexuality*, 42(1): 103-126.

gay and lesbian candidates win election the more represented the LGBT community will be in government (thus an expansion of LGBT rights) and the more accepting the public at large will become toward the LGBT community. Further, research on this topic is crucial because it will answer this question and fill the void that has grown over the past decade by determining which electorate and candidate characteristics affect gay and lesbian candidate electability and to what extent they have an effect.<sup>11</sup> As was mentioned above, over this same time frame public opinion toward the LGBT community and LGBT rights have changed considerably. It would make sense to think that as these opinions have improved the stigma toward lesbian and gay candidates would have decreased. Because of this gap within the literature we have no way of knowing. That is why this research sets out to fill this gap.

The research in this thesis is conducted, in part, by studying five factors relating to voter characteristics: age, gender, race/ethnicity, political ideology, and religiosity. It is important at this time to define these factors. Age, race, and religiosity are simply the age of a person, the race/ethnicity they identify as most (white, black, Hispanic/Latino, and Asian), and how religious someone is. Gender and political ideology are not as simple and require more explanation. According to the American Psychological Association, gender is the “socially constructed roles, behaviors, activities, and attributes” that society determines to be acceptable or normal for men/boys and women/girls. This is different from sex as sex is the assigned at birth (male or female) and is based on biological attributes (American Psychological Association 2011).

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<sup>11</sup> This research makes the assumption that support for the candidate in the survey would translate to a vote for that candidate thus equating support and electability.

Political ideology<sup>12</sup> is the “subjective lens” that a person looks through to see the world, and that lens colors incoming information based on the ideological leanings of the individual to help them efficiently interpret the world around them and make political decisions. In the United States, we have the liberal to conservative ideological continuum where these terms describe how individuals feel government should be involved in our daily lives. This is the continuum I utilize in this research. This continuum and the terms liberal and conservative are popularly described in the news, politics, and public policy today. For clarification, the liberal ideology generally holds that government should be more involved in regulating economic issues (economy, banking, industry, etc.) and less involved in regulating social or private issues (public safety, social norms, abortion, LGBT rights, etc.). The conservative ideology conversely believes that government should be less involved in regulating economic issues and more involved in regulative social or private issues.

This research will also study two intertwined variables relating to candidate characteristics: gender and sexual orientation. Gender was defined above, but sexual orientation requires further explanation. According to the American Psychological Association, sexual orientation is the “emotional, romantic, and/or sexual attraction to men, women, or both sexes” and is considered to be on a continuum from attraction to only the opposite sex to attraction to only the same sex (American Psychological Association 2008). Sexual orientation is divided into three categories: straight (heterosexual) where individuals are attracted to the people of the opposite sex; gay/lesbian where men and women are attracted to people of the same sex; or bisexual

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<sup>12</sup> All of the following material concerning political ideology comes from *The American Voter Revisited* (Lewis-Beck, Jacoby, Norpoth, and Weisberg 2008)

where individuals are attracted to people of both sexes (American Psychological Association 2008). Transgender (the 'T' in LGBT) refers to individuals struggling with their gender identity and does not directly deal with sexual orientation as it is defined above. For the purposes of this research, the candidate will either identify as straight or gay/lesbian.<sup>13</sup>

The study is conducted using survey research utilizing an experimental design where each respondent is randomly assigned the biographies of a hypothetical candidate that is either a straight man, straight woman, openly gay man, or openly lesbian and the control straight man candidate. Upon reading their candidates' biographies, the respondents are then asked to determine which candidate they would vote for and how enthusiastic they are about their choice.

In the end, I expect that openly gay and lesbian candidates will be found to be less electable than their straight counterparts. Further, I expect that the age, religiosity, and political ideology respondent demographic variables will have the greatest effect on a candidate's electability. It does not mean that openly gay and lesbian candidates are unelectable or less electable to every electorate. What it does indicate is that the demographics of an electorate are very important in determining the electability of openly gay and lesbian candidates.

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<sup>13</sup> This research is not focusing on the B (bisexuality) & T (transgender) from LGBT because it will only be focusing on candidates that are either gay or lesbian. From this point throughout the rest of the thesis, people will be referred to as either gay or lesbian and not LGBT.



## CHAPTER II

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature concerning attitudes and stereotypes of gays and lesbians in general and about gay and lesbian candidates in particular is fairly consistent in their findings. In other words, there are few major arguments in the literature about major subjects in the topic of homosexuality and openly gay and lesbian candidates. However, there is a minor disagreement about whether race affects opinions about LGBT people and LGBT rights. Most of the literature agrees generally about a major topic and then adds further insight through additional findings.

The purpose of my research is to determine gay and lesbian candidates' electoral viability, and this literature review will discuss major theories concerning how these types of candidates can be elected and findings concerning how effective they are once they win. This literature review will be divided into sections. It will be divided into sections that build the best base for making hypotheses about whether gay or lesbian candidates could be electorally viable. These sections include literature on gender, age, religion, and racial differences in attitudes toward homosexuality and LGBT rights; stereotypes about gays and lesbians and the consequences of those stereotypes; contact

theory; deracialized campaigns (how using this tactic could help openly gay and lesbian candidates win election); and the effects of openly gay and lesbian politicians on representation, LGBT rights and legislation, and legislatures.

### **Stereotypes of Gays and Lesbians**

The literature concerning the general attitudes toward homosexuality in the United States has found a trend of increasing approval of homosexuality but a continued and stubborn opposition (Avery, et. al. 2007; Haddock, Zanna, and Esses 1993; Andersen and Fetner 2008; Yang 1997; Gibson and Tedin 1988).

Blumenfeld (2004) says that a stereotype is “an oversimplified, preconceived, and standardized conception, opinion, attitude, judgment or image of a person or group held in common by others”. Stereotypes about gays and lesbians, specifically gay men, leak into politics when there are openly gay and lesbian candidates on the ballot, and this affects the perceptions of the candidates and the political environment (Golebiowska 2002; Golebiowska 2001a). The effects and types of stereotypes change depending on the gender of the candidate and the gender of the voter/respondent (Doan and Haider-Markel 2010). Overall, women are more likely than men to vote for gay and lesbian issues, and, no matter the gender of the respondent, gay men were perceived less favorably than lesbians (Doan and Haider-Markel 2010, and Sakalli 2002).

Madon (1997), through her two part experimental study of Rutgers University students, finds that the biggest reason for the bias against gay men is the belief that they violate the acceptable male gender roles. This belief is supported with the stereotypes of gay men of being gentle, talkative, fashionable, sensitive, selfish, open about feelings, melodramatic, and not macho (Madon 1997). Lesbians were not thought of as being

monolithic, but were instead divided into sub groups with the two most prevalent being butch (viewed as more competent and less warm) and feminine (less competent and more warm)(Brambilla, Carnaghi, Ravenna 2011). Lesbians, no matter their sub group, are still subject to female gender stereotypes (like being better with compassion issues like education and health care), but lesbians were believed to be better at handling the military than gay men (Doan and Haider-Markel 2010). In addition, men were found to prefer the counter-stereotypical gay man (masculine) and lesbian (feminine) over the stereotypical gay man (feminine) and lesbian (masculine), while women did not have a preference when it came to gay men but did prefer the counter-stereotypical lesbian to the stereotypical ones (Cohen, Hall, and Tuttle 2009).

Tied in to stereotypes of gays and lesbians is the idea of attribution, whether sexual orientation was controllable, which was found to be the best predictor of whether or not someone would support LGBT rights (Haider-Markel and Joslyn 2008). Those who believe that sexual orientation is controllable or a choice were far less likely to support LGBT rights than those who believed that sexual orientation is not controllable or a choice, and determining whether an issue is culturally valuable has a positive relationship with LGBT rights and works in tandem with the idea of attribution in forming opinions (Haider-Markel and Joslyn 2008, and Sakalli 2002).

Thanks to these stereotypes of gays and lesbians it seems relatively intuitive to believe that gay and lesbian candidates will be viewed less favorably than their straight counterparts due to their sexual orientation. This lower favorability should translate into lower electability for those candidates. In addition, the differences in feelings toward gays and lesbians, because of stereotypes and norms, also indicate that gay men are

looked at through a more negative lens than lesbians because of their perceived femininity and violation of masculine social norms. Therefore, gay candidates should have a lower electability than lesbian ones.

