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# JOURNAL OF SOCIAL ISSUES

**Marriage Restriction Amendments and the  
Same-Sex Marriage Debate: The Social,  
Psychological, and Policy Implications**

ISSUE EDITORS **Adam W. Fingerhut, Ellen D. B. Riggle,  
and Sharon Scales Rostosky**

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**Marriage Restriction Amendments and the Same-Sex Marriage Debate: The Social, Psychological, and Policy Implications**

**Issue Editors: Adam W. Fingerhut, Ellen D. B. Riggle,  
and Sharon Scales Rostosky**

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## **Same-Sex Marriage: The Social and Psychological Implications of Policy and Debates**

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*The political debates and policies related to the civil marriage rights of same-sex couples have psychological and social impacts on lesbian, gay, bisexual individuals and same-sex couples and also on their families, friends, and communities. The overarching goal of this issue was to significantly advance the previous sparse literature on these impacts. The result is an international, interdisciplinary, methodologically, and theoretically diverse collection of original empirical research articles that collectively address three broad questions: (1) What are the social and psychological effects of marriage amendment campaigns and policies? (2) How does civil marriage compare to other statuses for same-sex couples or marriage in other countries? (3) How do anti-gay initiatives affect heterosexual allies and intergroup relationships? Across the diverse approaches and populations that comprise this volume, findings converge in demonstrating that the denial of civil marriage rights is a significant public health issue with important policy implications.*

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## **Marriage Amendments and the Same-Sex Marriage Debate: The Social, Psychological, and Policy Implications**

Proposition 8 in the 2008 California general election may have been a turning point in the debate over civil marriage rights for same-sex couples in the United States. California's Proposition 8 was unique in that a majority of voters in that state approved the discontinuation of the right to civil marriage already exercised by over 18,000 same-sex couples. The resulting legal limbo created by the passage of Proposition 8 highlighted the inequality to which same-sex couples are subject. California was the 29th state to pass an amendment to the state constitution by a vote of the citizens to define marriage as between "one man and one woman." And, like the "Stonewall Riots" in New York City in 1969, Proposition 8 provided a flashpoint in an ongoing political and cultural struggle over the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual (LGB), and same-sex partnered individuals in civil society.

The battle over same-sex marriage, being waged not just in California but throughout the United States and countries around the world, has become so passionate and at times filled with vitriol that it is often referred to as a "culture war" (e.g., Gallagher & Bull, 1996). One side of this debate frames the issue as one of equality and justice. For example, proponents of marriage equality in the United States and South Africa point to the constitutional promise of the equal protection of laws for all citizens as the foundation for the fundamental right to marry a person of one's choosing (without regard to the sex of the partners). Proponents in other countries, such as the Netherlands, point to fundamental rights of privacy and equality.

Opponents of marriage equality question the normality and/or morality of persons who are involved in same-sex relationships or who identify as LGB, sometimes using religious arguments. This side stigmatizes LGB individuals and same-sex relationships to maintain heterosexual privilege within the social and institutional power structures. For example, gay men and lesbians have been portrayed as modern-day fascists who are seeking to encroach on the rights of others (Smith, 1997). This theme has been featured prominently in recent campaigns in the United States to ban same-sex marriage where it was suggested (falsely) that proponents of gay marriage want to change what is taught in school and what is permissible in churches (Leal, 2008).

Whether extending, protecting, restricting, or denying rights to LGB individuals and their families, whether in the United States or other nations, each policy has a measurable impact on individuals. Even before the policy is voted on or implemented, the public debates over rights for LGB individuals or the right of civil marriage for same-sex couples affect the psychological health and well-being and social relations of LGB individuals, same-sex couples, their families, friends, and communities. It is these psychological and social impacts that we explore in this volume.

