

**Restrictive Attitudes towards Same-Sex Marriage:
The Varying Importance of Gender by Race**

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In the aftermath of Proposition 8, a California constitutional amendment repealing gay marriage, attention focused on whether African Americans and Latinos propelled the measure to victory. Lost amidst the dominant framing around race was the role of gender, and the intersectional roles played by gender across racial and ethnic groups. We make use of two surveys of California voters to show that gender plays a different role in shaping gay marriage attitudes among whites and African Americans than among Latinos and Asian Americans. We discuss the reasons for this divergence in light of past research on the predominance of straight-marriage norms among the latter two groups.

In November 2008, California voters passed Proposition 8, a state constitutional amendment that eliminated the right of same-sex couples to marry, by a margin of 52% to 48%. Given the relatively narrow margin of victory for the amendment, many news analysts pored through the California exit poll data to see which groups may have been critical to its passage. One of the dominant narratives that emerged out of the sub-group analysis of the November exit poll data centered on race and the apparently high level of voter support for Proposition 8 among African Americans and, to some extent, Latino voters. An Associated Press headline two days after the election summed up much of the post-mortem news coverage on Proposition 8: “Blacks, Latinos helped Prop. 8, exit polls say” (Wohlsen 2008), and was followed by several news stories, commentaries, and talk shows featuring the opinions of analysts and community leaders that all echoed the same theme, of a deep divide between African Americans and gays within the Democratic Party coalition, and the potential for Republicans to make inroads among minority voters on hot-button social issues (Erbe 2008; Vick and Surdin 2008; Ferriss 2008; DiMassa and Garrison 2008).

The focus on racial minority opposition to gay marriage was perhaps not surprising, given several factors: a) the relatively close vote in favor of Proposition 8; b) the conflicting preferences of important constituencies in the Democrat Party (blacks, Latinos, and gays/lesbians); c) the historic election of a black President of the United States with very high black voter turnout; d) the exit poll data broken down by race that showed some of the highest levels of support among black voters; and e) the prior news coverage on religious organizations and Proposition 8, which made the focus on race a relatively new angle. Furthermore, the explosive charges that African American voters were the crucial vote in favor of restricting gay marriage spawned a series of counter-critiques that focused on such factors as the lack of

sufficient outreach between gay rights groups and race-based civil rights organizations and the lack of attention to race and class inequality within the gay rights community (Cannick 2008a, 2008b).

While such a debate was perhaps inevitable, or even necessary given the political circumstances, it was empirically and theoretically wanting. The empirics used to assert a racial divide over gay rights were flawed in several respects. They were based on exit poll data that are designed to be more representative of white voters than African Americans or Latinos. Thus, for instance, the critique that the National Election Pool overestimated Latino support for George W. Bush in 2004 because it was more likely to poll Latino voters in suburban areas and swing districts was equally valid in 2008, as the methods for the NEP remained fundamentally similar (Leal et al. 2005).

Perhaps more importantly, the exit poll data did not survey enough African Americans or Latinos to provide breakdowns within the group, by factors such as gender or religion. As a consequence, the arguments that emerged out of the data were relatively unsophisticated, of a relatively monolithic bloc of African American voters opposed to other voting blocs such as youth, white Democrats, and female voters. While there may have been an implicit recognition that non-religious black and Latino voters may have indeed rejected Proposition 8, the data did not allow for an analysis of sub-groups. Thus, the exit poll data and the subsequent analysis of the data paid scant attention to factors related to intersectionality (of race, gender, and religion) that have been fairly well developed within the literature on public opinion and issue

preferences, particularly with respect to gay rights and abortion among African Americans and whites.¹

