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An Examination Into the Effects of Social Positioning and Capitalist Immersion on Gendered Attitudes Towards Homosexuality in the United States

Fiona J. Blee
Old Dominion University

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AN EXAMINATION INTO THE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL POSITIONING AND
CAPITALIST IMMERSION ON GENDERED ATTITUDES TOWARDS
HOMOSEXUALITY IN THE UNITED STATES

by

Fiona J. Blee
B.A. July 2003, University of Central Lancashire

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Approved by:

Ruth Triplett (Director)

Randy R. Gainey (Member)

~~William Agyei~~ (Member)

ABSTRACT

AN EXAMINATION INTO THE EFFECTS OF SOCIAL POSITIONING AND CAPITALIST IMMERSION ON GENDERED ATTITUDES TOWARDS HOMOSEXUALITY IN THE UNITED STATES

Fiona J. Blee

Old Dominion University and Norfolk State University, 2005
Director: Dr. Ruth Triplett

Previous research on attitudes towards homosexuality has concentrated on characteristics of individuals, and neglected the capitalist structure of society that provides the contextual setting for the creation and maintenance of cultural attitudes.

This thesis uses responses collected in the general social survey of the United States between 1993 and 1998, to provide a more comprehensive explanation of differences in attitudes towards homosexuality, through an analysis of social position and the capitalist agenda. The analysis revealed significant relationships between sex, age, race, income, beliefs regarding the domestication of women, and attitudes towards homosexuality.

The analysis showed that respondents categorized as black or other were consistently more likely to hold negative attitudes towards homosexuality than the white respondents, and that attitudes towards homosexuality are becoming more liberal with the passage of time. Older

persons also held less tolerant attitudes towards homosexuality than younger persons. There exists a gendered difference in attitudes towards homosexuality, although this relationship, as well as the relationship between other demographic variables and attitudes towards homosexuality is mediated by beliefs regarding the domestication of women. These findings suggest that beliefs which are influenced by the respondents social position, are responsible for attitudes held, and also that these beliefs can alter the effects of the demographic variables.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The sheer number of homosexual individuals in existence at any one time makes the cultural attitude towards them a highly important issue. Kinsey, Pomeroy, and Martin (1948) found that by middle age, half the male population and twenty percent of the female population reported an overt sexual experience with at least one member of the same sex. The issue of homosexual rights is a highly emotive and contentious topic, with moral, political and personal judgments being passed, with devastating consequences for homosexual individuals. The prevalence of prejudice and discrimination against homosexuals is widespread, not simply at a national level, but also at an international level (Scott 1998). This acceptance of the oppression of homosexuality has allowed the continued verbal, psychological and physical abuse of homosexual individuals, and sadly in extreme cases even lead to homicide (Hodge 1998). This cultural condemnation has been so pervasive that it has even permeated legal statute and application (Howe 1997), suggesting that the oppression of homosexuality

This thesis follows the format requirements of the *American Sociological Review*.

is not simply a matter of personal aversion, but of structural hostility.

Structural homophobia has a profound impact on the lives of homosexual individuals, affecting where they can safely live, work and conduct their relationships (Alter 1995). While homophobia affects the daily life of homosexuals, often inciting lives dictated by secrecy and concealment, homosexual individuals also face the very real threat of physical harm and endangerment to themselves and their families (Howe 1997). This cultural acceptance of the oppression of an entire population within society needs to be examined and understood, in order to aid in the development of successful and effective reformative strategies.

The aim of this study is to examine to what extent, if any, does a gendered differential exist in attitudes towards homosexuality in the United States of America. If a significant difference is found to be in existence, it will be examined to what extent, if any, do the variables of sex, age, race, income, and beliefs regarding the domestication of women affect these differences. This analysis aims to highlight any links between social position, the capitalist agenda and attitudes towards homosexuality, and therefore provide a macro-orientated explanation of the negative

social attitude towards homosexuality. This macro-orientated explanation argues that individual attitudes develop within a capitalist framework of production and power. It also acknowledges the influence of capitalist ideologies upon perceptions of sexual morality, while avoiding essentialist gender assumptions. This theory suggests that locating and observing these attitudinal differences is insufficient if they are to be changed. There is also a vital need to examine the underlying causes and investments that create these attitudes, and therefore identify what actions, personal, political and economic, can alter or reinforce them.

Previous research has consistently found that there does exist a gendered division in attitudes towards homosexuality, with women being generally more tolerant of homosexuality than men (Stott 1998; Whitley 2001; Lewis 2003). These differences have largely been examined from a micro perspective of personal and psychological explanations (LaMar and Kite 1998; Whitley 2001). Such explanations however, remain incomplete. While they may partially explain individual opposition to homosexuality, they do not provide a structural explanation of attitudes towards homosexuality, or differences in such attitudes. Micro theories also fail to explain differences found in attitudes

towards homosexual men and homosexual women (Louderback and Whitely 1997). In addition the explanations offered by previous theories of the gendered difference in attitudes towards homosexuality have remained largely descriptive, declining to adequately analyze reasons for attitudinal differences by stating that men and women have different attitudes towards homosexuality, and that this is due to attributed gendered characteristics (Whitley 2001). Prior research has been based on essentialist and hegemonic assumptions about the constructs of binary gender roles, and has often utilized segregated categories of sexuality. This study therefore, seeks to include variables that demonstrate not simply notions dictated by gender, but rather by the individual's immersion in the capitalist regime. The remainder of this chapter will highlight the relevance of a Marxian perspective to modern attitudes towards homosexuality.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF CURRENT THESIS

The capitalist regime is guided by principles that ensure the perpetuation of an obedient and oppressed labor force, which in turn relies on hegemonic notions of the nuclear family, binary gender identities, marriage and heteronormativity. These capitalist assumptions of control

and ownership infiltrate the personal realm through their effects on the concepts of family and spouse (Marx 1978). The patriarchal ownership of women and the ensuing delegation of domestic work to the sole responsibility of women, are fundamental aspects of prosperous capitalism, as they ensure a submissive and controlled reproductive labor force, and innumerable hours of unpaid domestic labor (Mitchell 1971). This would suggest that an increased immersion in the capitalist regime, particularly as displayed by stronger beliefs that women should be primarily concerned with care giving roles, and higher levels of family income, will result in a stronger opposition to homosexuality. What is necessary to further an understanding of the normative opposition to homosexuality is an explanation of why the dominant discourse promotes heteronormativity, constructing gender and sexuality in such a way that negative attitudes towards homosexuality are viewed as a component of the successful enactment of a specific gender role. The heteronormative social ideology perpetuated by the capitalist doctrine ensures the compliance of the labor force to moral and behavioral codes of conduct that secure the propagation of future workers and consumers.

This study seeks to question the effects of gender on attitudes towards homosexuality through an examination of the effects of sex, age, race, income and beliefs regarding the domestication of women on such attitudes. This is to show gender to be a contributing factor to the social positioning of individuals within the capitalist structure, and that it is this strategic position that influences attitudes towards homosexuality. The importance of an individual's social position in the creation of attitudes towards homosexuality will be shown through an analysis of the effects of sex, age, race, income and beliefs regarding the domestication of women on attitudes towards homosexuality. It is predicted that a gendered difference in attitudes towards homosexuality will be found, but that this will not be found to be a determining or isolated influence. Gendered identities are given meaning through their existence and observance within the capitalist framework, in both the economic and domestic spheres. It is therefore predicted that a combination of factors representing acceptance of capitalist ideology will provide a more substantial explanation of differences in attitudes towards homosexuality.

This topic is timely due to the recent attempt by some, and refusal by others to acknowledge homosexual marriage

(Duncan 2004), which would afford eligible homosexuals the same legal, social and personal recognition to which their heterosexual counterparts are entitled. America has remained eager to critique other nations, religions and cultures for the perceived restrictions they place on liberty and lifestyle choice. This approach seems contradictory to the still pervasive racism, sexism and homophobia that exists throughout the United States. Many of these prejudices have become so normalized or accepted that they are no longer viewed by society as the unacceptable violence that they are (Foucault 1985). Social acceptance of intolerance of homosexuality is explicitly embedded in legal statute through the denial to acknowledge homosexual marriage and through acts such as the homosexual advance defense, in which a homosexual advance is seen as warranting a physical and deadly response (Howe 1997). The legal opposition to homosexual marriage has relied heavily on definitions enforced by a patriarchal and capitalist agenda. As such, this is representative of a shift away from multiculturalism and human rights, as the emphasis is placed on the exposition of groups as opposed to the acquiescence of individuals (Manning 1996). This is displayed by the states interest in marriage failing to represent the reality of marriage for many of those engaged

in the institution, with Duncan (2004) finding the four prevailing state rationales for the preservation of marriage as a heterosexual institution to be procreation, child-rearing, tradition and interstate uniformity.

A broader understanding of the influences upon the attitudes of individuals towards homosexuality could also help to inform a debate surrounding the legitimacy of the state's involvement in personal unions. An understanding of the motivations behind a structural opposition to homosexuality would be vital in the development of reformative strategies, while also possibly decentering conservative stances held in the debate surrounding the legitimacy of homosexuality. The crucial role played by sexuality in the development of the national identity has been discussed by Mayer (2000), in which the establishment of moral codes is used to authorize privileges and power relations within society. This hegemonic belief system is then used to control and suppress individuals on the basis of sexuality. During this current time of rapid economic and technological expansion, westernized values are being imprinted across the world (Schaeffer 2003). This stage in history provides the opportunity to recognize the history of violence, and take steps not only to stop it, but also to prevent it from recurring elsewhere. Therefore this study

is important because it could help to aid in the understanding of the motivations and justifications behind prejudice against homosexuals that could inform effective reformatory strategy.

