

(Sexual) Minority Report 2.0:

A Replication of Medina's (2005) Analysis of Student Attitudes Regarding LGBTQ Issues

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December 7, 2015

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ABSTRACT

This study examines changes in student attitudes toward LGBTQ issues over the past ten years. A replication of a survey distributed in 2005 was completed by students at Saint Mary's College, a Catholic women's liberal arts college located in the Midwest. A total of 107 students who completed survey are included in the sample. The study finds that an increase in acceptance and support for LGBTQ rights at a statistically significant level. However, no significant change is found in the amount of knowledge that students possess of resources for sexual minorities on campus. The increase in comfort to LGBTQ issues while campus resource perceptions remain unchanged supports the idea of influences coming from outside the school institution. These changes are taking place as a result of macro-level societal influences, like the government, on micro-level communities, such as schools and individuals.

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The academic discourse surrounding LGBTQ issues is diverse, extending from the respective experiences of individuals in the LGBTQ community to the larger societal influences on attitudes and change for LGBTQ rights. Those who do not fit the hegemonic, heterosexual model are characterized as sexual minorities. Sexual minorities are often subjected to discrimination, stereotyping, or hostile work and school environments. Bullying is one way a hostile environment may manifest itself for LGBTQ youth.

Bullying of LGBTQ youth may lead to negative consequences for the victim, such as "low self-esteem, anxiety, and depression" (Mishna et al. 2009). The environment that sexual minorities are surrounded by largely impacts their experiences and overall well-being (Espelage & Napolitano, 2008). When LGBTQ youth enter college, their experiences with bullying may continue, but many members of the LGBTQ community find a niche at college in which they feel safe and accepted (Renn 2007). Research has shown that involvement in college organizations that support LGBTQ students leads to more likelihood of sexual minority students to "come out" and openly express their identity (Renn, 2007).

This study explores the cultural climate at Saint Mary's College regarding LGBTQ issues, and the possible impact that college's resources and opportunities have on students' perceptions on the LGBTQ community. The data shows that differences emerge regarding the perceptions of Saint Mary's College students on sexual minority issues between Medina's (2005) study compared to the current study's findings. The changes are likely a result of governmental laws which are increasing the rights and protection of the LGBTQ community nationwide.

Attribution Theory

The attitude one takes toward certain behaviors or situations outside the hegemonic model may be linked to what one is inclined to attribute that behavior onto the perceived other.

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Attribution Theory, at the most general level, attempts to explain society by determining the cause of an event or behavior (e.g. what people believe causes a particular sexual identity).

Weiner's (1985) model of Attribution Theory links an outcome (success or failure of a particular idea) to a causal model. In American culture, ability and effort are perceived as the causes of a successful outcome.

Previous Applications of Attribution Theory

Attribution Theory has been used to examine how specific attributes; such as race, mental illness, or sexual identity; can impact social behaviors or attitudes. Graham (1997) employed Attribution Theory in a study on African American youths' aggression and socialization. Graham (1997) states that the "study of aggression as motivation is integrally related to the attributional construct of perceived control in others and to the linked concepts of responsibility and intentionality (p. 22). Graham suggests that Attribution Theory helps explain aggression in African American youth; "aggressive participants were more likely than nonaggressives to believe that the hypothetical peer acted with hostile intent" (p. 24). Additionally, Graham (1997) found that aggressive youth "reported feeling more anger and greater preference for aggressive behavior options" (p. 25). Graham argues that there is a link among how people think, feel, and act, which gives way to "causal reasoning and behavior of aggressive children" (p. 24).

This study led Graham (1997) to consider whether African American youth could alter their thinking by changing their attribution regarding the cause of others' behaviors, thus reducing aggression. Graham (1997) started an "attributional change program" that was designed to give children training in "how to accurately detect intentionality from social cues and to assume non malicious intent in situations of ambiguous causality (p. 25). Graham found that the participants in the experimental group "altered their judgements in the direction of less

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intentionality, less anger, and less endorsement of hostile behavior” (p. 26). This research suggests that it is possible to change people’s attributions through intervention.

Another area in which Attribution Theory has been applied is to mental illness. Phelan (2005) used Attribution Theory to understand how people perceive those with mental illness, and how their perception of causal attributions, can influence relationships. Phelan (2005) measured whether “genetic interpretations will reduce stigma by eliminating blame” (p. 308). Phelan (2005) hypothesized that a genetic interpretation results in less blame toward those who suffered from mental illness. Furthermore, Phelan (2005) argued that “attribution of low causal responsibility for a stigmatized characteristic...is associated with less blame and more positive emotions, that is, pity rather than anger, which in turn lead to an inclination to help the person and a disinclination to punish” (p. 309). Phelan believed that a genetic attribute would reduce the stigma of mental illness. However, after experimental testing, Phelan (2005) found “support was weak for [the] hypothesis based on attribution theory” (p. 317).

Given that the cause, or attribution, of non-normative sexual identities is debated — is a person "born this way" or is it a "choice" — some researchers sought to see how these two attributes relate to people's attitudes regarding LGBTQ persons. Reyna et al. (2014) found that "the relationship between attributions and anti-gay discrimination" were linked to perceivers' beliefs about gays and lesbians "violating values" (p. 1) The act of stigmatizing certain groups, including gays and lesbians, involves attributing behaviors to controllable causes, like personal choices, which "results in greater antipathy toward gays and lesbians" (Reyna et al., 2014, p. 1). Therefore, if being gay or lesbian is seen as a lifestyle choice, that "implies that gays and lesbians are responsible for what may seem as deviant behavior and should be denied support

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and social benefits" (Reyna, 2014, p. 1). In other words, the attribution given to LGBTQ behavior may create increased stigmatizing attitudes.