*H1: The gay and lesbian candidates will have lower electability than the straight candidates. (The proposed order of electability will be straight man, straight woman, lesbian, and gay man)*

## **Gender**

When it comes to gender and opinions toward gays and lesbians and LGBT rights the research is clear. Women are more accepting of gays and lesbians and more supportive of LGBT rights than men are (Simon and Abdel-Moneim 2010; Eagly et al 2004; Herek and Gonzalez-Rivera 2006; Calzo and Ward 2009; Whitley 2001; Guittar and Pals 2014; Lim 2002; Barringer, Gay, and Lynxwiler 2013; Herek 2002; LaMar and Kite 1998; Herek 1988). Calzo and Ward (2009), with their study of over 700 undergraduates, went as far as to say that men are less accepting of homosexuality because they receive less positive messages regarding homosexuality than women do from the media, their peers, and their parents.

There is also agreement within the literature in regards to feelings toward gay men and lesbians. Gay men are viewed less favorably than lesbians (Simon and Abdel-Moneim 2010; Herek and Gonzalez-Rivera 2006; Lim 2002; Barringer, Gay, and Lynxwiler 2013; Herek 2002; LaMar and Kite 1998; Herek 1988). From their study of Californians of Mexican decent, Herek and Gonzalez-Rivera (2006) find that men have equally negative feelings toward gay men and lesbians while women have more negative feelings toward lesbians than gay men, though still higher opinions all around than men.

Not only does this literature reaffirm the assertions of the first hypothesis (*H1*), but also it illustrates the gender difference in opinions toward homosexuality and support for gay rights. Men are found to be less accepting of homosexuality and less supportive of gay rights than women. As was stated in the introduction section, this research makes the assumption that support for gay rights and acceptance of homosexuality will equate to higher electability for gay and lesbian candidates. Because of this men should be less apt to vote for gay and lesbian candidates than women resulting in lower electability.

*H2: Male respondents will be less likely to vote for a gay/lesbian candidate than female respondents.*

### **Age**

Another area where there is agreement within the literature is the correlation between the age of respondents and opinions toward homosexuality. There is a negative relationship between the age of respondents and their opinions toward homosexuality meaning that as a person's age goes up their opinions toward homosexuality will become more negative (Guittar and Pals 2014; Herek and Gonzalez-Rivera 2006; Baunach 2012; Seltzer 1992; Page 2011; Keleher and Smith 2012; Andersen and Fetner 2008).

There has been a shift in opinions toward homosexuality and LGBT rights since the 1980s from a broad disapproval of these issues with localized support to broader support with localized areas (both demographically and geographically) of disapproval with one of those areas being older people (Baunach 2012). Another shift has been found in opinions toward homosexuality and LGBT rights that shows that over this same time period every age group has become more accepting of homosexuality and LGBT rights with the elderly still being the least accepting (Keleher and Smith 2012). Keleher and Smith (2012), in their longitudinal survey analysis, go on to say that this gradual increase

in acceptance among all age groups is because of generational replacement where the old, disapproving people die and are replaced by younger more accepting people eventually leading to a population more full of acceptance than disapproval. Utilizing data concerning the United States and Canada from 1981-2000 in the World Values Survey, Andersen and Fetner (2008) also found evidence indicating that attitudes toward homosexuality are not permanent and could change over time depending on the political and social environment. These results do not only mean that younger people who are accepting of homosexuality can change their minds. They also indicate that older people can also become more accepting of homosexuality over time.

Therefore, the younger the individual or population is the more accepting they will be of homosexuality and LGBT rights, and a candidate's sexual orientation will play less of a role in the decision making of a younger audience. Thus, an openly gay or lesbian candidate will be less electable in an area with an older population than in one with a younger population.

*H3: As the respondent's age increases their likelihood to vote for the gay/lesbian candidate will decrease.*

## **Religion**

Religion, whether it be a certain denomination or simply proclaiming that one is religious, is another area where there is agreement within the literature when it comes to feelings toward homosexuality and LGBT rights. Religion does negatively affect people's opinions toward homosexuality and LGBT rights, and religiosity (the degree to which people proclaim how religious they are) also has a negative relationship with these issues (Guittar and Pals 2014; Thomas and Olson 2012; Baunach 2012; Seltzer 1992; Rowatt et al 2006; Barringer, Gay, and Lynxwiler 2013; Cadge, Olson, and Wildeman

2008; Finlay and Walther 2003; Schwarz and Lindley 2005). Through a national sample of U.S. adults, Seltzer (1992) finds that church attendance is found to have a negative relationship with opinions toward homosexuality. As has been found with race and gender, Finlay and Walther (2003) find that knowing someone LGBT correlated to higher tolerance of LGBT people among religious individuals, and the closeness of the relationship with that gay or lesbian person added to that tolerance.

There are also differences in opinions depending on the denomination of religion. Protestant Christians (Evangelical Protestants being the most negative) were found to have the most negative views with Catholics and non-affiliated Christians having higher opinions, and those not affiliating with any religion having the most positive opinions (Guittar and Pals 2014; Thomas and Olson 2012; Baunach 2012; Finlay and Walther 2003). The research on this subject really only dealt with Christianity, denominations within Christianity, and those considered not affiliated with Christianity. Because of this it is hard to get a gage as to how members of other religions, Judaism and Islam in particular, feel about this issue. As was found with age, religious people and Evangelicals in particular still have negative views toward homosexuality and gay rights, but their opinions have softened over the past twenty five years (Thomas and Olson 2012).

It is clear from this literature that religion, and religiosity in particular, has a major effect on a person's opinions toward homosexuality and gay rights. Therefore, it is just as likely to have a substantial impact on a person's decision on whether or not to vote for a gay or lesbian candidate. Thus, the religiosity and religion of an electorate will greatly determine a candidate's electability within that electorate.

*H4: As a respondent's religiosity increases their likelihood to vote for the gay/lesbian candidate will decrease.*

### **Race/Ethnicity**

There is conflict within the literature concerning the effects of race and ethnicity on opinions toward homosexuality and gay rights. Jenkins, Lambert, and Baker (2009) found that there was no difference between blacks and whites concerning opinions toward gays and lesbians. However, this study was conducted on college students which, as mentioned in the review of the literature on age, are more accepting of homosexuality overall. Guittar and Pals (2014), through surveying a nationally representative sample of the U.S., find similar results claiming that there were no significant differences in opinion between any of the races or ethnicities, but that blacks did harbor slightly more negativity than whites or Latinos. Others found that blacks were more negative toward homosexuality than whites with Latinos being somewhere in the middle but closer to whites in their opinions (Calzo and Ward 2009; Herek and Gonzalez-Rivera 2006; Negy and Eisenman 2005; Lewis 2003; Glick and Golden 2010; Ernst, Francis, Nevels, and Lemeh 1991; Herek and Capitanio 1995). Calzo and Ward (2009) argue that this is because blacks receive more negative inputs on this subject from the media, their peers, and their parents.

After controlling for factors that affect the perception of LGBT people and LGBT rights (parental education, socio-economic status, and religiosity/church attendance), the differences between the races and ethnicities went away leaving gender, religion/religiosity, education, and age as the best predictors of opinion toward homosexuality and gay rights (Calzo and Ward 2009; Herek and Gonzalez-Rivera 2006;



Negy and Eisenman 2005). These cases were simply looking at the effects of race on opinions toward homosexuality and LGBT rights on an abstract basis. Abrajano (2010) studied differences in race and votes for or against Proposition 8 in California banning gay marriage. He found that blacks were more likely to have supported Proposition 8 than whites with Latinos having very similar likelihoods as whites.

Because of these conflicts in the literature it is difficult to determine the effect of race/ethnicity on a person's opinion toward homosexuality and LGBT rights. However, what is clear is that religiosity, age, and gender seem to play a much larger role in this decision making than race/ethnicity does. In fact it seems that those three demographic variables are intervening between opinions toward homosexuality and LGBT rights and the race/ethnicity variable. Regardless of why this may be, though higher religiosity levels are likely the cause, blacks are less supportive of homosexuality and LGBT rights than whites are. Thus, blacks should be less likely to vote for gay and lesbian politicians than whites. For the purposes of this research, Latinos will be lumped in with whites because the literature indicates that the opinions of Latinos are similar to that of whites on this subject. Because there is no literature concerning the opinions of Asians on this subject, and since their socio-economic levels are similar to whites, Asians will also be lumped in with whites as well (Sakamoto, Goyette, and Kim 2009).

*H5: White respondents will be more likely to vote for the gay/lesbian candidate than black respondents.*

### **Political Ideology**

It seems like a given that a voter's political ideology, whether more liberal or more conservative, would influence whether they would vote for a gay or lesbian candidate. The more liberal voters are the more likely they would be to vote for a gay or

lesbian candidate than their conservative counterpart. It could at least be said that liberal voters would be less likely to see a candidate's sexual orientation as an issue when deciding whether or not to vote for them.