### **LGB Rights and the Ballot Box in the United States: A Brief History**

Debates over same-sex marriage reflect the current incarnation of an ongoing battle over gay rights. These struggles have included fights over LGB's right to serve in the military, to experience fair treatment in employment and housing, to not be prosecuted nor persecuted under sodomy laws, to adopt children, and to marry and have legally protected and recognized relationships (Cahill, 2007). Most of the battles over LGB rights have taken place in legislatures and courtrooms; however, since 1977, voters in the United States have weighed in on more than 100 local and state initiatives and referenda [where citizen voters are allowed to directly vote on the establishment of a law] pertaining to LGB rights.

The first wave of gay-related ballot measures, in the middle and late 1970s, was largely anti-gay in nature and focused on repealing antidiscrimination laws or limiting states from being able to enact new antidiscrimination laws (Gamble, 1997). The first anti-gay ballot measure appeared before voters in Boulder, Colorado in 1974. With 83% of the vote, voters repealed a nondiscrimination law that had previously been passed to protect sexual minority individuals (Cahill, 2007; Haider-Markel, Querze, & Lindaman, 2007). In 1977, the second anti-gay ballot battle was waged when Anita Bryant, conservative Christian and former beauty queen, brought her anti-gay rhetoric to Miami Dade County, Florida. Bryant, whose anti-gay group was called Save Our Children, Inc., successfully rallied voters to repeal an initiative that protected gay men and lesbians from discrimination (Gallagher & Bull, 1996). Unlike the fight in Boulder, this campaign received national attention and brought gay rights to the forefront of public discourse (Cahill, 2007).

The second wave of anti-gay measures began in the late 1980s and continued through the early 1990s (Cahill, 2007). Once again, many of these campaigns centered on antidiscrimination laws. Central to this second wave were several campaigns that took place in Oregon and Colorado. Oregon's Measure 8 sought to repeal an executive order from then-governor Neil Goldschmidt that outlawed sexual orientation discrimination in state employment (Gallagher & Bull, 1996). Despite the fact that the governor's order only affected a small number of gay and lesbian individuals in the state, anti-gay activists worked hard to overturn it. Although these activists were successful in their fight, the Oregon Court of Appeals ultimately overturned Measure 8 in 1992 (see *Merrick v. Board of Higher Education*, 1992). At the same time that the Court was ruling on Measure 8, the Oregon Citizens Alliance, the Christian rights organization that sponsored Measure 8, was asking state voters to weigh in on another measure, Measure 9, that would have defined homosexuality as "abnormal, wrong, unnatural, and perverse" (Douglass, 1997). Although the measure was defeated, 57% to 43%, more than half-a-million voters favored the redefinition.

In Colorado in 1992, a similar highly publicized battle was being fought. Colorado's Amendment 2 sought to repeal existing Colorado laws protecting LGB



individuals against discrimination, ban the future passage of antidiscrimination laws protecting LGB individuals, and prohibit the government from hearing claims of discrimination made by LGB individuals. Essentially, the amendment would have made it legal to discriminate against gay men and lesbians and would have given sexual minority individuals no recourse for such treatment (O'Rourke & Dellinger, 1997). The amendment passed with 53.4% of the vote. In 1996, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that Amendment 2 violated the Equal Protection Clause of the U.S. Constitution reasoning that "a State cannot so deem a class of persons a stranger to its laws" (*Romer v. Evans*, 1996).

We are currently in the midst of a third wave of gay-related ballot measures in the United States that focuses on civil marriage rights for same-sex couples and adoption rights for LGB individuals and same-sex couples. This wave of electoral activity began following a 1993 Hawaii Supreme Court decision (*Baehr v. Lewin*, 1993) which found that a ban on same-sex marriage was discrimination on the basis of sex and therefore a violation of the state's equal protection clause (Rom, 2007). The state was ordered to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples; however, before this could happen, a constitutional amendment was passed giving the state legislature the power to define marriage (which they had previously defined as between a man and a woman). Although civil marriages of same-sex couples never took place in Hawaii, fear that they might take place galvanized opponents in other states to seek ways to limit recognition of such marriages. Since 1996 several states have passed "Defense of Marriage" laws. The federal government passed the "Defense of Marriage Act" in 1996, which defined marriage at the federal level as a union between a man and a woman and, importantly, gave states the right to acknowledge or not acknowledge same-sex marriages performed in other states.