The research here identifies the attributions given by students regarding LGBTQ behavior. This research examines how the perceiver's demographic traits -- such as age, race and ethnicity, sexual orientation, and religion – influence her perception of the cause of non-normative sexual or gender identities (LGBTQ). The research will not determine causality, that the participants' demographic traits are *causing* their attitudes about LGBTQ behavior; rather the study will examine correlations among variables.

Social Learning Theory

Another approach to college students' learning of attitudes, explained by Bandura's (1977), is Social Learning Theory, which states that people learn through the observation and modeling of perceived behaviors. Through the observation of people in their environment, people may express the learned behavior if it is perceived to be beneficial (Bandura, 1977, p. 8). Behavior as a product of "expectancies and incentives" (Rosenstock et al., 1988, p. 176).

Lam et al. (2010) used the social learning theory to explain how sales representatives develop an individual-level market orientation (IMO). Market orientation is defined as "the organizational culture that provides strong norms for learning from customers and competitors" (Lam et al., 2010, p. 61). They hypothesized that "top management's IMO indirectly influences sales representatives' IMO;" therefore, MO diffusion is seen as a "social learning phenomenon" (p. 63). Lam et al. (2010) did find support for this hypothesis, signaling an indirect influence, through middle-managers, on sales representatives. This study shows that social learning can take place through indirect interactions.

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Perry and Bussey (1979) applied the social learning theory to show how observation and imitation are key elements of the formation of sex roles. Children were more likely to imitate a group of models who were the same sex as the child, rather than a group of opposite-sex models (p. 1704). Furthermore, children were found to be “more likely to imitate persons whom they perceive to be good examples of their sex role” (p. 1708). Through consciously choosing what or whom one chooses to imitate, one’s behavior changes as a result.

For students at Saint Mary's College, different experiences, such as classes and residence life, will impact their behavior. Students witness and learn from the actions of other students, faculty, and staff. Social Learning Theory suggests that college students learn from peers around them simply by witnessing their behavior. This in turn may lead to changes in attitudes among students. The research here attempts to find the connection between what college students observed and experienced to what they believe regarding sexual minorities.

Literature Review

The changing attitudes Americans hold toward sexual minority issues, such as support for their civil liberties, have been studied previously. Baunach (2011) analyzed the trend in attitudes toward gay marriage between the years of 1988 and 2006 and found that "significant moderation" had occurred over 18 years. In 1988, 71.4 percent of participants disagreed with the statement that gays should be allowed to marry, while that percent dropped to 52.4 percent in 2006 (p. 354). Furthermore, the study found that the percentage of those who strongly agreed with the statement that gays should be allowed to marry tripled from 1988 to 2006. A more recent public opinion poll conducted by the Pew Research Center (2015) is consistent with these findings, as the majority of Americans were opposed to same-sex marriage in 2001, but by 2015, a majority (55 percent) are in favor of same-sex marriage.

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Differences in terms of age regarding support for gay marriage were found by Becker and Scheufele (2011); people under the age of 35 were more likely to be engaged in learning about gay marriage, which was found to be correlated with being accepting of gay marriage than people over the age of 35 (p. 337). Similarly, the Pew Research Center (2015) found that millennials (born after 1981) were much more likely than any other generation to be in favor of same-sex marriage.

Religiosity

In addition to age, previous research has also found that religion plays an important role in the perception that heterosexuals hold towards sexual minorities (Hamilton, 2007). Whitley (2009) found that religiosity; such as fundamentalism, religious service attendance, and self-rated religiosity; were correlated with having negative attitudes toward gays and lesbians. Hamilton (2007) found that college women who express complete disapproval of homosexuality cite religious beliefs as the principal reason for this belief. Additionally, when studying the differences between heterosexuals and sexual minorities, Longerbeam et al. (2007) found that the only difference of statistical significance was religion. Factors such as family income, ethnic or racial backgrounds, and parental education attainment were not of significant difference when comparing sexual minorities and heterosexuals. Additionally, Finlay and Walther (2003) found that participants who identified with no religion scored lower in a homophobic indicator than the participants who identified as Protestant and Catholic, and that Protestants and Catholics are less likely to be in favor of same-sex marriage than people who do not identify with any religion.

Jones and Cox (2011) reported findings on American Catholics' views on gay and lesbian issues and compared them to the general population's views. According to Jones and Cox (2011), less than 39 percent of Catholics said that homosexual behavior is morally wrong, compared to

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49 percent of the general public who believe that homosexual behavior is morally wrong.

Catholics are less likely than the general population "to have negative moral evaluations of 'homosexual behavior'" (p. 10). In terms of gay rights, Catholics rate higher than the general population in gay rights issues overall. Almost three-quarters (73 percent) "of Catholics favor laws that would protect gay and lesbian people against discrimination in the workplace, compared to roughly two-thirds (68 percent) of the general public" (p. 9). "Catholics are more supportive of legal recognitions of same-sex relationships than members of any other Christian tradition and Americans overall" (p. 8). Furthermore, support for gay marriage increases from 43 percent to 71 percent among Catholics when marriage "is explicitly define as a civil marriage" (p. 8). Catholics who attend religious services weekly support same-sex marriage at a rate of 26 percent, while 59 percent of Catholics who attend religious services "a few times a year or less" support same-sex marriage. Lastly, Catholics are less likely than the general population to believe sexual orientation can be changed. Just as patterns are found in how religious people view sexual minorities, other areas of society, like students who attend college, show patterns in attitudes toward sexual minorities.

