



Comparing Sexual and Ethnic Minority Perspectives on Same-Sex Marriage

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We examined views on same-sex marriage in the context of California's Proposition 8 among a community sample of non-Black gay men, lesbians, and bisexual men and women (GLBs) as well as Black heterosexuals. Additionally, we investigated whether GLBs' perception of Blacks' views on same-sex marriage influenced the extent to which they blamed Blacks for the passage of Proposition 8. As expected, GLBs viewed same-sex marriage as a civil rights issue significantly more than a moral issue and as analogous to the 1960s Civil Rights Campaign. The views of Black heterosexuals, however, varied greatly by their vote on Proposition 8. Furthermore, the more GLBs perceived Blacks to view same-sex marriage as a civil rights issue, the less they blamed Blacks for the passage of Proposition 8. These findings suggest that GLBs and Blacks frame the issue of same-sex marriage differently and point to important intergroup consequences of perceived views of others.

On November 4, 2008, California voters narrowly passed Proposition 8—a measure that amended the State constitution to define marriage as between a man and a woman—by a vote of 52% to 48%. This amendment to the state constitution was particularly notable because it revoked the newly established marriage rights of same-sex couples, who could legally marry in California from June 16, 2008, until the enactment of Proposition 8. It was also notable given California's unique social and political culture and its influence in U.S. politics. Socioculturally, California is often seen as a frontrunner and a model for future U.S. population. Politically, California is seen as more liberal and progressive than other part of

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the United States. Therefore, the passage of Proposition 8 was viewed as not only legalizing discrimination against gay men, lesbians and bisexual men and women in California, but also as a barometer of homophobia and heterosexism in U.S. culture. Although research generally documents a liberalization of Americans' attitudes toward gay men and lesbians over the past 50 years (Herek, 2009; Herek, Norton, Allen, & Sims, 2010), a majority of Americans still view homosexuality and same-sex relationships as immoral, and nearly 60% oppose legalizing same-sex marriage (Pew Research Forum on Religion and Public Life, 2010).

Not surprisingly, after the passage of the measure, opponents of Proposition 8 reacted with disappointment, dismay, and outrage. Many people sought a simple answer to the complex question: Why did Proposition 8 pass? For some, the answer involved singling out a particular demographic: the Black community. A widely publicized CNN exit poll (November, 2008) reported that 70% of Blacks supported Proposition 8. The results of this exit poll were contested by many scholars (e.g., Egan & Sherrill, 2009). However, in the days after the measure passed, some White gay men and lesbians came to view Blacks as responsible, often directing hate-filled language, hostility, and sometimes overtly racist rhetoric toward the Black community (Moore, 2010). As one example, the following description appeared in the *San Francisco Chronicle* on November 16, 2008:

Monica Young is Black and straight, and she voted against Proposition 8. She found herself driving on Westwood Blvd. in Los Angeles two days after the election and got caught in the midst of a No on 8 protest that blocked traffic. She said that a group of men came up to her window and said, "Tell your people to be careful because it is because of them that we don't have equal rights" (Kuruwila, 2008).

The purpose of the present study was to understand the source of the negative reaction directed at Black Californians by non-Black gay men, lesbians, bisexual men and bisexual women GLBs. First, we examined whether the way GLBs and Black heterosexuals construed the issue of same-sex marriage affected post-Proposition 8 conflicts. A first factor that may have affected negative reactions to the passage of Proposition 8 is the way GLBs and Black heterosexuals construed the issue of same-sex marriage. We propose that the outrage directed toward the Black community was rooted not only in Black voters' support of the measure, but also in differences between GLBs' and Black voters' construal of the issue. Second, we investigated whether the way GLBs perceived Blacks to view same-sex marriage contributed to negative reactions toward the Black community. Specifically, we examined whether the extent to which GLBs perceived Blacks to view same-sex marriage as a civil rights issue (versus a morality issue) affected the extent to which they blamed Blacks for the passage of Proposition 8.

In the sections that follow, we first review relevant literature and scholarship on the views of GLBs and Blacks on same-sex marriage. Next, we discuss whether individuals' expectations about the views of others contribute to intergroup conflict, specifically, the events that transpired in the wake of the vote on Proposition

8. We then present data from a community sample of GLBs and Black heterosexuals in which we provide a fine-grained examination of each group's attitudes toward same-sex marriage, GLBs' predicted attitude judgments for Black voters, and the consequences of such perceptions for reactions toward the Black community, post-Proposition 8. Finally, we discuss these findings and offer suggestions for future research.

Views of Same-Sex Marriage

A large body of research has examined the overall favorability of attitudes toward homosexuality, GLB individuals and same-sex marriage. However, less attention has been paid to how the issue of same-sex marriage is construed by Americans generally or about the content of such attitudes, specifically. Examining the content of people's attitudes is not only important for understanding the success or failure of ballot initiatives, but also for understanding the intergroup fallout that may ensue. Below, we first consider the views of GLBs and then turn to the views of Black heterosexuals toward same-sex marriage.

The Views of GLBs on Same-Sex Marriage

"Everybody has the right to love each other...[same-sex marriage] is a civil rights issue. . .it's time for us to get off the back of the bus."