In this paper, we seek to provide a more sophisticated answer to the question of race- and gender-based differences on voting decisions regarding constitutional restrictions on gay marriage. In addition to re-examining some of the received wisdom regarding the opinions of black women and men, and white women and men, we extend the analysis to consider the opinions of Latinos and Asian Americans as well using data from two surveys of California voters—one conducted a month prior to Election Day and the other conducted after the election. The first survey was conducted by the Public Policy Institute of California (PPIC) in the month prior to the November 2008 election, with a representative sample of California residents including 1,051 whites, 287 Latinos, 112 African Americans, and 88 Asian Americans who were eligible to vote.² While the PPIC surveys are generally considered to be among the most accurate gauges of public opinion in California (Tuna 2010), it is limited in one significant aspect, in that surveys are not conducted in any Asian languages. Also, the PPIC data only cover opinion one month prior to the November election, and not after Election Day. To overcome these limitations and to provide additional evidence to test our claims, we analyze the 2008 Collaborative Multi-racial Post-election Survey (CMPS), a post-election survey conducted in California as well as 17 other states with significant populations of racial and ethnic minorities

¹ We use intersectionality, overlaps, intersections, and intersecting identities interchangeably throughout the paper.

² The PPIC survey of Californians and their Government was a random-digit dial (RDD) telephone survey, with interviews conducted between October 12-19, 2008.

(Frasure et al. 2010). The sample sizes in the CMPS are smaller here for most groups, however, with 67 whites, 58 African Americans, 334 Latinos, and 210 Asian Americans.

In our analysis of both of these data, we find no consistently significant relationship between race and voting on Proposition 8, either in the bivariate or multivariate context. We do, however, find a gender gap in voting, with women less likely than men to support Proposition 8, after controlling for other factors such as age, education, religion, and party identification. Still, this gender gap is found only among whites and African Americans, but not among Latinos or Asian Americans. Thus, while race proves to be relatively insignificant in terms of its direct relationship to the constitutional ban on gay marriage in California, it nevertheless plays an important role in its intersection with gender.

Taken together, our findings suggest that the focus on black exceptionalism with respect to public opinion on gay marriage bans misses perhaps an even more important pattern—the differential role that plays among whites and African Americans on the one hand, and among Latinos and Asian Americans on the other. We posit some theoretical foundations for why this might be the case, and suggest avenues for future research particularly in light of ongoing changes in the politics of race and gender with respect to marriage equality and LGBT rights more generally.

Gender Gaps and Intersectionalities with Race

Our expectations of a gender gap in public opinion on same-sex marriage is built most fundamentally on the vast literature on gender differences in various aspects of American politics. Since the 1980s, studies of political attitudes, vote choice, and political participation have consistently shown that gender differences are consequential. For instance, women have

tended to hold more favorable opinions toward those who are disadvantaged, and women are significantly different from men on issues pertaining to social welfare and foreign policy (Frankovic 1982; Conover 1988; Burns, Schlozman, and Verba 2001; Chaney, Alvarez, and Nagler 1998; Kaufman and Petrocik 1999; Wirls 1986; Edlund and Pande 2002; Cook and Wilcox 1991). Women diverge from men, not only in their preferences on various policies, but also in how they rank the salience of those issues (Burns et. al. 2001). And, given differences in the ways that men and women assign policy priorities and form their political preferences, it is not surprising to find that they also have markedly different preferences when it comes to presidential voting (Chaney et. al. 1998) and party identification, with women consistently more likely than men to favor the Democrat Party in the United States, and left-leaning parties in Europe (Inglehart and Norris 2000; Sapiro 1983; Kaufman and Petrocik 1999; Norrander 1999; Wirls 1986). On a few issues such as abortion, prior research suggests that there may be no gender gap in public opinion, with women perhaps even being more conservative than men on some measures of opinion on abortion (Shapiro and Mahajan 1986). Still, on most measures of public opinion, whether it be ideology, issue preferences, party identification, or presidential approval, studies have consistently found a tendency for women to be more left-leaning than men.

Based on this literature alone, we would expect to find lower support for constitutional bans on gay marriage among women than among men. However, as we noted at the outset of this paper, news coverage of Proposition 8 in California and the incipient scholarship on public support for antigay policies would suggest that the relationship between gender and public opinion may be mediated in important ways by race. Indeed, there is by now a long-standing literature in gender studies that tries to ascertain the circumstances under which general findings

about gender and public opinion also apply within particular minority groups (Kane 2000). Prior to these studies that considered race/ethnicity and its intersection with gender, scholars approached women as a homogenous group and, given the nature of most survey samples, the inferences drawn were mostly about white women.³

