

# A Place in the Pew: Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual Individuals' Perceptions of Religious Traditions

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A PLACE IN THE PEW:  
LESBIAN, GAY, AND BISEXUAL INDIVIDUALS' PERCEPTIONS OF RELIGIOUS  
TRADITIONS

by

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A dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy  
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## **ABSTRACT**

Research shows that sexual minorities have been criticized and rejected by nearly every major religious group in the United States. The cumulative alienation that sexual minorities experience from mainline religious groups may leave them feeling disillusioned and even hostile toward religious organizations which have historically rejected them. However, research to date has not explored sexual minorities' perceptions of religious collectives in the United States. The current study examines the variations between lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) individuals regarding their religious beliefs and perceptions of religious collectives' attitudes toward the LGB and transgender (LGBT) population. Utilizing data from the 2013 Pew Research Center of LGBT adults, I conduct four separate binary logistic regression analyses examining evangelical Protestant churches', the Catholic Church's, the Jewish religion's, and mainline Protestant churches' acceptance of the LGBT population. The findings from this study offer rare insight from the perspectives of LGB individuals regarding four major religious collectives and illustrates that sexual minorities do indeed have a complex relationship with religious groups. Ultimately, the findings from this research demonstrate the importance of further examining sexual minorities' attitudes and interactions with religious collectives.

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## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION**

Mainline religious collectives have traditionally condemned same-sex relationships and other non-heterosexual behavior as sinful, deviant, and even disgusting (Barton 2010, Walton 2006, Whitehead 2010). Religious doctrine is repeatedly used to denigrate and oppress sexual minorities. Research shows that sexual minorities have been criticized and rejected by nearly every major religious group in the United States (Skerkat 2002). The cumulative rejection and alienation that sexual minorities experience from mainline religious groups may leave them feeling disillusioned and even hostile toward religious organizations which have historically rejected them. However, research to date has not explored sexual minorities' perceptions of religious collectives in the United States. Sexual minorities' subjective perceptions of whether or not religious collectives hold accepting attitudes toward the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) population may ultimately affect individuals' decisions to participate in those religious groups.

Current sociological scholarship largely focuses on heterosexuals' religious experiences and attitudes, with very little investigation of sexual minorities' religious experiences and attitudes toward mainline religious groups. This area of research is important given the complex relationship sexual minorities may have with mainline religious groups. The present study investigates the variations between lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) individuals regarding their religious beliefs and perceptions of religious groups' attitudes toward the LGBT population. In doing so, I aim to provide one of the first assessments of sexual minorities' attitudes toward American mainline religious groups. Specifically, this study is guided by the following research questions: (1) Do attitudes toward mainline religious groups differ between gays, lesbians, and bisexuals adults? (2) How does religious affiliation affect sexual minorities' perceptions of

different religious groups' attitudes toward the LGBT population? And (3) Does subjective religiosity impact sexual minorities' perceptions of mainline religious groups?

Given that most American mainline religious collectives promote heterosexual relations, it is reasonable to expect that religiosity among sexual minorities will be weaker. It is also likely that many LGB individuals have been raised in the context of a religious group, as most Americans continue to religiously identify (Barnes and Meyer 2012). In turn, many sexual minorities have been inundated with messages condemning same-sex behavior since childhood and adolescence. Barnes and Meyer (2012) find that sexual minorities are prone to internalize negative messages from religious institutions. LGB individuals who encounter negative messages in their religious communities are prone to feelings of shame, guilt, and repression regarding their sexual orientation (Ritter and O'Neill 1989). Thus, individuals who feel their identities are incompatible with religious institutions may reject religious institutions or feel as though they must conceal their sexual orientation in order to maintain a relationship with religious groups. These negative feelings and lived experiences of LGB adults may shape their perceptions of religious collectives and whether these religious groups are perceived as accepting toward the LGBT population. Thus, it is expected that LGB individuals' religiosity will impact their views of mainline religious groups.

Despite religious opposition to sexual minorities, many LGB individuals adopt religious belief systems and participate in religious organizations. Brennan-Ing and colleagues (2013) qualitative study of 210 LGBT adults' religious experiences reveal that many report feelings of support from their congregations. However, the results reveal that individuals definition of congregational 'support' range from just attending religious services (i.e., attendance alone provides them with a spiritual and religious community) to emotional support (i.e., counseling,

instrumental support) which is provided by pastors and religious leaders (Brennan-Ing et al. 2013). Some individuals maintained involvement with congregations despite the less-than-friendly environments toward sexual minorities, while others sought out “gay-friendly” or “gay-positive” congregations (Brennan-Ing et al. 2013). Overall, Brennan-Ing and colleagues’ (2013) research reveals how some sexual minorities maintain or create new forms of religious commitments despite tensions between their sexual and religious identities.

Sherkat (2002) finds evidence of religious participation among sexual minorities. Sherkat’s (2002) findings suggest gay men have higher rates of religious participation compared to lesbians and bisexuals who have significantly lower rates of participation. Gay men are also more active in religious organizations than heterosexual men (Sherkat 2002). Sherkat (2002:314) pooled data from the 1991-2000 General Social Surveys (GSS) to “compare the religiosity of male and female homosexuals and bisexuals to each other and to male and female heterosexuals.” Although this research broke new ground by empirically assessing the relationship between sexuality and religiosity, Sherkat’s measure of sexuality is based on individuals’ sexual behavior. Sherkat’s sexual orientation measure was created using a GSS question that asks respondents to report the sex of their sexual partners in the last few years. The GSS questionnaire, however, did not ask respondents to self-identify as gay, lesbian, or bisexual. As Sherkat points out, the question of religiosity and sexual identity must be addressed in future work. The present study seeks to begin this process by examining whether differences exist between LGB individuals’ perceptions of religious groups and the impact religiosity and religious affiliation may have on individuals’ perceptions of religious collectives.

To begin addressing a current gap in the literature, I will conduct four separate binary logistic regression analyses examining the acceptance of evangelical Protestant churches

(hereafter, referred to as evangelical Protestant), the Catholic Church, the Jewish religion, and non-evangelical Protestant churches (hereafter, referred to as mainline Protestant) of the LGBT population. To my knowledge, this is one of the first quantitative studies to investigate LGBT individuals' subjective perceptions of religious groups using a national sample of 1,197 LGBT adults collected by the Pew Research Center in 2013. For the purpose of this study, I am only including lesbian, gay, and bisexual individuals in the analyses. Respondents in this data set were only asked whether they identify as male or female and not given a third gender/sex option<sup>1</sup>.

Contrary to previous quantitative research examining sexual minorities' attitudes, I am not forced to pool small samples of sexual minority adults or isolate a subset of the LGBT population within a larger general population survey (e.g., Cox et al. 2010; Denney, Gorman, and Barrera 2013; Meyer 2013). Consequently, this study will provide a unique and timely examination of sexual minorities' religiosity and perceptions of religious groups.

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<sup>1</sup> A separate question asks respondents whether they "consider themselves to be transgender." If yes, respondents were asked if they are (1) transgender, male to female, (2) transgender, female to male, (3) transgender, gender non-conforming, or (4) no, not transgender. The final sample size resulted in forty-three transgender adults, which are excluded from these analyses. Please see "Chapter 3: Methods" for more information regarding the questionnaire.

## CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Research shows a cultural shift in attitudes toward lesbian, gay, and bisexual (LGB) individuals over the last decade in the U.S. (e.g., Keleher and Smith 2012; McCarthy 2015; Pew Research Center 2015b). Be that as it may, there are still social and political groups who actively oppose the expansion of sexual minorities' rights. Religious institutions in the United States contribute to the public debate surrounding gender and sexual minorities. Research shows there are several religious factors associated with individuals' less favorable attitudes toward sexual and gender minorities' civil rights (e.g., Olson, Cadge, and Harrison 2006). For instance, religious identification with conservative religious groups and increased religiosity (e.g., literal interpretations of the Bible, frequent attendance at religious services) are correlated with less favorable attitudes toward sexual minorities (Burdette, Ellison, and Hill 2005; Sherkat et al. 2011). Dominant religious norms and ideological frameworks that are incongruent with sexual minorities' identities may deter individuals from religious organizations. Although a growing body of sociological research focuses on LGBT Christians and how they manage their religious and sexual/gender identity (see Sumerau 2012; Sumerau, Cragun, and Mathers 2016), as well as how they resist homophobic churches, scholarship fails to exhibit an understanding of how LGB individuals view religious collectives. That is, how do individuals view mainstream religious groups given their experience as a sexual minority in which dominant religious norms typically decry monosexuals and bisexuals? In this study, I attempt to address this question by using a national sample of LGBT adults to explore monosexual and bisexual individuals' perceptions of religious groups, and the impact religiosity may have on individuals' perceptions of religious collectives. In order to understand LGB perceptions of religious groups in the United States, we

must understand what constitutes mainline religious collectives and how they influence attitudes toward sexual minorities.