Prior to 2004, voters in three states (Alaska, 1998; Nebraska, 2000; and Nevada, 2002) approved constitutional amendments restricting the definition of civil marriage to one man and one woman. In contrast, between 2004 and 2008, voters in 26 states passed such amendments, reflecting a new strategy by opponents of marriage rights for same-sex couples. Although laws passed by a legislature may be overturned by a court on constitutional grounds, amending a constitution institutionalizes the discrimination at a much higher level, making it much harder to reverse the policy.

In addition to the marriage amendments, campaigns have been underway to restrict gay men and lesbians and same-sex couples from adopting or fostering children (Stone, 2006). Same-sex couples in Utah and Mississippi are effectively unable to adopt because of state laws prohibiting adoption by unmarried couples. In 2008, a citizen initiative passed in Arkansas barring adoption or foster care by individuals cohabiting outside of a valid marriage. The Arkansas law, as well as a 30-year-old Florida law explicitly barring adoption by gay men and lesbians, were recently struck down by state courts. Adoption laws in several other states are

unclear or allow decisions about adoption or foster homes to be made by individuals that may discriminate against gay men and lesbians or same-sex couples.

Some research has catalogued the outcomes of gay-related ballot initiatives. Gamble (1997), for example, examined civil rights initiatives from 1959 to 1993. Included in her analysis were initiatives targeting housing and public accommodations for racial minorities, school desegregation, English language laws, AIDS policies, and gay rights. Overall, 60% of the civil rights initiatives dealt with LGB rights. Of the 43 gay rights initiatives, 88% sought to repeal existing gay rights laws or to limit the creation of new protections. In 79% of these anti-gay initiatives ( $N = 34$ ), the result repealed or limited gay rights. Gamble (1997) concluded that there is "tyranny at the ballot box" and that the majority have used direct democracy to maintain their privileged position.

Haider-Markel et al. (2007) conducted a similar analysis, extending the sample of initiatives through 2005. Of the 143 gay rights initiatives and referenda examined, 113 were "anti-gay in their intent" (p. 307), intending to repeal existing protections or restrict future protections. Only 21% ( $N = 30$ ) sought to grant rights to gay men and lesbians. In line with Gamble's (1997) data, 71% of the outcomes on these ballot initiatives resulted in victory for anti-gay activists. Regardless of the direction of the vote, however, Haider-Markel et al. noted that minorities may suffer simply because of the very public nature of the debates concerning their personhood and their rights.

### **LGB Rights and Marriage Rights around the World**

Though some countries (e.g., Canada) have found LGB individuals to be protected by their constitutions, only the constitution of South Africa explicitly protects individuals from discrimination based on sexual orientation (interpreted by their courts as protecting the right of same-sex couples to marry; see van Zyl, 2011). The European Union along with individual national governments has been active in expanding rights and protections. On the other hand, numerous countries have no protections for LGB rights. For example, two thirds of the countries in Africa still criminalize consensual sex between same-sex partners. (See the Gay and Lesbian International Human Rights Commission website, [www.iglhr.org](http://www.iglhr.org), for up to date information about the status of LGB rights around the world.)

International discourse has increasingly included discussion of the recognition of same-sex relationships. For example, there have been successful campaigns for registered partnerships from the Czech Republic to Uruguay, the recognition of civil unions in Argentina, and same-sex civil marriages in Mexico City and Spain. There have also been many unsuccessful campaigns and there remains much opposition to the recognition of same-sex couples in many countries. (See Newton, 2010, for a recent review.)