In the past two decades, however, several studies have analyzed surveys with sizable samples of African Americans and Latinos. In most of these cases, they have found that gender gaps in politics exist among racial and ethnic minorities as well, although the results are often less consistent for nonwhites as for whites (Welch and Sigelman 1992; Montoya 1996; Lien 1998). In some instances, gender gaps in opinion were found to be even greater among nonwhites than among whites. For example, Lee Sigelman and Susan Welch (1984) found a greater gender gap among blacks than among whites on the question of whether respondents would vote for a black candidate or a female candidate for President of the United States. On the issue of support for abortion rights, Wilcox (1990) found that the gender gap among blacks was greater than among whites, due to the fact that black women were more liberal on the issue than their white counterparts, and black men were more conservative than white men.

In other studies, however, the gender gap among racial and ethnic minorities has been shown to be smaller than the gender gap among whites, or to be insignificant altogether. For instance, Welch and Sigelman (1992) examined gaps in ideology, party identification, and presidential vote choice among Latinos, blacks, and whites, and found the differences among racial minorities to be weaker, yet still statistically significant. However, when the analyses shift from general measures of ideology and party identification, to issue preferences, the findings on gender gaps among racial and ethnic minorities becomes inconsistent or insignificant. So, for

³ For a concise review of this literature, see Montoya (1996) pp. 257-258.

example, Lisa Montoya (1996) finds in her analysis of the 1989 Latino National Political Survey that Latinas are more liberal than Latinos on issues dealing with social welfare and a women's role in politics, patterns that are consistent with those found among whites. However, this pattern is true only in the bivariate context and not in the multivariate context for most national origin groups, leading her to surmise that the immigrant experience leads to greater solidarity in opinion among immigrant-heavy groups than among the native-born population. Montoya also finds that there were no significant differences between Latinos and Latinas on military spending, while the gap is much clearer among whites. Similarly, Gay and Tate (1998) note that racial solidarity in public opinion among blacks often trumps gender differences in public opinion on general social programs as well as race-specific programs. Gender only mattered where the interests of women are posed as distinct from those of men, such as on support for the Women's movement. As for Asian Americans, Lien (1998) found inconsistent results on the existence of a gender gap on various measures of public opinion. Thus, when it comes to intersectional research on gender gaps across racial groups, the results are more consistent on general measures of attitudes such as political ideology and party identification, and far less consistent in terms of predicting issue preferences on social welfare programs and race-based programs.

Gendered and Racial Differences on Attitudes Towards Sexual Minorities

Given the disparate findings on the effects of gender on issue preferences more generally, what can we expect in terms of gender gaps on constitutional bans on gay marriage? It is tempting to simply express agnosticism regarding the intersection of gender and race when it comes to this issue, and to let the "empirics do the talking." However, as Nancy Wadsworth

(2011) has pointed out, it is important to go beyond the recognition of overlapping identities (identity intersectionality), and to dig deeper into the historical and social contexts that produce these intersectional differences with respect to sexuality (foundational intersectionality). We agree with Wadsworth's assessment, that there needs to be more theorizing on the source of intersectional differences on any particular set of attitudes or behavior. Although the literature on support for same-sex marriage bans is fairly new, we draw on a much more extensive literature on attitudes towards sexual minorities, both in the general population, and particularly with respect to racial and ethnic minorities. We also consider the literature on linked fate among Latinos and African-Americans (Sanchez 2006; Dawson 1994), and how collective group consciousness may cohere around certain issues but not others (Cohen 1999). Finally, given the way that religion played a prominent role in the run-up to Proposition 8 in California, and in larger national debates over a U.S. constitutional ban on gay marriage, we also draw attention to prior research on the differential impact of religiosity on public opinion among women and men.

Identity Intersectionality and Sexual Affect: The numerous studies in attitudes toward gay men and lesbians provide a clearer indication of what mass opinion may be on gay rights issues. For the most part, sexual affect correlates with policy opinion on issues concerning lesbians and gay men (Lewis 2003; Sniderman et. al. 1991; Sherrill 1996; Haider-Markel and Meier 1996). Men have consistently held more negative sexual affect than women (Herek 1988; Herek and Capitanio 1995; Herek and Gonzalez-Rivera 2006; Kite and Whitley 1996).⁴ There

⁴ There is some debate about the dynamic of the gender differences in attitudes towards homosexuals (e.g. Glenn and Weaver 1979). Whitley (1988) shows that women are more

are also racial gaps, with blacks having more negative attitudes than whites (Ernst et. al. 1991; Negy and Eisenman 2005; Lewis 2003). Other racial gaps involving Latinos and Asian Americans remain under-studied.