The issue of societal attitudes towards homosexuality is also important because of the consequential implications for human rights. The structural and cultural acceptance of prejudice and the violation of entire groups' human rights allow the potential for discrimination to be applied to all non-dominant groups in society. Therefore the difficulties currently faced by homosexuals are relevant also to the lives of women, children and racial minorities. It is argued here that men and women do not inherently differ in their attitudes, but rather these attitudes are created in direct response to their lived experiences, and it is the power relations implemented through capitalism that are responsible for gendered differences in attitudes towards homosexuality. Without understanding the true reasons for opposition, no reformatory strategy can hope to be effective. As such, the findings of this study may inform reformatory strategy that has the potential to improve the quality of life, not only of homosexuals, but also for society as a whole.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study of social attitudes towards homosexuality is very important as public opinion shares a dual relationship with social change, both reflecting and assisting it (Scott, Alwin and Braun 1996). Commonly accepted social principles have the power to affect legislation and policy decisions, and also provide a benchmark by which actions are morally and culturally judged. Thus how and why attitudes might differ, is crucial to the understanding of the social institution, and to the development of effective reformative strategies.

An investigation into gendered differences in attitudes towards homosexuality could help to understand, and therefore explain, the cultural opposition to homosexuality. Consequently, this study will investigate the following research questions: To what extent, if any, does gender have an effect on individual attitudes towards homosexuality? If a gendered difference does exist, what are the effects of age, race, income and beliefs regarding the domestication of women, on this difference? This will help to determine if this effect truly is a gendered effect, or if the influential factor appears to be ultimately economic. For

the purpose of this study, gender will be understood as the contextual enactment of attributes that are conventionally considered either male or female. This is by no means an exhaustive comprehension, but will suffice in this study to ensure clarity and demarcation. Consequently, gender role violations will be understood to be those behaviors that contradict the characteristics traditionally bestowed upon individuals due to their biological sex.

Although confirming the existence of a gendered difference in attitudes towards homosexuality, previous research does not take into account external influences on the individual and their creation of sexual identities and stereotypes. This simplification of reducing individuals to merely gendered beings cannot hope to explain the complex social relations that are responsible for the creation of identities and beliefs (Razack 1994). Simply recognizing one facet of an individual is not enough to explain the values they may hold, without also examining other factors that effect their social positioning and experiences and perceptions of life (Bronitt and Amirthalingham 1996). Family income is included as an indicator of individuals gains from the capitalist structure and therefore of the likelihood of their opposition or acceptance of capitalist ideologies. The influence of the economic infrastructure on

the lives and experiences of individuals cannot be ignored if a comprehensive understanding of the cultural and social influences upon the attitudes and values of individuals is to be reached. This thesis therefore, is designed to examine external influences on the individual, and how these external influences affect the perception of homosexuality, due to the perceived duties and obligations of the individual and their identity in the capitalist structure.

The complex economic and cultural control ensuring the reproduction of the work force and the protection of wealth through linear inheritance provides a plausible explanation of why capitalist societies have developed an opposition and moral objection to homosexuality. Without institutions such as the nuclear family and continual private ownership, capitalism would enter a stage of deterioration as alternative definitions and values could be placed on commodities. As an alternative critique of the institution of marriage, homosexual unions offer an increased independence to women and reveal the inadequacies of man (Naffine 1994). Without the underlying suggestions of possession, individuals would have more freedom to choose sexual partners and to control human reproduction, allowing women to pose a greater opposition to men in the work force and in the domestic arena. This would mean both increased

female earning power and decreased male earning power. In this sense homosexuality is incompatible with the current construct of capitalism.

Engels critiqued the established institution of marriage as a "marriage of convenience" (1978:742) dictated by the class of the participants. Due to issues of capital and therefore power, heterosexual relationships in a capitalist society will always be bound by social expectations in order to prevent diversion from the path of production. It is also acknowledged that heterosexual marriages do not distribute rights or obligations equally among both parties. The institution of marriage must therefore serve a different purpose to justify its own existence. Arguably, this purpose is to ensure the production of the future labor force and increase consumption, while also maintaining power structures and enforcing, through constructed notions of morality, the oppression of any groups of resistance. Homosexual sites of struggle are instantly delegitimized as immoral, as made clear by the Christian opposition to homosexual marriage (Stott 1998). The culture of greed that capitalism nurtured through extreme levels of competition also creates unquestioning desires for what others have. This conformity is crucial to the continuing consumption of goods, as vogues

dictate what the masses perceive they desire or need, providing mass markets for the frivolous products of capitalist production. Therefore, any nonconformity of thought or practice is potentially dangerous as it could lead to either entrepreneurism, which increases competition among the capitalists, or alternative values being developed which could threaten the capitalist regime.

Engels (1978), using Marx's materials, notes and marginalia wrote "The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State". Bearing this use of resources and the theorist's close working relationship in mind, this piece of work is acceptable as displaying accurately a Marxian approach to these issues. Engels argued that the transition to paternal lineage cemented the role of the mother to a "mere instrument for breeding children" (Engels 1978:736). This emphasized that the purpose of marriage in a capitalist society is to ensure inheritance and accumulate wealth. The capitalist nature of the family are further elaborated in Marx's own words when he states that the family "contains within itself in miniature all the antagonisms which later develop on a wide scale within society and its state" including slavery and serfdom (Engels 1978:737). Heterosexual marriage and the family unit, as popularly conceived in contemporary capitalist society, are

key elements in the indoctrination, creation and subjugation of the population. It is through this training of the masses that homosexuality is perceived as a double deviancy as it not only fails to promote the capitalist structure, but it actively seeks to undermine many of the hegemonic principles that allow the profitable continuance of capitalism. Foucault (1978) mirrored the notion of this threat by his understanding of power, in which he notes that power itself will always create an inevitable threatening resistance. This resistance can be exemplified by the ongoing homosexual and feminist resistance to dominant attitudes and social control.

Engels claimed that

full freedom in marriage can become generally operative only when the abolition of capitalist production, and of the property relations created by it, has removed all those secondary economic considerations which still exert so powerful an influence on the choice of a partner. (1978:750)

This implies that the current notion of marriage is guided by capitalist notions of private property, commodities and value. Homosexual marriage, with its consequential shift in focus from the biological to the independently constructed family relationship, threatens the positivistic schemes of truth that have been generated by

the capitalist directive surrounding the family, necessities and morality.

An understanding of the relations of power are key to understanding relations between dominant and non-dominant groups within society, including inter-gender and inter-socio economic relations and cultural attitudes toward homosexuality. Foucault (1988:119) stated that

the relations of power are perhaps among the best hidden things in the social body... [there is a need] to investigate what might be most hidden in the relations of power; to anchor them in the economic infrastructures; to trace them not only in their governmental forms but also in the intra-governmental or para-governmental ones; to discover them in their material play. (1988:119)

Thus Foucault argued, in support of Marx, that power from above played a crucial role in controlling every aspect of social life, including that of sexual practice.

Interestingly, Foucault's more localized inquiry also allowed the possibility of the economic infrastructures to play a capricious role in individual's lives, with varying consequences and degrees of effect. This analysis can aid in the elaboration of a Marxian explanation of gendered differences in attitudes towards homosexuality, through the acknowledgement of the role of heteronormativity in the capitalist agenda, and therefore the veiled agenda behind the moral objections to homosexuality. Men have been

historically more wealthy and more embedded in the capitalist doctrine (Marx 1978), and so according to these theorists would be more likely to hold beliefs consistent with the capitalist ideology. This is consistent with previous findings that show men to be less tolerant of homosexuality than women (Whitley 2001, Lewis 2003). According to this theory, those less invested in the capitalist dominion are those who have less influence or capital, and would be less influenced by its doctrine. Therefore, those with lower incomes should be less opposed to homosexuality than those with higher incomes. Arguably, racial minorities are also likely to be less invested in the capitalist regime, as they suffer disproportionately from poverty and social disadvantage (Garland 2001). This has not been entirely supported by previous research, with Lewis (2003) finding black respondents to be less tolerant than white respondents of homosexuality. However, the black sample was significantly more opposed to anti-homosexual discrimination, which could suggest that they oppose homosexuality in a different way, and for different reasons than the white population, or that they are more opposed to discriminatory practices, possibly due to the historical oppression of racial minorities. Religious and familial

influences could also affect inter racial differences in attitudes towards homosexuality.

Experiences and perceptions are relevant specifically to periods of time, influenced by the historical and cultural atmosphere (Foucault 1986:83). As such, attitudes cannot be understood separately from their surroundings and influences. This highlights the importance of understanding shifts in attitudes towards homosexuality, as they shape society and the experiences of those within it. These notions of deviancy and normalcy create the social world and give it meaning through interpretation.

The merging of sexuality with morality was discussed by Foucault (1985) as a coalition used by the dominant discursive regime. Foucault viewed sexuality not as something that carries intrinsic moral value but rather as something which has been constructed by systems of power with regulatory intentions (Foucault 1985). This transference of morality from sexual partner to self identity was viewed as a socially constructed aid to the oppression of those who endorsed, defended or engaged in such practices. By changing homosexuality from a practice to an identity, moral judgments that could be passed on an action could then be passed on the individual. This allowed public condemnation of the private sphere (Foucault 1985).

This complements Marx's notion of the family, which was a socio-economically created concept that allowed the economic political to control and privilege the private.

Engels contends that the economy's control over the private sphere, through its invasion of the moral structure of society, could have serious implications for debasing the legitimacy of the moral objective when he claims that

with the passage of the means of production into common property, the individual family ceases to be the economic unit of society... Thus, the anxiety about the "consequences", which is today the most important factor -both moral and economic-... disappears. Will this not be cause enough for a gradual rise of more unrestrained sexual intercourse, and ... a more lenient public opinion (1978:746).

This would imply that capitalism itself is largely accountable for the accepted morality of society.

Foucault (1980) broadened this notion of the capitalist influence on attitudes and morality in his analysis of power, truth and sexuality in which he claims that hegemonic beliefs and ideals were perpetuated by those in power and took on a representative truth as they became widely accepted. Foucault (1980:133) argued that "it's not a matter of emancipating the truth from every system of power (which is a chimera for truth is already power) but of detaching the power of truth from the forms of hegemony, social economic and cultural, within which it operates at

the present time". Both theorists assert that the morality of a society does not necessarily arise from a moral, ethical or righteous basis, but rather as a product of the dispensation of duties to separate groups within society. In this sense homosexuality would serve neither patriarchy nor capitalism profitably and so has been morally condemned.

