

THE PENNSYLVANIA STATE UNIVERSITY
SCHREYER HONORS COLLEGE

DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

PREJUDICE AGAINST BISEXUALS FROM BOTH THE HETEROSEXUAL AND
HOMOSEXUAL COMMUNITIES

KAITLIN HOLMES
Spring 2011

A thesis
submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements
for baccalaureate degrees
in Psychology and Spanish
with honors in Psychology

Reviewed and approved* by the following:

Theresa Vescio
Associate Professor of Psychology
Thesis Supervisor

David Rosenbaum
Distinguished Professor of Psychology
Honors Adviser

* Signatures are on file in the Schreyer Honors College.

ABSTRACT

Bisexuals face prejudice from multiple groups. This research examines both heterosexuals' and homosexuals' prejudice toward bisexuals. Our first hypothesis was that heterosexual women, lesbian women, and gay men would find the bisexual person to be less trustworthy, less warm, less attractive, less competent and less desirable as a person with whom to hook up. The heterosexual male group will also find the bisexual to be less trustworthy, warm, and competent, but they would be the only group of the four to find the bisexual more attractive and desirable for a hook up. Bisexuals are perceived to be promiscuous and rebellious. Due to this and the fact that lesbianism has been so sexualized in both the media and society, many men wish to see two women together in a sexual context. They think that this is more likely to occur with a bisexual and find them more attractive for this reason.

Heterosexuals and homosexuals of both sexes were asked to consider two people who were similar in all regards except their sexual orientation. The first person participants saw was a person who was the sex and sexual orientation to whom the participant was attracted. The second person was identified as the same gender as the first person, but bi-sexual. Beneath the images, names and sexual orientation of each person were descriptions each person's likes and dislikes. After seeing and reading about each person, participants reported their interest in having physical and close interpersonal relationships with each. Participants also rated each person on attractiveness, trust, competence and warmth.

Consistent with predictions, we found that bisexuals are more appealing to heterosexual men both in terms of attractiveness and for the potential of hooking up, than straight women are appealing. We also found that all four subgroups showed bias against the bisexual in terms of relationship desirability. Heterosexual men, lesbian women, and gay men showed bias against the bisexual in terms of trust, competence, and warmth. However, heterosexual women favored the bisexual in regards to those three variables.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iiv
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
Chapter 2 Method	9
Chapter 3 Results	15
Chapter 4 Discussion	18
Chapter 5 References	22
Figures	
1: Graph of Difference in Hook up Ratings	24
2: Graph of Difference in Relationship Ratings	24
3: Graph of Difference in Trust Ratings	25
4: Graph of Difference in Attraction Ratings	25
5: Graph of Difference in Competence Ratings	26
6: Graph of Difference in Warmth Ratings	26
Appendix A Informed Consent Form	27
Appendix B Information in survey taken by lesbian women	30
Appendix C Information in survey taken by gay men	33
Appendix D Information in survey taken by straight women.....	36
Appendix E Information in survey taken by straight men.....	39
Appendix F Scale to evaluate participant’s desire to hook up with person.....	42
AppendixG Survey to measure interest in a potential relationship and trust.....	43
Appendix H Scale to evaluate attractiveness, warmth, and competence.....	44

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, I would like to thank my thesis adviser, Dr. Theresa Vescio, for her invaluable amounts of time and encouragement. I would also like to thank Dr. David Rosenbaum for reading this thesis and helping me throughout my college career. In addition, I thank my friends and family for caring and inquiring about my thesis through the entire process. Finally, I want to thank all of the participants in both the heterosexual and LGBT communities. I could not have done this project without any of these people and I really appreciate their time and support.

Chapter 1

Introduction

As any minority group, bisexuals face discrimination in today's society. One may think that being part of the LGBT acronym, that bisexuals face the same prejudice as everyone else in the general community. Alas, this is not the case. Bisexuals face unique circumstances including both the objectification of heterosexual men along with the distrust general bias against them from the rest of the population.

It is important to recognize and discuss the reasons that bisexuals face prejudice. They are a unique group of individuals and have a hard time being placed into one category. For this reason, we need to recognize them as a unique group and treat them as such. Because of their special uniqueness, we must also consider why they might be treated differently as a minority, but more importantly, differently within the LGBT community. This research aims to identify prejudice toward bisexuals from the gay and straight communities.

Heterosexuals' prejudice toward homosexuals

As a whole, heterosexual people are prejudiced against homosexual people. According to psychologists like Herek and Yang, sexual prejudice, or negative attitudes toward an individual because of her or his sexual orientation, is one of the most deeply held prejudices in Western countries and it is a prejudice that is resistant to change (as cited in Falomir-Pichastor and Mugny, 2009). In his work, Herek (2009) mentions that the majority of Americans still consider homosexuality to be immoral. For instance,

though the number is shrinking-in 2007, homosexuality was considered unacceptable by 43% of people).

Heterosexuals' prejudice toward homosexuals stems from a variety of factors. First, as humans, we are frightened by the unknown. For many, homosexuality is not something to which we are consistently exposed. As Allport (1954) notes, that which is familiar comes to be valued and protected; we build fences to protect what we value, with the consequence of rejecting that which we are unfamiliar. Heterosexuality is normative and traditional notions of gender and family prevail (Herek, 1984). As a result, homosexuals are often seen as violating family values and "anti-gay sentiment might derive directly from the perception that homosexuals violate gender norms" (Vescio & Biernat, 2003, page 843).

Second, we grow up in a society replete with stereotypes and often have opinions and beliefs pushed upon us before we have a chance to form them for ourselves (Allport, 1954). Once these beliefs are a part of us, we often see no reason to change them, and think little about the issues at hand in much depth.

Anecdotally, it seems that many straight people are under the impression that a homosexual person is attracted to everyone belonging to their own sex. Though untrue, this thought scares them. Heterosexuals think that homosexuals pose a real danger in this manner. This can be seen in movies in which men don't want to be near a gay man in the locker room, among other things.

In many instances, there are also religious factors that promote heterosexuals' prejudice toward homosexuals. According to Vescio and Biernat (2003), "many religious authorities justify the scorn of gay men and lesbian women with holy texts and religious doctrine". Thus, people in positions of authority often express open contempt for homosexual and other non-heterosexual people. As Vescio and Biernat note, these public iterations of contempt might provide the basis for intrapersonal linkages between values and anti-gay sentiment.

The more masculine (heterosexual and not feminine) the man, the more prejudice toward bisexuals he may be. Masculinity is a key part to many men's identities, hegemonic masculinity in particular, which "is considered as the true nature of men and involves mainly heterosexism (i.e., an ideological system that focuses on the primacy of heterosexuality and the processes maintaining heterosexuals; social power and privilege)". They may be more rejecting of homosexuals because they feel the need to affirm their masculinity (Falomir-Pichastor and Mugny, 2009).