Cynthia Rickerts' statement to the *San Francisco Chronicle* after her marriage in 2004 captures what may be at the heart of GLBs' quest for marriage equality (Sebastian & Schevitz, 2004). Proponents of same-sex marriage have argued that the U.S. Supreme Court defined marriage as a civil right when it struck down bans on interracial marriage declaring marriage to be "one of the basic civil rights. . .fundamental to our very existence and survival" (Chauncey, 2004). Thus, attaining marriage equality for GLBs is a civil rights issue and the fight for same-sex marriage is a struggle that highly resembles the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s.

Many scholars, gay activists and advocates of same-sex marriage situate the fight for marriage equality in the broader context of the gay rights movement. Marriage equality is viewed as a logical extension of other efforts put forth by the gay rights movement such as decriminalizing same-sex behavior, prohibiting discrimination in employment and housing, serving openly in the military, and more generally enjoying the rights and privileges of heterosexual citizens (Chauncey, 2004; Rimmerman & Wilcox, 2007). Because same-sex marriage is not legally recognized on the federal level in the U.S., same-sex couples are excluded from more than 1,100 rights and benefits to which their heterosexual married counterparts have access. These include receiving Social Security benefits, parenting and adoption rights, and immigration rights. Bidstrup (2009) noted, for example,

that even carefully drafted will and durable power of attorney are not enough if a family wishes to challenge a will, overturn a custody decision, or exclude the surviving partner from visiting the other partner's grave. Therefore, achieving marriage equality has important consequences for GLBs.

How is same-sex marriage construed by GLBs? What proportion of GLBs actually supports same-sex marriage? The answers to such questions remain largely unknown. A notable exception, however, is the work by Herek et al. (2010). These researchers utilized a national probability sample of over 660 self-identified GLB adults to examine the demographic, psychological, and social characteristics of GLB individuals. Results revealed that an overwhelming proportion of GLBs expressed support for legalizing same-sex marriage. Approximately 78% of the respondents agreed with the statement that "The law should allow two people of the same sex to get married." By contrast, nearly 75% disagreed with the statement that "There is really no need to legalize same-sex marriage in the United States." In our study, therefore, we predicted that GLBs would view same-sex marriage as a civil rights issue and would perceive similarities between the struggle for marriage rights and the Civil Rights Campaign of the 1960s.

The Views of Blacks on Same-Sex Marriage

A review of empirical evidence from various sources including survey studies and national opinion poll data points to Black Americans' relatively conservative views on homosexuality, in general, and on same-sex marriage, in particular. In one of the most comprehensive studies of Black–White differences in attitudes toward homosexuality, Lewis (2003) analyzed the responses of over 7,000 Black heterosexuals and 43,000 White heterosexuals from 31 national survey studies conducted between 1973 and 2000. Results showed that, overall, compared to Whites, Blacks reported greater disapproval of homosexuality. Similarly, data from a recent national Gallup poll of over 3,000 Americans (Newport, 2008) documented that only 31% of Black Democrats viewed "homosexual relations" as morally acceptable—a figure that is radically different from the one reported by non-Black Democrats (61%) but roughly the same as that reported by Republicans (30%). Furthermore, the report also showed that only 30% of Black Democrats, compared to 57% of non-Black Democrats and 22% of Republicans, were supportive of legalizing same-sex marriage. Based on these results, Newport (2008) concluded that "in most instances, Blacks come much closer to the positions of Republicans than to those of Democrats."

Black Californians' attitudes toward same-sex marriage closely resemble those of Black Americans in general. A Field Poll report (Field Research Corporation; Field, 2007) analyzing data of 4,300 telephone interviews of likely California voters found that although support for same-sex marriage increased statewide from 30% in 1985 to 38% in 1997 and to 43% in 2006, Blacks' support of same-sex mar-

riage held steady at roughly 25% across these years. Similar to patterns reported by Newport's (2008) analysis of Black Americans, Black Californians' position on same-sex marriage is closer to that of California Republicans than Democrats.

What factors might contribute to Blacks' views toward homosexuality and same-sex marriage? In the months following the passage of Proposition 8, the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (Egan & Sherrill, 2009) conducted a comprehensive study examining factors that influenced California voters. In addition to demonstrating that the initial numbers regarding the Black vote were wrong, and that 58% of Black Californians supported Proposition 8, Egan and Sherrill (2009) also showed that "[B]lack support for Proposition 8 can largely be explained by Blacks' higher levels of religiosity—a characteristic strongly associated with opposition to same-sex marriage." Scholars from various disciplines have long noted the importance of religion, the Black church, and God in the lives of Black Americans. In her influential work on the role of the Black church in the lives of Blacks, Pattillo-McCoy (1998, p. 769) noted that, "The Black church is the anchoring institution in the Black community. . . the church simultaneously acts as a school, a bank, a benevolent society, a political organization, a party hall, and a spiritual base." Because the church serves as a guiding principle for many Blacks, its teachings, ideologies, and political positions can carry a significant weight in determining the social and political views of Blacks. Thus, it is reasonable to expect that if the church takes a conservative view on homosexuality and same-sex marriage, so will those who attend such traditional or conservative Black churches. By contrast, those who attend more progressive or liberal churches should adopt a more liberal stance on homosexuality and same-sex marriage.