In contrast, the family has remained the "symbolic center of a stable, capitalist moral and social order" (Dean 1996:71), implying that heterosexual marriage, reproduction and obligation have been a fundamental part of the perpetuation and success of capitalism. As such, homosexuality could be perceived as a threat to the power relations upon which capitalism is dependent as it relies upon the child bearing and unpaid labor of women. These services are provided through expectations of, and obligations to men as providers of capital.

Reiss (1990) argued that economic independence, through increased self sufficiency, reduces the risk attached to nonconformist activity, specifically that of sexual activity. However, such a theory fails to address the restrictions on the economic dependence of the individual effected through policies of economic discrimination, both in the workplace and also through welfare and domestic policy. It has also been argued that there exists a direct

link between ethical values, morality and therefore sexuality, and the highly individualistic mentality evolved through a capitalist economy (Weeks 1995). It is argued that the culture of choice and freedom that is definitive of modern capitalist societies cannot logically be stopped when it comes to making sexual judgments or choices of partner, lifestyle identity or sexuality. Thus, reminiscent of Marx's inevitable decline of capitalism and Foucault's resistance that is intrinsically built within each system of power, Weeks (1995) would seem to suggest that sexual and moral freedom of choice would necessarily increase as market trade increased. This does seem to be supported by the trend of increasing tolerance suggested by the literature (Pratte 1993), although it does not account for differences in attitudes within society.

A comparative study of attitudes towards homosexuality over a five-year period, beginning in 1986, supported the notion that men held more negative attitudes towards homosexuality than women did. Both the male and female groups expressed less negative attitudes towards homosexuality at the end of the study period in 1991 than they had when the study began. This implied a trend toward more liberal attitudes towards homosexuality for both men and women (Pratte 1993). This was possibly due to later

generations being less committed to traditional gender role norms, owing to the increased availability of contraception and the expansion of women in the workforce. This is indicative of a general shift towards more liberal sexual attitudes (Scott 1998).

The shift in attitudes towards homosexuals in America was examined to test if changing attitudes could be accounted for by changing demographics of the population, and if such changes were linked to larger cultural ideologies. It was found that individuals recognize a clear distinction between the morality of homosexuality and the civil rights of homosexual individuals, and changing demographics, most notably rising levels of education, and cultural ideologies could account only for roughly one half of the changes in attitudes (Loftus 2001). These findings suggest the existence of a trend towards more liberal sexual attitudes, which implies a probability that younger individuals are more likely to hold more liberal attitudes than their elders.

The cultural construct of the family is considered by Mitchell who states that "each independent sector has its own autonomous reality though each is ultimately, but only ultimately, determined by the economic factor" (1971:174) suggesting that capital and its compounding structures of

power affect the creation of morality and oppression. The family is also referred to as the "lynchpin" in the chain of capital, manual labor and production leading to the oppression of those who do not conform to the nuclear family norm (Mitchell 1971:178). The purported supremacy of biological parentage is also vital to the continual production of the labor force. The construct of homosexuality is therefore dangerous as it calls into question the legitimacy of other premises that capitalism relies upon, including the family, parentage and the polarization of gender identities. Capitalist rationality has permeated the marital contract, attempting to bring even the private sphere into the realm of capitalist control. However, the refusal of the state to legally acknowledge homosexual unions shows a resistance to such unions through the discourse of capitalist power. The creation of dichotomous gender identities also implies that a member of each gender category is necessary for the successful enactment of the family, enhancing the assertion that one gender fills a void left by the other.

Marx (1978:70) stated that society "takes for granted what it is supposed to evolve" by assuming the capitalist agenda as the ultimate cause in society. This explicitly includes the relationship of wage to labor, but also could

be interpreted to include those constructs such as the family, sexuality and gender. From this statement it can be inferred that the capitalist regime has such extensive control over society that it is able to create and perpetuate hegemonic beliefs in order to sustain its existence. The extent of capitalism was, Marx claimed, much more pervasive than simply affecting the economic policies and practices of nation states (Marx 1978). Rather it had permeated fundamental perceptions about human necessity, desire and value. It is due to this incredible hold that capitalism has on its subjects, that the very make up of society and its institutions such as gender, marriage and the family were designed to benefit the capitalist regime and therefore subjugate those who may not best promote its interests. Engels also stated that marriage is dependent on economic factors being instated in order to protect private property and ownership (Engels 1978:748).

The possessive nature of modern heterosexual sex relations is discussed by Naffine (1994:220) in which female sexual desires are seen as simply "an extrapolation to man's desires". This naturalized version of love involves the giving of herself by the woman to the man, in order that her body may be used for the fulfillment of his desires in return for economic stability. This ideology is ignorant of

the love between same sex couples, or any sexual relations that are not defined by the model of man and woman. This cultural philosophy perpetuated by capitalism to be natural and indisputable is in fact a constructed notion implying ownership and obligation allowing the continued dominance and command of the capitalist machine. Naffine (1994) concludes that traditional concepts of heterosexual love are based upon notions of possession, which in turn are dependent on the clear polarization of genders. This belonging of the woman to the man allowed her diminished power and increased subversion, while promoting the nuclear family encouraged the accumulation of wealth (O'Donovan 1985).

Interestingly, Naffine (1994) discusses the concept of reproduction as a male appropriated interaction. While women are primarily defined by their ability to bear children, even this biologically unique attribute is appropriated and accredited to the male, although notably only the heterosexual male. In this sense marriage is viewed as an enabling structure for male reproduction which gives man the right of control over the fertility of his wife. Homosexual marriage would clearly not fulfill this biological requirement which may help to explain the states opposition to it.

Irigaray (1985:222) stated that men's ownership of women was indeed upheld in order to create a male perception of self sufficiency. If a woman became a mere extension of the man himself when she became his wife, then procreation was an action that he fulfilled. In this sense woman becomes the receptacle and incubator of the male's offspring. Women's biological role in the production of children is reduced to the status of their role after birth, the caretaker of the mans possession. The gender binary is vital for this enactment to continue as it is the justification for the primary responsibility of domestic work to lie with the woman.

In the "Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1884", Marx stated that because of the political economy the "worker sinks to the level of a commodity" (Marx 1978:70) and that the "wretchedness of the worker is in inverse proportion to the power and magnitude of his production". Although Marx was referring to the proletarian labor worker, this theory can also be applied to the female domestic laborer, who is financially dependent on her husband as the worker is on their employer. However, female labor is often completed inside of the home, and her production is that of children. In this sense, woman becomes the means of production owned by the capitalist, and children become her

products that she is in charge of creating and developing. This immersion in the capitalist regime that limits the woman through consumption of her time, effort and body, further root her within the domestic arena, thus weakening her leverage as a valued laborer, while decreasing the possibility of freedom or escape from the boundaries of the regime.

Marx stated that the family is a mode of production, which ultimately can only lead to estranged human life. In this sense, the family is viewed as a unit that produces future laborers or future capitalists to exploit, thus providing a lineage down which capital could pass ensuring the accumulation of wealth and private property (Marx 1978). Marx also critiqued morality as one of a group of "particular modes of production" that prevented man from returning to his human or social mode of existence (1978:85). This would imply that societal moral standards were not necessarily based upon notions of justice or righteousness, but rather were structured to fit over the framework of the capitalist agenda. This could account for the creation of defined oppositional gendered identities and the pervasiveness of sexist notions.

Previous research into influences upon attitudes towards homosexuality has focused on personal aversions,

while neglecting the social context and structural influences upon the individual. Past literature has also tended to concentrate on very focused areas within the creation of attitudes, to the exclusion of others. Although this research is valuable as it provides information about factors that may be influential in the creation of such attitudes, this failure to take a holistic approach has forced previous research to remain incomplete. The current thesis attempts to incorporate the environment in which the individual's attitudes were created, and also the individual's experience of this environment, in order to acknowledge the effects of social position within the capitalist regime on attitudes towards homosexuality. The examination of attitudes within the relevant social context may enable influences upon attitudes towards homosexuality to be better interpreted and understood.

GENDER AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS HOMOSEXUALITY

Previous research has consistently found a relationship between gender and attitudes towards homosexuality (Whitley 2001; Lewis 2003). However, previous studies have been fairly limited in their scope, relying heavily on the construction of the gender binary and notions of sexuality as a distinct and separable component of an individual.

Such research offers little explanation of gender differences in attitudes towards homosexuality, other than the dichotomous relationship perceived between genders, and heterosexual desire to maintain such a distinction. This argument is logically lacking, as these appear to be more symptomatic than explanatory statements as there is a failure to explain why heterosexuality is so crucial to the dominant social ideology. The current study recognizes the importance of gender while refusing to view it as a characteristic that is capable of being understood outside of the context of it's enactment and recognition.

Previous research includes a study examining the relationship of gender role variables to attitudes towards homosexuality, conducted by Whitley (2001). Whitley's (2001) primary analysis was a meta analysis of previous research into the area of gender roles and attitudes towards homosexuality, and investigated two aspects of the gender role entity , including gender role beliefs and gender role self-concepts. Whitley is careful to clearly make the distinction between the two, describing gender role beliefs as those beliefs which "represent people's ideas of the proper roles for men and women in society and of behavioral norms for men and women" (Whitley 2001:692). Gender self concepts are defined as those which "represent peoples views

of themselves in terms of gender-stereotypic personality traits" (Whitley 2001:693). The first area of interest is more relevant to the current topic as gender role beliefs are used to display attitudes, whereas gender self-concepts are more reflective of individual personality traits. Both of Whitley's (2001) studies support the notion that gender role beliefs affect attitudes towards homosexuality and also found that a hyper investment in a gender role norm is likely to result in a negative attitude towards homosexuality. Strongly affirmed beliefs about gender role norms are also likely to be influential on the individual's perception of the social structure of institutions such as marriage, the family and the workplace.

Whitley's (2001) analysis also investigated the effect of role norms and attitudes toward sexism on the attitudes of a group of college students towards homosexuality. This study was important as it found gender to be a predictor of attitudes and anti-homosexual behaviors, showing women to be more tolerant of homosexuality and men to be more likely to engage in anti-homosexual behavior.