The men to whom a masculine identity is important may distance themselves from those who have an identity which the men do not wish to appear to have. Previous research by Herek (1988), among others, has proven that "heterosexual men are afraid about being misclassified as homosexuals and that psychological distancing from homosexuals results from a threat to identity" (as cited in Falomir-Pinchastor & Mugny, 2009). Heterosexual men's motivation to avoid being misclassified as homosexual may cause the men to be outwardly hateful and prejudiced against homosexuals in order to reaffirm their masculinity in front of their peers. It is considered to be a gender-role

violation and for this reason-the more a person attends to typical gender roles, the more hostility they will express toward homosexuals (Ratcliff, Lassiter, Markman, Snyder, 2006). According to Herek (2006), men would reject homosexuals, especially so they could fulfill their need to affirm their masculinity.

The idea that men distance themselves due to an identity threat is confirmed by the research of Pichastor and Mugny (2009) who found that men who are told that heterosexuals and homosexuals are biologically different then become less prejudiced against the homosexuals. They claim that because there is an unambiguous guarantee about their sexuality, the hetero men are then able to be more comfortable with homosexuals and see them in a more positive light.

Many heterosexual men may also think that having a gay friend might somehow make them less of a man and feel that their peers may start questioning their sexual identity. As noted by Herek (1986b,1987), “men would be more rejecting of homosexuals in order to fulfill their need to affirm their masculinity by distancing themselves from those with whom they do not want to be confused” (as cited in Falomir-Pichastor and Mugny, 2009). By avoiding association with homosexuals, heterosexual men may “accomplish the defensive function of maintaining a positive and distinctive gender identity” (p. 1234).

In sum, heterosexuals are prejudiced against homosexuals for a number of reasons. Heterosexuals are often scared by the unknown and many hold the notion that homosexuality is wrong based on religion. Straight men in particular don't always feel

comfortable around gay men because they feel the need to assert their masculinity. They do not want to be associated with the stigma of homosexuality and often discriminate against homosexuals to reject feared selves.

Heterosexuals' Prejudice toward Homosexuals Bisexuals

There are commonalities across the sources of prejudice toward homosexuals and bisexuals. Similarly to homosexuals, bisexuals experience prejudice because they are often seen as not abiding to social norms in regards to such things as gender and family.

Bisexuals also face prejudice for some different reasons than do homosexuals. There are at least two ways in which prejudice toward bisexual people is different from prejudice toward homosexual people. The prejudice toward bisexuals is qualitatively and quantitatively different from that toward homosexuals. First, as Brewster and Moradi (2010) noted, bisexuals face prejudice and violence from both heterosexual people and homosexual people. Heterosexuals should feel negativity and prejudice toward bi-sexuals for all the reasons that they feel negativity toward homosexuals. Like homosexual people, bisexual people may be viewed as violating traditional notions of gender and family, as well as being a potential threat to masculinity. In addition, however, bi-sexual people are also attracted to and sometimes date people of the opposite sex, which might provide a threat to heterosexual people. Bi-sexual people might also be the targets of prejudice and discrimination from homosexual people. Homosexual people may be jealous and/or resentful of bisexuals, who can pass as heterosexual and avoid prejudice and discrimination. In addition, many homosexual people believe that bisexuals are on their

way to coming out but not yet comfortable and/or certain with their sexual identity. As such, bi-sexual people might be perceived as a threat, or risky people with whom to have relationships.

Second, bi-sexual people may be seen as untrustworthy. Bisexuals are seen as “playing for both teams” or “swinging both ways”. They may also think there is a motivation to being bisexual, that the given person is greedy, overly sexual, and just plain promiscuous. They may consider bisexuals to be in need of making up their mind and picking a side. As discussed in an article by Brewster and Moradi, many non-bisexuals view bisexuals to be “confused, temporarily experimenting, or in denial about their true sexual orientation”. We do not always trust those we consider to be greedy or indecisive; trust is a key component to any and all relationships and the lack of trust in bisexuals is a large factor in why they face prejudice.

Brewster and Moradi (2010) claim that straight men and women view bisexuals as less trustworthy and less psychologically well adjusted. Bisexuals are also considered to be more likely to be promiscuous, nonmonogous, and behaving in generally less “acceptable” ways. In fact, Brewster and Moradi suggest that, intolerant and hostile attitudes toward bisexual individuals may be present in the heterosexual community, as well as lesbian and gay community, and may motivate feelings of interpersonal mistrust and denigration.

Many people, specifically homosexuals, believe that bisexuals are still in the process of coming out into their true sexual identity. As a result, bisexual people may be

viewed as confused or in a transitional phase to a person who is of a strictly lesbian, gay, or heterosexual orientation. Bisexuals are often considered to be ambivalent in regards to their sexual orientation or perhaps even in denial. Each of these perceptions may undermine trust, which is a novel prediction, and will be tested for the first time by the present research.

Interestingly, despite the fact that bi-sexuals may be the targets of a great deal of prejudice and discrimination from both heterosexual and homosexual people, on the surface, it seems that heterosexual men are open to, interesting in and intrigued by bisexual women. Although it seems that heterosexual men may be open to and accepting of bi-sexual women, below we turn attention to how and with what consequences bisexual women are objectified.

The Objectification of Bisexual Women by Heterosexual Men

Bisexual women face a unique set of circumstances. Often times, it does not seem that people feel as threatened by bisexual women, as bisexual men. According to Diamond (2008), “for too long, women with discontinuous, changing patterns of same-sex and other-sex desire have been written off as atypical and inauthentic, not only by researchers, but also by many subsets of the gay/lesbian/bisexual community” (as cited in Carr, 2008). This suggests that sexuality is fluid and that all women may not necessarily fit into one mold of sexual identity. As Diamond notes, bisexual women are accepted as long as they are seen as experimenting and still open to heterosexual relationships with men.

We predict that heterosexual men will consider a bisexual woman to be more attractive and sexually appealing than they will consider a heterosexual woman to be. Because women are objectified as sex objects for men and eroticized for male desire, which makes it seem as though men are positive toward bisexual women. However, as noted, this is not a genuine acceptance but a result of objectification and eroticization of lesbianism. This later point is reflected in the predictions made about heterosexual men's lack of interest in relationships with bisexual women and their lack of trust of bisexual women compared to their trust of straight women. This leads us to conclude that heterosexual men are only attracted to and interested in hooking up with bisexual women, not in having a relationship with them.

Predictions

We predict that straight women, lesbian women, and gay men will show bias against the bisexual in all variables: hook up, attraction, trust, and interest a relationship. This differs from heterosexual men, who we predict will favor bisexuals in terms of the attractiveness and hook up variables. However, we also predict that like the other three subgroups, heterosexual men will show bias against homosexuals in terms of the interest in a relationship and trust variables. In addition, we predicted that all four subgroups would show bias against the bisexual in the competence and warmth variables. We included these for exploratory purposes, but expected complementary patterns of findings.