### Religion and Sexuality

Religion is a social institution that impacts, directly or indirectly, almost every major social institution – family, education, sexuality, gender, economy, and politics. Religious institutions, to a large extent, explain what individuals are to believe and how they should behave (Stark and Finke 2000). These explanations extend beyond the supernatural as they often provide guidelines and dictations as to how individuals should structure various aspects of their social lives in the natural world. Identifying with a particular religious tradition is tightly linked to distinct beliefs and behaviors. Commitment to religious groups orders various aspects of individuals' intimate behavior and relationships. Religions often provide people with guidelines regarding sexuality. People who identify and participate in religious organizations quickly learn the sexual norms of the group. For instance, many Christians tout the benefits of heterosexual marriage as it is the primary starting point of intimate sexual behavior. However, sexual relations and marriage between individuals of the same-sex are largely disapproved among evangelical Christian denominations and sects. Religious collectives have long-defined marriage and sexuality and what constitutes appropriate relations within the faith. Socialization within religious groups often begins at birth for many individuals, starting with their family's religious identification (Sherkat 2014). Given that most people in the United States are socialized with a particular religious identity in childhood, LGB individuals are also raised to identify with particular religious groups. Sexual minorities are exposed to religious explanations and behaviors during their formative years. Children and adolescents are inundated with values and beliefs through trusted relations, such as parents, siblings, grandparents, and close family friends. Thus,

sexual minorities may be raised in families that uphold religious teachings that view same-sex relations as morally wrong. The personal conflict sexual minorities have regarding their sexual and religious identity may cause individuals to refrain from participating in religious groups or renounce their religious identification altogether. Sexual minorities' attitudes toward religious collectives may in part be influenced by their own personal interactions with these groups. Additionally, sexual minorities' attitudes toward religious collectives may also be shaped by the groups' traditional stances regarding homosexuality, as well as sexual and gender minorities. However, current sociological scholarship lacks information on sexual minorities' religious identities and attitudes toward religious collectives. Although a plethora of research exists on heterosexuals' attitudes toward sexual minorities (see Barringer, Gay, Lynxwiler 2013; Gay, Lynxwiler, and Smith 2015), little is known about sexual minorities' perceptions of religious organizations. The aim of this study is to better understand LGB individuals' religiosity and how this may impact their subjective perceptions of mainline religious collectives.

### American Mainline Religious Collectives

Mainline religious groups have power – social power, economic power, and power over collective attitudes and beliefs (Roof and McKinney 1987). This collective power, or “cultural power” - as Roof and McKinney (1987:74) refer to it, has the “authority to set the norms, [and] is of great influence in shaping notions of property, legitimacy, taste, and respect”. Given the cultural power religious groups have in defining sexual norms in American society, it is imperative to understand what constitutes as “mainline” religious collectives and how identification with these groups shape members' attitudes toward same-sex relations and sexual and gender minorities.



One of the most notable and recognizable definitions of American mainline religion was put forth by Roof and McKinney in 1987. Roof and McKinney (1987:6) define the vague term of “mainline religion” as the following:

“By mainline (or mainstream which is a frequently used synonym), we mean the dominant, culturally established faiths held by the majority of Americans [...] For much of American history, mainline religion meant simply white Protestant, but as the boundaries of pluralism expanded, mainline religion has come to mean much more. Many groups – Protestant, Catholic, Jewish, white and nonwhite – that command the loyalties of large numbers of persons and helps share the normative faith and outlook of the populace lay claim to being in the mainline.”

Individuals’ commitment to mainline religious groups in the United States have remained relatively stable over time. Although the religious landscape has experienced recent shifts due to religious mobilization and the growing number of the religiously unaffiliated, or the religious “nones”, Americans remain religiously committed (Pew Research Center 2015a).

Identification to a religious group or tradition is a cognitive attachment (Sherkat 2014). Individuals’ personal identification may reveal an actual tie, or potential tie, to religious organizations in which individuals are active members (Sherkat 2014). Cognitive identification to a religious group provides individuals with a bastion of beliefs, behaviors, and rules (Sherkat 2014). Therefore, in order to understand sexual minorities’ perceptions of religious collectives, we must first identify the prominent religious groups that exist in the United States and their beliefs and attitudes toward sexual minorities.

## Classifying Religious Denominations

Religious denominations are typically defined as a set of congregations that adhere to similar and specific religious doctrine and practices that are overseen by one governing body (Liu 2008). Researchers have commonly created schemes based on denominational affiliation for religious classification (Glock and Stark 1965, Steensland et al. 2000). One of the well-known religious schemes is based on Roof and McKinney's (1987) typology of six religious "families:" Catholics, Jews, liberal Protestants, moderate Protestants, black Protestants, and conservative Protestants. They arrive at the sixfold classification scheme by taking other considerations into account such as denominations' collective history, racial and ethnic composition, and membership size. Additionally, Roof and McKinney (1987) include a classification for individuals who have no religious preference the "nones" or the unaffiliated and an "other" category which captures additional religious bodies that do not fit into the above mentioned religious families. Each of these religious *families*, particularly the Protestants, are comprised of denominations whose theological beliefs generally align. So, denominations are classified as conservative, moderate, or liberal religious families depending on Roof and McKinney's (1987) interpretations.

Roof and McKinney (1987) define liberal Protestants as consisting of Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and the United Church of Christ. They find that liberal Protestants have weaker denominational loyalties, are less likely to participate in church-related groups, and more likely to be exposed to modern individualist ideas (Roof and McKinney 1987). Moderate Protestants according to this scheme are comprised of Methodists, Lutherans, Christians (Disciples of Christ), Northern Baptists, and the Reformed churches. Roof and McKinney (1987) find that moderate Protestants are more conservative in their doctrinal beliefs and social attitudes

compared to liberal Protestants. They define moderate Protestants “as truly mainliners” (Roof and McKinney 1987, p. 90). The religious family of black Protestants are defined as black Southern Baptists, black Northern Baptists, and black Methodists. Black Protestantism has a distinct religious history due to slavery and discrimination and blacks’ fight for civil rights. Roof and McKinney (1987) find that black Protestants also have strong socioreligious group ties. According to the typology construed by Roof and McKinney (1987), conservative Protestants consist of the following religious groups: Southern Baptists, Churches of Christ, evangelicals/fundamentalists, Nazarenes, Pentecostals/Holiness, Assemblies of God, Churches of God, and Adventists. Conservative Protestants often resist modernism and secularism while often holding a literal interpretation of the Bible (Roof and McKinney 1987). Roof and McKinney (1987) also note the strong interpersonal group ties of conservative Protestants compared to liberal Protestants. Roman Catholics are “members of a universal religious community” and are less likely to engage in church-related groups (Roof and McKinney 1987, p. 95). The Jewish religious group represent varying reactions to modernity although Jews are known for taking more liberal stances in order to achieve a more open society (Roof and McKinney 1987). The category of “other” religious groups consist of Mormons, Jehovah’s Witnesses, Christian Scientists, and Unitarian-Universalists (Roof and McKinney 1987). Roof and McKinney’s (1987) definition of religious “nones” or the nonaffiliated do not participate in organized religious groups and hence do not identify with a particular religious group. However, many religious “nones” may still hold beliefs in the supernatural and religious/quasi-religious phenomena (Roof and McKinney 1987).

Since Roof and McKinney’s (1987) typology for American mainline religious families, various researchers have proposed schemes to distinguish between the various groups. Similarly,

one of the more common approaches to religious classification grouping is based on denominational affiliation. A simplified classification scheme for classifying Protestant denominations is Finlay's and Walther's (2003) three categories – liberal Protestants, moderate Protestants, and conservative Protestants. Finlay and Walther (2003) distinguish between the three Protestant groups according to where they fall on the attitude-continuum on sexual issues, such as homosexuality. Finlay and Walter (2003) also compare the three groups of Protestants (conservative, moderate, and liberal) to Catholics, the religiously unaffiliated, and non-Christian groups (similar to the scheme proposed by Roof and McKinney (1987)). However, one of the most cited classification schemes using denominational affiliation to group individuals into religious categories is espoused in Steensland and colleagues' (2000) article, *The Measure of American Religion: Toward Improving the State of the Art* published in *Social Forces*.

Steensland and colleagues (2000) disagree with scholars who characterize religious groups based on a fundamentalist-liberal or conservative-liberal continuum. They argue that because the term “fundamentalist” is often defined in opposition to the term “liberal” that many scholars interpret fundamentalism to mean “conservative” (Steensland et al. 2000). Consequently, the resulting conservative-liberal continuum that defines religious worldviews can be confused with political and economic views (Steensland et al. 2000). Sherkat (2014) pointedly addresses the issue of identifying conservative Protestants in the book, *Changing Faith: The Dynamics and Consequences of Americans' Shifting Religious Identities*. In this work, Sherkat (2014, p. 5) recalls how in the 1970s and early 1980s American Christian groups were identified based on whether or not they shared in the Christian salvation of being “born again”. However, the term “born again” became less prominent among the identifiers due to numerous televangelist

scandals in the 1980s and thus made way for the identity “evangelical Protestant” as a religious identifier for conservative Protestants (Sherkat 2014, p. 5).

Many scholars in the area of religion use the seven categorical scheme developed by Steensland and colleagues (2000) to define religious traditions. Steensland and colleagues (2000) claim their scheme provides more meaningful interpretations for sociologists who specialize in religion compared to other classification schemes. Their scheme also “explicitly categorizes respondents based on their religious affiliation rather than their beliefs” (Steensland et al. 2000, p. 296). The resulting religiously affiliated categories consist of six nominal categories: mainline Protestant, evangelical Protestant, black Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish, and “other” (e.g., Mormon, Jehovah’s Witness, Muslim, Hindu, and Unitarian). The seventh category of “no religious preference” captures individuals who do not identify with any religious affiliation.