Intersectional differences in sexual affect by race and gender have been used to illustrate both inter-group gaps between racial groups, and intra-group gaps within racial groups. For instance, Ernst et al. (1991) argue that the perceived black-white difference is really a difference between black women and white women, with the latter having more negative sexual affect than the former. In terms of intra-group differences, studies of blacks and Latinos have also shown that men of color have a more negative sexual affect than women of color (Herek and Capitanio 1995; Herek and Gonzalez-Rivera 2006). To date, there have been not enough comparable observations of Asian Americans in cross-racial surveys to draw reliable inferences on intra-group and inter-group gaps that are driven by gender.

While these various studies provide some basis to expect gender gaps in attitudes towards gay marriage among whites, African Americans, and Latinos, there are limitations as well. As Gregory Lewis (2003) has shown, the correlates between attitudes towards homosexuals and attitudes towards gay rights policies are not perfect. For example, even though African-Americans have more negative attitudes towards homosexuals than whites, they may indeed be more likely to support gay rights. There is also disagreement in the scholarship on whether women and men support gay rights at different levels, regardless of differences in sexual affect (Kite and Whitley 1996; Whitley 1988; Brumbaugh et al. 2007). Racial differences may also be a function of other variables: Negy and Eisenman (2005) show, for instance, that

negative towards lesbians; men are more negative towards gay men. Whitley (1988) also shows that the word “homosexual” is generally confounded with gay men.

including religion discards any black-white differences, while Lewis (2003) found differences even with a control variable for religion.

Not only do these studies reveal conflicting findings, they also utilize identity intersectionality, leaving wanting a foundational understanding of why intersectional differences exist. Here, we move towards a foundational approach in the study of race and gender intersectionality as it involves support for gay rights. In doing so, we use a multi-level focus on identity formation with respect to race, gender, and public opinion. Thus, for each of the largest racial and ethnic groups, we lay out the ways in which gender differences may, or may not, exist with respect to support for gay marriage.

Foundational Intersectionality and Support for Gay Rights: Our foundational approach to intersectionality considers differences across racial and ethnic groups that operate at two levels: at the individual level, where gender norms on masculinity and femininity shape opinion on gay rights, and also at the collective level, where historical legacies of social movement activity and subgroup exclusion continue to operate. At the individual level, anti-gay stigma has been theorized to be the result of numerous factors, of which foremost is an individual's perception of gender norms (Herek 2004; Parrot et. al. 2008; Gaines and Garand 2010). The construction of hyper-gendered roles, especially hypermasculinity, exaggerates the degree of anti-gay stigma (Parrot et. al. 2008; Nierman et. al. 2007; Whitley 2002; Gaines and Garand 2010). To the extent that cultural contexts reproduce gender norms for racial and ethnic groups, resulting in how specific groups reify masculinity and femininity, we might expect group differences in gender norms to produce group differences in the relationship between gender and support for gay rights.

Among African Americans, hypermasculinity at the individual level is often explained as the product of social exclusion, as the racial and class subordination of African American men prompts them to capitalize on their gender privilege as an access to power. This capitalization of masculinity, in turn, significantly affects the relationships African-American men have with one another (Roberts 1994). Among Latinos, the tradition of machismo is the theoretical justification for why Latinos and Latinas differ (Baca-Zinn 1982). Strangely for Caucasians, gender differences are less attributed to hypermasculinity than the social construction of the caring, nurturing woman. There are currently no sociological explanations for the differences among Asian women and men; as Lien (1996) recounts, there is little difference in the historical development of Asians that would make a gender gap expected.