Student Attitudes

Scholars have studied college students in particular in terms of their attitudes toward sexual minority issues. Differing attitudes among college students toward LGBT issues are attributed to sex. Female participants are more likely to express favorable views toward sexual minorities as compared to men (Hinrichs & Rosenberg, 2002; Whitley & Kite 1995; Morrison & Morrison 2011; LaMar & Kite, 1998). Heterosexual students attending liberal arts colleges in the U.S. were found to differ in acceptance according to their sex. Hinrichs and Rosenberg (2002) found that 85 percent of undergraduate women were found to hold favorable views

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toward homosexuality, while 69 percent of undergraduate men studied showed acceptance for homosexuality (p. 72).

Researchers have found contradicting results regarding student attitudes toward homosexuality depending on the participants' race. Jenkins et al. (2009) found no significant difference between Black and White college students in terms of attitudes about gays and lesbians. However, Vincent et al. (2009) found that Black college women from a large university were more likely than White college women to hold negative prejudices toward gays and lesbians.

Educational level and location also impacts attitudes toward sexual minorities. According to Lambert et al. (2006), the support for specific rights for sexual minorities increased between the freshman and sophomore classes compared to the junior and senior classes. Jenkins et al. (2009) state that both Black and White upper-level (junior and senior) college students are more likely to socialize with gays than lower-level (freshman and sophomore) students. Furthermore, Hinrichs and Rosenberg (2003) found similarities in attitudes toward sexual minorities between small liberal arts college students and students attending large universities.

Some studies suggest that forming relationships with those who identify as a sexual minority leads to positive attitudes toward members of the LGBT community (Stotzer, 2009; Hinrichs & Rosenberg, 2003). Positive attitudes among college participants were found to be formed through positive relationships with people in the LGBT community (Stotzer, 2009; Hinrichs & Rosenberg, 2003) Also, knowing adults or peers who identify as LGBT was cited as a way that participants were normalized to the non-heterosexual experience (Stotzer, 2009).

Overall, the previous studies indicate that attitudes toward LGBT persons are positively impacted by being female and identifying as Catholic. This study will examine attitudes of

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students from an all-women's, Catholic liberal arts college. Medina's (2005) study shows differences in how Saint Mary's College students responded to feeling comfortable around sexual minorities; 30.9 percent of students responded as being "most comfortable" around sexual minorities and the majority of students were found to be "fairly comfortable with sexual minorities" (p. 6). Comparatively, Medina's (2005) study found students to be "more comfortable with racial, ethnic and class minorities than with sexual minorities" (p. 7). A correlation was found between being comfortable with racial, ethnic, and class minorities and being comfortable with sexual minorities (p. 9). My study will build on Medina's (2005) research by asking the same questions to see what, if any, changes have occurred in ten years.

Methodology

The methodology used in this research is a survey consisting of 19 questions surveying students about issues such as knowledge about diversity clubs on campus, opinions on LGBT issues on campus, and opinions about LGBT legal rights. The participants for this study were obtained from a list of Saint Mary's College students whose names and email addresses were obtained from the Office of the Registrar. The list provided was randomized by the director of the Registrar Office. The total population of Saint Mary's full-time undergraduate students is 1570 in the Fall 2015 semester. One hundred names were randomly selected from each class level (senior, junior, sophomore, and first-year), creating a stratified random sample. Emails containing a link to the survey posted on the SurveyMonkey website were sent to the randomly selected students. The survey took approximately 15 minutes for participants to complete. The email request was sent on Wednesday, October 5th, 2015. Because the response rate had not reached a 35 percent goal, the following Wednesday, an email reminder was sent to participants.

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A total of 138 participants started the survey, but of those, 31 did not complete and submit the survey, thus the total sample size was 107 students. The race of the participants was identified as: 100 students (93.5%) identified as White/European American, five (4.5 percent) as Hispanic/Latino, three (2.8%) as Asian/Pacific Islander, two (1.9%) as Black/African American, and one (0.9 percent) as Native American/American Indian. Of the 107 participants, 25 are first-year students, 25 are sophomores, 27 are juniors, and 29 are seniors (one participant did not give a response). The majority (79.4%) of participants identify as Roman Catholic. Unaffiliated was the next largest religious group (8.4%). Four (3.7%) of participants identify as agnostic, three (2.8%) as Protestant, two (1.9%) Other Christian, two (1.9 percent) selected Atheist, one (0.9 %) identified as Buddhist, and one (0.9%) as Other. Of all participants, 99 (93.4%) identified as heterosexual/straight, four participants (3.7%) identified as bisexual, two (1.9%) as asexual, and one (0.9%) as pansexual. No participants self-identified as homosexual/lesbian.