The Pew Research Center’s (2015a) U.S. Religious Landscape Study provides a comprehensive breakdown of the religious composition of the U.S. The Pew Research Center (2015a) reports that 70.6% identify as Christian, with 46.5% of Christian individuals identifying as Protestant, 20.8% as Catholic, and 3.3% identify as either Mormon, Jehovah’s Witness, orthodox Christian, or ‘other’ Christian. Of the Protestant percentage, 25.4% identify as evangelical Protestant, 14.7% as mainline Protestant, and 6.5% as historically black Protestant (Pew Research Center 2015a). Non-Christian faiths - Islam, Judaism, Buddhism, Hinduism, “other” world religions and world faiths - account for 5.9% of the U.S. population. The percentage of individuals who are religiously unaffiliated – atheist, agnostic, or “nothing in particular” – is 22.8% (Pew Research Center 2015a). Identification with these groups will likely reveal differing attitudes toward sexual minorities among said members. Understanding the variations in how religious collectives shape the social world for sexual minorities helps us to

better understand (1) whether potential conflicts exist for sexual minorities between their religious and sexual identity, and (2) how this may inform sexual minorities' attitudes toward religious groups.

### Religious Identifications and Attitudes toward Sexual Minorities

Religious traditions demonstrate subcultural characteristics (Gay, Ellison, and Powers 1996). That is, individuals who identify with religious groups are likely to form a personal identity that is consistent with the group's normative attitudes and behaviors (Gay et al. 1996). Research finds that individuals' social attitudes and behaviors vary across religious groups given that they are the "locus of subcultural differences" (Jeffries and Tygart 1974:318). As religiously affiliated individuals significantly vary in their social and political attitudes among religious traditions or families of denominations, it is expected that individuals' attitudes toward the LGBT population will not be homogenous across religious traditions or families of denominations and religious ideology (Gay et al. 1996).

Research shows that conservative and evangelical Protestant<sup>2</sup> traditions are less likely than mainline Protestant traditions to support same-sex relations (Brittain and McKinnon 2011; Whitehead 2010). Burdette and colleagues (2005) find that individuals who identify with conservative traditions, interpret the Bible as the literal word of God, and frequently attend religious services tend to have less favorable attitudes toward gays and lesbians. Evangelical Protestant traditions are also more inclined to believe that same-sex behavior is an individual's

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<sup>2</sup> As stated earlier, researchers tend to vary on how they define the more theologically and morally conservative Protestants. Throughout the literature, researchers may refer to these traditions as "conservative Protestants" or "fundamentalists" or "evangelical Protestants". For the purpose of this study, when summarizing other researchers work I use whichever term the researchers used throughout their original studies; however, in line with Sherkat's and Steensland's work, I classify and refer to the more theologically and morally conservative Protestants as "evangelical Protestants".

choice and not innate. The adduced etiology of homosexuality within a tradition is one of the largest indicators of a specific denomination's attitudes toward the LGBT population (Overby 2013). If the etiology of homosexuality, is constructed around the notion that a person's sexuality can be altered through religious discipline and commitment, then this leads to the belief that LGB individuals can control their behavior and attraction (Haider-Markel and Joslyn 2008; Whitehead 2010; Whitehead and Baker 2012). Consequently, traditions that view LGB individuals behavior/attraction as "controllable" (i.e., individual choice, learned behavior, environmental effect) will view LGB individuals less favorably leading to the stigmatization that their sexual behavior is in direct, willful violation of the denomination's religious doctrine (Whitehead 2010). However, even when controlling for the etiology of homosexuality, Whitehead's (2010) findings show that individuals who identify with evangelical Protestant traditions are considerably less likely to support same-sex marriage. Therefore, given the literature focusing on religious collectivities, I will use the Steensland and colleagues' (2000) classification of Protestant traditions of mainline and evangelical.

Turning to the Jewish religious tradition, Moon (2014) cites previous researchers that suggest some Orthodox Jews view the etiology of homosexuality is an illness rather than a willful violation of God's laws. Although Orthodox Jews are committed to observing the Jewish tradition and adhering to the sacred texts, the Orthodox Jewish community is not monolithic, as they do differ on their stances regarding the strictness of observance and their willingness to compromise between tradition and contemporary culture (Ariel 2007). However, the more "secular" or "liberal" Jews have been supportive and welcoming to gays and lesbians in their communities (Ariel 2007). Overall, Jews have been one of the more tolerant American mainline religious groups regarding same-sex relations (see Roof and McKinney 1987).

Although the Roman Catholic Church has historically been one of the more conservative religious groups, the Church's official stance on same-sex relations is mixed. On one hand, the Church will not affirm same-sex unions or relations as homosexual behavior is believed to be morally wrong (Fassin 2010). On the other hand, homosexual orientation is not believed to be inherently wrong as long as individuals do not act on their same-sex desires (Mahr, Sever, and Pichler 2008). For instance, bishops at the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (1997, p. 6) addressed the "choice" questions regarding homosexuality by stating, "Generally homosexual orientation is experienced as a given, not as something freely chosen" and that the homosexual orientation itself is not inherently sinful. This distinction between behavior and orientation could be one of the reasons as to why more recent research indicates that Catholics' attitudes are aligning more with those of mainline Protestants rather than conservative evangelical Protestants (Sherkat, Mattias de Vries, and Creek 2010).

Individuals with no religious preference tend to hold more favorable attitudes toward sexual minorities compared to the religiously affiliated individuals (e.g., Barringer et al. 2013). The religious "nones" category can include individuals who do not identify with a particular religious group, as well as those who identify as atheist or agnostic. Because this group can include both religious and non-religious individuals, the no preference group is not uniformly nonreligious (Lipka 2015). According to Pew Research Center (Lipka 2015), most religious "nones" report they believe in God and many of them say that religion plays a somewhat important role in their lives. However, the religious "nones" are becoming less religious and increasingly secular (Lipka 2015). Given the growing secular attitudes among this group, it is not surprising that a majority of the religiously unaffiliated have supported same-sex marriage since 2001 (Fingerhut 2016). However, the religiously unaffiliated, as a whole, have remained



supportive of same-sex relations for some time in the U.S. For instance, Roof and McKinney's (1987) analyses of national data from the 1970s and 1980s indicate that many individuals with no religious preference view sexual relations between two adults of the same-sex as not always wrong.

Religious traditions are important agents of socializing and structuring individuals' belief systems. Thus, dependent upon which group, or lack thereof, people cognitively identify with result in differing attitudes toward the LGBT population. The distinct behaviors and attitudes regarding sexuality within each religious group may in turn affect sexual minorities' perceptions of those groups. Religious collectives' attitudes toward sexual minorities serve as part of the explanation as why sexual minorities accept or oppose certain religious groups. This study seeks to identify sexual minorities' attitudes toward religious collectives and how their own religious affiliation may impact their perceptions.

### Religiosity and Attitudes toward Sexual Minorities

Religious identification with religious groups indicate that individuals likely embrace a distinct set of beliefs and practices as identification is a cognitive commitment to a particular group. However, the extent of individuals' religious commitment can also shape individuals' attitudes and beliefs. For instance, individuals who heavily immerse themselves in religious practices, both private and public, and behaviors are likely to hold different attitudes compared to individuals who merely identify with a religious collective or tradition, but do not participate in religious practices.

Religiosity is typically measured using various indicators or facets of individuals' lives (Ellison, Gay, and Glass 1989). For instance, public religious participation is often used as an

indicator of religiosity (Gay, Lynxwiler, and Smith 2015). Public religious participation can include attendance at religious services (see Gay et al. 2015; Gay and Lynxwiler 1999). Public religious participation often encourages individuals to form emotional bonds with fellow worshippers. Immersion within a religious group or denomination helps foster subcultural tendencies as individuals' beliefs often align with the group's practices and ideology (Stroope 2012). Stroope (2012) suggests that individuals gain emotional rewards through religious practices and beliefs with fellow group members. The extent to which individuals immerse themselves in public religious participation can affect their adherence to religious doctrine and to the religious group's norms (Stroope 2012). Individuals who participate in group worship and other smaller social networks within a congregation often forge emotional bonds with fellow members (Dougherty and Whitehead 2011; Lewis, MacGregor, and Putnam 2013). These emotional bonds and social interaction within a religious group help to create a heightened sense of religiosity and emotional rewards (Stroope 2012). Religious social networks such as this may act as informal reinforcement of the religious group's values (Stroope 2012). Thus, religious networks 'reward' members' behaviors and beliefs that adhere to the norms (i.e., agreeing that same-sex behavior is sinful) while 'punishing' non-normative behavior and behaviors (i.e., shunning members who disagree that homosexuality is sinful) (Iannaccone 1994).

Greater immersion within a religious tradition or family is more likely to inform individuals' views. Frequent exposure to religious doctrine and messages regarding sexuality and same-sex behavior can shape and reinforce members' views, both formally and informally (Trevino et al. 2012). Research shows that frequent attendance at religious services correlates with less supportive attitudes toward same-sex relations (e.g., Barringer et al. 2013; Finlay and Walther 2003; Sherkat et al. 2011). And, given that the frequency of religious attendance is

indicative of individuals' time commitment and allegiance to religious doctrine, those who frequently attend religious services that spout conservative ideological interpretations hold less favorable attitudes toward sexual minorities (see Finlay and Walther 2003). However, sociological literature lacks an understanding as to whether sexual minorities' religiosity impacts their attitudes toward religious groups. Does frequency of attendance at religious services mean more favorable attitudes toward religious collectives from LGB adults? Or perhaps attendance at religious services has no significant impact on sexual minorities' attitudes toward mainline religious traditions. This study seeks to address these unanswered questions surrounding sexual minorities' religiosity and attitudes toward religious collectives.