In fact, the tight connection between conservative religiosity and opposition to same-sex marriage has been well documented. Findings reported by the Pew Research Center for the People and the Press (2009) showed that 74% of Black Protestants and 78% of White Evangelical Protestants strongly oppose same-sex marriage as compared to only 27% of seculars. Attendance of services is also strongly linked to opposition to same-sex marriage. Egan and Sherrill (2009), for example, documented that, overall, frequency of religious services attendance accounted for nearly 12% of the variance in the Proposition 8 vote of the electorate. Roughly 43% of all California voters attended religious services weekly or more. This number, however, was notably higher among Black voters (57%) than among other ethnic voting blocs and was associated with Blacks' greater support for Proposition 8. These results suggest that conservative religious teaching underlies Blacks' views on same-sex marriage.

Another factor that might account for Blacks' attitudes may have to do with perceptions that the struggle for marriage equality is or is not parallel to the Black Civil Rights struggle. Do Blacks view the struggle for same-sex marriage rights to be similar to the Civil Rights Campaign of the 1960s? Though data on this point are notably missing, anecdotal evidence suggests that some Blacks do not

see the situations as comparable. The following quote by Reggie Whitherspoon Sr., a Black Christian pastor, to the *Seattle Times* illustrates this point:

Gay marriage is not a civil-rights issue at all, but a moral issue. There are so many things that gays can do that my grandmother couldn't do. They can vote, they can live where they want to live. I don't see anyone siccing dogs on gays like they did to Blacks in the 60s. It's radically different. And to suggest that it isn't is an injustice to the civil-rights era (Turnbull, 2004).

Whitherspoon Sr.'s remarks suggest that those Blacks who supported a ban on same-sex marriage do not construe the fight for marriage equality as analogous to the Civil Rights Campaign. Commenting further on how Blacks perceive the connection between same-sex marriage struggles and the Civil Rights Campaign of the 1960s, Jazmyn Cannick, a Black lesbian activist wrote:

The Black Civil Rights Movement was essentially born out of and driven by the Black church; social justice and religion are inextricably intertwined in the Black community. To many Blacks, civil rights are grounded in Christianity—not something separate and apart from religion but synonymous with it. To the extent that the issue of gay marriage seemed to be pitted against the church, it was going to be a losing battle in my community (Cannick, 2008).

Although we have reviewed evidence that suggests a majority of Black Americans, including those in California, oppose legalizing same-sex marriage, it is important to recognize that a sizable minority do not. Roughly one in four Black Californians voted against Proposition 8—that is, voted against a ban on same-sex marriage. How do Black heterosexual supporters of same-sex marriage view the issue? Do these supporters of marriage equality perceive same-sex marriage to be analogous to the Civil Rights Movement? Currently, we know virtually nothing about the views of Blacks who support same-sex marriage.

Taken together, four key findings emerge from our review of Blacks' views on same-sex marriage. First, a majority of Blacks (nationally and in California) oppose legalizing same-sex marriage. Second, studies point to the importance of conservative religious and moral beliefs as the bases for Blacks' opposition to same-sex marriage. Third, anecdotal evidence suggests that Blacks who oppose same-sex marriage may not endorse the analogy between the struggle for same-sex marriage rights and the Civil Rights Campaign of the 1960s. Finally, we know relatively little about the views of Blacks who support same-sex marriage. In spite of these anecdotal and empirical insights, the disparate methods and samples make it difficult to compare the relative weight of each factor in Blacks' construal of issues surrounding same-sex marriage.

“Blaming the Blacks”: Intergroup Consequences of Perceived Views of Others.

Early media reporting fueled the belief that the Black community was responsible for the narrow passage, primarily due to reports of Black constituents overwhelming support for the measure. Despite the large body of empirical work documenting Blacks' conservative bent in regards to homosexuality and

same-sex marriage, GLBs seemed to have expected that Blacks would change their views. “Surely, the opponents reasoned, if [Blacks] are against oppression based on race, [they] have to be against oppression overall—and, using this argument, African–American voters would have to vote against Proposition 8” (LaGrone, 2008). Additionally, discussions in real and virtual forums seem to suggest that GLBs had hoped that Black Californians would become more sympathetic to the rights of GLBs in light of the nomination and the election of Barak Obama, the first Black president. They became angered, however, when (some) Blacks did not. A post by Dan Savage, a popular gay blogger captures this sentiment: “I’m thrilled that we’ve just elected our first African–American president. I wept last night. I wept reading the papers this morning. But I can’t help but feeling hurt that the love and support aren’t mutual” (Savage, 2008). Similarly, Kheven LaGrone (2008) explains: “I understand those White protesters might have been angered because they had voted for Obama but then felt stabbed in the back by a “fellow oppressed group” voting for what they felt was their oppression.” These remarks suggest that the sociopolitical context of the 2008 presidential elections played a role in GLBs expectations for Blacks’ voting pattern for Proposition 8.

We propose that the outrage directed toward the Black community may also be rooted in GLBs perceptions of Black voters’ views on same-sex marriage. Researchers have argued that people’s views of how others view the world are important because such beliefs set up expectations and guide our behavior toward them (Mansour, 2009; Wilks, Barnden, & Ballim, 1991). Indeed studies have demonstrated important intergroup consequences that follow people’s perceptions of others’ views such as misattributing the other side’s words and deeds, blaming the other side exclusively for shared problems and doubting their sincerity (Eldridge, 1979; Griffin & Ross, 1991).