Participants' social class was identified as: seven (6.5%) working class, 48 (44.9%) middle class, 45 (42.1%) upper middle class, and seven (6.5%) upper class. One participant (0.9%) identified with as having a Mexican nationality, one (0.9%) as Italian, and 105 (98.1%) as having a United States nationality. The number of diversity classes (such as those that address topics of race, ethnicity, gender, class, or sexual orientation) was identified by participants as follows: 33 (32%) had taken no classes, 34 (33%) one class, 16 (15.5%) two classes, 13 (12.6%) three classes, three (0.02%) four classes, two (0.02%) five classes, one participant (0.01%) six classes and one participant (0.01%) eight classes.

Findings

The questions from Medina's (2005) study on "Minority Comfort Level" were asked in the current study and then compared to the 2005 results. Participants were asked "Yes" or "No"

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questions regarding their comfort in terms of different situations regarding race/ethnicity/class minorities and sexual minorities (See Appendix C). Table 6 in Appendix C shows an increase in the response of “Yes” for all questions of comfort including race, ethnicity, class, and sexual minorities from 2005 to 2015. The largest change, at 20%, is found in the responses to “I would/would not feel comfortable if there was a strong gay/lesbian presence on campus; 67.3% of participants answered “Yes” to this question, compared to 47.1% in 2005. This question however, still contains the fewest amount of “Yes” responses when compared to all comfort questions. The next largest change occurred in “Yes” responses to feeling comfortable “If your best friend came out.” While 70.6% of respondents answered “Yes” in 2005, 88.7% responded “Yes” in the current study, resulting in a change of 18.1%. After the “strong gay lesbian presence...” question, the question “if your roommate...” question had the next lowest number of participants answering “Yes, I would feel comfortable...”

Medina’s (2005) four scales are used to analyze differences between the 2005 findings and 2015 findings. See Appendix C-F for the questions included in each scale. Table 1 shows participants’ scores on the Sexual Minorities Comfort Scale (SMCS), measuring comfort in terms of issues surrounding sexual minorities. The scale is based on questions asked in the survey regarding participants’ comfort with association and discussion with people who identify as sexual minorities. A score of zero indicates the participant is least comfortable, while a score of 8 indicates the most comfortable. In the 2015 study, no participants received a score of zero, one, or two on the SMCS, while in 2005, a total of 7.4% of the participants had a score of either zero, one, or two. A majority (51.5%) scored eight on the scale, an increase of 20.6%, indicating that participants answered that they would feel comfortable in all situations regarding sexual minorities asked about in the survey questions. This compares to less than a third (30.9%) of

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participants who scored eight on the SMCS in 2005. The mean score in 2005 was 5.91, and is 6.92 in 2015, which is a significant difference (See Appendix C.)

Comfort Score	2005	2015	Change
0—Least Comfortable	1.5%	0%	-1.5%
1	4.4%	0%	-4.4%
2	1.5%	0%	-1.5%
3	8.8%	3.9%	-4.9%
4	10.3%	4.9%	-5.4%
5	10.3%	9.7%	-0.6%
6	5.9%	9.7%	+3.8%
7	23.5%	20.4%	-3.1%
8—Most Comfortable	30.9%	51.5%	+20.6%
Total	100%	100%	-
Mean Score	5.91	6.92	+1.01

Table 2 shows the, “Racial, Ethnic, and Class Minority Comfort Scale” (RECMCS) and compares 2015 to 2005 findings. A score of zero means that the participant answered “No” to all six questions regarding racial, ethnic, and class minority comfort, while a score of six indicates an answer of “Yes” to all six questions. No one received a score of zero, one, or two in 2015, while in 2005, 4.4% of participants received a score of either zero or one. Most participants (86.8%) received a score of six in 2015, meaning they responded “Yes” to all questions about comfort relating to racial, ethnic, and class minorities. This number stayed relatively close to the 86.3% of respondents in 2005 who answered “Yes” to all questions included in the scale. The mean of the RECMCS in 2005 was 5.61 and increased to 5.80 in 2015, which is a significant difference (See Appendix D).

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Comfort Score	2005	2015	Change
0 – Least Comfortable	2.9%	0%	-2.9%
1	1.5%	0%	-1.5%
2	0%	0%	0%
3	0%	2.8%	+2.8%
4	4.4%	0.9%	-3.5%
5	4.4%	9.4%	+5.0%
6 – Most Comfortable	86.3%	86.8%	+0.5%
Total	100%	100%	-
Mean Score	5.61	5.80	+0.21

The third scale, “Perceptions of Sexual Minority Issues in the Classroom Scale” (PSMICS), measures the attitudes participants’ perceptions of classroom information on sexual minority issues. Participants answered three questions about their views toward their classes’ teaching on sexual minority issues. Table 3 shows that score of 15 corresponds with positive perceptions with information about sexual minority issues offered in classes at Saint Mary’s College, while a score of three indicates negative perceptions. 5.6% of respondents received the highest score of 15 on the PSMICS, down from 7.4% in 2005. An increase from 2005 (1.5 %) to 2015 (2.8%) is seen in the percentage of participants who received a score of 3, the lowest score possible. The mean in scores for the PSMICS went down from 2005 to 2015, but there is no significant difference between the mean of 9.91 from Medina’s (2005) findings and the current mean of 9.23.