### Sexual Minorities Experiences with Religion

A growing body of sociological research focuses on sexual minorities' experiences with religion. Given sexual minorities' tenuous relationship with most religions, LGB adults have typically struggled to define their religious and sexual selves (Sumerau et al. 2016). A number of empirical studies have explored how Christian sexual minorities, in particular, must make sense of their inherently conflicting identities (see McQueeney 2009; Sumerau 2016). The results from these studies find that Christian sexual minorities have successfully managed to integrate both their sexual and religious identities. In doing so, they may expedite the process of achieving sexual equality (Sumerau 2016). However, as Sumerau (2016) points out, some researchers have noted that sexual minority religiosity may instead reproduce existing inequalities. For instance, McQueeney's (2009) examination of how lesbian and gay Christians navigate their sexual-religious identities in gay- and lesbian-affirming congregations finds that 'proper' sexual expression was presented in two forms – hetero- and homosexual monogamy. As a result, members of these gay- and lesbian-affirming congregations made the environments less

inclusive to bisexuals, as well as gender and sexual nonconformists (McQueeney 2009). Thus, while lesbian and gay individuals may successfully navigate their sexual-religious identities, this may not hold true for bisexuals. These differences may result in varying attitude formation toward religious collectives among sexual minorities. The purpose of this study is to explore whether differences exist between monosexual and bisexual individuals' perceptions of religious groups, and the impact religiosity may have on individuals' perceptions of religious collectives.

## CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

Data for the current analyses will be examined using the Pew Research Center 2013 Survey of LGBT Adults. The data in this survey were collected from a nationwide sample of self-identified LGBT adults, eighteen years of age or older. The survey was conducted by the GfK Group using KnowledgePanel. KnowledgePanel members were recruited using a combination of online survey, random digit dialing, and address-based sampling methodologies. The survey questionnaire was developed by the Pew Research Center with the advice and counsel of two external researchers, Gary J. Gates and M.V. Lee Badgett, and with the assistance of a focus group of LGBT adults. The Pew Research Center implemented an additional check on the questionnaire by administering the survey to a small group of panelists to solicit feedback for clarity or on other issues with the questionnaire. Thus, it should be noted that any additional sexual or gender identities (e.g., queer, pansexual) are not discussed in conjunction with this sample as these identities were not used in the questionnaire.

The original sample included 3,645 persons who self-identified as LGBT in response to the profile questionnaires regarding sexual orientation and gender identity. However, only active members of the GfK Panel were eligible for inclusion in the survey, and only one person per household who self-identified as LGBT was randomly selected to partake. Resulting in 1,924 panelists who were invited to take part in the survey. Of the 1,924 panelists, 1,422 participants completed enough of the initial interview to be eligible for the study. The survey opens with general questions unrelated to LGBT identity and experiences before shifting into questions relevant to LGBT individuals. Next, respondents were asked the following questions regarding their sexual orientation and gender identity:

Do you consider yourself to be...

1. Heterosexual or straight
2. Gay
3. Lesbian
4. Bisexual

Do you consider yourself to be transgender?

1. Yes
2. No

If transgender, are you....

1. Transgender, male to female
2. Transgender, female to male
3. Transgender, gender non-conforming
4. No, not transgender

The final sample size resulted in 1,197 LGBT participants. Of the full sample size, there are 398 gay men, 277 lesbians, 479 bisexuals (men = 129 and women = 349), and 43 transgender adults. The Pew Research Center surveys were not collected anonymously; therefore, in order to protect respondents' identities, certain variables were modified or removed from the public data set.

National surveys of the U.S. population do not capture a comparable sample size of LGBT adults, even when combining samples across multiple years. For instance, the 2014 General Social Survey (GSS) includes 45 respondents who self-identify as gay, lesbian, or homosexual, 65 respondents identify as bisexual, and 2,195 respondents who identify as heterosexual or straight. Not only is this sample size too small to conduct analyses, researchers must further parse out gays and lesbians by gender identity, which is not an accurate measure as some individuals who identify as a particular sexual orientation may not identify with the corresponding gender identity. Thus, the 2013 Pew Research Center data set offers a rare

national sample of LGBT adults. The Pew Research Center 2013 Survey of LGBT Adults is the ideal data set for this research project because it offers a rare opportunity to quantitatively investigate LGB individuals' perceptions of mainline religious collectives' attitudes toward the LGBT population in the U.S.

### Dependent Variables

The dependent variable is respondents' perceptions of whether various religious groups are accepting of the LGBT population. Although the question posed in the survey asks respondents their opinions on whether various religious groups are perceived as "friendly," "neutral," or "unfriendly" toward the LGBT population, this is closest conceptual measurement for "acceptance" in the questionnaire. Measurements for individuals' acceptance on various social and political issues are frequently cited throughout the literature. Thus, it is reasonable to replace the term "friendly" with "accepting" and "unfriendly" with "unaccepting".

For the purpose of these analyses, I am examining the perceptions of acceptance from four of the major religious collectives: evangelical Protestant churches, the Catholic Church, the Jewish religion, and non-evangelical Protestant churches. Due to the very small number of respondents (see Figure 1) who perceive the Mormon Church and Muslim religion as accepting of the LGBT population, these are removed from the final analyses.

Respondents were presented with a list of various religious groups and asked how they felt about each of the group's attitudes toward the LGBT population. The question reads, "Thinking about some different religions and religious groups, do you feel each of the following is generally friendly, neutral or unfriendly toward lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people?" (a) Evangelical churches, (b) The Catholic Church, (c) The Jewish religion, (d) The Muslim

religion, (e) The Mormon Church, and (f) Non-Evangelical Churches.” The possible response categories include (1) friendly, (2) neutral, and (3) unfriendly. To account for the low number of respondents (see Figure 1) who answered “friendly”, the categories “friendly” and “neutral” are collapsed and recoded as “accepting.” The resulting response categories for each dependent variable are (1) accepting and (0) not accepting. Respondents who refused to answer the question or failed to respond are recoded as missing.

### Independent Variables

#### *Sexuality*

To understand whether significant difference exist between sexual minorities, dummy variables are created to represent monosexual and bisexual adults. Respondents were asked about their sexual orientation and gender identity. For the purpose of these analyses, respondents who identify as “lesbian”, “gay”, and “bisexual” are included. Dummy variables for lesbian and gay are created with bisexual serving as the reference category.

#### *Religious Affiliation*

Religious affiliation is measured using a single question in the survey: “What is your present religion, if any? Are you . . .” In order to protect respondents’ identity, the religious affiliation variable is recoded as (1) Protestant, (2) Roman Catholic, (3) agnostic or atheist, (4) nothing in particular, (5) Christian (VOL.), and (6) all others, including: Mormon, Orthodox, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, Unitarian, or something else. For the purpose of these analyses, respondents who identify as nothing in particular, Christian (VOL.), and all others are collapsed and recoded as “other.” Dummy variables for Catholic, agnostic or atheist, and other are created with mainline Protestant serving as the reference category.



An additional dummy variable is created in order to capture respondents who identify as Evangelical. Respondents who answer yes to the question, “Would you describe yourself as a “born again” or evangelical Christian, or not?” and who identify as Protestant in the question regarding present religion are coded as evangelical Protestant (1) and all other responses are coded (0).

Unlike previous research, these analyses are only including religious affiliation measures for those who identify as mainline Protestant, evangelical Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish. The reason for this is to see whether differences exist between affiliation with a particular religious collective and perceptions of that religious group’s attitudes toward the LGBT population. However, a limitation of this data set is that in order to protect respondents’ confidentiality the religious affiliation variable for public omits original responses and collapses those who identify as Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, and Orthodox. Therefore, I am unable to separate out those who identify as Jewish.

### *Importance of Religion*

Respondents’ stated importance of religion is one of the most widely used survey measures of individual subjective religiosity and follows the measurement strategy of previous research (e.g., Smith, Faris, and Regnerus 2003). The question in the Pew data set is: “How important is religion in your life?” The possible responses to this question are (1) very important, (2) somewhat important, (3) not too important, and (4) not at all important. For the purpose of these analyses, the responses are recoded to (1) not all important, (2) not too important, (3) somewhat important, and (4) very important. The four-point scale question is entered as a continuous variable for each analysis. Only valid responses are included in the analyses.

### *Attendance at Religious Services*

Public religious participation is measured by religious attendance. The question is “Aside from weddings and funerals, how often do you attend religious services...?” The possible responses to this question are (1) more than once a week, (2) once a week, (3) once or twice a month, (4) a few times a year, (5) seldom, and (6) never. For these analyses, the responses are recoded to (0) never, (1) seldom, (2) a few times a year, (3) once or twice a month, (4) once a week, (5) more than once a week. The six-point scale question is entered as a continuous variable for each analysis. Respondents who refused to answer the question are recoded as missing.

### *Control Variables*

#### *Marital and Relationship Status*

The question in the Pew Research Center survey asks respondents if they are (1) married, (2) living with a partner, including a civil union, (3) divorced, (4) separated, (5) widowed, or (6) never married. Respondents who do not answer either 1 or 2 are then asked a follow-up question, “Are you currently in a committed relationship or not?” A dummy variable is created to represent respondents who are married, living with a partner, or in a committed relationship. For these analyses, respondents in a committed relationship are coded (1) and all other respondents are coded (0).

#### *Race and Ethnicity*

Race and ethnicity are identified by using the question concerning race and Hispanic identification. For the purpose of these analyses, respondents who identify as non-Hispanic white, black, Hispanic (regardless of race), and other race/ethnicity (not specified) are included. Dummy variables for black, Hispanic, and other race/ethnicity are created with non-Hispanic white serving as the reference category.

### *Age*

Age is measured in the data set as ordinal response categories (1) 18-24, (2) 25-34, (3) 35-44, (4) 45-54, (5) 55-64, (6) 65-74, and (7) 75+. However, for the purpose of these analyses, age is entered as a continuous variable. Only valid responses will be included in the analyses.