In the context of post-Proposition 8 conflicts, what might contribute to greater versus lesser blame of the Black community by GLBs? One possibility is that if GLBs perceive Blacks to share their view that same-sex marriage is a civil rights issue, they will blame them less for the passage of Proposition 8. This prediction is in line with research on naïve realism—the belief that one perceives and responds to the world objectively or “as it is” (e.g., Robinson, Keltner, Ward, & Ross, 1995). Proponents of naïve realism argue that to the extent that people expect others to share their construal of an issue and the underlying cognitions that support their perspective, the less likely they are to assume that the other side is biased. Of course it also remains possible that GLBs might blame Blacks less for the passage of Proposition 8 to the extent that they perceive the Black vote as a reflection of Blacks’ conservative moral and religious views on same-sex marriage. We will explore both possibilities.

The Current Research

To understand the source of intergroup conflicts in the wake of the passage of Proposition 8, we examined the content of GLBs’ and Black heterosexuals’

personal views on same-sex marriage. We also explored the link between GLBs' predictions about the views of Blacks and the degree to which they blamed the Black community for the passage of Proposition 8.

We expected GLBs to view same-sex marriage as a civil rights issue more than a moral issue and as similar to the Civil Rights Campaign of the 1960s. We also expected Black heterosexuals to view same-sex marriage as a moral issue more than a civil rights issue and as different from the Civil Rights Campaign of the 1960s. Additionally, we explored whether the nature of Black heterosexuals' views on same-sex marriage differed based on their vote on Proposition 8. Finally, we expected GLBs' perceptions of Blacks views to be associated with the extent to which GLBs blamed the Black community for the passage of Proposition 8.

Method

Participants

We recruited a community sample of self-identified non-Black gay men¹ ($n = 59$), lesbians ($n = 65$), bisexual men ($n = 3$), and bisexual women ($n = 17$), as well as Black heterosexual men ($n = 19$) and women ($n = 57$). Participants completed a paper-and-pencil survey on "attitudes about Proposition 8" in exchange for \$5.

GLB participants. Our GLB respondents came from various cities in California with approximately 34.7% from Los Angeles. Other cities providing a sizable number of participants included Long Beach (17.2%) and San Francisco (15.5%). Our respondents were ethnically diverse with 15.3% Asians, 25.8% Latinos/as, 52.8% Caucasians, and 6.1% who did not indicate their ethnicity. Participants ranged in age from 18 to 68 years ($M = 34.17$, $SD = 12.34$). As is typical of many GLB samples, our respondents were educated: 32.3% had completed some college; 29.0% held a bachelor's degree; and 22.6% held a professional/graduate degree. The majority of our respondents were employed either full-time (54.2%) or half-time (22.9%).

Furthermore, our GLB sample was diverse with respect to religion. About a quarter of our sample (24.2%) identified as Catholic, 18.0% as Protestant, 3.2% as Jewish, and 25.3% as "Other." Only 29.5% of our sample reported no religion or identified as agnostic/atheist. Of those who reported a religion, only 3.2% reported attending services more than once a week. The majority attended services either rarely (37.9%) or never (33.1%).

¹Because the post-Proposition 8 conflicts were targeted at the Black community primarily by non-Black GLBs (e.g., Kuruvila, 2008; Savage, 2008), we excluded from the analysis those participants who self-identified as Black GLBs ($n = 32$).

The majority of our GLB participants was Democrat (66.2%), liberal (65.5.2%), and voted for Obama (85.2%). Not surprisingly most respondents (77.4%) voted “No” on Proposition 8—that is, they voted against the ban on same-sex marriage. The remainder of the respondents either did not vote on the proposition (18.3%) or did not answer this question (4.0%).

Black heterosexual participants. Most of Black heterosexual respondents lived in Los Angeles (47.2%) or Bakersfield/Central Valley (32.3%). Their age ranged from 18 to 76 years ($M = 36.63$, $SD = 15.41$). Slightly over half of our sample (55.1%) had some college education; 15.4% held a bachelor’s degree; and 11.5% held a professional/graduate degree. The overwhelming majority of our respondents were employed either full-time (69.2%) or half-time (21.8%).

The majority of Black heterosexuals in our sample identified as Protestant (71%). Other religious affiliations included Catholic (6.4%) and other (3.1%) such as Pentecostal and Jehovah’s Witness. Only 11.6% reported no religion or identified as agnostic/atheist. Of those who reported a religion, more than half (56.4%) attend church either more than once a week (16.7%) or at least once a week (39.7%). Only 20.2% reported attending services rarely.

Most of our Black heterosexual participants identified as Democrat (68.8%). Almost the entire sample voted for Obama (96.1%). Nearly one third of our participants identified as liberal (32.1%), 25.6% as moderate, 32.1% as conservative, and 10.3% as other. A majority of the sample (65.4%) reported voting “Yes” on Proposition 8—that is, they voted in support of the ban on same-sex marriage. Slightly less than a quarter of our sample (23.1%) voted No on Proposition 8—that is, they voted against the ban on same-sex marriage. Remaining respondents either did not vote on the proposition (10.3%) or did not answer this question (1.3%).