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Class Perceptions Score	2005	2015	Change
3-Negative Perceptions	1.5%	2.8%	1.3%
4	0%	0.9%	+0.9%
5	4.4%	6.5%	+2.1%
6	8.8%	14.0%	+5.2%
7	8.8%	9.3%	+0.5%
8	16.2%	9.3%	-6.9%
9	4.4%	15.0%	+10.6%
10	11.8%	6.5%	-5.3%
11	10.3%	3.7%	-6.6%
12	14.7%	17.8%	+3.1%
13	5.9%	1.9%	-4.0%
14	5.9%	6.5%	+0.6%
15-Postive Perceptions	7.4%	5.6%	-1.8%
Total	100%	100%	-
Mean	9.81	9.23	-0.58

The next scale shown in Table 4 compares participants' perceptions of resources on campus for sexual minorities (PRCSMS). A total of 2.8% received the lowest score of three or four, indicating little knowledge of resources on campus. This is an increase from zero percent in 2005 who had little knowledge. There was a slight increase from 5.9 % in 2005 to 6.5 percent in 2015 of participants who indicated knowing much about resources available for sexual minorities on campus. The mean score went down from 10.75 in 2005 to 10.40 in 2015; this does not show a significant difference in means.

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Resources Perceptions Score	2005 Percent	2015	Change
3-Little Knowledge	0%	1.9%	+1.9%
4	0%	0.9%	+0.9%
5	0%	0%	0%
6	7.4%	3.7%	-3.7%
7	1.5%	7.5%	+6.0%
8	10.3%	10.3%	0%
9	10.3%	15.0%	4.7%
10	16.2%	9.3%	-6.9%
11	16.2%	10.3%	-5.9%
12	10.3%	17.8%	+7.5%
13	14.7%	14.0%	-0.7%
14	7.4%	2.8%	-4.6%
15-Much Knowledge	5.9%	6.5%	+0.6%
Mean	10.75	10.4	-0.35

One scale not used in Medina's study but developed for this project is the Perceptions of Legal Issues Scale (PLIS), measuring how positive participants' perceptions are toward laws in favor of sexual minorities. (See Appendix A for questions). Table 5 shows that 44% of participants scored the highest possible 20 points, indicating positive perceptions toward laws that support sexual minorities. A small fraction (1%) of participants scored the lowest amount possible on the PLIS. The mean score is 17.54.

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Table 5 Perceptions of Legal Issues Scale (PLIS)	
Legal Perceptions Score	Frequency/%
8-Least Supportive	1 (1.0%)
9	2 (1.9%)
10	0 (0%)
11	2 (1.9%)
12	5 (4.8%)
13	3 (2.9 %)
14	3 (2.9%)
15	7 (6.7%)
16	11 (10.6%)
17	8 (7.7%)
18	5 (4.8%)
19	11 (10.6%)
20-Most Supportive	46 (44.2%)
Mean	17.54

Significant correlations were found between the Racial, Ethnic, and Class Minority Comfort Scale (RECMCS) and the Sexual Minority Comfort Scale (SMCS). Significant correlations were also found between the PLIS and the SMCS, as well as between the Perceptions of Resources on Campus for Sexual Minorities (PRCSM) and Perceptions of Sexual Minority Issues in the Classroom Scale (PRCSMS).

Discussion

The findings show that even as students' comfort and support toward sexual minorities have risen, their perceptions and knowledge about campus resources has not. The discrepancies found between overall comfort with LGBT issues and the lack of change over 10 years in perceptions of campus resources and courses leads to the conclusion that influences outside of campus community may be impacting individual perceptions.

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Similarly to how laws prohibiting racial and ethnic discrimination increased racial minorities' rights in the past, the legal issues surrounding LGBTQ rights are at the forefront of potential change today in American society. Medina's (2005) study was conducted before many pivotal, state-wide and national-scale changes took place regarding the LGBTQ issues. For example, the California Supreme Court ruled in 2008 that it is unconstitutional to limit marriage to people of the opposite sex. That same year, Proposition 8, which made same-sex marriage illegal, passed in California, but in 2010 Proposition 8 was deemed unconstitutional. During the Obama administration, several laws have been put into place that support the LGBTQ community. The passing of the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd Jr. law in 2009 made hate crimes against people based on their sexual orientation or gender identity a crime. The "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy was banned in 2011, allowing gays and lesbians to openly serve in the military. Furthermore, the Supreme Court's June 26, 2015 decision that states could not ban same-sex couples from marrying was one of the most recent and momentous events in LGBT rights history (CNN Library, 2015). These events in LGBT history have strengthened the national discourse on viewing sexual minorities' rights as an issue of social justice.

The importance of these milestones in LGBTQ history should not be understated; they have changed the way people perceive and act upon the attainment of social justice for sexual minorities. However, there is more that can be done to secure the equality for all people, including those in the LGBTQ community. As Chad Griffin, the Human Rights Campaign President stated, "The unfortunate reality is that, while LGBT Americans can legally get married, millions remain at risk of being fired or denied services for who they are or who they love because the majority of states still lack explicit, comprehensive non-discrimination protections" (Eilperin, 2015, n.p.). Furthering the protection of sexual minorities is a necessary step in

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reducing the discrimination and unequal treatment they face. In November 2015, Obama endorsed adding sexual orientation and gender identity to the Civil Rights Act, which would make discrimination against millions of people illegal.

Macro-level institutions, such as the government, make changes that ultimately create changes in interpersonal interactions. As the larger society changes its norms and practices, individuals begin to change their behaviors to fit the larger society. This pattern of change could be happening at colleges across the country. The increasing acceptance for LGBT issues comes after the fact that legal issues are recognizing sexual minorities' rights. With the continuation of legal support, the fact that Saint Mary's College students show increasing support for LGBT issues could signify the emergence of a more accepting climate for sexual minorities.