### The Present Volume

In light of the increasing public debate over gay rights, specifically marriage rights, and the results of the U.S. elections in November, 2008 (California's Proposition 8, marriage amendments in Arizona and Florida, and the now invalid Arkansas adoption initiative that effectively barred gay men and lesbians from adopting children), an interdisciplinary working group met in January 2009 to further develop the knowledge base on the social and psychological consequences and policy implications of gay-focused ballot initiatives.

Central to the meeting were discussions of the importance of disseminating research findings related to the social and psychological consequences of voter initiatives like the ones that have targeted the LGB community, not just in the United States, but in other countries as well. It is from these discussions that this volume was born.

This volume is organized around three key questions: (1) What are the social and psychological effects of anti-gay legislation and voter driven initiatives on members of the LGB community? (2) How does civil marriage compare to other statuses for same-sex couples or marriage in other countries? (3) How do anti-gay initiatives affect heterosexual allies and intergroup relationships?

#### *Anti-Gay Ballot Initiatives and Psychological Well-Being*

In the discussions of rights for LGB individuals much has been said about the tangible consequences of legislation and ballot referenda and initiatives. For example, several reports analyzing the negative financial impact of the lack of legal recognition on same-sex couples have been produced by The Williams Institute (UCLA School of Law). Less attention has been paid to the social and psychological consequences that ballot measures have on those who are targeted (for an exception, see Riggle, Rostosky, & Horne, 2010). The first three articles in this volume examine these individual level psychological effects and consider the effects on LGB individuals' relationships with their intimate partners, family members, and extended social network.

The scant research examining anti-gay ballot initiatives and psychological well-being has primarily used the minority stress framework (Meyer, 2003), suggesting that campaigns related to gay rights and to marriage initiatives specifically serve as a minority stressor for LGB individuals (e.g., Rostosky, Riggle, Horne, & Miller, 2009; Russell, 2000). Minority stress is the chronic stress that accompanies a stigmatized social status such as LGB or transgender. Primary components of the minority stress model include experiences of discrimination, anticipation of rejection, concealment or disclosure of the stigmatized identity, and internalized negative views of the self as a result of the stigmatized identity. Minority stress

components have been shown to account for the increased rates of psychological distress in LGB individuals (Meyer, 2003).

Marriage amendment campaigns and the accompanying negative messages about LGB lives constitute a specific discriminatory and prejudicial event. In a study of LGB individuals conducted shortly after the 2006 election in the United States, Riggle, Rostosky, and Horne (2009) compared responses of LGB individuals living in one of the seven U.S. states that passed a constitutional amendment restricting marriage for same-sex couples with LGB individuals living in states without such an amendment or in states where amendments had been passed in a prior election. Participants in states that had just passed a marriage ban reported significantly greater exposure to negative messages about gay men and lesbians and significantly more stress. These individuals also reported poorer psychological well-being (i.e., more depressive symptoms and negative affect) and lower positive affect.

Additional analyses, reported in Rostosky et al. (2009), utilized a subsample of participants who also completed measures of minority stress and psychological distress prior to the election to demonstrate changes across time. Participants who lived in states where a marriage ban passed showed significant increases in exposure to negative media messages and negative conversations and increases in psychological distress. These same changes were not seen in individuals in states without a recent marriage ban suggesting that the effects were related to the anti-same-sex marriage campaign and resulting outcome. Likewise, Hatzenbuehler, McLaughlin, Keyes, and Hasin (2010), using a large population-based, longitudinal dataset demonstrated that the prevalence of psychological disorders among LGB individuals significantly increased in states that passed marriage amendments relative to LGB individuals in states without amendments.

Interestingly, though participants in the Rostosky et al. (2009) study reported a greater amount of minority stress, they also reported positive effects as well. For example, LGB participants reported significantly greater exposure to positive messages about gay men and lesbians, perhaps because these LGB individuals had surrounded themselves with supportive friends, families, and colleagues. Thus, another important component of the minority stress process is the effective coping efforts that LGB individuals use to combat negative emotions and psychological symptoms (Meyer, 2003).