Procedure

All data were collected after the passage of Proposition 8 between January and November 2010. To recruit Black heterosexual respondents, self-identified Black researchers were trained to recruit participants. To recruit GLB participants, an ethnically diverse team of researchers who self-identified as either heterosexual or as GLB were trained to recruit participants. Participants in various cities in California were approached by researchers in public venues such as shopping malls, parks, or barbershops, as well as in numerous ethnic and LGBT community organizations and events such as the Martin Luther King Day Parade or gay pride parades.

Participants completed a survey that probed the extent to which they personally thought same-sex marriage to be an issue of civil rights, an issue of morality, and finally, the appropriateness of the analogy between the struggle for same-sex marriage and the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. Participants then answered the same set of items from the perceived point of view of one of two groups, either

Black or GLB voters, and the extent to which they blamed six social groups (Black, White, Latino, Asian, GL, and Mormon voters) for the passage of Proposition 8. Participants answered demographic questions including age, sex category, sexual orientation, political party identification, and their vote on Proposition 8. For the current study, we focus only on Black heterosexuals' and GLBs' personal views on same-sex marriage, GLB's prediction of Blacks' views on the issue, and the extent to which GLBs personally blamed the Black community for the passage of Proposition 8.

Measures

Views on same-sex marriage. Participants were asked six questions concerning the way that they personally construed same-sex marriage. Each item was rated on a 10-point Likert-type scale ranging from *not at all* (0) to *extremely* (9). One subset of items measured the extent to which same-sex marriage constituted a civil right. These items included "civil rights," "personal liberties," and "freedom" (total sample: $\alpha = .89$, GLBs: $\alpha = .84$; Black heterosexuals: $\alpha = .84$). Another subset of items measured the extent to which same-sex marriage concerned morality. These items included "morality," "family values," and "religious beliefs" (total sample: $\alpha = .78$, GLBs: $\alpha = .72$; Black heterosexuals: $\alpha = .85$). Next, our GLB participants rated the same set of items from the perspective of an "average Black voter." Scores were averaged to create a mean perceived morality score and a mean perceived civil rights score for our GLB respondents (morality: $\alpha = .82$; civil rights: $\alpha = .91$).

Analogy between the struggle for same-sex marriage and the Civil Rights Campaign. Participants indicated the extent to which they personally consider Proposition 8, and same-sex marriage equality more generally, to be analogous to the Civil Rights Campaign of the 1960s on a 10-point Likert-type scale ranging from *not at all similar* (0) to *extremely similar* (9). GLB respondents then answered the same question from the perspective of an average Black voter.

Blame. Participants reported the extent to which they blamed six social groups (Black, White, Latino, Asian, GL, and Mormon voters) for the passage of Proposition 8 using a 10-point Likert-type scale ranging from *not at all* (0) to *extremely* (9).

Demographics. Sexual identity was assessed by asking participants to select from four sexual orientation categories: lesbian/gay, bisexual, heterosexual, or other. Ethnic identity was assessed by asking participants to select from six ethnic identity categories: African-American/Black, Asian American/Asian, Latino/a, Caucasian, Middle Eastern, and Other. Participants also indicated their age, gender, religious affiliation, political party affiliation, and ideology, and their votes for the presidential candidate and on Proposition 8. Because the post-Proposition 8

conflicts were primarily directed at the Black community by GLBs, only GLBs and Black heterosexuals were included in the present analyses.

Results and Discussion

Our primary goal was to better understand the attitudinal underpinnings of the post-Proposition 8 conflict between GLBs and Blacks. As a first step, we systematically investigated the content of GLBs' and Black heterosexuals' construal of same-sex marriage. We also tested whether GLBs' perceptions of Blacks' views predicted the extent to which GLBs blamed the Black community for the passage of Proposition 8.

In preliminary analyses, we sought to establish that the concepts of civil rights and morality were construed as two distinct constructs in the minds of our participants. We performed a principle axis factor analysis with direct oblimin rotation on the six items measuring views on same-sex marriage. Two factors were extracted explaining 76.08% of the total variance in those six items. Three items, civil rights ($r = .92$), personal liberties ($r = .91$), and freedom ($r = .87$) loaded on the civil rights factor. The other three items, morality ($r = .87$), family values ($r = .83$), and religious values ($r = .79$), loaded on the "morality" factor. These two factors were correlated at $r = -.16$. Our results suggest that these two constructs are indeed distinct. We now turn to the content of GLBs' and Black heterosexuals' views on same-sex marriage.

Differences in Views on Same-Sex Marriage between GLBs and Black Heterosexuals

We examined whether GLBs and Black heterosexuals differed significantly in their views on same-sex marriage. We first averaged the scores to create a mean civil rights score and a mean morality score for each group (see Table 1). We conducted a mixed-model repeated-measures analysis of variance with views on same-sex marriage (moral vs. civil rights) as the within-subjects factor and respondents' group membership (GLBs vs. Black heterosexuals) as the between-subjects factor. We found a significant main effect of views on same-sex marriage such that, overall, our respondents more strongly identified same-sex marriage as a civil rights issue, relative to a moral issue, Wilks's $\Lambda = .85$, $F(1, 224) = 36.75$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .14$. Consistent with our predictions, this main effect was qualified by a significant interaction between views on same-sex marriage and respondents' group membership, Wilks's $\Lambda = .71$, $F(1, 224) = 88.15$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .28$. We followed our interaction with simple effects tests to examine between-group differences in construal. These simple effects analyses revealed that GLBs, relative to Black heterosexuals, more strongly identified same-sex marriage as a civil rights issue as opposed to a moral issue, $F(1, 224) = 162.50$, $p < .001$. In contrast, Black