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Appendix A: Survey

Informed Consent

You are invited to participate in a study of sexual minorities at Saint Mary's College. We hope to learn what perceptions are held by Saint Mary's students pertaining to the sexual minority community. You were selected as a possible participant in this study through a random selection process.

If you decide to participate, you will answer questions about your background and your attitudes relating to sexual minorities. The survey will take about 15 minutes to complete. There is a minor risk that you will feel uncomfortable answering questions relating to sexual minorities. You may decide to skip any question you do not wish to answer. This research will provide insight into how college students think about sexual minorities and the issues they face on campus and in the world at large. Another benefit is that with the information gained, Saint Mary's College administration and students will be able to gauge college students' needs in terms of support and programs related to the issue of diversity on campus.

Any information obtained in connection with this study that can be identified with you will remain confidential. The collected data will be available to only to my advisor, Professor Susan Alexander and myself. In any written reports or publications, no one will be identified or identifiable and only group data will be presented. The aggregated data will be seen by the faculty of the department of Sociology at Saint Mary's College and will be available on-line on the Saint Mary's Sociology website.

Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your future relations with the Saint Mary's College Department of Sociology in any way. If you decide to participate, you are free to discontinue participation at any time without affecting such relationships.

If you have any questions, please ask us. If you have any additional questions later, we will be happy to answer them. Contact Lorena Miramontes at: lmiram01@saintmarys.edu or (574) 303-2032 or contact Dr. Susan Alexander at salexand@saintmarys.edu or ext.4728 . You have the option to print a copy of this form for your own records. To print this form, right click and select "Print."

You are making a decision whether or not to participate. Your agreement to this form indicates that you are 18 years of age, have read the information provided above, and have decided to participate. You may withdraw at any time without prejudice after checking this box should you choose to discontinue participation in this study.

1. Do you agree to the above terms? By clicking Yes, you consent that you are willing to answer the questions in this survey.

Yes

No

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2. What is your age?

3. What is your class year?

4. What are your major(s) and minor(s)?

Major

2nd Major (if applicable)

Minor

2nd Minor (if applicable)

5. Where do you currently live?

On-campus housing

Off-campus

Abroad

Other (please specify)

6. What is your race? (Please select all that apply.)

White/European

American

Hispanic/Latino

Black/African American

Native American/American Indian

Asian/Pacific Islander

Other (please specify)

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7. With what sexual orientation do you most identify?

Heterosexual/Straight

Homosexual/Lesbian

Bisexual

Asexual

Pansexual

Other (please specify)

8. What is your nationality?

United States

Other (please specify)

9. How would you describe your socioeconomic status?

Working Class

Middle Class

Upper Middle Class

Upper Class

Other (please specify)

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10. What is your religion?

- Roman Catholic
- Evangelical Protestant
- Methodist
- OtherProtestant
- Other Christian
- Jewish
- Muslim
- Buddhist
- Hindu
- Atheist
- Agnostic
- Unaffiliated
- Other (please specify)

11. Number of diversity (topics of race, ethnicity, gender, class, sexual orientation, etc) classes taken at SMC (i.e. Race, Ethnicity & Identity in the US, Intro to Gender and Women's Studies, etc)

Number of Classes

Department of Diversity
Class(es) Taken (i.e.
Philosophy, Business,
Sociology, etc.). Please list
all.

12. Do you know of any group(s) at Saint Mary's for racial, ethnic, or social class minority students? If so, please list them.

13. Do you know of any group(s) at Saint Mary's for lesbian, bisexual, transgender, or questioning students? If so, please list them.

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14. How would you describe your primary residence?

Large/Major City

Small City

Suburban Area

Small Town

Rural Area

15. I consider verbal harassment to be: (Select all that apply)

Graffiti on posters, doors, elevators, white boards, etc.

Saying remarks that negatively portray gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and/or transgenders.

Saying remarks that negatively portray gays, lesbians bisexuals, and/or transgenders to a gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender person.

Threatening individuals verbally.

threatening individuals in writing.

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16. YES or NO, please give your first reaction to whether you personally would feel comfortable having...

	Yes	No
A close family member was a racial, ethnic, or classed minority.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A close family member "came out" as gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
A close family member was dating/married to a person of a different race, ethnicity, social class.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A close family member invited his/her partner to family occasions.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
If your roommate was of a different race, ethnicity, social class than you.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If your roommate "came out" as gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A strong gay/lesbian presence on campus.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If your best friend "came out".	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> To speak of racial, ethnic, gender, or class minorities in class.		
To speak of issues of sexual minorities in class.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A person of a different racial, ethnic, or class lived in your section/floor in the residence hall.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender neighbor living in your section/floor in the residence hall.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To walk across campus alone.		
To speak with someone who is of a different race, ethnicity, or social class.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="radio"/>
To speak with someone who is gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgender.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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3.

17. The following questions pertain to your experiences at Saint Mary's. Please select the appropriate answer.

Strongly Agree Agree Unsure Disagree Strongly Disagree

Lesbian students at Saint Mary's College are harassed (verbally or physically) because of their sexual orientation.

Bisexual students at Saint Mary's College are harassed (verbally or physically) because of their sexual orientation.