Chapter 2

Method

Participants

Participants were 285 undergraduates at the Pennsylvania State University. Half of the participants were students enrolled in an introductory psychology class who completed the study in return for credit in an introductory psychology course. The other half of participants were recruited through a Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgendered (LGBT) listserv; participants recruited through the LGBT listserv completed the experimental materials voluntarily. According to self reports, participants included 47 lesbian women, 31 gay men, 120 heterosexual women, and 87 heterosexual men.

Procedure

Participants were asked to take one of four surveys, based on their sexual orientation. Participants first read a consent form (see Appendix A). Informed consent was indicated when students agreed to take the survey by continuing by clicking a button that indicated consent and directed them to the online survey.

After signing the consent form, participants provided demographic information including age, gender, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and relationship status. Participants were told that they would see information about two people and that for each person they would see a photograph, name, and a description of the person-likes, and dislikes. They were asked to look at the person and read all information carefully before reporting their impressions of the person. For all participants, the first person presented was described as a person of the gender and sexual orientation to which the participant was attracted. More

specifically, the first person seen and evaluated varied, being a heterosexual man for heterosexual female participants, a heterosexual woman for a heterosexual male participants, a gay man for a gay participants, and a lesbian woman for a lesbian participants. After reading the first profile, participants rated the person on a series of dimensions, using scales described below, (i.e. attraction and desire for hook ups, trust, trait ratings, competence and warmth). The participant would then see the same setup in regards to a second individual. After reading about and evaluating the first target, participants read about and evaluated a bi-sexual person. Importantly, the two stimulus people were created to be equivalent in terms of attractiveness and perceived competence and warmth, based on pilot testing and as described below.

Stimulus Materials

Stimulus materials were created based on pilot testing to assure that the two people were equivalent in all ways except for the sexual orientation information (i.e., desired gender and sexual orientation person and bisexual person). In the pilot testing, an independent sample of 147 participants completed two tasks. More specifically, 63 lesbian women, 37 gay men, 16 straight women, and 31 straight men provided two kinds of ratings.

First, participants rated the attractiveness of 52 pictures of the gender target to which they are attracted given their sexual orientation. Thus, lesbian women and straight men rated images of women and gay men and straight women rated images of men. Ratings were made on a single item (i.e., “attractiveness”) using a 7-point scale (endpoints labeled: “very unattractive” and “very attractive”).

Second, participants read descriptions of the likes and dislikes of five people. To depict likes and dislikes, each of the five people described as having provided answers to the following questions: (a) What are six things you could never live without?; (b) What are your four main interests?; (c) What are your four favorite books?; (d) What are your four favorite bands/artists?; (e) What are your four favorite movies? and (f) What are your three favorite magazines? Answers to the questions were varied to indicate sexual orientation. For instance, each group had answers that were consistent for all groups, but also answers that were specific to each group. For example, gay men were said to like “Out magazine”, heterosexual men to like “Details”, heterosexual women to like “Cosmo”, and lesbian women to like “MS magazine.”

After reading about each person, participants reported their perceptions of the competence and warmth of each. To assess perceived competence and warmth, participants rated the person on eight traits. Competence was assessed by four traits (i.e., competent, confident, intelligent, thoughtful) and warmth was assessed by four traits (i.e., warm, sincere, good natured, friendly).

Within subgroup (lesbian women, gay men, straight women, and straight men) analyses were performed to identify pictures that were rated as equivalent in attractiveness and to identify profiles that were perceived as equivalent in terms of perceived competence and warmth. Analyses were performed to select equivalent photographs and equivalent person descriptions, as described below.

Pictures. In order to select pictures equivalent in attractiveness two sets of analyses were conducted for each subgroup of participants (gay men, lesbian women, straight men, and straight women). First, we ran a one-sample t-test comparing average

ratings of images to the mid-point of the scale. After looking over the results we chose the pictures that were rated as significantly above the midpoint of the scale. Next, ratings of attractiveness of the two most similarly rated images were submitted to a within participants ANOVA. For each subgroup, two images were selected that were equally attractive to the participant subgroup of interest, all $F_s < 1$.

Person descriptions. In order to select person descriptions that were equivalent in terms of perceived competence and warmth two sets of analyses were conducted for each subgroup of participants (gay men, lesbian women, straight men, and straight women). First, we ran a one-sample t-test comparing average competence (and warmth) ratings to the mid-point of the scale. After looking over the results we chose the pictures that were rated as significantly above the midpoint of the scale both on competence and warmth. Next, for each subgroup of participants, the person descriptions with the most similar means and standard deviations on perceived competence and warmth were selected and ratings on each variable were submitted to separate within participants ANOVA to test for differences in mean ratings between the two descriptions. For each subgroup, two person descriptions were selected that were perceived to be both equally competent and equally warm for each participant subgroup of interest, all $F_s < 1$.

Within subgroups of participants, we randomly paired photographs with person descriptions to create two different people. The people were then randomly ordered and the first person was labeled as the gender and sexual orientation of interest given the participants sexual orientation. Within subgroup of participants, the second person was then as bisexual. After reading about each person, participants completed a series of ratings, which contained the primary dependent variables (described below).

Dependent Measures

Hookup and Relationship Attraction. After reading the profiles of each person, students rated how likely they would be to engage in specific behaviors with that person. There are nine behaviors in regard to a potential hookup on which participants rated ranging from smiling at the person (i.e., “If he/she smiled at me I would smile back”) to having sex with the person (i.e., “I would have sex with this person”; see Appendix F for complete scale) Using 7-point scales (endpoints labeled “Extremely unlikely” and “Extremely likely”), students indicated their likelihood of engaging in behaviors of different intimacy with each person.

The following scale listed six behaviors regarding a potential relationship, ranging from “I could imagine him/her being my girlfriend” to “I would be interested in getting to know him/her”. Using 7-point scales (endpoints labeled “Extremely unlikely” and “Extremely likely”), students indicated their likelihood of being interested in a relationship with each person.

We created the variables for analysis by averaging across all of the items for the person of the participant’s same sexual orientation and then did the same for the bisexual person. We then subtracted the average bisexual scores from the average same orientation scores.

Trust Scale. Next, participants were asked to read ten statements (i.e. “I could imagine him/her being my girlfriend”, “If he/she promised to do me a favor, he/she would follow through”). They were then asked to rate how likely they would be to engage in each behavior listed with the subject. Ratings were made using a 7-point scale (endpoints labeled “Extremely unlikely” and “Extremely likely”).

As with the social distance scale, variables were created by subtracting the average ratings of the bisexual from the average ratings of the person of the same sexual orientation as the participant.

Attraction. Participants rated how much the given adjective applied to the person. Adjectives included attractive, appealing, datable, desirable, enticing, erotic, hot, interesting, kissable and wild. Ratings were made on a 7-point scale (1=not at all to 7=extremely).

As above, variables were produced by subtracting the average ratings of the bisexual from the average ratings of the person of the same sexual orientation as the participant.