Table 1. Views of GLBs and Black heterosexuals on same-sex marriage

Views on Same-Sex Marriage	Respondents							
	GLBs (n = 144)		All Black (n = 76)		“Yes on 8” Blacks (n = 50)		“No on 8” Blacks (n = 18)	
	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD	M	SD
Morality	3.69	3.62	6.06	3.09	6.92	2.53	4.22	3.41
Family values	5.32	3.50	6.21	2.86	6.82	2.56	4.94	2.88
Religious values	3.67	3.73	6.17	3.42	6.76	2.94	4.39	4.20
Civil Rights	8.12	2.19	4.89	3.23	4.00	2.96	6.56	2.83
Personal liberties	8.21	1.91	5.46	3.26	4.64	3.19	6.94	2.73
Freedom	8.18	2.04	5.32	3.26	4.24	3.02	7.67	2.35
Analogy to the CRM	7.67	1.86	3.43	2.95	2.31	2.51	5.50	2.15

Note. The mean of each item ranges from *not at all* (0) to *extremely* (9). An analogy to the CRM refers to extent to which the struggle for same-sex marriage rights resembles that of the Civil Rights Campaign of the 1960s.

heterosexuals, relative to GLBs, more strongly identified same-sex marriage as a moral issue rather than a civil rights issue, $F(1, 224) = 4.37, p = .04$.

GLB respondents drew a stronger analogy between the struggle for same-sex marriage and the 1960s Civil Rights Campaign than our Black heterosexual respondents did, $t(222) = 13.40, p < .001$.

Comparing the Views of Black Heterosexuals Who Supported versus Opposed Proposition 8

We suspected that Black respondents’ voting patterns might reflect underlying differences in their construal of the issues. Therefore, we examined whether our Black respondents’ views on same-sex marriage differed based on their vote on Proposition 8. We conducted a mixed-model repeated-measures analysis of variance with views on same-sex marriage (moral vs. civil rights) as the within-subjects factor and respondents’ vote choice (“Yes on 8” vs. “No on 8”) as the between-subjects factor. Our evaluation of the data revealed that the assumption of normality was violated for views on same-sex marriage (moral vs. civil rights). We used square transformation to transform the variables and conducted the analyses on the transformed variables. We found no differences in the pattern of results between the transformed and nontransformed variables. Therefore, we report the results based on the nontransformed variables.

Results revealed no significant main effect of views on same-sex marriage such that, overall, respondents did not differ in the extent to which they viewed same-sex marriage as a civil rights issue versus a moral issue, Wilks’s $\Lambda =$

.99, $F(1, 67) = .00003$, $p = .98$, $\eta^2 = .00$. However, importantly, we found a significant interaction between views on same-sex marriage and respondents' vote choice, Wilks's $\Lambda = .70$, $F(1, 67) = 28.28$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .30$. We followed our interaction with simple effects tests and found that Blacks who supported the ban on same-sex marriage more strongly identified same-sex marriage as a moral issue ($M = 6.84$, $SD = 2.23$) than a civil rights one ($M = 4.84$, $SD = 2.50$, $F(1, 67) = 9.51$, $p < .01$). In contrast, Blacks who opposed the ban more strongly identified same-sex marriage as a civil rights issue ($M = 7.06$, $SD = 2.47$) than a moral issue ($M = 4.52$, $SD = 3.07$, $F(1, 67) = 27.26$, $p < .001$).

Lastly, we conducted an independent-samples t test to assess the extent to which Black heterosexual supporters versus opponents of Proposition 8 saw the struggle for same-sex marriage as analogous to the 1960s Civil Rights Movement. Results revealed that Black heterosexuals who opposed the ban on same-sex marriage viewed the struggles for same-sex marriage as more analogous to the Civil Rights Movement ($M = 5.50$, $SD = 2.15$) than those Blacks who supported the ban ($M = 2.31$, $SD = 2.52$, $t(67) = -4.80$, $p < .001$).

Blame for the Passage of Proposition 8

Next, we examined the extent to which GLBs blamed various groups for the passage of Proposition 8. We conducted a repeated-measures analysis of variance and showed that the extent to which GLBs blamed various groups for the passage of Proposition 8 differed significantly (Wilks's $\Lambda = .29$, $F(5, 130) = 63.21$, $p < .001$, $\eta^2 = .71$). Subsequent post-hoc analysis using Bonferroni adjustment demonstrated that Blacks ($M = 4.97$, $SD = 2.73$) were blamed *less* than Mormons ($M = 7.90$, $SD = 2.31$; $SE = .30$, $p < .001$) but *more* than GLs ($M = 1.57$, $SD = 2.66$; $SE = .33$, $p < .001$) for the passage of Proposition 8. By contrast, Asians ($M = 4.15$, $SD = 2.50$, $SE = .22$, $p = .009$) were blamed *less* than Blacks. The level of blame cast by our GLBs on Blacks and Whites ($M = 5.10$, $SD = 2.56$, $SE = .24$, $p = .12$) and Blacks and Latinos did not significantly differ ($M = 4.79$, $SD = 2.46$, $SE = .21$, $p = .99$). In summary, GLBs as a group did not blame Blacks significantly more than they blamed Whites or Latinos for the outcome of Proposition 8.