Using the minority stress framework as a starting point, the three articles in the first section of this volume draw on additional conceptual frameworks from relationship science and communications to expand previous research. Together, these articles explore how the enactment of laws and policies that deny marriage rights affect LGB individuals' intimate partnerships and their interpersonal interactions in their communities.

In the first article, Maisel and Fingerhut (2011) examine the effects of marriage ban campaigns on LGB individuals and their relationships. Importantly,

the research these authors present is some of the first to directly examine the effects of anti-gay ballot campaigns (in this case, the campaign associated with California's Proposition 8) separate from the outcome of the election. The authors found that LGB individuals experienced negative emotions in the days leading up to the election, and yet also found positive emotional support from their friends, family, and intimate partners. A unique contribution of this article is that the authors were able to explore possible relationship status differences in their sample that included LGB individuals who had previously been legally married in the state of California. They found that positive and negative emotional experiences seemed to be particularly intensified for these married participants. Finally, the qualitative analysis of quotes from participants contributes a complex picture of the negative and positive affect generated by the campaign and its expression in interpersonal relationships.

The second article in this section, by Lannutti (2011), delves into same-sex couples' perceptions of their communications with others in their more extended social networks following the passage of a marriage amendment. Using the "consequential stranger" framework (Blau & Fingerman, 2009), Lannutti argues that the social consequences of marriage amendments can be discerned through an examination of everyday interactions that same-sex couples have with people in the extended social network who are "friends of friends," neighbors, and community members. In an analysis of in-depth interviews with 57 same-sex couples from seven U.S. states that had recently passed a marriage amendment, Lannutti discovered that interactions with extended social network members both positively and negatively impact identity disclosure, perceived social support, and perceived political connectedness of same-sex couples.

The findings in Lannutti (2011) and Maisel and Fingerhut (2011) both support the idea that marriage amendment campaigns and resulting policies that deny marriage equality to same-sex couples are sources of minority stress (Meyer, 2003). They extend previous research by showing that these campaigns also have negative consequences in the relational lives of LGB individuals. That is, these campaigns are accompanied by conflicted and negative interactions and experiences that further exacerbate negative emotions. To cope with the negative socioemotional consequences of minority stress surrounding amendment campaigns, LGB individuals rely and depend upon social support and their positive interactions with partners, friends, and the extended social network. These findings further contribute to our understanding of successful coping, a previously neglected component of the minority stress model.

David Frost (2011) ends this section by using self-determination theory and a personal projects analysis (Little, 2008) to compare LGB and heterosexual individuals' perceptions of their intimate relationships. His findings reveal that whereas there are no differences between LGB and heterosexual individuals in the meaning attached to their intimate relationships, LGB individuals, to a

significantly greater degree than heterosexual individuals, perceive that their intimate relationships are devalued and that there are barriers to attaining their intimate relationship goals, particularly at the level of the macrosystem (i.e., laws and policies). Although this study does not directly examine the impact of the marriage campaigns or their outcomes, the findings are important to quantifying the real-life psychological impacts of treating same-sex relationships as “less than” heterosexual relationships.

### *Marriage Equality and Social Inclusion/Exclusion*

In previous research on minority stress, same-sex couples were found to express a desire for the protections of legal relationship recognition; they recognized that their relationships, lacking equal marital rights, were often seen as less legitimate or “real” (Rostosky, Riggle, Dudley, & Comer Wright, 2006; Rostosky, Riggle, Gray, & Hatton, 2007; Rostosky, Riggle, Horne, Denton, & Huellemeier, 2010). Even for those in a legally recognized marriage, marriage amendments likely create stressful anxiety about the future of that recognition. Other research on the effects of exclusion from the cultural and legal institution have found similar effects (e.g., Hull, 2006), but less research has been conducted on the relatively new effects of social inclusion.