Competence and Warmth Ratings. Participants also rated the profiles based on how competent and warm they considered the person to be. Ratings were made on a 7-point scale (1=not at all to 7=extremely). The items on the scale were the terms indicating warmth: warm, friendly, good natured and sincere. The terms indicating competence: thoughtful, intelligent, competent and confident.

As above, variables were produced by subtracting the average ratings of the bisexual from the average ratings of the person of the same sexual orientation as the participant.

Chapter 3

Results

Each dependent variable (difference in interest in hookups, relationships, attraction, perceived competence and perceived warmth) was submitted to a participant gender (male, female) X participant sexual orientation (heterosexual, homosexual) between-participants Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). In addition, when the predicted gender X sexual orientation interaction emerged as significant, follow up simple effects tests were performed to interpret the interaction. The results from these analyses are reported below for each dependent variable.

Social Distance: Interest in Hookups and a Relationship. No significant effects emerged from analysis of hookups. Analysis of interest in a relationship, however, produced a single significant effect. The interaction between participant gender and participant sexual orientation was significant, $F(1,273)=4.015, p < .05$. As shown in Figure 2, gay men and straight men showed similar preferences for relationships with people of their own sexual orientation versus bi-sexual people, whereas lesbian women showed far less bias against relationships with bi-sexual people than did straight women. I also compared the magnitude of the effect of gender within level of sexual orientation. Among heterosexual people, women were more biased against bi-sexual people than were men. By contrast, among homosexual people, the pattern reversed; women were less biased toward bi-sexual people than were men, though this difference was not significant.

Trust. Two significant effects emerged from the participant gender X participant sexual orientation ANOVA performed on trust ratings. First, there was a significant main

effect of participant gender, $F(1,277)=4.05, p < .05$; female participants were shown to be more trusting of the bisexual person in the survey than the person of their same sexual orientation, while males were more trusting of the person of their own sexual orientation. Second, there was a significant main effect of sexual orientation $F(1,277)=7.36, p < .05$. Heterosexuals produced trust ratings significantly higher than the ratings homosexuals produced. The interaction between participant gender and participant sexual orientation was not significant. However, the means for each condition can be found in Figure 3.

Attraction. A single significant effect emerged from the participant gender X participant sexual orientation ANOVA performed on attraction ratings. The interaction between participant gender and participant sexual orientation was significant, $F(1,268)=4.96, p < .03$. As shown in Figure 4, heterosexual men found the bisexual person to be more attractive than the person of their same sexual orientation, whereas heterosexual women, lesbian women and gay men found the person of their same sexual orientation to be more attractive than the bisexual person.

Perceived Competence. No significant effects emerged from analysis of competence. In fact, the only significant effect to approach significance was a marginally significant interaction between participant gender and participant sexual orientation, $F(1,272)=3.12, p < .08$. As shown in Figure 5, heterosexual women found the bisexual person to be more competent, whereas heterosexual men, lesbian women and gay men found the bisexual person less competent.

Perceived Warmth. Three significant effects emerged from the participant gender X participant sexual orientation ANOVA performed on interest in relationships. There was a main effect of gender, $F(1,275)=4.467, p < .05$, such that male participants

exhibited more anti-bisexual bias ($M=.331$) than did female participants ($M=-.021$). There was also a significant main effect of participant sexual orientation, $F(1,275)=12.737$, $p < .05$; homosexual targets expressed more anti-bisexual bias ($M=.312$) than did heterosexual participants ($M=.075$). These two main effects were, however, qualified by a significant interaction between gender and sexual orientation, $F(1,275)=5.51$, $p < .02$. As show in Figure 6, gay men and straight men had higher ratings for people of their own sexual orientation versus bi-sexual people, whereas heterosexual women showed far less bias in the competence of bisexual people than did lesbian women. Equivalently, when we compared the magnitude of the effect of gender within level of sexual orientation, among heterosexual people, women showed a pro bi-sexual bias (viewing bisexual men as warmer than heterosexual men), whereas men showed an anti-bisexual bias. Among homosexual people, both groups showed bias toward the bisexual person, but the magnitude of that difference did not significantly differ as a function of participants' gender.

Chapter 4

Discussion

This research examined the quality and quantity of prejudice toward bisexuals from both the heterosexual and homosexual communities. We expected similar patterns of bias among heterosexual women, gay men, and lesbian women. More specifically, we expected to find anti-bisexual bias on each dependent measure; heterosexual women, gay men and lesbian women were expected to be less interested in hooking up with and having a relationship with bi-sexual people than members of the gender and sexual orientation to whom they are attracted, as well as being less trusting, less attracted, and perceiving less competence (but more stereotypic perceived warmth) in bisexual people. As Brewster and Moradi (2010) noted, many people do not trust bisexuals. We believed that this would carry over to the other variables as well in addition to trust.

By contrast, heterosexual men were predicted to find the bisexual to be more attractive and that they would have more desire to hook up with the bisexual. This was predicted because of the objectification of women in today's society. Also, men may desire bisexuals because of the notion that a threesome may be more attainable with a bisexual than with a heterosexual woman.

We also predicted that the other three subgroups would be biased against bisexuals in every variable, with heterosexual men being biased against heterosexuals in all variables but attractiveness and hook up potential. We expected these outcomes because we bisexuals are generally seen as less trustworthy and of lesser quality overall than hetero or homosexuals.

To test our predictions, we recruited participants to look at a picture and description of someone of their same sexual orientation who was the gender to whom they were attracted. They also looked at a similar set up but of a bisexual person. Several questions were then asked. Participants were asked to rate a number of traits as well as how much they agreed with certain statements such as “I would have sex with this person” and “I could expect this person to tell me the truth”. These questions were asked in order to test our predictions by determining ratings of social distance, trust, competence, warmth, attraction, and desire for a hook up. Because people were pilot tested to be equivalently attractive, competent and warm prior to adding the sexual orientation labels, evidence of anti-bisexual preferences could only be due to the sexual orientation target.

In accordance to our predictions, attractiveness and hookup variables had higher ratings for the bisexuals from the results of heterosexual men. These variables showed bias toward the bisexual in all other groups. Also consistent with our predictions, all four subgroups showed bias against the bisexual in the variable used to measure desire for a relationship. The variables of trust, warmth, and competence showed also showed ratings consistent with our predictions from heterosexual men, lesbian women, and gay men.

Inconsistent with our predictions were ratings from heterosexual women on three variables. They all showed biased toward the non-bisexual in trust, competence, and warmth. We had expected heterosexual to be biased against bisexuals in all variables, given the notion that the general population has distrust for bisexuals, among other things.

Heterosexual men were more attracted to and had more desire to hook up with a bisexual woman versus a heterosexual woman. These results may be attributed to the fact that women have been objectified repeatedly, specifically in the media. In addition, men’s desire to have a

sexual encounter with more than one woman might fuel their attraction to bisexuals, with whom men think they may have a greater chance with to have a threesome.