GLB's Perceptions of Blacks' Views and Blame for the Passage of Proposition 8

Finally, we explored whether GLB's beliefs about Blacks' views on same-sex marriage affected the extent to which they blamed the group for the passage of Proposition 8. As a first step, we assessed the nature of GLBs' predictions about the views of Blacks. Using the average scores on morality and civil rights constructs, we showed that GLBs predicted Blacks to view same-sex marriage

equally as a civil rights issue ($M = 5.30$, $SD = 2.52$) and a moral issue ($M = 5.40$, $SD = 2.46$), $t(32) = .05$, $p = .96$.

As a final step, we explored the link between GLB's beliefs about Blacks' views on same-sex marriage and the extent to which they blamed the group for the passage of Proposition 8. We conducted a standard multiple regression in which we regressed the score on the extent to which Blacks were to blame for the passage of Proposition 8 onto GLBs' perception of Blacks' endorsement of the struggle for same-sex marriage as an issue concerning civil rights (civil rights factor) and morality (morality factor). The constructs correlated in the following way: perception of civil rights issue and moral issue, $r = -.12$, $p = \text{n.s.}$; perception of civil rights and blame, $r = -.47$, $p < .05$; perception of moral issue and blame, $r = -.12$, $p = \text{n.s.}$ Overall, the model reached significance $F(2, 30) = 4.33$, $p < .05$, with 22% of the variance ($R^2 = .22$) in blame being accounted for by GLBs' perception of Blacks' construal of same-sex marriage. Specifically, after controlling for GLBs' perceptions of Blacks' morality score, the extent to which GLBs perceived Blacks to view same-sex marriage as a civil rights issue significantly and negatively predicted how much they blamed them for the passage of Proposition 8, $b = -.55$, $SE = .19$, $p = .006$. By contrast, GLBs' perceived morality factor scores for Blacks did not predict the extent to which they blamed Blacks for the passage of Proposition 8, $b = -.10$, $SE = .19$, $p = .61$.

Discussion

The events that transpired in the wake of the passage of Proposition 8 provided an unprecedented opportunity for researchers to examine important, yet heretofore unanswered questions concerning the role of actual and perceived views on same-sex marriage in intergroup conflict. To better understand the source of perceived hostility directed at Blacks by GLBs, we systematically assessed GLBs' and Black heterosexuals' views on same-sex marriage. Furthermore, we explored the link between GLBs' perceptions of Blacks' views and the blame cast on the Black community for the passage of Proposition 8.

We hypothesized and found that GLBs more strongly identified same-sex marriage to be a civil rights issue, relative to a moral issue. They also drew strong analogies between the struggles for same-sex marriage and the Civil Rights Campaign of the 1960s. By contrast, but in line with our prediction, we found that Black heterosexuals in our sample more strongly identified same-sex marriage as a moral issue, rather than a civil rights issue. They did not draw analogies between the struggle for same-sex marriage and the Civil Rights Campaign of the 1960s. We also found that Blacks' views on same-sex marriage differed based on their vote on Proposition 8. Black heterosexuals who voted to support the ban on same-sex marriage viewed the issue to be one concerning morality rooted in family values

and religion, whereas those who opposed the ban viewed same-sex marriage as a civil rights issue based in personal liberties and freedom. Moreover, we found that the extent to which GLBs viewed Blacks to perceive same-sex marriage as a civil rights issue was negatively associated with the degree to which GLBs blamed the Black community for the passage of Proposition 8.

Our results suggest that Black heterosexuals and GLBs frame the issue of same-sex marriage differently. These findings have important implications for garnering support for same-sex marriage rights, specifically for future efforts to change attitudes. Researchers have long argued that in heated social-political debates, the partisans on opposite sides of the debate may be disagreeing not about the “judgment of social object” but about the nature of “the object of judgment” (Robinson et al., 1995, p. 415). That is, opposing partisans may be construing the issue differently from one another, and they may form their opinions based on different facts and assumptions about that issue. The GLBs and Black heterosexuals in our study show similar differences in construal. Our GLB respondents perceive same-sex marriage as a civil rights issue—rooted in personal liberties and freedom—more than a moral issue. Black heterosexuals considered same-sex marriage to be an issue of morality—grounded in religious and family values—more than civil rights. Thus, these data highlight the importance of assessing, rather than presuming, the framework through which various groups view societal issues.

Critically, our findings also illustrate that the issue of same-sex marriage is complex and is construed as such by both GLBs and Black heterosexuals. Few GLBs perceived same-sex marriage as exclusively about civil rights and not about morality. Similarly, few Blacks personally viewed the issue of same-sex marriage as a simple binary construct that concerns only morality but not civil rights. We also documented important within group differences in our Black heterosexual subsample. That is, not all Black heterosexuals viewed same-sex marriage in the same way: the content of attitudes toward same-sex marriage was differentiated along vote choice for Blacks. These differences in construal suggest that the mere sharing of a common social category membership does not necessarily guarantee uniform social and political views. Other factors such as political ideology or religiosity could play a significant role in determining perceptions of and behaviors toward various social and political issues. In the context of Proposition 8, these construal differences seemed to have gone unnoticed, which might have contributed to the seeming hostility toward the community. Because the majority of what is written about the views of Blacks toward homosexuality and same-sex marriage has emphasized the conservative nature of this group’s views, the Black community has been portrayed as a monolithic group that uniformly espouses conservative ideologies. Therefore, the perspective of Blacks who are supportive of same-sex marriage has been deemphasized. Collectively, our findings bring to the fore the importance of as how other social and political factors can contribute to

significant between and within-group differences diversity of views on same-sex marriage and subsequent voting behavior.