Eskridge and Spedale (2006) explored the effects of legal recognition of same-sex relationships (in the forms of registered partnerships) in five Scandinavian countries. They found evidence of the positive effects of social inclusion, or validation of their relationship by others as a result of becoming “married.” Badgett (2009) found evidence of similar positive effects of social inclusion through the exercise of civil marriage rights in the Netherlands. Badgett also found that marriage is the preferred option where other relationship recognition options are available. She argued that marriage is seen as the “ultimate” legal status validating equality of same-sex relationships.

Whereas the articles in the first section of this issue focus on the psychological effects of explicit exclusion from marriage equality, the second section focuses on contexts in which same-sex couples have been included in the right to marry or granted legal relationship status. In this section, three articles explore the relationships of same-sex couples in Vermont and Massachusetts in the United States, in the Netherlands, and in South Africa. These articles explore the effects of positive policies giving legal recognition to couples, as well as the continued stigmatization of same-sex couples and the impact of privilege on the exercise of marriage rights.

Rothblum, Balsam, and Solomon (2011) first surveyed couples who had obtained a civil union in Vermont in 2001. Vermont was the first state to offer a legalized status similar to marriage to same-sex couples. In this volume, the authors report on a follow-up survey they conducted 3 years later, just after

Massachusetts had begun to offer civil marriage rights to same-sex couples. In the follow-up, Rothblum and her colleagues (2011) asked participants in the study to write about their perceptions of their legalized relationship status. Civil unions created a "partial equality" where couples experienced limited social inclusion and validation, but not full equality.

Legalizing a relationship is an important investment; this investment, however, occurs in a macroenvironmental context that continues to feature an inequality in status (Vermont recognized same-sex civil marriages after the follow-up study was conducted and the federal government and the vast majority of states in the United States still do not recognize civil marriages of same-sex couples). Rothblum et al.'s findings point out both the importance of having a legalized relationship and the recognition by couple members of the separate and not equal status of civil unions vis-à-vis civil marriage. The inclusion in a recognized cultural institution (i.e., civil marriage) cannot be mimicked by other status designations. Rothblum et al. also found that a substantial number of couples had already added or were planning to add their first child to their family in the wake of civil union rights; these couples felt more secure about starting a family and protecting their families once they had legal relationship rights.

The next article in this section, by Badgett (2011), expands upon her previous work in the Netherlands (Badgett, 2009) and explores the perceptions of social inclusion (and exclusion) of same-sex couples in the Netherlands and in Massachusetts (United States). Badgett reports here that members of same-sex couples in the Netherlands felt more included and accepted after they were granted the right of civil marriage (whether they themselves were married or not). In Massachusetts, members of couples in civil marriages felt more accepted and experienced more support from their families. These positive impacts were experienced to a greater degree when accompanied by privileged statuses, such as being male, being White, and having a higher income. This article, as well as Rothblum et al., point out that in the United States, state civil marriage rights, while offering some benefits, do not automatically bring an end to prejudice and stigma.

In the final article in this section, Mikki van Zyl (2011) reports on the effects of marriage equality, and social inequality, in South Africa. South Africa was the first country to include nondiscrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in its constitution. As a result, same-sex couples in South Africa have been granted marriage equality. In a culturally diverse and historically complex society, the benefits of marriage intersect not only with the privileges of race, class, and sex, but also are overlaid with schisms in "northocentric" versus "African" cultural values. Even a constitutional guarantee of equality does not always translate into absolute equality for all persons. Privilege, not only in South Africa but also in other countries, translates into the ability to exercise rights. A lack of privilege can deter the ability to exercise marriage rights, and thereby effectively maintain

a system of social exclusion, whereas conditions of privilege may promote social inclusion.

These articles explore the effects of social exclusion through the lens of social inclusion. At the same time, they make the important point that full social inclusion is still out of reach for those who are less privileged. Equality of policy does not eliminate stigmatization; thus the interaction of social inclusion in one area and continued stigmatization needs further exploration and theoretical development.