### *Educational Attainment*

Educational attainment is measured as (1) less than high school, (2) high school, (3) some college, and (4) bachelor's degree or higher. The four-point scale question is entered as a continuous variable for each analysis. Only valid responses are included in the analyses. That is, "not asked" and "refused to answer" are omitted from the analyses.

### *Political Ideology*

Political ideology is measured by using the question in the survey: "In general, would you describe your political views as..." The resulting codes in the Pew data set are (1) very conservative, (2) conservative, (3) moderate, (4) liberal, and (5) very liberal. This five-point scale question is entered as a continuous variable for each analysis. Only valid responses are included in the analyses.

### *Family Income*

Total family income is measured using an eight point scale with the lowest category representing less than \$20,000 and the highest category representing an income of \$150,000 or over. Only valid responses are included in the analyses. Respondents who refused to answer are recoded as missing.

## Analytic Strategy

The analytic strategy uses hierarchical binary logistic regression to examine the effects of sexuality, religious affiliation, and subjective religiosity on respondents' perceptions of religious groups' acceptance of the LGBT population.

First, I run descriptive statistics for the independent and dependent variables, as well as the control variables. Second, I run four separate binary logistic regression analyses for evangelical Protestant churches, the Catholic Church, the Jewish religion, and non-evangelical churches to examine whether differences exist between monosexual and bisexual individuals' perceptions of religious groups' acceptance of the LGBT population. Next, the independent variables of religious affiliation, attendance at religious services, and importance of religion are entered into the models. Lastly, the control variables are entered into the models examining the effects of various sociodemographic variables on respondents' perceptions of religious groups' acceptance of the LGBT population.

## CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

Table 1 displays the means, standard deviations, and proportions for the independent, dependent, and control variables for LGB adults. Table 1 shows 60% of respondents view mainline Protestant churches as accepting of the LGBT population. Comparatively, only 16.7% of respondents view the Catholic Church as accepting of the LGBT population. Given that previous research finds that mainline Protestant churches and the Jewish religion tend to be more accepting of the LGBT population, it is not surprising that, in turn, LGB respondents view mainline Protestant churches and the Jewish religion as accepting of the LGBT population. Historically, evangelical Protestant churches and the Catholic Church have held less favorable views of sexual and gender minorities; therefore, as Table 1 indicates, fewer LGB adults view these two religious groups as accepting of the LGBT population.

Table 1 shows that 58% of respondents identify as gay or lesbian, compared to 41% of respondents who identify as bisexual. The majority of respondents (42.6%) identify with a different religious group other than mainline Protestant, Catholic, agnostic, or atheist. However, 27.6% of respondents identify as mainline Protestant, 17% identify as atheist/agnostic, and 12.6% identify as Catholic. Table 1 indicates that LGB adults, on average, report attending religious services seldom to a few times per year ( $M = 1.31, SD = 1.42$ ). Compared to the general population, attendance at religious services among LGB adults is much lower. The 2014 GSS shows that the general population, on average, report attending religious services several times a year to once a once ( $M = 3.32, SD = 2.28$ ). Additionally, LGB adults report, on average, that religion is either not too important to somewhat important in their lives ( $M = 2.27, SD = 1.14$ ).

Table 1 reflects that 60.3% of LGB adults are in a committed relationship (e.g., married, dating). In line with the general population, 75.4% of LGB adults identify as white, non-Hispanic. Table 1 also shows that 10.4% of adults identify as Hispanic, 7% identify as black, and 7% identify with other races. The mean age for LGB adults falls between 35-44 and 45-54 ( $M = 3.58$ ,  $SD = 1.63$ ). Table 1 shows that most LGB adults are educated, as the mean falls between some college and a bachelor's degree or higher ( $M = 3.58$ ,  $SD = 1.63$ ). LGB adults, on average, identify somewhere between moderate and liberal ( $M = 3.59$ ,  $SD = .936$ ). The average family income for LGB adults falls between the \$40,000-\$50,000 range and the \$50,000-\$75,000 range ( $M = 4.02$ ,  $SD = 2.21$ ).

#### Predictors of LGB Individuals' Perceptions of Evangelical Protestant Churches

Table 2 presents the results for the nested models analysis of sexual orientation, religiosity, and sociodemographic variables on the dichotomous variable of perceptions of evangelical Protestant churches. Table 2 presents the logistic regression coefficient ( $\beta$ )/odds ratio (OR) and the standard error in parentheses. Table 2 shows that Model 1 has a statistically significant  $\chi^2$  ( $p < .01$ ) with a pseudo r-square of .014. Model 1 of Table 2 displays the results for entering only sexual orientation into the analysis. Model 1 in Table 2 shows that respondents who identify as gay, compared to the reference group of bisexual, are less likely to view evangelical Protestant churches as accepting of the LGBT population (OR = .648,  $p < .01$ ).

In Model 2 of Table 2, the religious affiliation and religiosity variables are entered into the analysis. Model 2 in Table 2 has a statistically significant  $\chi^2$  ( $p < .001$ ) with a pseudo r-square of .098. Sexual orientation holds as a significant predictor of respondents' perceptions of evangelical Protestant churches in Model 2, as respondents who identify as gay, compared to

bisexual, are less likely to view evangelical Protestant churches as accepting of the LGBT population (OR = .640,  $p < .05$ ). Model 2 in Table 2 also shows that LGB adults who identify as agnostic or atheist, compared to mainline Protestants, are significantly less likely to view evangelical Protestant churches as harboring accepting attitudes toward the LGBT population (OR = .404,  $p < .01$ ). Model 2 in Table 2 shows a similar trend among those identify with other religions; LGB adults who identify with other religions, compared to mainline Protestants, are less likely to view evangelical Protestant churches as accepting of the LGBT population (OR = .664,  $p < .01$ ). Importance of religion is a significant predictor of views toward evangelical Protestant churches in Model 2. Table 2, Model 2 shows that as religion becomes increasingly important to LGB adults they are more likely to view evangelical Protestant churches as accepting toward the LGBT population (OR = 1.366,  $p < .001$ ).

In Model 3 of Table 2, the remaining sociodemographic variables are entered in the analysis. Model 3 has a statically significant  $\chi^2$  ( $p < .001$ ) with a pseudo r-square of .176. Similar to the first two models, sexual orientation is a significant predictor of respondents' perceptions of evangelical Protestant churches. Respondents who identify as gay, compared to the reference group of bisexual, are significantly less likely to view evangelical Protestant churches as accepting of the LGBT population. Model 3 in Table shows that religious affiliation as agnostic or atheist and with other religions holds as significant predictors of views toward evangelical Protestant churches among LGB adults. Respondents who identify as agnostic or atheist, compared to mainline Protestants, are less likely to view evangelical Protestant churches as accepting toward the LGBT population (OR = .483,  $p < .05$ ). Additionally, LGB adults who identify with other religions, compared to mainline Protestants, are significantly less likely to view evangelical Protestant churches as accepting of the LGBT population (OR = .633,  $p < .05$ ).

Model 3 in Table 2 shows that importance of religion also held as a significant predictor of LGB individuals' perceptions of evangelical Protestant churches; as religion becomes increasingly important to LGB adults they are more likely to view evangelical Protestant churches as accepting toward the LGBT population (OR = 1.286,  $p < .01$ ).

A couple sociodemographic variables proved to be significant predictors of LGB individuals' perceptions of evangelical Protestant churches in Model 3 of Table 2. Model 3 shows that as respondents' educational levels increase, they are significantly less likely to view evangelical Protestant churches as accepting toward the LGBT population (OR = .772,  $p < .01$ ) (check wording). Model 3 also shows that as LGB individuals' political views become increasingly liberal, the less likely they are to view evangelical Protestant churches as accepting of the LGBT population (OR = .649,  $p < .001$ ).

#### Predictors of LGB Individuals' Perceptions of the Catholic Church

Table 3 presents the results for the nested models analysis of sexual orientation, religiosity, and sociodemographic variables on the dichotomous variable of views toward the Catholic Church. Table 2 presents the logistic regression coefficient ( $\beta$ )/odds ratio (OR) and the standard error in parentheses. Table 2 shows that Model 1 has a statistically significant  $\chi^2$  ( $p < .05$ ) with a pseudo r-square of .010. Model 1 of Table 3 displays the results for entering only sexual orientation into the analysis. Model 1 shows that respondents who identify as gay, compared to the reference category of bisexual, are significantly less likely to view the Catholic Church as accepting of the LGBT population (OR = .654,  $p < .01$ ).

In Model 2 of Table 3, the religious affiliation and religiosity variables are entered into the analysis. Table 3 shows that Model 2 has a statistically significant  $\chi^2$  ( $p < .001$ ) with a



pseudo r-square of .123. The results show that sexual orientation holds as a predictor of LGB individuals' perceptions of the Catholic Church in Model 2 of Table 3. Respondents who identify as lesbian, compared to bisexual, are significantly less likely to view the Catholic Church as accepting of the LGBT population (OR = .545,  $p < .05$ ). Respondents who identify as gay, compared to bisexual, are significantly less likely to view the Catholic Church as accepting toward the LGBT population (OR = .679,  $p < .05$ ). Interestingly, respondents who identify as Catholic, compared to mainline Protestants, are more likely to view the Catholic Church as accepting of the LGBT population (OR = 2.212,  $p < .01$ ). Model 2 in Table 3 also shows that LGB adults who identify with other religions, compared to mainline Protestants, are more likely to view the Catholic Church as accepting of the LGBT population (OR = 1.527,  $p < .05$ ). Importance of religion is a significant predictor of LGB individuals' attitudes of the Catholic Church. Model 2 in Table 3 shows that as religion becomes increasingly important to LGB individuals, the more likely they are to view the Catholic Church as accepting of the LGBT population (OR = 1.674,  $p < .001$ ).