A study even created and utilized a right-wing scale which determines how right-wing the respondent is (from not right-wing to extremely right-wing), and the results indicated a negative correlation between the respondents right-wing score and their attitudes toward homosexuality (Haddock, Zanna, and Esses 1993). This means that the more right-wing an individual is the more they disliked homosexuality. This finding corroborates the intuitive belief presented above that a voter's ideology does play a role in determining whether they would vote for a gay or lesbian candidate or whether sexual orientation matters at all when making such a decision. It also seems fair to say that this variable is as large an impact on gay and lesbian electability as religiosity and age.

*H6: The more conservative the respondent the less likely they will be to vote for the gay/lesbian candidate.*

### **In-Group and Out-Group & Contact Theory**

One reason that demographics may affect perceptions of LGBT people and views toward LGBT rights is that people of these demographics vary in their contact with the LGBT community. This is where a discussion of in-groups and out-groups as well as contact theory becomes important.

Research has also been done on out-groups (groups that are not part of the main or majority group) which is very useful to research on gays and lesbians because they are members of an out-group. Through an experiment containing hypothetical candidates, Golebiowska (2001b) finds that individual members of an out-group (like a gay or

lesbian candidate) are found to be more accepted than the group itself. When the individual from the out-group successfully illustrates their separateness from that group their acceptance by those in the majority climbs even higher (Golebiowska 2001b). An example of this would be a gay candidate coming out as gay but explaining that they are not solely focused on issues only affecting the LGBT community.

Homosexuality is considered to be a concealable out-group because one cannot tell by looking at someone else if they are gay or lesbian. Again utilizing an experimental design containing hypothetical candidates, Golebiowska (2003) finds that gay and lesbian candidates are perceived more favorably when they conceal their membership to this out-group until they have proven themselves politically, individualized themselves as discussed above, and been elected (Golebiowska 2003). Candidates have less control over these things when running in lower-level (local) elections than when they are running in higher-level elections (Golebiowska 2003).

Intergroup contact theory, originally dealing with race relations, is the idea that contact by an in-group (individual or group of a majority) with an out-group (individual or group of a minority) would decrease prejudice by the in-group toward the out-group (Pettigrew and Tropp 2006; Pettigrew et al 2011; Pettigrew 1998; Mazziotta, Mummendey, and Wright 2011; Vezzali and Giovannini 2011; Pettigrew 2009). In addition, it is found that this contact can lead to great trust and forgiveness for past transgressions between the in and out-groups, and that this and the basics of the contact theory are universal across nations, genders, and ages (Pettigrew et al 2011).<sup>14</sup>

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<sup>14</sup> It is important to keep in mind that not all contact is positive. In some cases contact can lead to a deepening of prejudice and negative feelings toward the out-group.

This contact does not have to be direct between groups. It can be indirect or vicarious. Indirect or vicarious contact, seeing the in-group having successful contact with the out-group through media or friends of a friend, can also have the same effect as having direct contact, and it also increases the willingness of those having indirect or vicarious contact to take part in direct contact later on (Pettigrew et al 2011, and Mazziotta, Mummendey, and Wright 2011). There is also an idea of secondary effects of intergroup contact meaning that when an in-group comes in direct contact with an out-group the in-group's prejudice toward the out-group contacted decreases, but that contact also decrease prejudice toward other out-groups not directly contacted (Vezzali and Giovannini 2011, and Pettigrew 2009). Vezzali and Giovannini (2011), in their field study, found that direct contact with immigrants improved the prejudices of the in-group toward immigrants and also seemed to improve attitudes toward the out-groups of the disabled and gays/lesbians. They believe this occurs because direct intergroup contact affects the in-groups anxiety and perspective on the world which in turn changes their attitudes toward out-groups in general. However, Pettigrew (2009), utilizing a longitudinal survey, finds that these secondary effects are limited to out-groups that are similar to the contacted out-group in perceived stereotypes, status, and stigma. Using these theories and the findings that come from them could be incredibly useful in softening the animosity toward the gay and lesbian community (out-group) and the openly gay and lesbian candidates that come from it.

## **Deracialized Campaigns**

Although not the focus of this thesis, it should be noted that factors other than voter traits can affect the electability of LGBT candidates. For example, those candidates who have a “deracialized” campaign can increase their electability.

A deracialized campaign is a campaign usually used by racial minorities that is conducted “in a stylistic fashion that defuses the polarizing effects of race by avoiding explicit reference to race-specific issues, while at the same time emphasizing those issues that are perceived as racially transcendent, thus mobilizing a broad segment of the electorate for purposes of capturing or maintaining public office” (Orey and Ricks 2007). This style of campaign is found to be very effective in getting racial minorities (specifically blacks and Latinos) elected to office and could be utilized to get openly gay and lesbian candidates elected as well (Orey and Ricks 2007; Gonzalez Juenke and Christina Sampaio 2010; Wright Austin and Middleton, IV 2004; Liu 2003; Stein, Ulbig, and Post 2005; Liu and Darcy 2006). Gay and lesbian candidates are also likely to encounter the same political issues (personal and campaign) that members of other minority groups have in their attempts to be elected to office (Button, Wald and Rienzo 1999). Orey and Ricks (2007), from their 2001 survey of black elected officials in California, found that those elected using deracialized campaigns were less likely to support interests traditionally found to be pertinent to their community and less likely to endorse their group interest policies. Again, this research focuses on racial minorities running for office and not openly gay or lesbian candidates. According to the findings presented in the review of the literature concerning representation, openly gay and lesbian candidates, once elected, do increase the number and type of legislation dealing with gay

and lesbian issues so I do not think that there would be an issue of openly gay or lesbian representatives not working on or voting for gay and lesbian legislation.

This type of campaign is found to have the drawback that minority issues are heard less because they are left out of the campaign (Liu and Darcy 2006). This could be something that could likely carry over into “deracialized” gay/lesbian campaigns. A candidate’s perceived strength (the higher the strength, the more cross-over votes) has been shown to be very important in getting the necessary cross-over votes needed to win an election with the media playing a large role in influencing this perception (Liu 2003).

It has also been found that simply deracializing a campaign and hoping to get white cross-over votes is not enough. Minority candidates need to get support from other minority groups to build a coalition, and they need to make sure that they get as high a voter registration and voter turnout as possible from their own minority group and the other groups that they have formed a coalition with (Wright Austin and Middleton, IV 2004). Without doing this minority candidate’s likelihood of winning decreases greatly. For gay and lesbian candidates, this would need to be tweaked slightly. As was shown in the review of the race/ethnicity literature, racial/ethnic minorities may be less supportive of gay and lesbian candidates than whites so it would probably be more realistic to say that gay and lesbian candidates should focus on building a coalition with mostly liberal leaning whites and boosting their voter registration and turnout.

A bit of good news that comes from this literature is that while race greatly influences voter support for minority candidates when they run the first time, job approval becomes more important when that same minority candidate runs for re-election (Stein, Ulbig, and Post 2005). This is good news because it means that deracialized

campaigns should only need to be run when the candidate runs the first time, and then they can feel freer to run on and voice their opinions on minority issues. This is also good news for openly gay and lesbian candidates because it indicates that they would only need to be concerned about winning their first election because after that they could begin to run on their accomplishment/job approval which makes their homosexuality less of an issue.

### **Gay and Lesbian Candidates**

Now that the literature dealing with the topic of homosexuality and the important differences in opinion between groups have been discussed the literature covering gay and lesbian candidates can be discussed. Gay and lesbian candidates are looked at more negatively than their heterosexual counterparts, and they more often choose to run in local (lower level) elections (Herrick and Thomas 2001; Golebiowska 2002; Button, Wald, and Rienzo 1999; Golebiowska 2001a).

Gay and lesbian candidates, due to their perceived undesirability, are usually more strategic than their heterosexual counterparts meaning that they are more selective of the time, place, and political environment in which they run (Haider-Markel 2010). The partisan split on favorability of gay and lesbian candidates is large illustrating that Democrats are by far more accepting of gay and lesbian candidates than Republicans (Haider-Markel 2010). This also plays in to the gay and lesbian candidates' selectivity. Another issue that plays in to the selectivity of the candidate is the liberalness of the district. The more liberal a district is in which a gay or lesbian candidate is running, the more accepting that district will be of that candidate. This leads to a more friendly campaign environment for that candidate to run in (Golebiowska 2002).

The next chapter will discuss the data and methods used to test the hypotheses laid out in this chapter. I will defend the use of Mechanical Turk (Mturk) to distribute/administer the survey, detail the distribution of the dependent and independent variables, and discuss the statistical methods used for this research.