The results were explained using a cultural gender belief system (Deaux and Kite 1987:97) which is defined as a "set of beliefs and opinions about males and females and about the purported qualities of masculinity and

femininity". The cultural gender belief system theory, however, does not explain why the destabilization of this gender belief system would be threatening other than to be unfamiliar. Rather, the theory explains the condemnation of homosexual men and women by their deviation from traditional gender roles. Therefore the acceptance of the feminization of homosexual men and the masculinization of homosexual women is fundamental to the theory's validity (Laner and Laner 1979; Storms et al. 1981). Whitley's (2001) understanding depends on the hegemonic assumptions of the dichotomy of gender, the deviation from gender roles of homosexuals, and the belief that gender traits displayed in one facet of an individual are applicable to all areas of the individual's behavior (Kite and Whitely 1998). The acceptance of these assumptions is demonstrated by previous research, which found that men who are perceived as having feminine traits are perceived as being more likely to be homosexual, whereas women who are perceived to have masculine traits are deemed more likely to be lesbian (Kite and Deaux 1987; McCreary 1994). However, this is an essentialized, prejudiced and inaccurate perception of homosexuals that has distorted previous research findings.

LaMar and Kite (1998) identified four components of attitudes towards homosexual men and lesbians, including

condemnation or tolerance, morality, contact and stereotypes. They found that men held more negative attitudes towards homosexuals than women in the areas of condemnation, morality and contact, but that women held more negative attitudes regarding stereotypes (LaMar and Kite 1998). Men rated homosexual males more negatively than lesbians on all sub-scales except stereotypes, whereas women reported similar levels of condemnation or tolerance and morality towards homosexual men and homosexual women, but displayed more negative attitudes regarding contact with lesbians. However, Louderback and Whitley (1997) do address the hetero-erotic ideology of lesbianism, which may account for the differences displayed by men in relation to tolerance of homosexual men and homosexual women.

LaMar and Kite (1998) state that attitudes towards homosexuality are not one-dimensional but are rather comprised of several layers of beliefs including fear, disgust and evasion. This analysis is best understood from a generalized gender belief system, in which genders are believed to be incompatible and fixed. LaMar and Kite claim that separating attitudes towards homosexuality and attitudes towards gender roles is "extremely difficult and perhaps impossible" (1998:189). They go on to state that there may be a need for a psychodynamic element to analysis

of attitudes towards homosexuality, due to the possibility of negative attitudes being the result of latent or repressed homosexuality. For all factors except stereotypes, men were shown to be less tolerant of homosexuality than women. In the contact component both genders reported a greater intolerance of same-sex contact than of other-sex homosexual contact. Gender role analysis is therefore not supported, as it does not explain gender differences in attitudes towards lesbians and homosexual men. This highlights the need for further theoretical debate and analysis of gender differences in attitudes towards homosexuality.

Both gender role beliefs and gender role self concepts have been argued to constitute the gender schema, which is an internal belief system concerning appropriate gender roles, that influences the individuals perception of the world around them. Individuals who are highly gender schematic therefore adhere closely to accepted gender roles (Bem 1981). Gender roles also play a key part in the individual's construction of morality and perceptions of social concepts. As such, the gender scheme theory dictates that those whose beliefs are strongly influenced by gender role norms will have strong negative attitudes towards those who are perceived to contravene gender role norms, such as

homosexual men and women (Bem 1993). Multifactor gender identity theory critiques gender schema theory by arguing that although gender role beliefs are related to attitudes towards homosexuality, gender role self concepts are irrelevant as they exist independently of moral judgments of others, and are only representative of the individuals view of themselves (Spence 1993).

It has been proposed that there may be constructs that span these two dimensions, such as hyper masculinity and hyper femininity, which can be identified by an extreme attachment to traditional gender roles (Whitley 2001). These could be considered as both personality traits and attitudes towards external beings, and are constructed based firmly on engendered beliefs. An analysis of old fashioned sexism, which is indicated by an approval of the unequal treatment of men and women, and modern sexism, which is representative of the denial of gendered inequality, was also carried out to observe any effect that the strength of attitude about gender roles had on attitudes towards homosexuality.

Hyper masculinity was found to have a significant effect on the attitudes of individuals towards homosexuality, suggesting that intense personal affiliation with the traditional male role norm, comprising heterosexual

proficiency and gender dominance (Carrigan, Connell and Lee 1987) is related to high levels of negative attitudes towards homosexuality (Whitley 2001). It is unclear whether this is due to the more intense affiliation with a traditional gender role or the gender of the participant, as no research was carried out into hyper femininity and attitudes towards homosexuality. It was also found that those individuals who held traditional gender role beliefs expressed more negative views towards homosexuality than their more liberal counterparts (Whitley 2001). There exists a strong correlation between gender role beliefs and attitudes towards homosexuality, and this correlation exists for attitudes towards both homosexual men and homosexual women (Whitley 2001). Beliefs held concerning male role norms and female role norms were both found to have equally strong links to attitudes towards homosexuality. Old fashioned sexism was found to be positively correlated with negative attitudes towards homosexuality, with modern sexism having a weaker correlation, which implies that attitudes towards homosexuality are derived more from traditional gender role beliefs than from more contemporary measurements of gendered associations. These results would appear to support Spence's (1993) multifactor gender identity theory, which states that beliefs, attitudes and behavior exist

separately from one another, indicating that these gender role apparatus can operate autonomously. This supports the gender belief theory as homosexuals suffer disapproval because of their perceived defiance of gender role norms. However, there is no theoretical explanation offered as to why this aversion to fluid or amalgamated gender roles may exist. The issue of what constitutes a gender role violation also requires clarification, as this could emanate from the perception of the attitude holder, or it could be an intrinsic aspect of homosexuality.

The effects of male role endorsement, old-fashioned sexism, modern sexism and hyper gender role orientation on attitudes towards homosexuality were examined through a deconstruction of attitudes into three components including affect, cognition and behavior (Whitley 2001). The strongest predictors of attitudes towards homosexuality were found to be old fashioned sexism, attitudes towards women and endorsement of traditional male role norms, supporting the notion that individuals who held strong traditional beliefs about gender role norms are the most likely to report negative attitudes towards homosexuality. (Whitley 2001). The strongest predictors of anti-homosexual behavior were found to be gender, attitudes towards women and hyper gender role orientation.

These findings were explained using a gender role belief system perspective, which states that those who hold strong beliefs about gender roles will use these beliefs to interpret the world around them (Whitley 2001). Gender role belief system theory has three basic premises, including that women are vulnerable, heterosexuality is normal and that there exist intrinsic differences in the characteristics of two binary genders. From this perspective lesbian women are perceived as being inconsistent with the need for male protection, and homosexuals represent a clear threat to the primacy of heterosexuality. Homosexuality is also perceived to simultaneously reject gender role norms thereby destabilizing gender differentiation (McCreary 1994). This explanation is problematic as there appears to be no evidence to support the purported greater vulnerability of heterosexual women, or that homosexuals wish to limit the practice of heterosexuality. Traditional sexist beliefs were found to be meaningful predictors for anti-homosexual behavior for men but not for women, suggesting that men are more able or more motivated to act upon their negative attitudes towards homosexuality. It is not discussed if this tendency is reflected in male behavior generally or if it is specific to attitudes towards homosexuality.

Previous research into gender differences in attitudes towards homosexuality have therefore concentrated on the constructed notions of gender, and assumed characteristics attributed to them to be inherent and desirable. The effect of social class on perceptions of gender enactment is therefore important, as it illuminates the subjective nature of gender.

CLASS AND GENDER ROLE BELIEFS AND PERCEPTIONS

There has been limited research in to the effects of class and social position on attitudes towards homosexuality, with the following studies focusing on the perceived sexuality of individuals as related to class components such as occupation and social background. Class has been found to be a crucial element in the determining of the feminization of homosexual males (Harry 1983). Homosexual males who originated from working class backgrounds were found to be more likely to retain feminine characteristics than those from higher socio-economic classes. This suggests the involvement of capital and social structure in the creation of social and sexual stereotypes, and conformity to such stereotypes. This finding is reiterated by Weinbaum (1983:117) with the statement that the money nexus is relevant to sexual

relations "across race, class and cultural differences" implying that capital is constantly involved in the creation and sustenance of relations that by necessity involve issues of power.

It has also been found that it is not only personality traits, but also occupation that affects the perceived femininity, masculinity and homosexuality of individuals (Wong et al. 1999). Professions traditionally linked to specific gender roles increased the perception of the worker to be perceived accordingly, with incompatible sex and gender roles leading to an increased likelihood of homosexuality being attributed to the target. This supports the notion that there is a gendered difference in attitudes towards homosexuality and its stereotypes through the impact of gender on perception (Wong et al. 1999). Gender belief theory states that anyone who displays inconsistent gender traits or those divergent from their biological gender, will initiate negative associations from others (Laner and Laner 1979; 1980). Thus it has been shown that non-conformity is linked to perceptions of homosexuality and such non-conformity is damaging to the perceptions of individuals by others.

RACE AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS HOMOSEXUALITY

While there have been several pieces of research conducted into the effects of gender on attitudes towards homosexuality (Bem 1981; Deaux and Kite 1987; Whitley 2001) there has been relatively little attention paid to the effect of race on attitudes towards homosexuality.

In his research into racial disparities in attitudes towards homosexuality in America, Lewis (2003) found that the black sample displayed a greater disapproval of homosexuality than the white sample, which remained significant when religion and education were controlled. There was no significant difference found between the white and the black sample's opinions on sodomy laws and homosexual civil rights when no variables were controlled. However, when religion and education were controlled, the black respondents were shown to be more supportive of homosexual civil rights, and distinctly more opposed to discriminatory employment policy. Black respondents were eleven percent more likely than white respondents to view homosexual relations as "always wrong", and fourteen percent more likely to deem them warranting "God's punishment" in the form of AIDS (Lewis 2003:63). However, this difference in attitude was not reflected in attitudes towards the criminalization of homosexual sex, with the black

respondents being no more likely than the white respondents to favor criminalizing homosexual relations. Black respondents were also less likely to allow a homosexual to give a speech in public or to place a book written by a homosexual in a public library. Respondents of both racial categories reported similar attitudes towards the employment of homosexuals, although the black respondents were ten percent more likely to support legislation banning anti-homosexual discriminatory employment practices (Lewis 2003).