In Model 3 of Table 3, the remaining sociodemographic variables are entered in the analysis. Table 3 shows that Model 3 has a statistically significant  $\chi^2$  ( $p < .001$ ) with a pseudo r-square of .227. Model 3 shows that sexual orientation holds as a predictor of LGB individuals' perceptions of the Catholic Church once all the variables are entered into the analysis. Respondents who identify as lesbian, compared to bisexual, are significantly less likely to view the Catholic Church as accepting of the LGBT population (OR = .536,  $p < .05$ ). Model 3 in Table 3 shows that respondents who identify as agnostic or atheist, compared to mainline Protestants, are more likely to view the Catholic Church as accepting toward the LGBT population (OR = 2.110,  $p < .05$ ). Model also shows that importance of religion holds as a

significant predictor of LGB adults' views toward the Catholic Church. As religion becomes increasingly important to LGB adults, they are significantly more likely to view the Catholic Church as accepting toward the LGBT population (OR = 1.642,  $p < .001$ ).

Model 3 in Table 3 shows that Hispanic LGB individuals, compared to white, non-Hispanic respondents, are significantly more likely to view the Catholic Church as accepting of the LGBT population (OR = 2.043,  $p < .001$ ). Model 3 also shows that as LGB individuals' educational attainment increases the less likely they are to view the Catholic Church as accepting toward LGBT individuals (OR = .687,  $p < .001$ ). LGB adults' political views are also a significant predictor of views toward the Catholic Church. Model 3 reveals that as LGB adults become increasingly liberal, they are less likely to view the Catholic Church as accepting of the LGBT population (OR = -.575,  $p < .001$ ).

#### Predictors of LGB Individuals' Perceptions of the Jewish Religion

Table 4 presents the results for the nested models analysis of sexual orientation, religiosity, and sociodemographic variables on LGB individuals' perceptions of the Jewish religion. Table 4 presents the logistic regression coefficient ( $\beta$ )/odds ratio (OR) and the standard error in parentheses. Table 4 shows that Model 1, in which only sexual orientation is entered into the analysis, does not have a statistically significant  $\chi^2$ . Furthermore Model 2, in which religious affiliation and religiosity are entered into the analysis, does not have a statistically significant  $\chi^2$ . However, once the remaining sociodemographic variables are entered into the analysis, Model 3 has a statistically significant  $\chi^2$  ( $p < .001$ ) with a pseudo r-square of .119.

Model 3 of Table 4 shows that respondents who identify as agnostic or atheist, compared to mainline Protestants, are significantly more likely to view the Jewish religion as accepting

toward the Jewish religion (OR = 1.675,  $p < .05$ ). Model 3 in Table 4 shows that as LGB adults attend religious services more frequently, they are significantly more likely to view the Jewish religion as accepting toward the LGBT population (OR = 1.154,  $p < .05$ ).

Model 3 reveals that LGB adults who are in a committed relationship are less likely to view the Jewish religion as accepting toward the LGBT population (OR = .632,  $p < .001$ ). Black LGB adults, compared to white, non-Hispanic adults, are significantly less likely to view the Jewish religion as accepting toward the LGBT population (OR = .549,  $p < .01$ ). Model 3 shows that Hispanic LGB respondents, compared to white, non-Hispanic adults, are less likely to view the Jewish religion as accepting toward the LGBT population (OR = .527,  $p < .001$ ).

Additionally, Model 3 in Table 4 shows that as LGB respondents' increase in age, they are more likely to view the Jewish religion as accepting of the LGBT population (OR = 1.184,  $p < .001$ ).

As LGB adults' educational attainment increases, they are significantly more likely to view the Jewish religion as accepting toward the LGBT population (OR = 1.440,  $p < .001$ ).

#### Predictors of LGB Individuals' Perceptions of Mainline Protestant Churches

Table 5 presents the results for the nested models analysis of sexual orientation, religiosity, and sociodemographic variables on LGB individuals' perceptions of mainline Protestant churches. Table 5 presents the logistic regression coefficient ( $\beta$ )/odds ratio (OR) and the standard error in parentheses. Table 5 shows that Model 1 has a statistically significant  $\chi^2$  ( $p < .001$ ) with a pseudo r-square of .022. Model 1 of Table 5 displays the results for entering only sexual orientation into the analysis. Model 1 shows that lesbians, compared to bisexuals, are significantly more likely to view mainline Protestant churches as accepting toward the LGBT population (OR = 1.831,  $p < .001$ ). Model 1 also shows that gays, compared to bisexuals, are

also significantly more likely to view mainline Protestant churches as accepting toward the LGBT population (OR = 1.598,  $p < .001$ ).

In Model 2 of Table 5, religious affiliation and religiosity are entered into the analysis. Table 5 shows that Model 2 has a statistically significant  $\chi^2$  ( $p < .001$ ) with a pseudo r-square of .078. Model 2 shows that sexual orientation holds as a significant predictor of LGB individuals' perceptions of mainline Protestant churches. Gay respondents, compared to bisexual respondents, are significantly more likely to view mainline Protestant churches as accepting toward the LGBT population (OR = .176,  $p < .01$ ).

In Model 2 of Table 5, religious affiliation and religiosity are entered into the analysis. Table 5 shows that Model 2 has a statistically significant  $\chi^2$  ( $p < .001$ ) with a pseudo r-square of .078. Sexual orientation holds as a significant predictor of LGB individuals' perceptions of mainline Protestant churches. Lesbians, compared to bisexuals, are significantly more likely to view mainline Protestant churches as accepting of the LGBT population (OR = 1.694,  $p < .01$ ). Gays, compared to bisexuals, are significantly more likely to view mainline Protestant churches as accepting of the LGBT population (OR = 1.660,  $p < .001$ ). Model 2 in Table 5 shows that religious affiliation is a significant predictor of LGB individuals' perceptions of mainline Protestant churches. Respondents who identify as Catholic, compared to those who identify as mainline Protestant, are significantly less likely to view mainline Protestant churches as accepting of the LGBT population (OR = .618,  $p < .05$ ). LGB adults who identify as agnostic or atheist are significantly less likely, compared to those who identify as mainline Protestants, are significantly less likely to view mainline Protestant churches as accepting of the LGBT population (OR = .487,  $p < .01$ ). Additionally, Model 2 shows that respondents who identify

with other religions, compared to mainline Protestants, are less likely to view mainline Protestant churches as accepting of the LGBT population (OR = .565,  $p < .001$ ).

In Model 3 of Table 5, the remaining sociodemographic variables are entered in the analysis. Table 3 shows that Model 3 has a statistically significant  $\chi^2$  ( $p < .001$ ) with a pseudo  $r$ -square of .141. The results of Model 3 show that a significant difference between gays and bisexuals holds once the remaining control variables are entered in the analysis. Gays, compared to bisexuals, are significantly more likely to view mainline Protestant churches as accepting of the LGBT population (OR = 1.475,  $p < .05$ ). Religious affiliation remains as a significant predictor of LGB individuals' perceptions of mainline Protestant churches. Respondents who identify as agnostic or atheist, compared to those who identify as mainline Protestant, are significantly less likely to view mainline Protestant churches as accepting of the LGBT population (OR = .584,  $p < .05$ ). Additionally, respondents who identify with other religions, compared to those who identify as mainline Protestant, are significantly less likely to view mainline Protestant churches as accepting of the LGBT population (OR = .693,  $p < .05$ ). Importance of religion becomes a significant predictor of LGB individuals' perceptions of mainline Protestant churches once the sociodemographic variables are entered into the analysis. Model 3 shows that as religion becomes increasingly important to LGB adults, the more likely they are to view mainline Protestant churches as accepting of the LGBT population (OR = 1.176,  $p < .05$ ).

Model 3 of Table 5 reveals that there are a couple sociodemographic variables that are predictors of views among LGB adults toward mainline Protestant churches. Model 3 shows that as respondents increase in age, they are significantly more likely to view mainline Protestant churches as accepting toward the LGBT population (OR = 1.238,  $p < .001$ ). Additionally, as

LGB adults' educational attainment increases, they are significantly more likely to view mainline Protestant churches as accepting of the LGBT population (OR = 1.371,  $p < .001$ ).

## CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

Changes in U.S. policies, such as same-sex marriage, represent a shift in society's acceptance of sexual minorities, or at least of gay and lesbian sexual minorities. Burgeoning social support for the rights and inclusion of sexual minorities has led to their increased acceptance in U.S. social institutions, such as family and education. However, the institution of religion has largely remained opposed to same-sex relationships and non-heterosexual relations. Sexual minorities' relations are still viewed as sinful, shameful, and controllable actions that willfully defy sacred religious norms. In turn, LGB persons often denounce religious upbringings and ties to religious organizations. LGB individuals are shown to reject religious identification at higher rates compared to those who identify as heterosexual or cisgender (Sherkat 2017). However, despite these growing trends, recent research, using the 2013 Pew Research survey, finds that sexual minorities that do identify as religious report higher levels of subjective well-being (Barringer and Gay 2017), thus suggesting that sexual minorities may indeed (happily) identify with religious institutions which embrace LGB individuals. Yet, until now, the literature has lacked an empirical understanding of sexual minorities' perceptions of religious collectives' acceptance of the LGBT population. Understanding LGB individuals' perceptions of whether or not religious collectives hold accepting attitudes toward the LGBT population enhances our broader understanding of sexual minorities' religious participation and affiliation with such religious groups.

The specific purpose of this analysis is to disaggregate sexual minority populations to better understand monosexual and bisexual experiences and perceptions of religious collectives. The findings from this analysis reveal notable differences between monosexuals' and bisexuals' perceptions of four major religious collectives' acceptance of the LGBT population in the U.S.