## CHAPTER III

### DATA AND METHODS

A survey was used to collect the data for this research. A copy of this survey, in its entirety, can be found in the Appendix at the end of this thesis. This survey was created on the survey program Qualtrics and was distributed and responded to via the online survey service Mechanical Turk (Mturk) which is operated by the website Amazon. Mturk is a service that pays respondents a small amount, determined by the researcher, to complete surveys. Fifty cents was paid to the respondents of this survey, and the survey took less than five minutes to complete.

This research attempts to determine gay and lesbian candidate electability by studying the effect five respondent demographic variables (gender, age, race, religiosity, and political ideology) and a candidate's sexual orientation have on said electability. The gay/lesbian candidate electability is determined in three parts. In the first part the respondent is asked to read brief biographies about two candidates running against one another in a primary. One of the candidate biographies is a candidate that is a straight man that all respondents receive and serves as a control. The other candidate biography is one of six randomly assigned candidates. These biographies include that of a straight man

straight woman, gay man, lesbian, boldly gay man, and boldly lesbian candidate. All six of these biographies are identical except for the sexual orientation/gender of the fictional candidate. The boldly gay and boldly lesbian candidate biographies were added as another form of control. These two biographies are identical to that of the gay and lesbian biographies except the bold biographies state more explicitly the sexual orientation of the candidate described. All answers given by respondents who received the boldly gay or boldly lesbian candidate biographies were recoded after collection so that those responses would be re-classified as either responses to the regular gay candidate or the regular lesbian candidate. Examples of all of these biographies can be seen in the full text of the survey in the Appendix of this paper.

In the second part of determining gay/lesbian candidate electability the respondents are asked to choose which candidate they would be willing to vote for. Their choices are either Candidate A (the control straight man candidate) or Candidate B (one of the six randomly assigned candidates).

*Based only on what you know about the two candidates from what you just read, and not based on political issue positions, which candidate would you rather vote for?*

- Candidate A (Jones)
- Candidate B (Smith)

The third determining factor of gay/lesbian candidate electability is asking the respondent on a scale from 0 to 5 to determine how strongly they prefer the candidate that they chose.

*On a scale from 0 to 5 with 0 meaning no preference and 5 meaning highly prefer, how strongly do you prefer the candidate you chose?*

- 0 (No Preference) (0)
- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)

□ *5 (Highly Prefer) (5)*

Based on the answers respondents gave to the last two questions, a gay/lesbian candidate electability continuum was created with a scale of -5 to 5 with 0 indicating no preference. The respondent's answer to the question concerning how strongly they prefer the candidate that they chose was made negative if they chose the control straight man candidate (Candidate A) in the preceding question and left alone if they chose the randomly assigned experimental candidate (Candidate B).

**Mturk**

Mturk is an efficient and effective tool that can be utilized by survey researchers though questions of the validity of results gathered through Mturk have been raised since it was first used by researchers. There is skepticism concerning Mturk's reliability when compared to traditional forms of survey research (face-to-face, mail, phone, etc.). However, research has been done to test whether there is a difference in reliability between the traditional methods used to administer surveys and Mturk.

That research found that Mturk was just as reliable as the traditional methods of survey administration and gave a more diverse sample of respondents than the traditional college undergraduate sample collected by many social scientists (Buhrmester, Kwang, and Gosling 2011; Casler, Bickel, and Hackett 2013; Goodman, Cryder, and Cheema 2013). The literature did caution that the population from which the samples are drawn does tend to be younger and more liberal than the broader public so it is imperative that researchers take these possible abnormalities into account (Buhrmester, Kwang, and Gosling 2011; Casler, Bickel, and Hackett 2013; Goodman, Cryder, and Cheema 2013).

Because my research focuses on these and other demographic variables, I will discuss the distribution of my demographic variables in detail later in this section.

The literature did determine that the length of the survey and the compensation can affect the reliability of the results with excessively lengthy or very low paying surveys getting more unreliable results (Buhrmester, Kwang, and Gosling 2011; Casler, Bickel, and Hackett 2013; Goodman, Cryder, and Cheema 2013). With my survey being relatively short and the compensation being fair, I am not concerned that these two reliability issues will come in to play with my research.

### **Data**

My sample was taken using Mturk on December 1, 2014, and it contains 282 participants. Again, the full text of this survey can be found in the appendix of this thesis. Because I am using respondents' demographics as independent variables (gender, age, race, religiosity, and political ideology), I ran basic statistical tests to determine the distribution of these variables. This will aid in explaining both the types of people who responded to this survey and explain my independent variables at the same time. Specifics about the distributions of these variables and their operationalization will be detailed below.

### Gender

The first independent variable is gender. This is a dichotomous variable where the respondent can choose either male or female to describe their gender. Males were coded as 0 and females were coded as 1. The exact text of the question can be seen below.

*What is your gender?*

- Male*
- Female*

Of the 282 respondents, approximately 62% are male and approximately 38% are female. This indicates a skew toward male respondents and also indicates that this sample is more skewed toward males than the population of the United States as a whole. However, this is acknowledged during analysis and is not likely to greatly affect the results. The full distribution of the gender variable can be seen below in Table 1.

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Male	176	62.41
Female	106	37.59
Total	282	100.00

Age

The age of the respondents was determined by allowing them to place themselves in one of ten five year age intervals. The survey question and intervals can be seen below.

*What is your age?*

- 18-25*
- 26-30*
- 31-35*
- 36-40*
- 41-45*
- 46-50*
- 51-55*
- 56-60*
- 61-65*
- 66+*

This variable was coded 1 to 10 with the youngest interval being coded 1 and the oldest interval being coded 10. The distribution of this variable is illustrated below in Table 2. As can be seen in Table 2, the mean age is just under 3. Based on the 1 to 10 scale that age was measured with, this indicates that the average age of this survey's respondents is

approximately 30 years old. This means that this sample is relatively young when compared to the entire United States and gives the potential for somewhat biased results and interesting conclusions.

<b>Table 2: Age Variable Statistics</b>			
<b>Variable</b>	<b>Observations</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
Age	282	2.879433	1.867402
<b>Age</b>			
<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	
18-25	64	22.7	
26-30	88	31.21	
31-35	51	18.09	
36-40	38	13.48	
41-45	15	5.32	
46-50	9	3.19	
51-55	5	1.77	
56-60	7	2.48	
61-65	3	1.06	
66+	2	0.71	
Total	282	100.00	

### Race/Ethnicity

Respondents were asked to indicate their race/ethnicity by choosing the response that best fit how they saw themselves.

*What race/ethnicity do you most identify with?*

- White*
- Black*
- Hispanic/Latino(a)*
- Asian*
- Other* \_\_\_\_\_

This variable was then converted into two dichotomous variables. This first dichotomous race variable (race2) created a white/non-white dichotomy where only the respondents who chose white as their race were coded as white and those who chose a race/ethnicity other than white were coded as non-white. The second dichotomous race variable (race3)

created a white/non-white dichotomy where respondents choosing white, Hispanic/Latino(a), and Asian were coded as white and those choosing black or other were coded as non-white. The variable race3 was created because it represented what was described in the literature on race and opinions toward homosexuality. Both of these dichotomous race variables are coded 0 for non-white and 1 for white.

The distribution of all three race variables is illustrated below in Table 3. As indicated, just over 75% of the sample is white which is very similar to the nation as a whole. The black and Hispanic/Latino(a) races in this sample are somewhat smaller than their true representation in the population, and the Asian race in this sample is somewhat larger. When broken down into the two dichotomous variables, the race2 variable is very similar to the United States' white/non-white racial divide. The race3 variable is clearly skewed white because it includes all but one of the minority groups that could be chosen.

<b>Table 3: Race Variables Statistics</b>		
<b>Race</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
White	217	76.95
Black	14	4.96
Hispanic/Latino(a)	22	7.80
Asian	22	7.80
Other	7	2.48
Total	282	100.00
<b>Race2</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Non-White	65	23.05
White	217	76.95
Total	282	100.00
<b>Race3</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
Black	21	7.45
White	261	92.55
Total	282	100.00

## Religiosity

Religiosity, how religious someone is, was measured in two different ways. First, respondents were asked to rank how religious they are on a scale from 1 to 5. Later in the survey, respondents were asked how many times they attended religious services. Both of these measures are considered accurate ways to determine religiosity and are used by the American National Election Surveys. The exact questions and responses can be seen here.