Unpredicted in our hypotheses, heterosexual women were found to be more trusting of a bisexual man than a heterosexual man. They also considered the bisexual man to be warmer. While unexpected, this result does make sense. It may be that because straight women feel like a bisexual man “might as well be gay”. The women could still discuss men and relationships with a bi man in the same manner in which they could with a gay man. This relationship with a man is highly coveted. It is possible that straight women focus more on these potential qualities in a bisexual man more than they do on others.

One result that was predicted, but turned out to be true to an extreme, is heterosexual women’s desire to avoid a relationship with a bisexual man. Of all the four subgroups, the heterosexual women were most biased against the bisexuals. This may again be related to how a bisexual man has many similar qualities to a gay man as well as the stereotypic idea that most gay men have AIDS and that prejudice toward gay men is strong that prejudice toward lesbian women. While in regards to trust and warmth, the ability to discuss men in a personal and sexual manner may be desirable; this quality may increase the bias toward the bisexual man in regard to a potential relationship.

Overall, our results showed previous research by Brewster and Moradi (2010) to be true. Bisexuals are less trusted by homosexual men and women as well as heterosexual men. Previous research had not mentioned trust in relation to bisexuals by specific subgroups, so more research on this might certainly be warranted. In addition to further delving into the trust factor ratings by heterosexual women, it would be worthwhile to also investigate straight women’s perception of competence in bisexual men versus straight men.

Our findings might imply a general lack of knowledge in regards to homosexuals and the LGBT community in general. They certainly show that the objectification of women in our society carries over into this specific aspect of sexuality. One might also say that bisexuals are considered to be practically homosexuals in many cases.

Because this study was limited to those between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five, the results cannot be considered true in terms of groups outside of this age range. For the most part, respondents were college students in Pennsylvania, so it would also be presumptuous to attribute these results to other areas. In addition to these factors, because the majority of respondents belong to the college population, we might consider the fact that we our results do not encompass the opinions of all socioeconomic levels.

Future research might want to investigate women's feelings about bisexual men in more depth. It could also be interesting to further investigate heterosexual men's feelings about bisexual women. While we have identified more attraction and desire for the men to want the bisexual women, it might be interesting to test these items under a variety of contexts in order to confirm from what the desire extends. In a similar manner of thinking, it would be interesting to extend our findings of prejudice against bisexuals from the homosexual community in order to see if our reasoning behind the results holds true. It would also be advised to expand the area, age group, and socioeconomic levels in a future study. With the right resources, doing this would expand to whom the results can be attributed and potentially unearth unexpected findings.

Chapter 5

References

Allport, G. W. (1954). *The nature of prejudice*. Oxford, England: Addison-Wesley.

Retrieved from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/615267598?accountid=13158>

Brewster, M. E., & Moradi, B. (2010). Perceived experiences of anti-bisexual prejudice:

Instrument development and evaluation. US: Wm. C. Brown Co.

doi:10.1037/a0021116

Carr, C. L. (2009). The new (essentialist) sexual fluidity: Sexual fluidity. *Sex Roles*,

61(1-2), 130-132. Retrieved from

<http://search.proquest.com/docview/622032161?accountid=13158>

Falomir-Pichastor, J., & Mugny, G. (2009). "I'm not gay...I'm a real man!": Heterosexual

men's gender self-esteem and sexual prejudice. *Personality and Social*

Psychology Bulletin, 35(9), 1233-1243. Retrieved

from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/622105659?accountid=13158>

Herek, G.M.(n.d.). *Sexual Prejudice: Prevalence* . Retrieved from

http://psychology.ucdavis.edu/rainbow/html/prej_prev.html

Ratcliff, J. J., Lassiter, G. D., Markman, K. D., & Snyder, C. J. (2006). Gender

differences in attitudes toward gay men and lesbians: The role of motivation to

respond without prejudice. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 32(10),

1325-1338. Retrieved

from <http://search.proquest.com/docview/621439837?accountid=13158>

Vescio, T. K., & Biernat, M. (2003). Family values and antipathy toward gay men.