### *Marriage Amendments and Intergroup Relations*

In addition to demonstrating the effects that anti-gay ballot initiatives have on LGB individuals, it is important to understand how such initiatives affect majority group members (i.e., heterosexuals) and relations between LGB and heterosexual individuals. The first two articles in this section focus on the experiences of straight allies, or heterosexual individuals who have aligned themselves with the LGB community. Despite anecdotal evidence demonstrating the existence of out-group allies, there has been little systematic investigation of who these individuals are (see Fingerhut, 2011, for an exception) or how they become allies (see Duhigg, Rostosky, Gray & Wimsatt, 2010). In fact, many of the major social psychological theories concerning intergroup relationships suggest that allies should not even exist. For example, Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) posits that individuals divide the world into in-groups and out-groups based on salient social categories and that individuals are intrinsically motivated to protect their in-group's interests. In such a model, it would make little sense for individuals, especially those who are part of the dominant class, to align themselves with the out-group. Similarly, Social Dominance Theory (Sidanius, 1993; Sidanius & Pratto, 1993) suggests that, through the process of evolution, humans have come to prefer social structures based on hierarchy and that those on top of the hierarchy will do what they have to in order to maintain their position. Once again, such a system preferences intergroup tension and leaves little room for the phenomenon of out-group alliance. Given this theoretical bent, it is not a surprise that allies have received little attention from the research community.

In perhaps the only published study to examine the experiences of straight allies during same-sex marriage campaigns, Arm, Horne, and Levitt (2009) interviewed 10 heterosexuals who had LGB family members and who lived in Tennessee during its marriage amendment campaign in 2006. The results revealed a variety of themes, including feelings of anger, distress, and fear. Participants also reported tension in relationships as those around them either saw the issue differently or did not want to be involved. At the same time, participants, all of whom supported their LGB family member and LGB rights more generally, felt compelled to continue the fight for equality. For some, this fight led to a change



in identity. One woman reported on such a change following participation in a protest:

I had always been your typical Southern woman, we didn't do that kind of thing [protesting]. You didn't want your name in the paper. And I'm thinking, "I'm standing on this street corner, protesting with a sign in my hand, and there's no going back for me now. I'll never be that woman again." I don't want to be. (p. 92)

In the present volume, Horne, Rostosky, and Riggle (2011) similarly examine the experiences of those related to LGB individuals in the wake of same-sex marriage amendments. Referring to Goffman's (1963) concept of "courtesy stigma," the authors argue that family members of LGB individuals will be subject to the negative consequences of the marriage debates as they are implicated on account of their association with the targeted group. Additionally, family members are burdened as they worry about their LGB family members who are being targeted. Importantly, however, the authors suggest that the experiences of family members, and out-group allies more generally, are different from those of the targeted minority in that family members retain their rights and privileges as part of the majority. Using quantitative and qualitative methodologies, comparisons were made between family members living in one of the seven states that passed an amendment in the 2006 U.S. election and LGB individuals living in these same states. Additionally, comparisons were made between the experiences of family members living in states where an amendment was on the ballot and family members living in states without such an amendment. Though LGB individuals reported more stress than family members, there were no differences between the groups in reports of negative amendment-related affect and overall negative affect. These data make salient the fact that LGB individuals are not the only ones being affected by the debates over same-sex marriage; the effects of such debates are more far-reaching and touch not only those who are LGB themselves but also those whose families include LGB individuals.

Glenda Russell (2011) similarly reports on the experiences of allied heterosexuals, this time using semi-structured interviews to better understand the interplay between gay and heterosexual individuals involved in the gay rights movement. Using data collected over the past 20 years from over 125 allies, Russell comments on the interactions between in-group and out-group individuals in what she describes as a still-unfolding movement. The data reveal a complex interplay between gay and heterosexual activists; although both groups are essential for progress, tension still exists between the groups as decisions are made regarding the definition, direction, and leadership of the movement. We hope these two contributions not only shed light on straight allies, but also on the topic of out-group alliance more broadly. More research is needed to understand the motivations of out-group allies as well as the consequences of adopting such an identity.