*On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being not religious at all and 5 being very religious, how religious are you?*

- 1 (Not Religious At All)
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5 (Very Religious)

*How often do you attend religious services?*

- Never
- A Few Times A Year
- Once Or Twice A Month
- Almost Every Week
- Every Week

These two variables for religiosity were tested for correlation. As can be seen below in Table 4, these variables were highly correlated indicating that either could be reliably used to indicate a respondent's religiosity, or they could be combined into a single religiosity variable. I chose to combine these two variables. The answers given by every respondent for each question was added together giving one religiosity score on a scale from 2 to 10 with 2 being not religious and 10 being very religious. Table 5, also below, shows the distribution of this new measure for religiosity. The mean religiosity score of all respondents is just over 3.5 which indicates that this sample is not a very religious



group. The more detailed distribution also illustrates that while the sample is skewed toward those who are not religious, there is still a healthy number of respondents who range from religious to very religious.

	<b>Religion1</b>	<b>Religion4</b>
<b>Religion1</b>	1.000	
<b>Religion4</b>	0.7272	1.000

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Observations</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
Religiosity	282	3.680851	2.267892
<b>Religiosity</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	
2	150	53.19	
3	22	7.80	
4	25	8.87	
5	24	8.51	
6	24	8.51	
7	10	3.55	
8	11	3.90	
9	10	3.55	
10	6	2.13	
Total	282	100.00	

### Political Ideology

The final independent variable is political ideology which is measured by asking respondents to plot themselves on a liberal to conservative continuum where liberal is coded as 1 and conservative is coded as 5.

*On the scale below mark which political ideology best describes your political beliefs.*

- Liberal*
- Somewhat Liberal*
- Moderate*
- Somewhat Conservative*
- Conservative*
- Don't Know/Refuse To Answer*

The full distribution of the political ideology variable along with the mean political ideology of the sample can be seen below in Table 6. The mean political ideology of 2.6 on the liberal to conservative scale from 1 to 5 indicates that this is a liberal leaning or “somewhat liberal” to “moderate” group of respondents. The complete distribution of the political ideology variable corroborates this by showing a liberal skew to the sample.

<b>Table 6: Political Ideology Variable Statistics</b>			
<b>Variable</b>	<b>Observations</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
Political Ideology	282	2.645161	1.294525
<b>Political Ideology</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>	
Liberal	58	20.79	
Somewhat Liberal	91	32.62	
Moderate	57	20.43	
Somewhat Con.	38	13.62	
Conservative	35	12.54	
Total	279	100.00	

Given this demographic breakdown of the respondents it is clear that the sample used for this research is not quite representative of the United States as a whole. There are more men in this sample than women which is the opposite of this country. The average age is lower than the national average. The number of whites as compared to the number of minorities is close to representative, but the breakdown of the minority respondents shows that it too is not quite representative with too few blacks and Hispanics/Latino(a)s and too many Asians. The sample is also liberal leaning. Because this sample was collected on the internet using Mturk, these skews should not be terribly surprising and they should not cause any alarm bells regarding the reliability of this study’s results. Given this young, white, liberal, male sample, if the following results do indicate a bias against gay/lesbian candidates, it would be very significant because

according to the literature white, younger, and more liberal voters should not care about a candidate's sexual orientation.

When digging deeper into the sample, looking specifically at the sample of those receiving the gay candidate biography and the lesbian candidate biography, the same skews mentioned above are still present. The demographic breakdown of the respondents receiving the gay candidate biography can be seen below in Table 7, and the same breakdown for those receiving the lesbian candidate biography can be seen below in Table 8.

<b>Table 7: Demographics for Gay Candidate Treatment</b>		
<b>Variable</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	50	60.24
Female	33	39.76
<b>Age</b>		
18-25	19	22.89
26-30	27	32.53
31-35	8	9.64
36-40	15	18.07
41-45	5	6.02
46-50	5	6.02
51-55	1	1.20
56-60	2	2.41
61-65	1	1.20
<b>Race</b>		
White	60	72.29
Black	6	7.23
Hispanic/Latino(a)	7	8.43
Asian	9	10.84
Other	1	1.20
<b>Religiosity</b>		
2	46	55.42
3	6	7.23
4	6	7.23
5	6	7.23
6	8	9.64
7	2	2.41
8	5	6.02
9	4	4.82
<b>Political Ideology</b>		
Liberal	18	21.69

Somewhat Liberal	25	30.12
Moderate	19	22.89
Somewhat Conservative	15	18.07
Conservative	6	7.23

**Table 8: Demographics for Lesbian Candidate Treatment**

<b>Variable</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	64	62.75
Female	38	37.25
<b>Age</b>		
18-25	26	25.49
26-30	38	37.25
31-35	21	20.59
36-40	6	5.88
41-45	3	2.94
46-50	1	0.98
51-55	3	2.94
56-60	2	1.96
61-65	2	1.96
<b>Race</b>		
White	82	80.39
Black	5	4.90
Hispanic/Latino(a)	5	4.90
Asian	6	5.88
Other	4	3.92
<b>Religiosity</b>		
2	53	51.96
3	10	9.80
4	7	6.86
5	8	7.84
6	9	8.82
7	7	6.86
8	2	1.96
9	4	3.92
10	2	1.96
<b>Political Ideology</b>		
Liberal	22	22.00
Somewhat Liberal	31	31.00
Moderate	17	17.00
Somewhat Conservative	15	15.00
Conservative	15	15.00

## **Methods**

An analysis of variance test (ANOVA) is performed to test the first hypothesis which predicts that gay candidates and lesbian candidates will have lower electability than their straight counterparts. The predicted electability ranges from the straight man candidate with the highest electability to the straight woman to the lesbian to the gay candidate with the lowest electability. This test contains three parts. First, it calculates the mean and standard deviation of electability for each of the four types of candidates (or groups). It then compares those mean electability levels of each of the four groups to one another and determines the statistical significance of the differences in electability. Finally, it determines the variance of electability within each group and between each group.

A regression is also performed between all five independent variables (gender, age, race, religiosity, and political ideology) and the dependent variable of gay/lesbian candidate electability. This test is performed to determine the statistical and substantive significance of the impact each independent variable has on the dependent variable. Because all of the independent and dependent variables are categorical an ordered logistic regression best fits the data. However, both an ordered logistic regression and a traditional regression were run with the data and both tests garnered the same results. Because of this, the results of the traditional regression will be presented in the next chapter. The results of this statistical test will help determine the validity of hypotheses two through six.

The next chapter will detail the analyses performed. It will also describe the findings of those analyses and what those findings mean for the hypotheses posed in the Literature Review chapter.

## CHAPTER IV

### ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

This chapter will discuss the analysis and findings of this research and determine how well the hypotheses posed in the Chapter II hold up. This chapter contains three sections with the first laying out the findings pertinent to the first hypothesis (H1) dealing with candidate's sexual orientation and their overall electability. Because the results of the analysis of gay candidate electability and lesbian candidate electability differed concerning the voter demographic variables' effect on electability, those results will be examined in two separate sections. One section will be devoted to the results concerning hypotheses two through 6 (H2-H6) as they pertain to gay candidate electability, and the other section will be devoted to results concerning those same hypotheses as they pertain to lesbian candidate electability.

#### **Candidate's Sexual Orientation**

The results of the ANOVA test lend partial credence to the first hypothesis (H1). H1 states that gay and lesbian candidates will have lower electability than their straight counterparts. This can be seen by the results posted below in Table 9 which illustrate the overall mean electability of each type of candidate. The electability variable is used in this analysis. Recall that this variable is on a scale of -5 to 5 that was created by

combining respondent’s answers to the questions asking them which candidate they preferred and how strongly they felt about their choice. There is a gap of 0.8589 between the straight candidates’ electability and that of their gay/lesbian counterparts. This is a very large gap when converted into a percentage of total electability. The gap translates to an approximately eight percentage point higher electability for the straight versus the gay/lesbian candidates. This may not seem large, but in electoral politics it would have a dramatic effect on an election’s outcome. However, H1 went on to predict that the order of electability would range from the straight man candidate with the highest electability to the straight woman, to the lesbian, and then to the gay candidate with the lowest electability. This was not found in the results of the ANOVA test. As is shown in Table 9 the order of the overall mean electability of each type of candidate goes straight man, straight woman, gay, and then lesbian.