Journal of Applied Social Psychology, 33(4), 833-847. Retrieved from

<http://search.proquest.com/docview/620132618?accountid=13158>

Figure 1

Graph of Difference in Hook Up Ratings

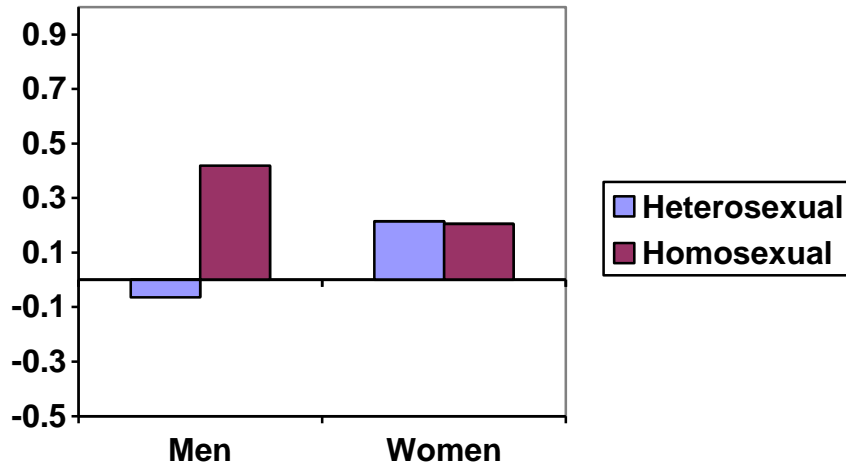


Figure 2

Graph of Difference in Relationship Ratings

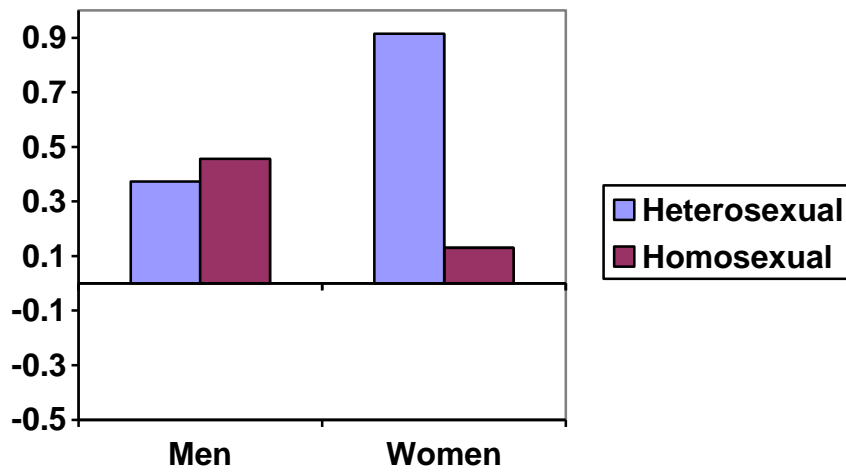


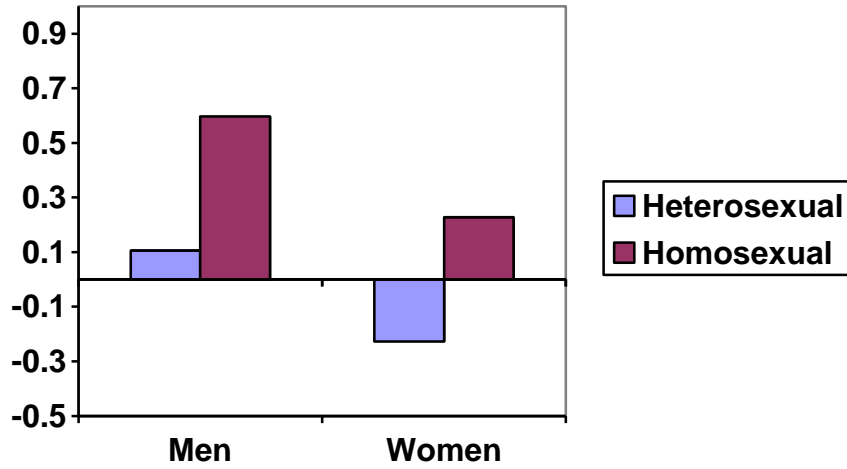
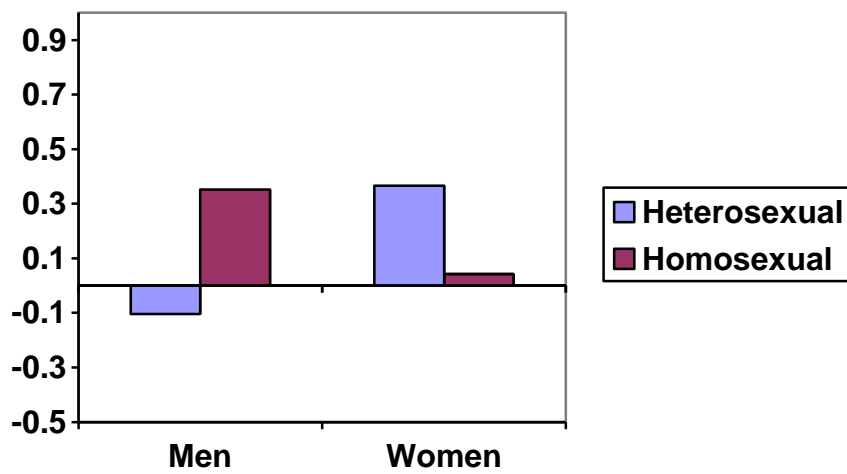
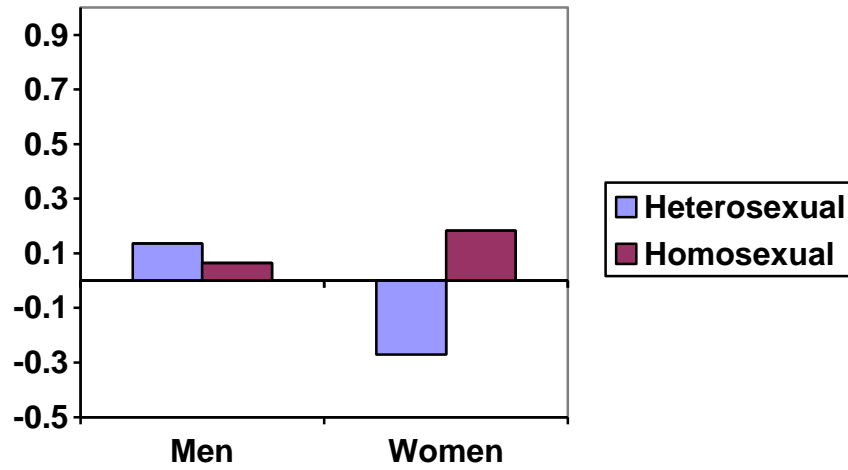
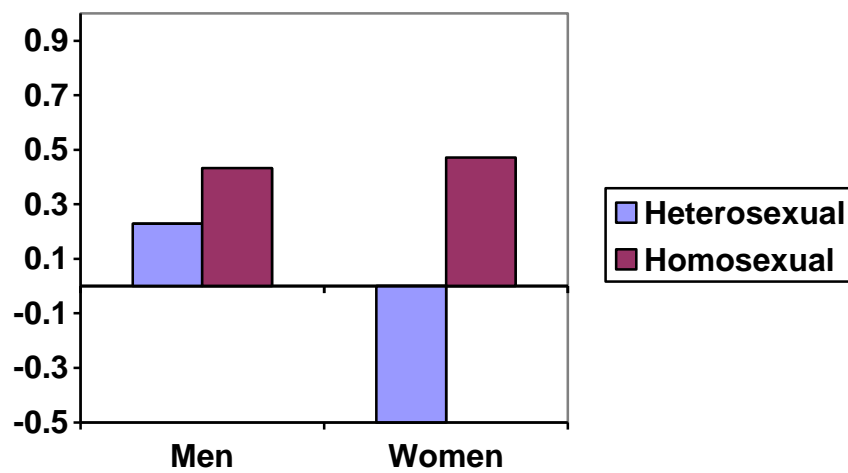
Figure 3Graph of Difference in Trust Ratings**Figure 4**Graph of Difference in Attraction Ratings

Figure 5Graph of Difference in Competence Ratings**Figure 6**Graph of Difference in Warmth Ratings

Appendix A: Informed Consent**Implied Informed Consent Form for Social Science Research
The Pennsylvania State University**

Title of Project: *Social Perceptions of Others*

Principal Investigator: *Kaitlin Holmes, B.A.*
Department of Psychology
417 Moore Building
University Park, PA 16802
(570) 337-0948
keh5128@psu.edu

Advisor: *Theresa K. Vescio, Ph.D.*
Departments of Psychology and Women's Studies
416 Moore Building
University Park, PA 16802
(814) 865-1417
tkv1@psu.edu

1. **Purpose of the Study:** We are interested in your judgments of profiles of specific individuals.