Gays compared to bisexuals are less likely to view evangelical Protestant churches as accepting of the LGBT population. This may be explained in part: gay men have long struggled with evangelical Protestant churches' particular focus and stance on gay males' sexuality. Early Christian texts have historically discussed same-sex relations between males while largely ignoring women (Boswell 1980). The infamous Leviticus 18:22 passage has historically been used to denigrate and persecute gay males. Given gay males' history, and current conflicts, with evangelical Protestant traditions, it seems likely that most would perceive evangelical churches as less accepting of the LGBT population.

The focus on monosexual relationships within religious traditions may further explain the difference between monosexuals' and bisexuals' perceptions of the Catholic Church. Gays and lesbians are less likely to view the Catholic Church as accepting of the LGBT population compared to bisexuals. Again, given that the Catholic Church has largely focused on monosexual relationships, while largely ignoring bisexual sexual relations, bisexuals may view the Catholic Church as more accepting of the LGBT population overall. Disclosure of bisexual identities in religious groups may be met with greater acceptance than gay and lesbian disclosure, given that others in the religion may seek to emphasize and draw out the heterosexual side of bisexual sexual minorities' desires (Barringer, Sumerau, and Gay 2017).

The Jewish religion and mainline Protestant churches have historically been more accepting of the LGBT population compared to evangelical Protestant churches and the Catholic Church; therefore, it is not surprising that there are no significant differences between monosexual and bisexual individuals' perceptions of the Jewish religion. However, monosexual individuals view mainline Protestant churches as more accepting of the LGBT population compared to bisexual individuals. Once additional controls are added into the model, only



significant differences between lesbian and bisexual sexual minorities remain. Bisexuals may perceive mainline Protestant churches as less accepting of the LGBT population given that they are not the focus of religious traditions. Religious traditions have tended to focus on monosexual relationships and how lesbian and gay relations are defined according to religious scripture. Although mainline Protestant churches have progressed in their acceptance of sexual minorities, bisexuals are still largely overlooked within these religious groups. Bisexuals lack support from LG communities as well (Lewis et al. 2009). Thus, the compounding effects of being overlooked in mainline Protestant churches and lack of social support from lesbians and gays, may result in bisexuals' perceiving mainline Protestant churches as less accepting of the LGBT population.

The results also reveal that variations in religious affiliation and religiosity affect sexual minorities' perceptions of religious collectives. Sexual minorities who identify as agnostic/atheist or with other religions, compared to those who identify as mainline Protestant, are less likely to view evangelical Protestant churches as accepting of the LGBT population. Additionally, as importance of religion increases, sexual minorities are more likely to view evangelical Churches as holding more favorable attitudes toward the LGBT population. Sexual minorities who view religion as playing an important role in their lives may be less inclined to view evangelical Protestant churches as less accepting of the LGBT population, despite the contentious relations between evangelical churches and sexual minorities. Sexual minorities who identify as agnostic/atheist or as Catholic are more likely to perceive the Catholic Church as accepting of sexual and gender minorities. Importance of religion also predicts more favorable views of the Catholic Church among sexual minorities. Although evangelical churches and the Catholic Church have historically held condemning views of sexual minorities, it appears that

religious commitment among LGB individuals shapes their views as more accepting of the LGBT population.

Such differences are further revealed when examining LGB individuals' perceptions of the Jewish religion and mainline Protestant churches. Religious affiliation and religiosity have no significant impact on sexual minorities' perceptions of the Jewish religion until sociodemographics are factored into the analysis. However, sexual minorities who identify as agnostic/ atheist or with other religions are likely to view mainline Protestant churches as less accepting compared to those who identify as mainline Protestant. This finding is not surprising given that those who identify as mainline Protestant are likely to view their own religion as accepting of the LGBT population. Once controlling for additional factors, LGB individuals who believe religion plays an important role in their lives perceive mainline Protestant churches as accepting of the LGBT population. This may result from sexual minorities embracing religious beliefs and their commitment to faith which allows for a more positive view of mainline Protestant churches.

The findings also reveal that sociodemographic factors, such as age, education, committed relationships, and so forth, impact sexual minorities' perceptions of religious collectives. Once sociodemographic characteristics are factored into the analyses, differences between monosexual and bisexual sexual minorities are further revealed. As stated earlier, religious affiliations, in some instances, do not hold as significant predictors of sexual minorities' perceptions of religious collectives' acceptance of the LGBT population. Educational attainment is a significant predictor of LGB individuals' views across all four religious collectives. The more educated LGB individuals become the less likely they are to view evangelical churches and the Catholic Church as accepting of the LGBT population. The reverse

is true when examining perceptions of the Jewish religion and mainline churches: The more educated individuals become the more likely they are to view the Jewish religion and mainline Protestant churches as accepting of the LGBT population. This may result from LGB individuals delving deeper into the literature surrounding these four religious collectives and how the Jewish religion and mainline Protestant churches have not vilified same-sex relations in the way evangelical churches and the Catholic Church have over the years.

The remaining sociodemographic factors reveal some differences in sexual minorities' perceptions of the four religious collectives. Sexual minorities in a committed relationship perceive evangelical churches and the Jewish religion as less accepting of the LGBT population. Sexual minorities have struggled to secure the civil right to legally marry and long hidden their relationships in the face of opposition from religious institutions. Thus, sexual minorities in a committed relationship may have a different view of religious groups' acceptance of LGBT individuals. The findings also reveal that political party affiliation impacts sexual minorities' perceptions of evangelical churches and the Catholic Church. The more liberal the political ideology LGB individuals ascribe to, the more likely they are to view these two religious collectives as not accepting of the LGBT population. Additionally, compared to white, non-Hispanic sexual minorities, Hispanic LGB persons are more likely to view the Catholic Church as accepting, which is not surprising given Hispanics close ties with the Catholic Church. Black and Hispanic LGB persons view the Jewish religion as not accepting of the LGBT population. This may be explained, in part, that black and Hispanic persons are less likely to affiliate with the Jewish religion. The same pattern may also be true for racial and ethnic minorities within the LGBT population as well. Thus, the limited identification with the Jewish religion may skew

Hispanic and black sexual minorities' view of the religious collective's acceptance of the LGBT population, or lack thereof.

The results confirm that sexual minorities do indeed have a complex relationship with religious groups, and while there may be additional explanations of variations in LGB persons' views across these four major religious groups, this analysis adds to the limited research regarding sexual minorities' perceptions of religion in the U.S. Attitudes toward mainline religious groups do differ between gay, lesbian, and bisexual adults. As bisexuals are typically overlooked or disregarded within religious contexts, it comes as no surprise that they have different views of religious collectives' perceptions of the LGBT population. Similar to how religious collectives have taken issue with gays and lesbians, sociological research has also primarily focused on gays and lesbians in a heterosexual paradigm. In doing so, we know less about the unique distinctions of sexual minorities and how religious identification affects their perceptions of religious groups' attitudes toward the LGBT population. This research begins to shed light on that question as the findings suggest that religious importance is a significant factor in sexual minorities' viewpoints of religious collectives. The same is true for religious affiliation as well, as sexual minorities who identify with religious group seem to hold views of said religious groups accordingly. Ultimately, the findings from this research demonstrate the importance of further examining sexual minorities' attitudes and interactions with religious collectives.

Despite the contribution this analysis adds to the sociological body of literature, there are some limitations to note that may guide future research. First, due to a limitation of the survey, the author is unable to examine the intersectional experiences of sexual and gender minorities. The Pew Research Center survey did not ask participants a third sex/gender option. The survey

questionnaire did not allow participants the opportunity to express that they are gender non-conforming in addition to self-identifying as bisexual or gay or lesbian. Second, similar to other quantitative studies, the religiosity measures do not tap the complex ways in which levels of religious observance may play out in sexual minorities everyday lives. For instance, although sexual minorities report that religion plays an important role in their lives, questions are left unanswered regarding what this may look like for those individuals. Perhaps LGB individuals engage in smaller religious communities, such as study groups or musical choir/band groups. This type of engagement in smaller networks within religious collectives may explain LGB individuals' perceptions. Higher engagement in religious subcultures through group activities may help to better understand importance of religion among sexual minorities as well. Additionally, the data for this survey were collected before the U.S. Supreme Court's legalization of same-sex marriage. This monumental shift in legislative policy may also correlate with a shift in attitudes among sexual minorities toward religious collectives. Lastly, due to the small sample size of transgender adults, this analysis is unable to analyze and examine their experiences and perceptions of religious collectives. Similar to most quantitative surveys with small sample sizes of sexual and gender minorities, the author was forced to decide whether to exclude transgender adults or include them with making no direct references to their unique experiences. For the purpose of this research, the author chose the former and excluded the forty-three transgender adults. This analysis calls upon future researchers to ensure that measures are incorporated into surveys that capture transgender and intersex experiences to carryout meaningful quantitative analyses.

## Conclusion

This study contributes to sociological scholarship on sexuality and religion by empirically assessing the impact of religious affiliation and religiosity on LGB individuals' views of religious collectives. The findings from this study offer rare insight from the perspectives of LGB individuals regarding four major religious collectives. While researchers continue to investigate the relationship between sexuality and religion, most studies tend to focus on the impact of religion and subjective religiosity on heterosexuals' attitudes toward the LGBT population. Moreover, when sexual minorities' experiences have been the focus of sociological research, it has been on monosexual minorities in relation to heterosexual religious norms (Sumerau, Cragun, and Mathers 2015); thus, ignoring bisexuals' religious experiences, behaviors, and attitudes. Comparatively, qualitative studies in which researchers examine sexual minorities' personal religious experiences, have offered limited, ungeneralizable results. The findings from this study offer a broader, more generalizable examination of sexual minorities' subjective religiosity and attitudes toward mainline religious collectives, which ultimately may predict their identification, participation, and belief in religion. Additionally, the findings from this research propose avenues for future research regarding sexual and gender minorities, social attitudes, and religiosity.