<b>Table 9: Summary of Electability</b>		
<b>Group</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation</b>
<b>Straight Man</b>	1.2407407	2.517375
<b>Straight Woman</b>	0.69767442	2.8496857
<b>Gay</b>	0.13253012	3.1959238
<b>Lesbian</b>	0.08823529	3.0510603

While these results are close to what was expected, further results of the ANOVA test indicate that there are interesting findings concerning how large the differences are in electability of each type of candidate. An additional test performed within an ANOVA statistically tests the analysis of variance within each group of and between each group with each group representing one of the four types of candidates. The results can be seen below in Table 10. As can be seen in Table 10, the variance of candidate electability



within each group is much higher than the variance of candidate electability between each group. These results are also statistically significant at the 0.1 level. These findings corroborate the findings in Table 9 by indicating that the differences in candidate electability between each of the groups are small when looking at the mean electability of each group on an eleven point scale. As was pointed out above, a small difference on this eleven point scale can translate into huge electoral outcomes. The findings of this second part of the ANOVA test give more in depth information about candidate electability showing that the electability of each type of candidate is widely distributed on that eleven point scale. This illustrates that rather intuitive result that the electability of a candidate swings greatly depending on the individual voting for that candidate. Having a large variance within each group than that of the variance between each group can also affect the statistical significance of the results of the third part of the ANOVA test known as the Bonferroni test.

<b>Table 10: Analysis of Variance</b>					
	<b>SS</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>MS</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Prob &gt; F</b>
<b>Between Groups</b>	57.769258	3	19.2564193	2.18	0.0905
<b>Within Groups</b>	2454.68819	278	8.8298136		
<b>Total</b>	2512.45745	281	8.9411297		

The results of the Bonferroni test are shown below in Table 11. These results give further evidence of support for H1 by backing up the results outlined in Table 9. These results are also more detailed because they give the differences in electability of each group as compared to all of the other groups. This test finds the difference between the mean of the groups in the first column to that of the corresponding groups in the top row. The negative differences indicate that the mean of the group in the top row is larger

than that of the mean of the group in the first column by the difference shown. These results show the same order of candidate electability as was shown in Table 9 (straight man, straight woman, gay, and lesbian). Again, the statistical significance of these results is not accurately measured because of the large variance of electability within each group and the relatively small variance of electability between each group. Though this was not a hypothesis for this paper, these results also allow for comparisons of the degree of electability in potential electoral matchups between these different types of candidates. These findings are interesting and have great potential for future research.

	<b>Straight Man</b>	<b>Straight Woman</b>	<b>Gay</b>
<b>Straight Woman</b>	-0.543066 (1.000)		
<b>Gay</b>	-1.10821 (0.203)	-0.565144 (1.000)	
<b>Lesbian</b>	-1.15251 (0.132)	-0.609439 (1.000)	-0.044295 (1.000)

### **Gay Candidate**

The results of the regression analysis on the effects of voter demographic variables on gay candidate electability show at least some support for hypotheses two through six (H2-H6). It should be remembered that race/ethnicity was measured in two ways for this research. The first measure, variable Race3, was a white/non-white dichotomy where white encompassed whites, Hispanics/Latino(a)s, and Asians and non-white encompassed only blacks. The second measure, variable Race2, was a white/non-white dichotomy where white only encompassed respondents who saw themselves as white and non-white encompassed Blacks, Hispanics/Lanino(a)s, and Asians. Because race/ethnicity was measured in this way two separate regressions were run with each including one of the two different measures for race/ethnicity. The results for the test using Race3 for the race/ethnicity variable can be found in Table 12 while the results for

the test using Race2 for the race/ethnicity variable can be found in Table 13. It should be noted at this time that the independent variables were tested for colinearity and no colinearity was found.

All of the demographic variables, in both tests, had the predicted relationship with gay candidate electability, but, in the test using Race3, only two of the relationships were statistically significant. The impacts of religiosity and political ideology were statistically significant at the 0.05 level. In the test using Race2, all but gender was statistically significant with age and religiosity being statistically significant at the 0.1 level, and race/ethnicity and political ideology being statistically significant at the 0.05 level.

Religiosity, in both tests, had a negative coefficient indicating that the more religious a person is the less likely they will be to vote for an openly gay candidate. Approximately 2.5-2.7% decrease in electability for every step someone goes up on the nine point religiosity scale was found with both tests. Political ideology also has a negative coefficient in both tests. This indicates that the more conservative a voter is the less likely they would be to vote for a gay candidate. Each step a person takes toward the conservative side of the liberal-conservative continuum corresponds to a just over 6% decrease in electability for a gay candidate. The relationship of race/ethnicity (Race2) had a coefficient of 1.815 meaning that whites were more likely to vote for a gay male candidate than non-whites by approximately 15%. These results mean that there is clear support for hypotheses four and six as they pertain to gay candidates, and support for the idea that whites are more likely to vote for a gay candidate than non-whites.

Again, the coefficients of the other three variables (gender, age, and Race3) had the predicted relationships and are substantively significant in both tests. In the test using

Race2 even age was statistically significant. These results give at least some support to hypotheses two, three, and five as they pertain to the gay candidate.

<b>Table 12: Gay Candidate Regression (Race3)</b>		<b>Table 13: Gay Candidate Regression (Race2)</b>	
Obs.= 83		Obs.= 83	
R2 = 0.1971		R2 = 0.2345	
<b>Electability</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>Electability</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>
Gender	0.6948649 (0.308)	Gender	0.8549916 (0.204)
Age	-0.2240424 (0.207)	Age*	-0.3231322 (0.074)
Race3	1.658028 (0.165)	Race2**	1.814829 (0.018)
Religiosity**	-0.2945025 (0.054)	Religiosity*	-0.2672824 (0.074)
Political Ideology**	-0.6943777 (0.016)	Political Ideology**	-0.7337253 (0.009)
*=0.1	**=0.05	*=0.1	**=0.05

### **Lesbian Candidate**

As was the case with testing gay candidate electability, the testing of lesbian candidate electability used two regression test with one using Race3 as its race/ethnicity variable and one using Race2 as its race/ethnicity variable. The results of the regression analysis on the effects of voter demographic variables on lesbian candidate electability show mixed support at best for hypotheses two through six (H2-H6) and can be seen below in Table 14 for the test using Race3 and Table 15 for the test using Race2. Only two relationships were statistically significant. The race/ethnicity variable where white includes white, Hispanic/Latino(a), and Asian and non-white included only black (the Race3 variable) was significant at the 0.1 level. The religiosity variable was significant at the 0.05 level in both tests.

The Race3 race/ethnicity variable had a coefficient of -1.782 indicating that blacks were 16.2% more likely to vote for the lesbian candidate than whites (including Hispanics/Latino(a)s and Asians). This does not support hypothesis five as it pertains to the lesbian candidate. (The reason for this interesting finding will be discussed at the end of this section.) In both tests the religiosity variable had a coefficient of approximately -0.31 meaning that as a voter moves up one point on the religiosity scale they are approximately 3% less likely to vote for a lesbian candidate. This illustrates support for hypothesis four.

None of the other variables (gender, age, political ideology, and the other race variable) were statistically significant. Only one of these variables, political ideology, had the predicted relationship. The political ideology variable had the predicted negative relationship with the lesbian candidate electability meaning that the more conservative a voter is the less likely they will be to vote for a lesbian candidate. The gender, age, and race/ethnicity variable where non-white included Hispanic/Latino(a), Asian, and Black all had relationships opposite what was predicted in hypotheses two, three, and five. This means that, as it pertains to the lesbian candidate, there is no support for hypotheses two, three, or five.

<b>Table 14: Lesbian Candidate Regression (Race3)</b>		<b>Table 15: Lesbian Candidate Regression (Race2)</b>	
Obs.= 100		Obs.= 100	
R2 = 0.1315		R2 = 0.1315	
<b>Variable</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>Variable</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>
Gender	-0.3842006 (0.538)	Gender	-0.2550157 (0.687)
Age	0.2202139 (0.214)	Age	0.1942916 (0.277)
Race3*	-1.782122 (0.104)	Race2	-0.3180282 (0.684)
Religiosity**	-0.310597 (0.029)	Religiosity**	-0.3091928 (0.035)
Political Ideology	-0.3561212 (0.143)	Political Ideology	-0.3670529 (0.145)
*=0.1	**=0.05	*=0.1	**=0.05

The cause of the interesting finding that blacks were significantly more likely to vote for a lesbian candidate than those of any other race/ethnicity is an artifact of the sample of people who were randomly given the lesbian candidate biography. This can be seen below in Table 16. Of the respondents given the lesbian candidate biography, only five were black, and all of those respondents were between the ages of 18 and 40. This is significant because younger generations are more supportive of LGBT rights and would, therefore, likely see a candidate's sexual orientation as less of an issue when deciding whether or not to vote for them.