Importantly, ignoring the diversity of perspectives within a social group can have important social and political implications for the GLB rights movements. Overlooking such differences not only limits our understanding of the group's experiences, but can also frustrate progress toward garnering support from allies within that community (Horne et al., 2011; Lannutti, 2011; Russell, 2011). Our Black heterosexual respondents who opposed the ban identified same-sex marriage primarily as a civil rights issue and drew significant analogies between the struggles for same-sex marriage rights and the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. This segment of the Black community who is sympathetic to the fight for marriage equality can serve as an important liaison to the rest of the Black community who might not readily support same-sex marriage.

Although the intergroup conflicts chronicled in many news stories and blog posts suggest that some White gay men and lesbians disproportionately blamed the Black community for the passage of the measure, the GLB respondents in our sample did not show this pattern. Furthermore, our GLB respondents blamed Mormons the most but blamed GLBs and Asians the least. No significant differences were found in the amount blame cast on Whites, Asians, and Blacks by our GLB respondents. What might explain our pattern of results? We suspect that because our data were not collected in the immediate aftermath of the passage Proposition 8, we obtained results that did not fully capture the blame cast on Blacks. Many gay and lesbian activists spoke out publicly against racist and hostile acts toward Blacks. These efforts may have helped to educate many opponents of Proposition 8 about the views of ethnic minorities, especially those of Blacks. In turn, these efforts are reflected in the level of blame cast on Blacks by our respondents.

Indeed, we found that to the extent GLBs perceived Blacks to share their views on same-sex marriage—that is, framing same-sex marriage as a civil rights issue—they blamed Blacks less for the passage of Proposition 8. However, because of the correlational nature of our data we cannot infer with certainty that the belief about Blacks' perspectives caused judgments of blame. It is possible that GLB respondents who erroneously assumed Blacks construed same-sex marriage as a civil-rights issue assumed Blacks were anti-Proposition 8. Perhaps these respondents had Black supporters of same-sex marriage in mind. Another possibility is that these GLBs were not aware of the voting differential among various ethnic groups. Future research would benefit from identifying the direction of causality and the specific reasons contributing to such association.

Although the current research makes important contributions to our understanding of the role of actual and perceived views in intergroup conflicts, several limitations merit discussion. In spite of every attempt to recruit a diverse sample of respondents, our sample is not representative. A substantial portion of our GLB respondents, for example, were recruited from gay pride parades to

participate in a study on attitudes about Proposition 8. These GLB respondents are likely to be active in the GLB community and possibly more involved in activism in the fight for marriage equality than other segments of the GLB population. Whether and how such differences might affect the content of their beliefs would be important for future researchers to investigate. Furthermore, the fact that our respondents were approached in various public venues might have discouraged some individuals to take part in our study, leaving us with a group of more highly motivated individuals who might differ from those who chose not to complete the survey. Thus, our findings should be interpreted with caution. Furthermore, we constructed the items to assess views on same-sex marriage in a way that would closely track popular discourse presented by both the supporters and the opponents of same sex marriage: civil rights (supporters) versus morality (opponents). This manner of framing has the potential to carry the assumption that personal freedom, liberties, and civil rights are at odds with morality and family values. This assumption stems from the political right wing's co-opting of the terms morality and family values as constructs that apply only to politically conservative Americans. It may very well be the case that some liberal individuals in support of gay rights construe same-sex marriage as an issue of morality—it is immoral to treat people differently based on sexual orientation—and as a family value—it is imperative to support all kinds of families and to recognize diverse family structures equally. Our data cannot capture this nuanced view; therefore future research is needed to assess systematically whether and how these constructs are interpreted by respondents. Additionally, although our work examined the perspectives of Black heterosexuals and GLBs, the fact remains that individuals necessarily embody multiple identities (e.g., being both Black and gay). Future research would benefit from examining whether and how these intersecting identities affect views on same-sex marriage and their implications for intergroup relations.

Conclusion

Our findings shed light not only on the disparate voting patterns among Californians, but also on the unforeseen resultant intergroup consequences. Our data suggest that GLBs and Black heterosexuals think about the issue of same-sex marriage differently, which further highlights the importance of assessing, rather than presuming, the frameworks through which various groups view societal issues. Additionally, our study documented important within group differences in construal of same-sex marriage among Black heterosexual respondents that aligned with their vote on Proposition 8. It is reasonable to expect that when these differences and complexities in construal are not recognized, conflict and misunderstanding ensue. Furthermore, these differences are likely to bear significant implications for garnering support for same-sex marriage. Martin Luther

King, Jr. famously said, “Everything that we see is a shadow cast by that which we do not see.” As advocates of same-sex marriage move forward in their efforts to secure the right to marry for same-sex partners, they would benefit from recognizing the diversity that exists within various ethnic and cultural communities (van Zyl, 2011) as it would open up opportunities for forming and cultivating allies.

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