## **APPENDIX A: FIGURES**

	Friendly	Neutral	Unfriendly	Refused
Evangelical Protestant Churches	3.1	17.3	76.9	2.7
The Catholic Church	2.6	13.9	82.1	1.4
The Jewish Religion	11.6	45.8	40.9	1.6
The Muslim Religion	0.1	8.9	89.3	1.6
The Mormon Church	1.0	10.2	86.8	1.9
Non-Evangelical Protestant Churches	14.7	44.8	38.6	1.9

Figure1: Percentage of LGB Respondents' Perceptions of Religious Groups' Attitudes toward LGBT Individuals



## **APPENDIX B: TABLES**

Table 1: Means, Standard Deviations, and Proportions for Predictors of LGB Individuals' Attitudes toward Religious Groups

Independent Variable	Mean/ Proportion	Standard Deviation	N
Attitudes toward evangelical Protestant churches (1 = accepting, 0 = not accepting)	.210	--	1,123
Attitudes toward the Catholic Church (1 = accepting, 0 = not accepting)	.167	--	1,138
Attitudes toward the Jewish Religion (1 = accepting, 0 = not accepting)	.584	--	1,135
Attitudes toward mainline Protestant churches (1 = accepting, 0 = not accepting)	.606	--	1,132
Sexual orientation			
Lesbian	.240	--	1,154
Gay	.344	--	1,154
Bisexual (reference group)	.415	--	1,154
Religious affiliation			
Mainline Protestant (reference group)	.276	--	1,147
Catholic	.126	--	1,147
Agnostic/ atheist	.170	--	1,147
Other religions	.426	--	1,147
Attendance at religious services (six-point scale)	1.32	1.42	1,146
Importance of religion (four-point scale)	2.27	1.14	1,146
Committed relationship (1 = yes, 0 = no)	.603	--	1,149
Race and ethnicity			
White, non-Hispanic (reference group)	.754	--	1,154
Black	.070	--	1,154
Hispanic	.104	--	1,154
Other races	.070	--	1,154
Age	3.58	1.63	1,154
Educational attainment (four-point scale)	3.34	.782	1,154
Political views (five-point scale)	3.59	.936	1,149
Family income (eight-point scale)	4.02	2.21	1,135

Table 2: Binary Logistic Regression Results of 3 Models: Predictors of LGB Individuals' Perceptions of Evangelical Protestant Churches

Independent Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
<i>Sexual Orientation (bisexual)</i>			
Lesbian	.107/ 1.113 (.188)	-.059/ .942 (.195)	.067/ 1.069 (.204)
Gay	-.433/.648** (.165)	-.446/ .640* (.172)	-.443/ .642* (.190)
<i>Religious affiliation (mainline Protestant)</i>			
Catholic		-.005/ .995 (.232)	-.096/ .909 (.248)
Agnostic/ atheist		-.906/ .404** (.318)	-.727/ .483* (.331)
Other religions		-.409/ .664* (.188)	-.458/ .633* (.203)
Attendance at religious services		.019/ 1.019 (.065)	.000/ 1.000 (.067)
Importance of religion		.312/ 1.366*** (.090)	.252/ 1.286** (.094)
Committed relationship			-.358/ .699* (.173)
<i>Race and ethnicity (white, non-Hispanic)</i>			
Black			.183/ 1.201 (.250)
Hispanic			.198/ 1.219 (.219)
Other races			.229/ 1.257 (.296)
Age			.083/ 1.086 (.052)
Educational attainment			-.258/ .772** (.095)
Political views			-.432/ .649*** (.086)
Family income			-.071/ .931 (.045)
Constant	-1.030	-1.478	.988
N	1,099	1,099	1,099
Chi-Square	9.98**	72.170***	133.088***
Cox & Snell Square	.009	.065	.117
Nagelkerke R Square	.014	.098	.176

Note: Cell entries are given as logistic regression coefficients/ odds ratios with the standard errors in parentheses. \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001. VIFs lower than 2.12.

Table 3: Binary Logistic Regression Results of 3 Models: Predictors of LGB Individuals' Perceptions of the Catholic Church

Independent Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
<i>Sexual Orientation (bisexual)</i>			
Lesbian	-.375/ .687 (.216)	-.606/ .545** (.228)	-.623/ .536* (.242)
Gay	-.425/ .654** (.173)	-.387/ .679* (.182)	-.420/ .657* (.206)
<i>Religious affiliation (mainline Protestant)</i>			
Catholic		.794/ 2.212** (.253)	.628/ 1.873* (.274)
Agnostic/ atheist		.484/ 1.622 (.337)	.747/ 2.110* (.359)
Other religions		.424/ 1.527* (.215)	.405/ 1.499 (.235)
Attendance at religious services		.126/ 1.135 (.069)	.083/ 1.086 (.072)
Importance of religion		.515/ 1.674*** (.099)	.496/ 1.642*** (.106)
Committed relationship			-.101/ .904 (.190)
<i>Race and ethnicity (white, non-Hispanic)</i>			
Black			.119/ 1.127 (.282)
Hispanic			.715/ 2.043*** (.224)
Other races			-.087/ .916 (.343)
Age			.043/ 1.044 (.059)
Educational attainment			-.375/ .687*** (.104)
Political views			-.585/ .557*** (.094)
Family income			.010/ 1.010 (.049)
Constant	-1.218	-3.039	-.130
<i>N</i>	1,112	1,112	1,112
Chi-Square	6.890*	85.566***	164.421***
Cox & Snell Square	.006	.076	.141
Nagelkerke R Square	.010	.123	.227

Note: Cell entries are given as logistic regression coefficients/ odds ratios with the standard errors in parentheses. \*p < .05, \*\*p < .01, \*\*\*p < .001. VIFs lower than 2.13.

Table 4: Binary Logistic Regression Results of 3 Models: Predictors of LGB Individuals' Perceptions of the Jewish Religion

Independent Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Sexual Orientation ( <i>bisexual</i> )			
Lesbian	.161/ 1.175 (.168)	.202/ 1.224 (.170)	.046/ 1.047 (.181)
Gay	.079/ 1.082 (.136)	.080/ 1.083 (.139)	-.206/ .814 (.155)
Religious affiliation ( <i>mainline Protestant</i> )			
Catholic		-.306/ .736 (.213)	-.153/ .858 (.227)
Agnostic/ atheist		.181/ 1.198 (.231)	.516/ 1.675* (.248)
Other religions		-.242/ .785 (.168)	.106/ 1.112 (.181)
Attendance at religious services		.091/ 1.096 (.058)	.143/ 1.154* (.062)
Importance of religion		-.089/ .915 (.077)	-.018/ .982 (.082)
Committed relationship			-.460/.632*** (.144)
Race and ethnicity ( <i>white, non-Hispanic</i> )			
Black			-.599/ .549** (.227)
Hispanic			-.641/ .527*** (.188)
Other races			-.458/ .632 (.247)
Age			.169/ 1.184*** (.044)
Educational attainment			.364/ 1.440*** (.082)
Political views			-.031/ .969 (.071)
Family income			.052/ 1.053 (.037)
Constant	-.001	.192	-1.367
<i>N</i>	1,111	1,111	1,111
Chi-Square	.971	12.192	100.688***
Cox & Snell Square	.001	.011	.089
Nagelkerke R Square	.001	.015	.119

Note: Cell entries are given as logistic regression coefficients/ odds ratios with the standard errors in parentheses. \**p* < .05, \*\**p* < .01. , \*\*\**p* < .001. VIFs lower than 2.12.

Table 5: Binary Logistic Regression Results of 3 Models: Predictors of LGB Individuals' Perceptions of Mainline Protestant Churches

Independent Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
<i>Sexual Orientation (bisexual)</i>			
Lesbian	.605/ 1.831*** (.172)	.527/ 1.694** (.176)	.389/ 1.475* (.183)
Gay	.469/ 1.598*** (.138)	.507/ 1.660*** (.143)	.296/ 1.345 (.155)
<i>Religious affiliation (mainline Protestant)</i>			
Catholic		-.481/ .618* (.222)	-.440/ .644 (.233)
Agnostic/ atheist		-.719/ .487** (.238)	-.538/ .584* (.250)
Other religions		-.572/ .565*** (.177)	-.366/ .693* (.186)
Attendance at religious services		.085/ 1.089 (.061)	.116/ 1.123 (.063)
Importance of religion		.128/ 1.137 (.078)	.162/ 1.176* (.082)
Committed relationship			.076/ 1.078 (.145)
<i>Race and ethnicity (white, non-Hispanic)</i>			
Black			.041/ 1.041 (.233)
Hispanic			.003/ 1.003 (.187)
Other races			.125/ 1.113 (.251)
Age			.213/ 1.238*** (.045)
Educational attainment			.315/ 1.371*** (.083)
Political views			-.054/ .947 (.072)
Family income			.045/ 1.046 (.037)
Constant	-.096	-.039	-1.790
<i>N</i>	1,108	1,108	1,108
Chi-Square	17.453***	64.407***	119.463***
Cox & Snell Square	.016	.058	.105
Nagelkerke R Square	.022	.078	.141

Note: Cell entries are given as logistic regression coefficients/ odds ratios with the standard errors in parentheses. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ . VIFs lower than 2.12.

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