My religion has had a strong affect on my beliefs regarding sexual orientation.

I stay away from areas of campus where minorities primarily hang out for fear of being labeled as a minority (e.g. Office of Multicultural Affairs)

I stay away from areas of campus where sexual minorities primarily hang out for fear of being labeled as gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender

I have witnessed academic situations in which students have been discriminated against because of their race, ethnicity, gender, class, etc. (such as grading, treated differently in classes).

I have witnessed academic situations in which students have been discriminated against because of their sexuality (such as grading, treated differently in classes).

I have witnessed social situations in which students have been discriminated against because of their race, ethnicity, gender, class, etc. (such as exclusion in resident halls, treated differently at social events on campus).

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	Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I have witnessed social situations in which students have been discriminated against because of their sexual orientation (such as exclusion in resident halls, treated differently at social events on campus).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If/When I see/hear verbal harassment I take action (talk to the harasser, report incident to RA, Hall Director, or Security).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

18. The following questions are regarding your opinion on laws related to sexual minorities. Please select the appropriate answer.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Same-sex marriage should be legal in the United States	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Same-sex adoption should be legal in the United States	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
People who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender should be protected through anti-discrimination laws in the workplace.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Businesses should be able to deny services to people based on their sexual orientation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

19. Select the appropriate answer

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I have had courses at Saint Mary's that touched on issues regarding diversity (race, ethnicity, gender, class, etc.) (topic was discussed, but not as the main topic for at least one class period)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Strongly Agree

Agree

Unsure

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

I have had courses at Saint Mary's that have had an in-depth discussion about diversity (topic was main topic for one or more class periods).

The knowledge that my professor(s) had about issues dealing with diversity was thorough.

I have had courses at Saint Mary's that touched on issues regarding sexual orientation (topic was discussed but not as the main topic for at least one class period).

I have had courses at Saint Mary's that have had an in-depth discussion about sexual orientation (topic was main topic for one or more class period).

The knowledge that my professor(s) had about issues dealing with sexual orientation was thorough.

There are people (professors, administration, other students) whom I feel that I could speak with about diversity issues.

There are people (professors, administration, other students) whom I feel that I could speak with about sexual orientation issues.

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	Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
There are resources available on Saint Mary's College campus for students to learn more about issues and concerns dealing with racial or ethnic minorities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
These resources are visible on campus.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are resources available on Saint Mary's College campus for students to learn more about issues and concerns dealing with gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transgenders, or questioning persons.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
These resources are visible on campus.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In general, students at Saint Mary's are comfortable about being open with their sexuality on campus.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Verbal harassment is a problem on campus.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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Appendix B

Student Diversity and
Demographics

Undergraduate Students										
	2006	2007	2008	2009*	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
	Race/Ethnicity									
Black or African-American	22	22	22	23	25	23	22	21	21	32
American Indian or Alaska Native	4	7	7	4	4	2	1	0	1	1
Asian	32	29	32	26	27	21	22	22	23	25
Latina or Hispanic	75	89	102	120	124	134	148	173	167	168
Native Hawaiian or Pac. Islander*	-	-	-	1	1	0	0	0	0	0
Two or More Races*	-	-	-	16	20	24	27	41	44	52
Racial/Ethnic Minority Total	133	147	163	190	201	204	220	257	256	278
Racial/Ethnic Minority Percent	8.7%	9.2%	10.0%	11.4%	12.9%	13.5%	15.0%	17.4%	16.9%	17.7%
Race/Ethnicity Unknown	38	36	43	39	42	57	60	55	55	44
Race/Ethnicity Unknown Percent	2.5%	2.2%	2.6%	2.3%	2.7%	3.8%	4.1%	3.7%	3.6%	2.8%
White	1347	1414	1415	1424	1296	1226	1160	1136	1180	1222
White Percent	88.2%	88.2%	86.9%	85.6%	83.3%	81.2%	79.0%	76.8%	77.7%	77.8%
Total U.S. Citizens/Nationals	1518	1597	1621	1653	1539	1487	1440	1448	1491	1544
Non-Resident International	9	7	7	11	16	23	29	31	28	26
Non-Resident Int. Percent	0.6%	0.4%	0.4%	0.7%	1.0%	1.5%	2.0%	2.1%	1.8%	1.7%
Grand Total	1527	1604	1628	1664	1555	1510	1469	1479	1519	1570
	Religious Affiliation									
Roman Catholic	79.5%	78.3%	78.0%	77.0%	77.8%	78.2%	79.8%	78.6%	79.6%	77.5%
Protestant/Other Christian	9.6%	9.6%	8.8%	9.5%	9.1%	9.8%	10.2%	10.4%	9.7%	10.5%
Non-Christian Faith	0.6%	0.6%	0.7%	0.5%	0.4%	0.5%	0.4%	0.4%	0.7%	0.8%
None	0.4%	0.5%	0.7%	0.8%	0.8%	0.8%	0.9%	1.3%	1.8%	2.7%
Unknown/No Response	10.0%	11.0%	11.9%	12.2%	11.8%	10.7%	8.7%	9.3%	8.2%	8.5%
	First-Generation									
Percentage First-Generation	--	--	--	--	--	24.3%	21.9%	20.4%	20.1%	21.1%

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Appendix C: Table of questions for the SMCS

Percent answering “Yes, I would feel comfortable ...”	Year		Percent Change
	2005	2015	
If there was a strong gay/lesbian presence on campus	47.1%	67.3%	+20.2%
If your best friend “came out”	70.6%	88.7%	+18.1%
A close family member “came out”	69.1%	86.8%	+17.7%
If your roommate “came out”	55.9%	72.9%	+17.0%
To speak with someone who identifies as a sexual minority	89.7%	99.1%	+9.4%
To speak of issues about sexual minorities in class	85.3%	94.4%	+9.1%
A close family member was dating/married to a sexual minority	77.9%	86.0%	+8.1%
Living on the same floor as a sexual minority	88.2%	94.4%	10.3%

0=No, I would not feel comfortable if....