It was noted that a higher percentage of black respondents than white respondents were women, which may have curtailed the true hostility felt by the black population, according to previous research (Lewis 2003:67). In addition, higher levels of education are positively correlated with more liberal attitudes, and as black respondents are statistically less likely to be college graduates than white respondents (Lewis 2003:66), this may account for some of the disparity. However, when controlling for religion, education, age and gender, black respondents are still found to hold more negative attitudes towards homosexuality than comparable white respondents do. An intra-racial analysis showed similar affects of religiosity and education on each group. Increased age and religious attendance were positively correlated with

decreased tolerance of homosexuality, while increased education was positively correlated to increased tolerance within both racial categories.

Intra-racial gender differences were found to be significant with women being more tolerant of homosexual relations than comparable men. However, religion, age and education all also appear to have an impact on attitudes towards homosexuality, but this impact is shown to be less significant for the black respondents than it is for the white (Lewis 2003). This suggests a need for further research into the area of racial disparity of attitudes towards homosexuality. This study also examined only the racial categories of black and white. A more comprehensive analysis including more racial groups may illuminate pertinent differences between or within categories.

Thus, previous research has failed to take into account the full range of effects that interact within the individual at any one time, and have usually taken one characteristic, either gender (Whitley 2001) or race (Lewis 2003) and used it as an essentializing and deterministic force. What is problematic about these characteristics is that they are socially constructed by an economic superstructure, which defines each category and shapes individuals' experiences accordingly. Using a Marxian and

Foucauldian understanding of the social, it is hoped that the influences of the economic forces within society can be better understood and exposed as the creators of morality, identity and sexuality, and also therefore, of inequality and prejudice. These theorists allow the study to go further than the superficial and perceived notions of gender and race, to observe the effects of the capitalist establishment that has designed such definitions. It is therefore predicted that the influence of gender on attitudes towards homosexuality can be more fully understood as a contributing factor in the creation of social placement within the capitalist structure. This social placement in turn affects individual attitudes towards homosexuality.

The following hypotheses, derived from the empirical literature, will be tested through an analysis of the effects of sex, age, race, income and beliefs regarding the domestication of women, on individual attitudes towards homosexuality. Due to the subjective nature of the concepts being examined, beliefs regarding the domestication of women will be used as a proxy measure of internalization of capitalist ideology by the individual. Sex, age, race, and income will be used as indicators of social position within, and reward from, the capitalist regime. The effects of these

variables will be analyzed while controlling for the effects of time.

Hypothesis 1: There will be a significant relationship between the sex of the respondent and attitudes towards homosexuality. Women will have more tolerant attitudes towards homosexuality than men.

Hypothesis 2: There will be a significant relationship between beliefs regarding the domestication of women and attitudes towards homosexuality. Those holding more liberal beliefs towards one will also hold more tolerant attitudes towards the other.

Hypothesis 3: Sex, age, race, income and beliefs regarding the domestication of women will significantly influence attitudes towards homosexuality. Those respondents categorized as female, those reporting a younger age, those who are categorized as black or other, those reporting lower incomes, and those who hold more liberal beliefs regarding the domestication of women will be more likely to hold more tolerant attitudes towards homosexuality, than those respondents who are categorized as male, those who report an older age, those who are categorized as white, those reporting higher incomes, and those who report more

traditional beliefs regarding the domestication of women.

Hypothesis 4: Beliefs regarding the domestication of women will mediate the relationship between the demographic variables and attitudes towards homosexuality.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This study seeks to determine whether gender has a significant effect on attitudes towards homosexuality, and whether this effect is mediated by beliefs about the domestication of women. The effects of social positioning, as indicated by sex, age, race and income, on attitudes held towards homosexuality will also be examined. An analysis of quantitative data will be completed from data collected in the General Social Survey completed by the Roper Center for Public Opinion Research (Davis and Smith 1990). These conceptual and predicated notions will be examined in order to examine influences upon attitudes towards homosexuality. Due to the lack of a direct measure of immersion in the capitalist regime, the variables of sex, age, race and income are used as indicators of social position within the capitalist hierarchy, with a higher social position being indicative of fuller immersion. The variable measuring beliefs about the domestication of women is a proxy constructed to show the internalization of this immersion. Through an understanding of which areas have a greater

effect on attitudes towards homosexuality, it is hoped to uncover possible explanations for any differences found.

SUBJECT POPULATION

The secondary data used in this study was taken from the United States General Social Survey during the years of 1993 to 1998. The sampling frame for this study is the English-speaking population of the United States of America who are over the age of eighteen and living in non-institutional arrangements within the United States. From this list the sample studied was selected, ensuring that every case in the population has a chance of selection. Due to some variation in the collection of certain variables throughout the selected time period each variable has a unique number of representative cases. There are 15,873 cases including the age of the respondent, 15,916 including the sex of the respondent, 13,151 cases including the race of the respondent, 14,087 cases including the income variable, and 9014 cases including the respondents attitude towards homosexuality. The scale of beliefs regarding the domestication of women included 6,888 cases. Due to this disparity, sub samples have been used to complete the following analysis. This is statistically valid as the

variables were randomly assigned to respondents in order to avoid sampling bias.

VARIABLES

The dependent variable represents attitudes held towards homosexuality. It was measured through responses to the question "What about sexual relations between two adults of the same sex". Respondents could answer "always wrong" (coded 1), "almost always wrong" (coded 2), "wrong only sometimes" (coded 3) or "not wrong at all" (coded 4). This is interpreted as higher values being indicative of a more tolerant attitude.

The two categories in the data collected for the variable sex were male (coded 1) and female (coded 2). Age was recorded in years, with higher values indicating a greater number of years of age. Although there were three categories of race in the original data, these categories were recoded into "white" (coded 1) and "black" and "other" (coded 0). This was coded as such in order to highlight differences between structurally dominant and non-dominant groups. The respondents financial reward from the capitalist institution was assessed through the question "In which of these groups did your total family income, from all sources, fall last year before taxes, that is?" The

responses were recorded in 12 ordinal increments, ranging from less than \$1,000, to \$25,000 and above.

A scale measuring beliefs about the domestication of women has been constructed utilizing 6,888 cases including responses to the following statements (see Tables 1 and 2). The perceived relationship of working mothers compared to their non-working counterparts was measured through responses to the statement "A working mother can establish just as warm and secure a relationship with her children as a mother who does not work". The perceived obligations and priorities connected to the role of a wife were measured by responses to the statement "It is more important for a wife to help her husband's career than to have one herself". The final contributing variable recorded responses to the statement "It is much better for everyone involved if the man is the achiever outside the home and the woman takes care of the home and family". The respondents were able to respond "strongly agree", "agree", "disagree" or "strongly disagree", with the scale being coded so that higher values represented more liberal beliefs regarding the domestication of women. The scale ranged from 3 to 12 (mean = 8.61 , s.d. = 1.91). Note that the statement querying the relationship between a working mother and a mother who does not work and their child was recoded so that higher values displayed a

Table 1. Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Scale Statistics.

	Cronbach's Alpha	Mean	SD
Scale of Beliefs About Domestication Of Women	0.704	8.610	1.919

Table 2. Inter Item Correlation Matrix for Items Included in the Scale of Beliefs Regarding the Domestication of Women.

	<u>Important for Man to Work</u>	<u>Wife Should Help Husband</u>
Wife Should Help Husband	0.586	1.000
Mother to Work Hurts Child	0.420	0.334

more liberal attitude to be consistent with the other 2 scaled variables. The scaled items have face validity and Cronbach's alpha was used to show the reliability of the scale. Correlations between the items ranged from .33 to .58 and Cronbach's alpha for the entire scale was .70. This scale provides a measure of the respondents attitude towards the relative importance of woman in relation to man in both the domestic and the corporate arena. Survey years are included in the analysis as a dummy variable in order to control for the effects of time, with 1993 as the reference category.

DATA ANALYSIS

In order to test these hypotheses, bivariate analysis of the discrete variables of gender and attitudes towards homosexuality, and race and attitudes towards homosexuality, will be run, specifically using a crosstabulation procedure. Spearman's bivariate correlation analysis will then be carried out on the scaled variable of beliefs regarding the domestication of women and attitudes towards homosexuality, age and attitudes towards homosexuality, and income and attitudes towards homosexuality, in order to assess the significance of any relationship between the demographic variables and attitudes towards homosexuality.

Multivariate regression analysis will be run on attitudes towards homosexuality, and sex, age, race, income and beliefs regarding the domestication of women to analyze the influence of combinations of the demographic variables on attitudes towards homosexuality. This will allow the amount of variance in attitudes towards homosexuality explained by each variable to be deciphered. The data will be run using a dummy variable to control for the effects of time.

A second multivariate regression analysis will then be run on attitudes towards homosexuality and sex, age, race and income, to expose the effect of beliefs regarding the domestication of women on the relationships between the demographic variables and attitudes towards homosexuality.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This analysis will examine the relative likelihood of individuals reporting a negative attitude towards homosexuality based on their sex, age, racial categorization, income and beliefs regarding the domestication of women, while controlling for historical effects. It is hypothesized that those respondents categorized as male will hold more negative attitudes towards homosexuality due to holding more traditional values. It is also hypothesized that those respondents who report an older age, and are categorized as white or as receiving a higher income will hold more negative attitudes towards homosexuality, due to being more immersed in the capitalist regime, and therefore being more likely to support masculinist and heteronormative ideologies. Furthermore, it is hypothesized that there will be a positive correlation between beliefs regarding the domestication of women and attitudes towards homosexuality, with those holding more liberal attitudes towards one, also holding more tolerant attitudes towards the other. It is predicted that beliefs regarding the domestication will

mediate the relationship between the demographic variables and attitudes towards homosexuality.