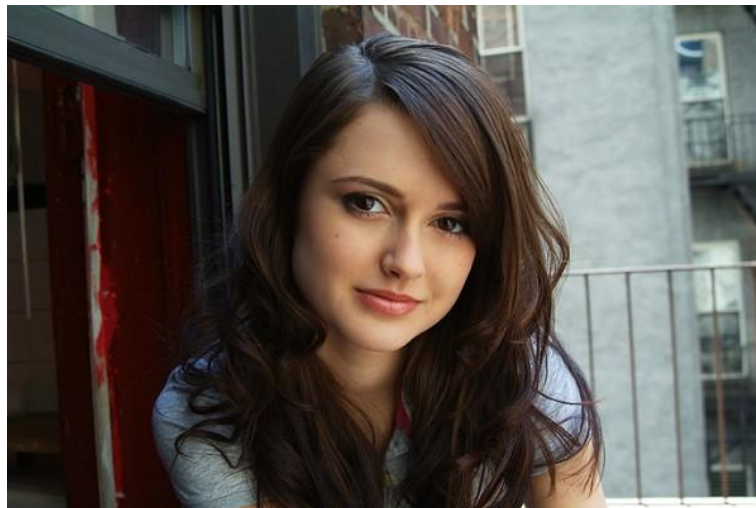
2. **Procedures to be followed:** You will be asked to rate two different profiles. Each profile will feature a picture and some information about the person such as likes and dislikes. You will then be asked to report your perceptions of the person.
3. **Duration/Time:** Participation in this study should take no more than 30 minutes of your time.
4. **Statement of Confidentiality:** Your participation in this research is confidential. A code number will be assigned to your responses, and no personally-identifying information will be connected to this code number. The data will be stored and secured in a locked file cabinet in Moore Building. In the event of a publication or presentation resulting from the research, no personally identifiable information will be shared. Your confidentiality will be kept to the degree permitted by the technology used. No guarantees can be made regarding the interception of data sent via the Internet by any third parties.
5. **Right to Ask Questions:** Please contact Kaitlin Holmes at (570) 337-0948 or Dr. Theresa Vescio (814) 863-0714 with questions, complaints or concerns about this research.
6. **Payment for participation:** If you were recruited through the subject pool, you will receive course credit for participating as specified in the syllabus provided by your instructor. Alternative means for earning this course credit are available as specified in the syllabus. If you were recruited through email you will not be compensated for your participation.
7. **Voluntary Participation:** Your decision to be in this research is voluntary. You can stop at any time. You do not have to answer any questions you do not want to answer. Refusal to take part in or withdrawing from this study will involve no penalty or loss of benefits you would receive otherwise.

You must be 18 years of age or older to consent to take part in this research study.

Your completion of the image reviews and research tasks implies your consent to participate in this research. Please save a copy or print off this form for your records or future reference.

Appendix B: Information in survey taken by lesbian women

Please look at the following profile describing a single woman, read it carefully and answer the questions that follow.



Name: Jessica

Sexual Orientation: lesbian

What are six things you could never live without?

1. Friends
2. horse
3. piercings
4. Family
5. Library card
6. chipotle

What are your four main interests?

1. baking
2. Sarah Silverman
3. Penn State football
4. music

What are your four favorite books?

1. Comfort Food for Breakups
2. Lord of the Rings
3. 1984
4. Jane's World

What are your four favorite bands/artists?

1. Owl City
2. Tegan and Sara
3. John Mayer
4. Adele

What are your four favorite movies?

1. If These Walls Could Talk 2
2. Boondock Saints
3. Fried Green Tomatoes
4. The Hangover

What are your three favorite magazines?

1. Time
2. MS
3. Out magazine

Please look at the following profile describing a single woman, read it carefully and answer the questions that follow.



Name: Ashley
Sexual Orientation: bisexual

What are six things you could never live without?

1. Friends
2. women
3. clean underwear
4. books
5. Family
6. animals

What are your four main interests?

1. parties
2. tattoos
3. activism
4. cooking

What are your four favorite books?

1. The IHOP Papers
2. Harry Potter
3. All the Pretty Girls
4. The Da Vinci Code

What are your four favorite bands/artists?

1. Melissa Etheridge
2. The Beatles
3. Goo Goo Dolls
4. Indigo Girls

What are your four favorite movies?

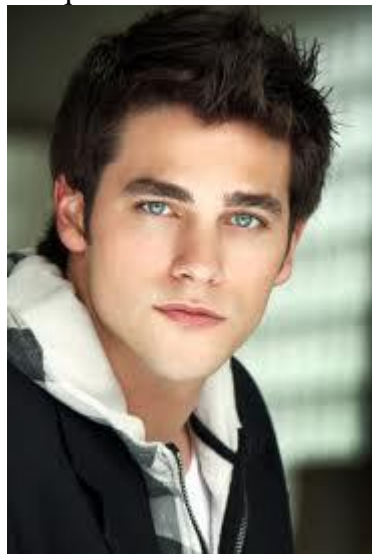
1. Inglorious Basterds
2. Kissing Jessica Stein
3. I Can't Think Straight
4. Pineapple Express

What are your three favorite magazines?

1. MS
2. Out magazine
3. National Geographic

Appendix C: Information in survey taken by gay men

Please look at the following profile describing a single man, read it carefully and answer the questions that follow.



Name: Mike

Sexual Orientation: Gay

What are six things you could never live without?

1. sexpants
2. cuddling
3. humor
4. animals
5. Friends
6. Family

What are your four main interests?

1. drama
2. meditation
3. video games
4. reading

What are your four favorite books?

1. Catcher in the Rye
2. Tales of the City
3. The Giver
4. Dream Boy

What are your four favorite bands/artists?

1. Madonna

2. Michael Jackson
3. Led Zepplin
4. Adam Lambert

What are your four favorite movies?

1. The Hangover
2. Brokeback Mountain
3. Burnt Money
4. Inception

What are your three favorite magazines?

1. Newsweek
2. Instinct
3. Advocate

Please look at the following profile describing a single man, read it carefully and answer the questions that follow.



Name: Chris

Sexual Orientation: bisexual

What are six things you could never live without?

1. memories
2. skating
3. Friends
4. cuddling
5. shopping

6. Family

What are your four main interests?

1. movies
2. animals
3. painting
4. guitar

What are your four favorite books?

1. Hitchiker's Guide to the Galaxy
2. Giovanni's Room
3. The Line of Beauty
4. Brave New World

What are your four favorite bands/artists?

1. Nickelback
2. Lady Gaga
3. Cage the Elephant
4. Billie Holiday

What are your four favorite movies?

1. Avatar
2. Zombieland
3. Another Gay Movie
4. Broken Hearts Club

What are your three favorite magazines?

1. Out magazine
2. Time
3. GQ

Appendix D: Information in survey taken by straight women

Please look at the following profile describing a single man, read it carefully and answer the questions that follow.



Name: Chris

Sexual Orientation: straight

What are six things you could never live without?

1. Friends
2. communication
3. internet
4. basketball
5. Family
6. sneakers

What are your four main interests?

1. parties
2. hunting
3. cars
4. cooking

What are your four favorite books?

1. The Old Man and the Sea
2. Harry Potter
3. Freakonomics
4. The Da Vinci Code

What are your four favorite bands/artists?

1. Avenged Sevenfold
2. The Beatles
3. Goo Goo Dolls
4. Tenacious D

What are your four favorite movies?