1=Yes, I would feel comfortable if...

Alpha reliability=0.665

A higher score on the SMCS represents more “Yes” responses to questions about comfort level regarding sexual minorities. There is a statistically significant difference between the means from 2005 to 2015 ($p = .05$).

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Appendix D: Table of questions for the Racial, Ethnic, and Class Comfort Scale (RECMCS)

Table 7 Comfort Level Regarding Race, Ethnicity, and Class (R/E/C) Minorities, 2005 and 2015			
Percent answering “Yes, I would feel comfortable...”	Year		Percent Change
	2005	2015	
A close family member was dating/married to a person of a different R/E/C	91.2%	98.1%	+6.9%
A close family member was of a different R/E/C	89.7%	95.3%	+5.6%
Living on the same floor as someone of a different R/E/C	94.1%	99.1%	+5.0%
If your roommate was of a different R/E/C	91.2%	95.3%	+4.1%
To speak with someone of a different R/E/C	94.1%	98.1%	+4.0%
To speak of issues about R/E/C in class	91.2%	94.3%	+3.1%

0=No, I would not feel comfortable if....

1=Yes, I would feel comfortable if...

Alpha reliability=0.545

A higher score on the RECMCS indicates that the respondent answered “yes” to more questions about feeling comfortable around racial, ethnic, and class minorities. Although the alpha reliability is low (0.545), there is a statistically significant difference between the means from 2005 to 2015 ($p = .05$).

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Appendix E: Table of questions for the Perceptions of Sexual Minority Issues in the Classroom Scale (PSMICS)

Table 8 Responses to questions regarding classroom teachings on diversity, 2015						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Had courses that touched on issues of sexual orientation	14.0%	34.6%	14.0%	26.2%	11.2%	100%
Had courses with in-depth discussion about sexual orientation	15.9%	18.7%	7.5%	17.8%	3.7%	100%
Professors' knowledge regarding sexual orientation is thorough	15.0%	27.1%	36.4%	17.8%	3.7%	100%

5= Strongly Agree

4=Agree

3=Unsure

2=Disagree

1=Strongly Disagree

Alpha Reliability= 0.807

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Appendix F: Table of questions for the Perceptions of Resources on Campus for Sexual Minorities Scale (PRCSMS)

Table 9 Responses to questions regarding resources on campus, 2015						
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
There are people whom I can speak with about sexual orientation issues	29.9%	37.4%	20.6%	10.3%	1.9%	100%
Resources are available to learn about LGBTQ issues	14.0%	42.1%	26.2%	12.1%	5.6%	100%
These resources are visible on campus	11.2%	29.0%	28.0%	22.4%	9.3%	100%

5= Strongly Agree

4=Agree

3=Unsure

2=Disagree

1=Strongly Disagree

Alpha Reliability= 0.761

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Appendix G: Table of Questions from the Perception of Legal Issues Scale (PLIS)

Table 10 Responses to legal questions regarding sexual minorities, 2015						
Same-sex marriage should be legal	Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
	58.1%	21.9%	6.7%	5.7%	7.6%	100%
Same-sex adoption should be legal	67.6%	17.1%	9.5%	3.8%	1.9%	100%
Workplace anti-discrimination laws for LGBTQ community	64.8%	32.4%	1.0%	1.9%	0%	100%
Businesses should be allowed to deny service to LGBT community	5.8%	3.8%	5.8%	21.2%	63.5%	100%

5= Strongly Agree

4=Agree

3=Unsure

2=Disagree

1=Strongly Disagree

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Appendix H

Table 11 Respondents answering “yes” to what is considered verbal harassment	
I consider verbal harassment to be:	Yes
	Frequency/%
Threatening individuals verbally	103 (96.3%)
Saying remarks that negatively portray gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and/or transgender to a gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender person	99 (92.5%)
Saying remarks that negatively portray gays, lesbians, bisexuals, and/or transgender	82 (86.0%)
Threatening individuals in writing	84 (78.5%)
Graffiti on poster, doors, elevators, white boards, etc.	47 (63.6%)

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Appendix I

Lesbians are harassed because of sexual orientation	Strongly Agree	Agree	Unsure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
	3.7%	13.1%	29.9%	27.1%	26.2%	100%
Bisexuals are harassed because of sexual orientation	1.9%	10.3%	33.6%	29.0%	25.2%	100%
Religion affects beliefs about sexual orientation	5.7%	18.1%	14.3%	24.8%	37.1%	100%
Stay away from areas with LBT presence	0.9%	0.9%	5.6%	23.4%	69.2%	100%
Witness academic discrimination against sexual minorities	1.9%	5.6%	7.5%	30.8%	54.2%	100%
Witness social discrimination against sexual minorities	6.5%	23.4%	9.3%	23.4%	37.4%	100%