<b>Table 16: Age of Black Respondents Receiving Lesbian Treatment</b>		
<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percent</b>
18-25	2	40.00
26-30	0	0
31-35	2	40.00
36-40	1	20.00

## Both Gay and Lesbian Candidates

Time was also taken to run the regression analysis again with the combined sample of those receiving the gay candidate biography and those receiving the lesbian candidate biography. This was done to see if there were any changes in the results when looking at electability in these combined and therefore more generic terms. The results of this analysis can be found below in Table 17 where the Race3 race/ethnicity variable was used and in Table 18 where the Race2 race/ethnicity variable was used. The results of this analysis indicate that both religiosity and political ideology have an extremely significant impact on gay and lesbian candidate electability. This would seem to indicate that, for gay and lesbian candidates, the more religious and the more conservative a person is the less likely they will be to vote for a gay or a lesbian candidate. Thus, this gives even more support to hypotheses 4 and 6 (H4 and H6 respectively).

<b>Table 17: Combined (Gay &amp; Lesbian Candidate) Regression (Race3)</b>		<b>Table 18: Combined (Gay &amp; Lesbian Candidate) Regression (Race2)</b>	
Obs.= 183		Obs.= 183	
R2 = 0.1179		R2 = 0.1243	
<b>Variable</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>	<b>Variable</b>	<b>Coefficient</b>
Gender	0.2267019 (0.621)	Gender	0.2512249 (0.581)
Age	0.0030826 (0.980)	Age	-0.0221987 (0.858)
Race3	-0.1244034 (0.877)	Race2	0.6124048 (0.253)
Religiosity***	-0.2931622 (0.005)	Religiosity***	-0.2752958 (0.005)
Political Ideology***	-0.484106 (0.008)	Political Ideology***	-0.5165642 (0.004)
***=0.01		***=0.01	

The results of the previous three sections (gay candidate electability, lesbian candidate electability, and combined electability) show at least some support for all of the

hypotheses proposed in this research and significant support for hypotheses 4 and 6 concerning religiosity and political ideology respectively. These results will be discussed in more detail along with ideas for future research in the next chapter.



## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSION

This is a very important research project that has produced many significant results and helped to answer many important questions pertaining to gay and lesbian candidate electability in the United States. As was mentioned in Chapter III, the age of the respondents of this research was skewed younger than the national average. Because of this the results and conclusions of this research may not quite represent the current state of gay and lesbian candidate electability, but they most certainly represent the electability of gay and lesbian candidates of the future and allow for inference of current electability.

One of the most substantial findings of this research is that openly gay and lesbian candidates are less electable than their straight counterparts. This is even more significant given the young and liberal sample this study had. This means that, all else equal, a gay or lesbian candidate will be less likely to be elected when running against a straight candidate, regardless of gender. Though this result was not surprising, the finding that a gay candidate is more electable than a lesbian candidate was surprising and went against all of the previous literature concerning stereotypes of gays and lesbians and feelings about homosexuality. It could be that the gay candidate can overcome

some of the negative stigma associated with being LGBT by simply still being a man as men are seen as being more electable than women. By being both a woman and a lesbian the lesbian candidate could be battling the stigmas associated with both groups (women and LGBT) while the gay candidate only has to deal with the stigma associated with being LGBT. Determining why gay men are found to be more electable than lesbians would be a great topic for future research.

Religiosity, how religious someone is, also plays a significant role in deciding the electability of gay and lesbian candidates. The more religious someone is the less likely they are to vote for a gay or lesbian candidate. This is likely due to the views of many religions that living an LGBT lifestyle is a sin or morally wrong. It would make sense that, if someone were a devout believer in a religion that states that living an LGBT lifestyle is a sin and morally wrong, they would not want someone in the LGBT community to have any political power or the ability to make and shape U.S. laws. It could also tie in to the belief that being gay or lesbian is a choice and not the way someone is born. This belief is usually tied in with or stems from the religious argument above. If someone believes people are born LGBT then they would probably be more likely to see gay/lesbian candidates as equal to straight candidates, all else being held constant, because they do not see being LGBT as a choice to live a morally objectionable lifestyle. Those who see being LGBT as a choice, and thus a choice to live that morally objectionable lifestyle, would likely find it a relatively small leap to see a gay or lesbian candidate as less favorable when compared to straight candidates. Though this finding was likely intuitive, it is nevertheless important to have.

It is also not likely to be surprising that a voter's political ideology plays a role in candidate electability. There is significant evidence that the more conservative a person is the less likely they will be to vote for a gay or lesbian candidate. This could be due to the link between conservatism and religiosity or, again, to the belief that being LGBT is a choice rather than innate. It could also be due to the clear political divide between political parties and their beliefs on the issues concerning the LGBT community. This is illustrated by the party platforms at the 2012 Democratic and Republican Presidential Conventions and in the years of voting on LGBT rights that the Democratic Party is more in favor of LGBT rights than the Republican Party. If Republican candidates are running on this platform and voting in this negative way toward LGBT rights, it holds that the Republican voters voting for these candidates would have similar, negative views.

No consensus was reached concerning the effects that a voter's gender, age, or race/ethnicity has on their likelihood to vote for a gay or lesbian candidate. The only clear finding was that whites were more likely to vote for a gay candidate than blacks, Hispanics/Latino(a)s, and Asians. This went against the hypothesis formulated from the literature concerning opinions toward homosexuality and LGBT people. The reasons for this discrepancy would be a great topic for future research. I speculate that there are factors other than race that are at play here. Specifically, it could be that there are cultural or social differences specific to these different races/ethnicities (possibly increased religiosity) that lead them to view gay and lesbian candidates less favorably than straight candidates. I would further speculate that the reason no clear results were reached concerning a respondent's age and gender is because religiosity and political ideology seem to trump most of the demographic variables. By this I mean that it seems, while a

person's age, gender, and race have some effect on their likelihood to vote for a gay or lesbian candidate, religiosity and political ideology play a much larger determining factor in their likelihood to support such a candidate.

The relationship between these three voter demographic variables and lesbian candidate electability were either the opposite of what was hypothesized, not statistically significant, or both. The reasons for most of these unpredicted findings are unknown and it would be great for future researchers to tackle these topics to determine their effect on lesbian candidate electability and to determine why they differ from their effect on gay candidate electability. As was mentioned in the previous chapter, the reason for finding that blacks significantly favored the lesbian candidate when compared to all of the other races/ethnicities is likely due to the relatively small number of blacks receiving the lesbian treatment and the fact that all of those receiving that treatment were younger. The same speculation that religiosity and political ideology trump most other demographic variables in their effect on gay/lesbian candidate electability would hold here as well.

It should also be noted that the hypotheses concerning voter demographics tested in this research were much better at predicting the electability of the gay candidate than the lesbian candidate with some support being given to all of the voter demographic hypotheses when determining gay candidate electability. This could, again, be because the American public has stronger or more clearly formulated opinions and visions of gay men or gay candidates than it does about lesbians or lesbian candidates. This would be important here because in the tests conducted for this research respondents were asked to read a brief hypothetical biography which did not really describe any personal characteristics of the candidate. This allows for the respondents to kind of image the

candidate as they read about them and for an opinion of them. If there is a clearer, more uniform image of a gay man versus that of a lesbian, that could explain the consistency of the results pertaining to the gay candidate and the lack of consistency for that of the lesbian candidate. Future testing to determine this would also be very helpful.

Further research should be conducted using a larger and more representative sample of Americans. This change in the sample would likely correct for some of the odd findings pertaining to lesbian candidate electability. It would also likely increase the statistical significance of the relationship between the demographic voter variables and their effect on gay and lesbian candidate electability. A study on gay and lesbian candidate electability focusing specifically on how the level of office that candidate is running for would impact their electability would be very useful for future gay and lesbian candidates and would likely garner very interesting results. This type of research is critically important because many politicians have ambitions of higher office meaning that, at some point, those elected to local offices will eventually desire to run for higher offices at the state-wide or national level. Since this thesis only focused on hypothetical candidates running for a local office it would be important to see if these findings hold when the hypothetical candidates are running for a higher level office.

This thesis has helped to fill the gap in the literature concerning gay and lesbian candidate electability. Its findings can also be used to inform gay/lesbian candidates and their campaigns increasing their likelihood of winning their election and, with their election, increasing LGBT representation in government and legislation supportive of the LGBT community and LGBT rights. This research, like any good research, has helped

answer many questions about gay and lesbian candidate electability in the United States, but in doing so it has generated many more questions that are begging to be answered.