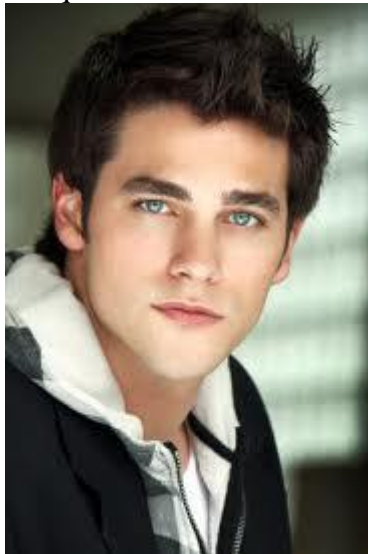
1. Inglorious Basterds

2. Saving Private Ryan
3. Fight Club
4. Pineapple Express

What are your three favorite magazines?

1. Maxim
2. Details
3. National Geographic

Please look at the following profile describing a single man, read it carefully and answer the questions that follow.



Name: Mike

Sexual Orientation: bisexual

What are six things you could never live without?

1. Family
2. Friends
3. Ipod
4. Steak dinner
5. Sleep
6. Internet

What are your four main interests?

1. tattoos
2. dogs
3. napping
4. football

What are your four favorite books?

1. The Da Vinci Code
2. The Darwin Awards

3. Slaughterhouse Five
4. Harry Potter

What are your four favorite bands/artists?

1. Johnny Cash
2. Red Hot Chilli Peppers
3. Metallica
4. The Killers

What are your four favorite movies?

1. Superbad
2. The Godfather
3. The Hurt Locker
4. The Dark Knight

What are your three favorite magazines?

1. National Geographic
2. Maxim
3. Sports Illustrated

Appendix E: Information in survey taken by straight men

Please look at the following profile describing a single woman, read it carefully and answer the questions that follow.



Name: Ashley

Sexual Orientation: straight

What are six things you could never live without?

1. Hugs
2. Dessert
3. Cozy Sweaters
4. Music
5. Friends
6. Family

What are your four main interests?

1. animals
2. dancing
3. video games
4. reading

What are your four favorite books?

1. Catcher in the Rye
2. Memoirs of a Geisha
3. The Giver
4. Dear John

What are your four favorite bands/artists?

1. Enrique Iglesias
2. Michael Jackson

3. Led Zeppelin
4. Colbie Caillat

What are your four favorite movies?

1. The Hangover
2. Up
3. Dirty Dancing
4. Inception

What are your three favorite magazines?

1. Newsweek
2. People
3. Allure

Please look at the following profile describing a single woman, read it carefully and answer the questions that follow.



Name: Jessica

Sexual Orientation: bisexual

What are six things you could never live without?

1. Friends
2. Love
3. Movies
4. Family

5. Internet
6. Chocolate

What are your four main interests?

1. gardening
2. yoga
3. Penn State football
4. music

What are your four favorite books?

1. My Sister's Keeper
2. Lord of the Rings
3. 1984
4. The Lovely Bones

What are your four favorite bands/artists?

1. Owl City
2. Taylor Swift
3. John Mayer
4. Train

What are your four favorite movies?

1. Precious
2. Boondock Saints
3. Toy Story 3
4. The Hangover

What are your three favorite magazines?

1. Time
2. Vogue
3. Elle

Appendix F: Scale to evaluate participant's desire to hook up with person

Please consider the woman described above and imagine that you were at a party or night club that she was also attending. Using the below scale, please indicate the likelihood that you would engage in each behavior with the woman described above.

- | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|----------|---|---|---|---|---|--------|
| Ext | | | | | | Ext |
| remely | | | | | | remely |
| Unlikely | | | | | | Likely |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
1. _____ If she smiled at me I would smile back
 2. _____ I would flirt with her
 3. _____ I would stand close to her
 4. _____ I would dance close her
 5. _____ I would grind on her
 6. _____ I would make out with her at the party or club
 7. _____ I would facebook or give my phone number to her
 8. _____ I would go home with this her
 9. _____ I would have sex with her

Appendix G: Survey to measure interest in a potential relationship and trust

Imagine that the woman described above was a new acquaintance with whom you shared several interests. Using the below scale, please indicate the likelihood that you would engage in each behavior with the woman described above.

- | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|-------------------------|
| Ext
remely
Unlikely | | | | | | Ext
remely
Likely |
| 1. _____ | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| 2. _____ | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| 3. _____ | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| 4. _____ | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| 5. _____ | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| 6. _____ | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| 7. _____ | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| 8. _____ | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| 9. _____ | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |
| 10. _____ | | | | | | |

Appendix H: Scale to evaluate attractiveness, warmth, and competence

Please consider the woman described in the above and rate her on each of the following dimensions.

				attractive					
Not At All	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Extremely	
				appealing					
Not At All	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Extremely	
				dateable					
Not At All	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Extremely	
				desirable					
Not At All	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Extremely	
				enticing					
Not At All	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Extremely	
				erotic					
Not At All	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Extremely	
				hot					
Not At All	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Extremely	
				interesting					
Not At All	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Extremely	
				kissable					
Not At All	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Extremely	
				wild					
Not At All	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Extremely	
				thoughtful					
Not At All	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Extremely	
				friendly					
Not At All	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Extremely	
				competent					
Not At All	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Extremely	
				good natured					
Not At All	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Extremely	
				confident					
Not At All	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Extremely	
				warm					
Not At All	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Extremely	
				intelligent					

Not At All 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely

Not At All 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 Extremely
sincere

ACADEMIC VITA of Kaitlin E. Holmes

Kaitlin E. Holmes
430 S. Pine Run Rd.
Linden, PA 17744

KaitlinE.Holmes@gmail.com

EDUCATION

Bachelor of Arts Degree in Psychology, Penn State University, Spring 2011
Bachelor of Arts Degree in Spanish, Penn State University, Spring 2011
Honors in Psychology
Thesis Title: Prejudice Against Bisexuals
Thesis Supervisor: Theresa K. Vescio

STUDIES ABROAD

Universidad Iberoamericana (Puebla, Mexico) **Summer 2010**

- Integrated with Mexican culture and Spanish through living with a family for six weeks
- Increased knowledge about Mexican history, culture and art through classroom instruction and visits to several cultural sites throughout Mexico
- Learned colloquialisms through everyday conversation and translation of professional articles

London Study Tour (London, England) **December 2009**

- Learned about the culture through many trips and interactions with Londoners in order to complete a final project
- Expanded knowledge about theatre by attending several theatre productions

EXPERIENCE & ACTIVITIES

Resident Assistant **2009-present**

- Supervise 49 residents on a daily basis
- Ensure the safety of over 500 students while on call approximately once a week
- Organize community-building events and educational programs five times per month

Sinfonietta Orchestra **2008-2010**

- Performed semi-annual concerts in Eisenhower Auditorium on cello

AWARDS & HONORS

- **Arlene M. and John H. Witmer, Jr. Endowed Scholarship:** for academic excellence in Liberal Arts
- **Robert C. Byrd Scholarship:** for high school academic excellence
- **Susquehanna Undergraduate Literature Conference:** was selected to and presented a paper
- **Penn State's 2011 Undergraduate Exhibition:** presented a research poster