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

The analysis was carried out utilizing data collected in the United States general social survey between the years of 1993 and 1998 (see Table 3). A slight majority of the respondents were female, and the age of respondents ranged from 18 - 89. However, over half of the respondents (51.4%, $n = 8,159$) were 43 or younger at the time of the survey. The majority of respondents were identified as white. There were 12 income categories ranging from less than \$1,000 per year, to \$25,000 and over, with the majority of respondents (62.6%, $n = 8,813$) being in the uppermost category. There was a slight tendency towards holding more liberal beliefs regarding the domestication of women with the scale ranging from 3-12 with higher values indicating more liberal attitudes, with a mean of 8.61 (s.d. = 1.92).

The majority of respondents questioned about their attitudes towards homosexuality held negative attitudes towards sexual relations between two adults of the same sex. Just over a quarter of respondents questioned (27.3%, $n = 2,461$) felt that it was not wrong at all.

Table 3. Demographic Characteristics of Sample.

Variable		Sample N	Percentage
<u>Sex</u>			
	Male	6,949	43.70
	Female	8,967	56.30
<u>Age</u>			
	Mean =	44.17	
	Range =	18 - 89	
	SD =	16.36	
<u>Race</u>			
	White	10,658	81.00
	Black and Other	2,493	19.00
<u>Income</u>			
	Mean =	10.60	
	Range =	1 - 12	
	SD =	2.44	
<u>Scale of Beliefs Regarding Women</u>			
	Mean =	8.61	
	Range =	3 - 12	
	SD =	1.92	
<u>Year</u>			
	1993	1,606	15.54
	1994	2,992	28.95
	1996	2,904	28.10
	1998	2,832	27.41

Table 3. Continued.

Variable	Sample	
	N	Percentage
<u>Attitudes Towards</u>		
<u>Homosexuality</u>		
Always Wrong	5,502	61.00
Almost Always Wrong	432	4.80
Sometimes Wrong	619	6.90
Not Wrong At All	2,461	27.30

CROSSTABULATION

A crosstabular analysis was then carried out including 9,014 cases in order to assess the relationship between sex and attitudes towards homosexuality. As hypothesized there was a significant bivariate relationship between sex and attitudes towards homosexuality (see Table 4) (chi-square = 21.78, with 3 degrees of freedom, $p < .001$) with 62.5% ($n = 2,541$) of males responding that homosexual relations are always wrong, as opposed to 59.8% ($n = 2,961$) of females. Twenty-five percent ($n = 1,019$) of males questioned responded that sexual relations between two adults of the same sex are not wrong at all, compared to 29.1% ($n = 1,442$) of the females questioned. Male respondents were found to have a consistently more negative attitude towards homosexuality than females. A weak but significant positive correlation is shown ($\gamma = .06$, $p = < .001$). This supports the hypothesis that there is differences between genders in attitudes towards homosexuality, with women holding more tolerant attitudes towards homosexuality than men.

A crosstabular analysis was run on 8,130 cases in order to assess the relationship between race and attitudes towards homosexuality (see Table 5). As hypothesized, there was a significant bivariate relationship between race and

Table 4. Crosstabular Analysis Showing Bivariate Relationship Between Respondent's Sex and Attitudes Towards Homosexuality.

Homosexual Relations	Respondent's Sex	
	Male	Female
Always Wrong (N = 5502) (61%)	2451 62.5%	2961 59.8%
Almost Always Wrong (N = 432) (4.8%)	219 5.4%	213 4.3%
Sometimes Wrong (N = 619) (6.9%)	284 7.0%	619 6.9%
Not Wrong At All (N = 2461) (27.3%)	1019 25.1%	1442 29.1%
p = 0.001 Gamma = 0.066		

Table 5. Crosstabular Analysis Showing Bivariate Relationship Between Respondent's Race and Attitudes Towards Homosexuality.

Homosexual Relations	Respondent's Race	
	White	Black and Other
Always Wrong (N = 5016) (61.70%)	3944 59.87%	1072 69.52%
Almost Always Wrong (N = 389) (4.78%)	315 4.78%	74 4.80%
Sometimes Wrong (N = 556) (6.84%)	483 7.33%	73 4.74%
Not Wrong At All (N = 2169) (26.68%)	1846 28.02%	323 20.94%
p = 0.000 Gamma = 0.191		

attitudes towards homosexuality ($\chi^2 = 54.64$, with 3 degrees of freedom, $p = <.001$) with over half of white respondents (59.87%, $n = 3,944$) reporting that they felt that homosexual relations are always wrong, as opposed to 69.52% ($n = 323$) of respondents categorized as black or other. Only 24.94% ($n = 323$) of respondents categorized as black or other felt that homosexual relations are not wrong at all, as opposed to 28.02% ($n = 1,846$) of respondents categorized as white. Those respondents categorized as black or other were shown to have consistently less tolerant attitudes towards homosexuality than those categorized as white. A significant correlation was shown ($\gamma = .191$, $p = <.01$). This does not support the hypothesis that those who are categorized as black or other will hold more tolerant attitudes towards homosexuality, due to being less immersed in the capitalist regime.

BIVARIATE CORRELATION

A bivariate correlation was run on 8,997 cases including age and attitudes towards homosexuality. This analysis revealed, as predicted, that there exists a significant negative correlation between age and attitudes towards homosexuality, as shown in Table 6 (Spearman's $Rho = -.201$, $p = <.001$). This supports the prediction that older

Table 6. Correlation Matrix Showing Bivariate Relationships Between Respondent's Age, Income, Beliefs Regarding the Domestication of Women and Attitudes Towards Homosexuality.

Homosexual Relations		
Respondent's Age	Correlation Coefficient	0.201*
Income	Correlation Coefficient	0.082*
Beliefs Regarding Women	Correlation Coefficient	0.372*

* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

persons are more likely to report more negative attitudes towards homosexuality.

A correlation analysis was also run on 8,082 cases including income and attitudes towards homosexuality. This analysis revealed that, contrary to prediction, there is a positive correlation between income and attitudes towards homosexuality, as shown in Table 6 (Spearman's $Rho = .08$, $p = <.001$). This contradicts the prediction that respondents reporting a higher income will also report more negative attitudes towards homosexuality.

A further correlation analysis was run on 3,415 cases including the variables of beliefs regarding the domestication of women and attitudes towards homosexuality. The bivariate correlation revealed that, as predicted, there is a significant positive correlation between beliefs regarding the domestication of women and attitudes towards homosexuality, as shown in Table 6 (Spearman's $Rho = .37$, $p = <.01$). This supports the hypothesis that there will be a significant relationship between attitudes towards homosexuality and attitudes towards the domestication of women. Those holding more liberal attitudes towards one will also hold more liberal attitudes towards the other.

MULTIVARIATE REGRESSION ANALYSIS 1

An ordinal multivariate regression analysis was run to assess any relationships between sex, age, race, income and beliefs regarding the domestication of women on attitudes towards homosexuality, while controlling for the effects of time by using a dummy variable (see Table 7).

Sex was not found to be a significant indicator of attitudes towards homosexuality when the other variables were controlled ($p = >.05$). As predicted, age was found to be a significant factor in the respondents attitudes towards homosexuality with a negative correlation revealing that a single unit increase in age is equated to a 2% decrease in the odds of the respondent holding a more tolerant attitude towards homosexuality (Odds Ratio = 0.98, $p = < .01$). Race was shown to be a significant predictor in attitudes towards homosexuality, although not in the expected direction, with the odds of white respondents holding more tolerant attitudes towards homosexuality being 2.17 times higher than the respondents who identified themselves as black or other (Odds ratio = 2.17, $p = <.01$). This finding is also supportive of previous research (Lewis 2001). Income was not found to have a significant relationship with attitudes towards homosexuality ($p = >.05$). Beliefs regarding the domestication of women was found to be a significant

Table 7. The Effects of Sex, Age, Race, Income, Beliefs Regarding the Domestication of Women and Time on Attitudes Towards Homosexuality.

		Regression 1	Regression 2
Sex (Female)	Odds Ratio	1.079	1.305**
	(s.e.)	0.080	0.049
Age	Odds Ratio	0.984**	0.972**
	(s.e.)	0.003	0.002
Race (White)	Odds Ratio	2.166**	1.763**
	(s.e.)	0.109	0.066
Income	Odds Ratio	1.006	1.046**
	(s.e.)	0.017	0.010
Beliefs (Liberal)	Odds Ratio	1.525**	---
	(s.e.)	0.025	---
Year 1994	Odds Ratio	1.053	0.803**
	(s.e.)	0.130	0.066
Year 1996	Odds Ratio	1.489**	1.053
	(s.e.)	0.121	0.065
Year 1998	Odds Ratio	1.645**	1.184*
	(s.e.)	0.129	0.065
Nagelkerke R-Square		0.196	0.073

* significant at $p < 0.01$ level (2-tailed)

** significant at $p < 0.001$ level (2-tailed)

predictor of attitudes towards homosexuality in the predicted direction, with each unit increase in beliefs regarding the domestication of women being equated to an increase of 1.53 in the odds of the respondent also holding more tolerant attitudes towards homosexuality (Odds ratio = 1.53, $p = <.05$).

A dummy variable was used to control for the effects of time. This analysis showed no significant difference between 1993 and 1994 ($p = >.05$). However, there was a significant difference between 1993 and 1996, with the odds of those respondents questioned in 1996 being 49% more likely to hold more positive attitudes towards homosexuality (Odds ratio = 1.49, $p = <.05$). There was also a significant difference between 1993 and 1998, with the odds of those respondents questioned in 1998 being 65% more likely than the 1993 respondents to hold a more liberal attitude towards homosexuality (Odds ratio = 1.65, $p = <.01$). This would suggest that as times passes, attitudes become more liberal, which supports previous research in this area (Scott 1998; Loftus 2001). Approximately 20% (Nagelkerke R-Square= .20) of the variance in attitudes towards homosexuality is explained by these variables.