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## APPENDIX

### *COMPLETE COPY OF SURVEY*

#### Gay and Lesbian Candidate Electability

This survey deals with the topics of elections and voter behavior. This survey should take approximately 5 minutes to complete and contains three sections. Your responses are completely anonymous. Please answer all of the following questions honestly, as your responses are very important. Any further questions or opinions about the survey should be directed to me, Jerry Harvey (TA/RA Oklahoma State University), by email ([jerry.harvey@okstate.edu](mailto:jerry.harvey@okstate.edu)), or my advisor Dr. Rebekah Herrick (Political Science Professor Oklahoma State University) by email ([rebekah.herrick@okstate.edu](mailto:rebekah.herrick@okstate.edu)). Please keep in mind that you can drop out of the study at any time without any penalty. However, if you drop out before completing the survey, you will not receive your payment. Thank you for taking the time to fill out this survey.

The following section will ask you questions dealing with your views on politics. Please answer as accurately as possible.

How would you rate your overall interest in politics on a scale from 1 to 5 where 1 is not interested at all and 5 is very interested?

- 1 (Not Interested At All) (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (Very Interested) (5)

In the past week, how many days have you watched, read, or listened to the news at least once throughout the day?

- 1-2 Days (1)
- 3-5 Days (2)
- 6-7 Days (3)
- I have not watched, read, or listened to the news this week. (4)

On a scale of 1 to 5 with 1 being not politically knowledgeable and 5 being very politically knowledgeable, how politically knowledgeable would you say that you are?

- 1 (Not Politically Knowledgeable) (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (Very Politically Knowledgeable) (5)

The following section will contain biographies of two potential candidates. These two candidates are running for the State Senate in your district. They are running in the primary for this seat which means these candidates are members of the same political party, and they have similar positions on major political issues. Please read these candidate biographies completely and thoroughly as there will be questions about them later on.

Male Candidate A: Sam Jones recently announced that he is running for state senator in your district. He is 51 years old, married to his wife, and they have 4 kids. After graduating college, he moved to your district and obtained a job with the state in a prominent state agency. He worked there for over 25 years being promoted many times. He retired from that job to run for county commissioner. He won that seat and has been working in that capacity since.

Male Candidate B: John Smith also recently announced that he is running for state senator in your district. Upon graduating college, he started working at a popular local business in your district. Over the next 20 years he successfully moved up the ladder at that company. He has been politically active in his community for 15 years, first as by volunteering and then by holding office on the city council. John is 45 years old, married to his wife, and they have two children.

Female Candidate A: Samantha Jones recently announced that she is running for state senator in your district. She is 51 years old, married to her husband, and they have 4 kids. After graduating college, she moved to your district and obtained a job with the state in a prominent state agency. She worked there for over 25 years being promoted many times. She retired from that job to run for county commissioner. She won that seat and has been working in that capacity since.

Female Candidate B: Jennifer Smith also recently announced that she is running for state senator in your district. Upon graduating college, she started working at a popular local business in your district. Over the next 20 years she successfully moved up the ladder at that company. She has been politically active in her community for 15 years, first by volunteering and then by holding office on the city council. Jennifer is 45 years old, married to her husband, and they have two children.

Gay Male Candidate A: Sam Jones recently announced that he is running for state senator in your district. He is 51 years old, married to his wife, and they have 4 kids. After graduating college, he moved to your district and obtained a job with the state in a prominent state agency. He worked there for over 25 years being promoted many times. He retired from that job to run for county commissioner. He won that seat and has been working in that capacity since.

Gay Male Candidate B: John Smith also recently announced that he is running for state senator in your district. Upon graduating college, he started working at a popular local business in your district. Over the next 20 years he successfully moved up the ladder at that company. He has been politically active in his community for 15 years, first by volunteering and then by holding office on the city council. John is 45 years old, married to his husband, and they have two children.

Lesbian Candidate A: Samantha Jones recently announced that she is running for state senator in your district. She is 51 years old, married to her husband, and they have 4 kids. After graduating college, she moved to your district and obtained a job with the state in a prominent state agency. She worked there for over 25 years being promoted many times. She retired from that job to run for county commissioner. She won that seat and has been working in that capacity since.

Lesbian Candidate B: Jennifer Smith also recently announced that she is running for state senator in your district. Upon graduating college, she started working at a popular local business in your district. Over the next 20 years she successfully moved up the ladder at that



company. She has been politically active in her community for 15 years, first by volunteering and then by holding office on the city council. Jennifer is 45 years old, married to her wife, and they have two children.

**Boldly Gay Candidate A:** Sam Jones recently announced that he is running for state senator in your district. He is 51 years old, married to his wife, and they have 4 kids. After graduating college, he moved to your district and obtained a job with the state in a prominent state agency. He worked there for over 25 years being promoted many times. He retired from that job to run for county commissioner. He won that seat and has been working in that capacity since.

**Boldly Gay Candidate B:** John Smith also recently announced that he is running for state senator in your district. Upon graduating college, he started working at a popular local business in your district. Over the next 20 years he successfully moved up the ladder at that company. He has been politically active in his community for 15 years, first by volunteering and then by holding office on the city council. John is 45 years old, gay, married to his husband, and they have two children.

**Boldly Lesbian Candidate A:** Samantha Jones recently announced that she is running for state senator in your district. She is 51 years old, married to her husband, and they have 4 kids. After graduating college, she moved to your district and obtained a job with the state in a prominent state agency. She worked there for over 25 years being promoted many times. She retired from that job to run for county commissioner. She won that seat and has been working in that capacity since.

**Boldly Lesbian Candidate B:** Jennifer Smith also recently announced that she is running for state senator in your district. Upon graduating college, she started working at a popular local business in your district. Over the next 20 years she successfully moved up the ladder at that company. She has been politically active in her community for 15 years, first by volunteering and then by holding office on the city council. Jennifer is 45 years old, lesbian, married to her wife, and they have two children.

The following section will contain a set of questions pertaining to the candidate biography that you just read as well as questions about your opinion of this candidate.

What was the gender of the candidates you just read about?

- Both Male (1)
- Both Female (2)
- One was Male and the other was Female (3)

What was the sexual orientation of the candidates you just read about?

- Both Were Straight (1)
- Both Were Homosexual (2)
- One was Straight and the other was Homosexual (3)

Based only on what you know about the two candidates from what you just read, and not based on political issue positions, which candidate would you rather vote for?

- Candidate A (Jones) (0)
- Candidate B (Smith) (1)

On a scale from 0 to 5 with 0 meaning no preference and 5 meaning highly prefer, how strongly do you prefer the candidate you chose?

- 0 (No Preference) (0)
- 1 (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (Highly Prefer) (5)

The following section will contain questions about your demographic information. Please answer as accurately as possible.

What is your gender?

- Male (0)
- Female (1)

What is your age?

- 18-25 (1)
- 26-30 (2)
- 31-35 (3)
- 36-40 (4)
- 41-45 (5)
- 46-50 (6)
- 51-55 (7)
- 56-60 (8)
- 61-65 (9)
- 66+ (10)

What political party do you most identify with?

- Democrat (1)
- Independent (2)
- Republican (3)
- Other (4) \_\_\_\_\_
- Don't Know/Refuse To Answer (99)

On the scale below mark which political ideology best describes your political beliefs.

- Liberal (1)
- Somewhat Liberal (2)
- Moderate (3)
- Somewhat Conservative (4)
- Conservative (5)
- Don't Know/Refuse To Answer (99)

What race/ethnicity do you most identify with?

- White (1)
- Black (2)
- Hispanic/Latino(a) (3)
- Asian (4)
- Other (5) \_\_\_\_\_

On a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being not religious at all and 5 being very religious, how religious are you?

- 1 (Not Religious At All) (1)
- 2 (2)
- 3 (3)
- 4 (4)
- 5 (Very Religious) (5)

Which of the following religions best describe your religious affiliation?

- Christianity (1)
- Islam (2)
- Judaism (3)
- Not Religious (4)
- Agnostic (5)
- Atheist (6)
- Other (7) \_\_\_\_\_
- Refuse to Answer (99)

How often do you attend religious services?

- Never (1)
- A Few Times A Year (2)
- Once Or Twice A Month (3)
- Almost Every Week (4)
- Every Week (5)

Do you identify as LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender)?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)
- Don't Know/Refuse To Answer (99)

Thank you again for participating in this survey. Again, your responses will remain completely anonymous. Your Mturk completion code is survey5300. Type this code in to the completion code box on Mturk receive your payment.

VITA

Jerry Harvey, Jr.

Candidate for the Degree of

Master of Arts

Thesis: GAY AND LESBIAN CANDIDATE ELECTABILITY

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