MULTIVARIATE REGRESSION ANALYSIS 2

A second multivariate analysis was run to assess the effects of sex, age, race and income on attitudes towards homosexuality while controlling for the effects of time omitting beliefs regarding the domestication of women (see Table 7). This second multivariate analysis was run in order to discover whether the lack of predicted relationship between sex and income, and attitudes towards homosexuality could be accounted for by the mediating effect of beliefs regarding the domestication of women.

This analysis again showed age, as predicted, to have a significant influence upon attitudes towards homosexuality with a single unit increase in age equating to an approximate increase of 10% in the likelihood of holding more negative attitudes towards homosexuality (Odds ratio = 0.97, $p = <.01$). However, the relationships between sex, race and income, and attitudes towards homosexuality were significantly altered by the omission of beliefs regarding the domestication of women.

Sex was shown to be a significant indicator of attitudes towards homosexuality in this analysis consistent with the prediction, with the odds of females holding more tolerant attitudes towards homosexuality being approximately 30% higher than males (Odds ratio = 1.30, $p = <.01$). Race

was shown to be a significant predictor of attitudes towards homosexuality, although contrary to prediction, the odds of white respondents holding more tolerant attitudes towards homosexuality were 76% higher than those respondents who were identified as black or other (Odds ratio= 1.76, $p = <.01$). Income was also found to be a significant indicator of attitudes towards homosexuality, although not in the predicted direction, with a unit increase in income equating to the odds of the respondent holding a more tolerant attitude towards homosexuality being increased by approximately 5% (Odds ratio = 1.05, $p = <.01$).

The fact that sex and income are shown to be significant factors in the analysis only when beliefs regarding the domestication of women are omitted, shows that beliefs regarding the domestication of women mediates the relationships between sex and attitudes towards homosexuality, and income and attitudes towards homosexuality. However, when beliefs regarding the domestication of women are removed from the analysis, race becomes a less influential factor on attitudes towards homosexuality. This suggests that beliefs regarding the domestication of women enhances the effect of race on attitudes towards homosexuality.

There was a significant difference shown between

responses given in 1993 and 1994 (Odds ratio= 0.80, $p = <.01$) suggesting that those respondents questioned in 1994 were only 80% as likely as those asked in 1993 to respond positively when questioned regarding their attitudes towards homosexuality (Odds ratio = 0.80, $p = <.01$). However, there was no significant difference found between 1993 and 1996 ($p = >.05$), although those questioned in 1998 are shown to be 18% more likely to hold more tolerant attitudes towards homosexuality (Odds ratio = 1.18, $p = <.05$).

Approximately 7% of the variance in attitudes towards homosexuality was explained by these variables (Nagelkerke = 0.07). Therefore, this analysis shows that when beliefs regarding the domestication of women is omitted from the study the amount of variance explained in attitudes towards homosexuality is reduced from approximately 20% (Nagelkerke R-Square = .20) to approximately 7% (Nagelkerke R-Square = .07). This suggests that beliefs regarding the domestication of women is responsible for over half of the total variance explained, more than all of the other variables combined. This highlights the importance of the influence of beliefs regarding the domestication of women on attitudes towards homosexuality.

These findings suggest that age and race are consistently significant factors in determining attitudes

towards homosexuality. Beliefs regarding the domestication of women are shown to be highly correlated with attitudes towards homosexuality, and correspondingly explains a large portion of the variance in attitudes.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

This study investigated the following research questions: To what extent, if any, does gender have an effect on individual attitudes towards homosexuality? If a gendered difference does exist, what are the effects of age, race, income and beliefs regarding the domestication of women on this difference? This was done to determine whether any effect truly is a gendered effect, or whether attitudes towards homosexuality are influenced by social position within the capitalist structure.

That sex was shown to be a significant predictor of attitudes towards homosexuality is supportive of the hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between the sex of the respondent and attitudes towards homosexuality, with women being predicted to hold more tolerant attitudes than men. This finding is also supportive of previous findings in this area (Lewis 2003; Whitley 2001).

Sex was significantly related to attitudes towards homosexuality only when beliefs regarding the domestication of women are omitted from the multivariate analysis. However, sex was found to be a significant predictor of

attitudes towards homosexuality in the expected direction in both the bivariate analysis, and in the multivariate regression analysis that did not include the variable measuring beliefs regarding the domestication of women.

Male respondents were shown to hold less tolerant attitudes towards homosexuality than female respondents, which supports the theory that those who obtain greater rewards from the capitalist system are more likely to oppose principles that are not consistent with capitalist ideologies. The traditional notion of marriage as a heterosexual institution, with the corresponding emphasis on traditional values such as child bearing and home making, has enabled capitalism to flourish through the unrecognized and unpaid domestic labor provided mostly by women (Mitchell 1971).

The significant relationship found between beliefs regarding the domestication of women and attitudes towards homosexuality supports the hypothesis that there would be a significant relationship between beliefs regarding the domestication of women and attitudes towards homosexuality, with those holding more liberal beliefs about one, also holding more tolerant attitudes towards the other.

Consistent with the prediction, beliefs regarding the domestication of women was found to be positively correlated

with attitudes towards homosexuality in both the bivariate analysis and the multivariate analysis. This relationship was in the expected direction with those holding more liberal beliefs regarding the domestication of women, also being more likely to hold more tolerant attitudes towards homosexuality.

This indicates that those who hold less rigid gender-role beliefs are also more likely to be less opposed to homosexual relationships. Due to the necessity of traditional family units, which ensure familial obligation, and the ensuing unpaid domestic labor, to the capitalist regime, this finding can be interpreted as those who are less committed to the capitalist regime being more likely to hold more tolerant attitudes towards homosexuality.

That men appear to hold less tolerant attitudes towards homosexuality would also indicate that attitudes towards homosexuality are influenced by social position within the dominant social structure of capitalism, with those in a position of power holding beliefs that will ensure the continuation of their dominance. The finding that the significance of sex as a predictor of attitude is diminished by the inclusion of beliefs regarding the domestication of women shows a link between beliefs regarding the domestication of women and attitudes towards homosexuality,

and also suggests that beliefs about the social structure, and the roles of men and women within it, have a greater effect on attitudes towards homosexuality than sex. This is supportive of previous research (Whitley 2001) and consistent with the theory that the capitalist structure and the respondents placement within it, will have a profound effect on their attitudes.

Sex was found to be a significant factor in the multivariate analysis only when beliefs regarding the domestication of women were not included. As predicted, men were shown to hold more negative attitudes towards homosexuality than women. Age was found to be a consistent predictor of attitudes towards homosexuality. As hypothesized, older respondents held less tolerant attitudes towards homosexuality. Race was consistently shown to be strongly related to attitudes towards homosexuality. However, this relationship was not in the predicted direction, with those respondents categorized as white, being more likely to hold more tolerant attitudes towards homosexuality. Income was found to be significantly related to attitudes towards homosexuality only when beliefs regarding the domestication of women was omitted from the analysis. This partially supports the hypothesis that the demographic variables will have a significant relationship

with attitudes towards homosexuality, and also that beliefs regarding the domestication of women will have a mediating effect on the relationship between the demographic variables and attitudes towards homosexuality.

That the significance of sex as an influential factor on attitudes towards homosexuality is dependent upon beliefs regarding the domestication of women, further supports the theory that differences in attitudes are not due to biological or innate gendered difference, but rather are a result of cultural beliefs held by individuals. Such beliefs are affected by the lived experience of individuals, which is, in turn, profoundly affected by their social position.

The correlation between age and attitudes is supportive of both the hypothesized prediction and also of previous research that has found that older generations have tended to hold more conservative attitudes (Pratte 1993; Lewis 2003). This would seem to imply that individual's beliefs and attitudes become set early in life, as older individuals retain attitudes towards homosexuality that were adopted during a time period when less tolerant ideologies were the norm. This would suggest that as time continues to pass, attitudes towards homosexuality will continue to become more liberal.

Those respondents categorized as black or other were more opposed to homosexuality than the white sample, which could possibly be due to a variety of factors including religious, family or educational backgrounds. The fact that race is such a powerful predictor of attitudes does not entirely refute the predictions, given that low income has been correlated with racial minorities (Proctor and Dalaker 2002). This finding suggests that attitudes towards homosexuality can also be influenced by external factors such as history, family beliefs, religious affiliation and education. This supports the previous literature that suggests that individuals categorized as black, may oppose homosexuality in a qualitatively different way to those respondents categorized as white (Lewis 2003). This may be particularly true of immigrants or those who are closely related to first-generation immigrants, who may not have fully adopted capitalist ideologies. These findings suggest that other influences, external to capitalism, have a greater effect on the creation of attitudes towards homosexuality of those respondents categorized as black or other. Such attitudes may also be influenced by the dominance of highly masculinist public role models available for black males, such as those successful in the sports and athletics industries (Anderson and Hill Collins 2004:76-77).

Although previous research suggests that controlling for religion does not remove racialized differences in attitudes towards homosexuality (Lewis 2003), further research into these areas could help to clarify why such disparities exist, and whether they are stable, or subject to change over time.

Income was only found to be a significant factor in one of the regression analysis, and the relationship was not in the predicted direction. This could possibly be due to other contaminating factors, such as those in higher wage brackets also being more educational, which has been shown to be correlated with more tolerant attitudes (Lewis 2003). Those with higher incomes may also have been able to travel more extensively, which could lead to them being more tolerant of lifestyles or cultures other than their own. These findings could also be distorted through the limited income categories available in the data set.

As predicted, the relationships between sex, race, income, and attitudes towards homosexuality alter when beliefs regarding the domestication of women is omitted from the analysis. Both sex and income fail to be significant when beliefs regarding the domestication are included in the analysis, but are significant when beliefs regarding the domestication of women are omitted. The relationship

between race and attitudes towards homosexuality is weakened by the removal of beliefs regarding the domestication of women from the analysis. However, beliefs regarding the domestication of women do not appear to affect the relationship between age and attitudes towards homosexuality. These findings partially support the hypothesis that beliefs regarding the domestication of women mediate the relationship between the demographic variables and attitudes towards homosexuality.

This suggests that an individual's beliefs strongly affect their attitude towards homosexuality. This supports the Marxian notion that the economic political is able to control the private sphere of the citizen through a constructed set of moral values (Engels 1978: 746). This finding also supports Foucault's notion that those in power created a moral identity based on sexuality and sexual practice, in order to ensure their continued dominance.

That sex was found to be significant only when beliefs regarding the domestication of women were omitted from the analysis suggests that it is lived experience that influences beliefs regarding the domestication of women, and that this in turn affects attitudes towards homosexuality. This is supportive of Whitley's (2001) study that found that gender-role beliefs were an influential factor in attitudes

held by individual's towards homosexuality, with those holding clearly defined and separated beliefs about the roles of men and women holding less tolerant attitudes towards homosexuality. This finding is also supportive of the cultural gender belief system (Deaux and Kite 1987), which states that those individuals who deviate from traditional gender roles, including those who engage in homosexual practices, are more likely to be disliked by those who hold traditional beliefs about the roles of men and women.

Both regression analyses indicated that attitudes towards homosexuality are becoming more tolerant as time passes. This is supportive of previous research that suggests that sexual attitudes, and attitudes towards homosexuality are becoming more tolerant (Pratte 1993; Scott 1998). This finding is also consistent with the finding that an increase in age is likely to indicate a less tolerant attitude towards homosexuality, as both findings suggest that younger generations tend to hold more tolerant attitudes towards homosexuality.

There are some limitations of the data set which include the selection sample of the respondents, with those living in institutional arrangements not being represented. Within the United States a considerable percentage of the

population is incarcerated. Within this incarcerated population, racial minorities are over represented which could distort the data collected (Garland 2001). This may give an inaccurate representation of the relationship between race and attitudes held towards homosexuality. Arguably, this is especially true of the racial category of black and other, as the black population is subject to disproportionately high levels of incarceration (Garland 2001) which could possibly lead to a misrepresentation of their attitudes as a racial category.

The exclusion of non-English speaking individuals could also provide an inaccurate representation of attitudes towards homosexuality in America due to the large immigrant population. Due to these limitations of the data, the findings are applicable only to the English speaking, adult population of America that is not living in institutionalized arrangements.

The data was collected using closed response categories, which places limitations on the ability of the data to accurately represent the attitudes of the respondents. The respondents were also asked to express attitudes towards homosexuality without any contextual or qualifying information, such as length of relationship, consent, or situation, although the age of the actors was

implied through the use of the term "adult". Due to social stereotypes concerning homosexuality, issues such as these are pertinent to the perception of the relationship and more specific questions may have allowed more illustrative attitudes to be recorded. The wording of the question recording attitudes towards homosexuality is problematic, with a high frequency of the word 'wrong' being used in the possible response categories, which could be suggestive of the interviewer leading the participant, and could result in some inaccuracy of the chosen response. There is also a failure to distinguish between attitudes held towards male and female homosexuals, which may have resulted in an erroneous representation of attitudes towards homosexuality. This could be significant as suggested by previous findings that have shown a significant difference in attitudes towards male and female homosexuals (Louderback and Whitley 1997). The available responses for the sex and race variables are also severely limited, with respondents being able to categorize themselves as "male" or "female" for the sex variable, and "black", "white" or "other" for the race variable. Such limited responses are arguably not able to present a fully accurate representation.

The fact that the variables also do not take into account the respondent's personal and family history could

also restrict the ability to accurately predict their attitudes towards homosexuality. Simply by utilizing data reflecting their current social position, a large and potentially significant portion of their experience, and therefore influences, are not taken into account. A more comprehensive analysis, providing more than a snapshot of their life events and knowledge, may produce a clearer understanding of the origin and direction of attitudes towards homosexuality.

There are also issues in the collection of family income data, as the highest increment indicated is \$25,000 and above. This means that a family living on an income of \$25,000 a year will be placed in the same category as a family living on an annual income of \$500,000. These two categories may arguably have quite different backgrounds and lifestyles, and therefore differences in attitudes, and yet are represented by the same figure. Due to the categories being fairly low for a family income, the majority of respondents fell into the uppermost category. This does not allow for comparisons among different categories of high earners, which could possibly hide relationships between income and attitudes towards homosexuality.

It is worth noting that there are also many other variables than were available for this analysis, that could

be examined to provide a more thorough representation of an individual's social position such as marital status, occupation, education, parental socio-economic status, parental occupation, accumulated wealth and experience of discrimination. Experience of cultures other than the individuals own could also have an effect on attitudes held towards homosexuality. The selection of a limited number of variables used in the analysis may account for the low amount of variance explained in attitudes towards homosexuality. Future analysis of this area may also benefit from having variables selected over a longer time frame, to allow trends to be more clearly illustrated.

This analysis suggests that men are less tolerant of homosexuality than women, and that race and beliefs regarding the domestication of women are influential factors affecting the attitudes held by individuals towards homosexuality. Respondents identified as white, and those who hold more liberal beliefs regarding the domestication of women are shown to be more likely to have more tolerant attitudes towards homosexuality. However, further research into these factors could help to provide a more comprehensive and accurate analysis of influences upon attitudes towards homosexuality, that could aid in the

development of public policy and theories of social stratification.

An increase in age was shown to indicate an increased likelihood of the respondent holding more negative attitudes towards homosexuality. This is a trend that should remain under examination as time passes, in order to observe if this trend continues as younger generations become more liberal, plateaus, or even eventually reverses. It would also be interesting to see whether trends in attitudes towards homosexuality are correlated with particular historical events, such as the legalization of homosexual unions. As homosexual individuals become more accepted by society, it is possible that what initially allowed them to be tolerated by capitalist ideology, such as high levels of disposable income, will reduce. As legal recognition of both homosexual marriages and unions, and homosexual parentage increases, along with medical advances, the ability of homosexuals to create their own families in ways never before possible, is also increased. This could lead to the current trend towards more tolerant attitudes towards homosexuality, eventually shifting direction back towards more negative attitudes.

Useful information about the relationship between age and attitudes towards homosexuality could also be gained

from the longitudinal collection of data, in order to observe whether attitudes stay constant over the life course, or whether certain life stages are highly correlated with changes in attitudes. If this was found to be the case, the direction of such changes could be important to study.

Given the close relationship between beliefs regarding the domestication of women and attitudes towards homosexuality, more research into the relationship between sex and attitudes towards homosexuality could help to further clarify how such beliefs and attitudes are created and maintained. This information could be vital in designing programs that aim to overcome prejudice in diverse and constantly changing societies.

That black and other respondent's held less tolerant attitudes towards homosexuality highlights a clear need for further research to be carried out to examine influences upon minority groups attitudes within the United States. This is especially important in this time of cultural diversity and rapid ethnic merging within America (Bouvier 1992). The fact that race has such a strong and consistent effect on attitudes towards homosexuality suggests that this is an area that needs to be studied further in order to understand how and why this factor so strongly affects

attitudes towards homosexuality, and also whether it affects other attitudes and in what way.

This analysis highlights a need to investigate the intra-racial effects of income on attitudes. The unique history of African Americans places them in a singular position, and the failure to take this history into account throughout the analysis may account for the failure of the data to meet the predictions. Looking at the relationship between these two factors more closely may help to clarify the relationship found between race and attitudes towards homosexuality. A study that examined the inter-racial effects on attitudes towards homosexuality would also benefit from having a sample that had a more comprehensive variety of racial categories. A greater understanding of the inception of negative attitudes towards groups of people in the United States could be invaluable in taking steps to overcome prejudice and ensuing discriminatory practices.

The relationship between beliefs regarding the domestication of women and attitudes towards homosexuality needs to be examined further in order to clarify and develop any relationship between structural dominance and opposition to homosexuality. Cross-cultural analysis may also help to illuminate links between structural social composition and attitudes towards homosexuality. The fact that nations that

utilize more reformative penal systems, more adequate welfare policies and more comprehensive health care systems, including progressive drug policies, also tend to have more accepting laws regarding homosexuality, suggests that less capitalist societies are also those more likely to be less strongly opposed to homosexuality. An examination of these associations could provide more evidence supportive of the notion that capitalist ideologies influence attitudes towards homosexuality.

The fact that age, race, sex, income, beliefs regarding the domestication of women and year of survey explain approximately 20% of the variance in attitudes towards homosexuality supports the theory that attitudes are created in response to lived experience, and therefore support the notion that the respondents social position within the capitalist regime will affect the attitude held. However, further analysis including a more inclusive range of variables, such as interaction with homosexuals, knowledge of homosexuals, (either accurate or inaccurate), religious affiliation, geographical area, family history, and occupation could increase the amount of variance explained and therefore be valuable to the development of a theory explaining differences in attitudes towards homosexuality. Future research could also benefit from examining the

interaction effects between the demographic variables, in order to highlight the effects of individual variables upon others.

What these findings suggest is that attitudes towards homosexuality are formed utilizing a personal belief system, which can be influenced, though not predetermined, by demographic and economic factors. An individuals lived experience plays a crucial role in the creation of such beliefs and therefore attitudes. These findings accordingly, provide a warning against essentializing or deterministic predictions, especially when formed on loosely defined or limited categories.

The importance of beliefs regarding the domestication of women to attitudes held towards homosexuality supports the theory that capitalist ideology has permeated individuals attitudes towards not simply the corporate arena, but also the private sphere, including sexual morality and gender roles. These findings also highlight the existence of an inter-relation between each of the variables, supporting the notion of a fragile structure of knowledge and beliefs, that individuals maintain to accommodate and reflect their experience and perceptions. This endorses the view that attitudes are the result of a complex system that cannot be explained without a more

comprehensive and descriptive data set. While data analysis may be useful for providing direction for future research, the extent to which empirical analysis will be able to explain humanistic beliefs and attitudes may be limited. Therefore, this analysis also highlights a need to include qualitative analysis in future studies.

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VITA

Fiona J. Blee

Old Dominion University, Department of Sociology and
Criminal Justice, Norfolk, Virginia 23529 (757) 683-3791

Education:

M.A. Applied Sociology, May 2005; Old Dominion
University, Norfolk, Virginia

B.A. Criminology and Criminal Justice, July 2003,
University of Central Lancashire, Preston, England.