In addition to individual-level processes that may vary by race, macro-level factors may amplify or diminish intragroup differences in public opinion. As many prior works on racial formation in the United States have shown, historical traditions of state-imposed discrimination tend to solidify collective consciousness (Marx 1996; Dawson 1994). By drawing from a history of oppression, members of racial minority groups link their fates to one another and produce cohesive political blocs (Sanchez 2006; Dawson 1994). At the same time, the construction of race is a dynamic process: just as there are historical moments that unify groups, there are moments that break this cohesion. For some social movements that challenge political institutions, those institutions subsequently stabilize by absorbing some attributes of the movement's goals, resulting in internal divisions of a collective movement (Piven and Cloward 1977). In other instances, the struggles and concerns of subgroups may be marginalized in the name of solidarity for the larger group or movement. In *The Boundaries of Blackness*, Cathy Cohen (1999) notes that the increased stratification among blacks accentuated second-order

marginalization. The divisive issue of AIDS in the black community produced numerous cleavages across class, gender and sexuality, and it crippled the ability blacks in response to state inaction (Cohen 1999).

At the same time, the gay rights movement and the women's rights movements have historically been criticized for their underlying racism. Many black feminist narratives and manifestos describe the experience of exclusion from the white feminist movement and the civil rights movement (Ford 2002; Combahee River Collective 1977). The exclusion from the white feminist movement was a product of racism whereas the exclusion from the civil rights movement was a product of sexism. Chandra Ford (2002), a black lesbian feminist, identifies her desire to be included in the black liberation front, but these efforts resulted in repetitive rapes by black men. In such a narrative, exclusion and aggression coincide with research on hypermasculinity of African-American males. The aggressors—the dominant anti-gay and misogynist forces—were centralized around black men. Thus, macro-level dynamics in the case of African Americans reinforce micro-level processes, and we can expect to find sharp gender-level differences in support for gay rights, including gay marriage.

The macro-level narrative is different in the case of lesbian Latinas. Not only are Latinos identified as holding a negative view of lesbianism by a tradition of *machismo*, Latinas are also implicated by a tradition of *marianismo* (Reyes 2002). Evelyn P. Stevens (1973) coined the term *marianismo* as the symbiotic counterpart to *machismo*, and she noted that the development of the tradition is intricately related to adoration and emulation of the Virgin Mary. Though Stevens (1973) argues that these traditions manifest differently across Latin communities, she contends that these traditions are present in all of them (see also Castillo and Cano 2007; Castillo et al. 2010). Researchers find the continuation of the *marianismo* belief system is consequential to the

perception of treatment of women in Latin American countries, and among Latinos in the United States (e.g., Bull 1998; Lavrin 2005; Moreno 1997). In the Latina narratives, exclusion does not embody a single gender group; the exclusion and hostility engulf both Latinos and Latinas. Lesbians are viewed as giving up a significant aspect of their *marianismo*—motherhood; this results in antagonism not only from Latino men, but also from women (Trujillo 1991). What is apparent from these narratives is that the attachment to gender norms is important to both Latinos and Latinas. Thus, in the case of Latinos, the traditions of *machismo* and *marianismo* may work at cross-purposes with respect to gender differences in support for gay rights: the former would be expected to accentuate gender differences, while the latter would be expected to diminish them.

Similar to Latinos, Asian Americans comprise a multitude of groups that have unique traditions and norms. On sexuality, Sumie Okazaki (2002) finds that there are Asian cultural characteristics and that these pan-Asian characteristics are primarily in regards to sexuality and sexual behavior. Sex is minimally discussed in Asian culture as there is adherence to rigid moral and social codes (Abraham 1999; Chan 1986, 1992; Horan and DiClemente 1993). Many narratives about gay and lesbian Asian Americans center upon rejection by Asian communities (Kumashiro 1999; Okazaki 2002), and gay and lesbian Asian Americans are more likely to be involved in queer communities as opposed to Asian ones (Chan 1989). In qualitative stories of gay Asian American males, Kevin K. Kumashiro (1999) reports that gay males are doubly marginalized by cultural scripts of queerness and Asian-ness. From their Asian communities, males are expected to carry on the family name by marrying and procreating; to be a part of Asian culture as a male is to perform heterosexuality (see also Atkinson, Morten, and Sue 1993). Being more collectively focused than individually focused, Asian communities expect sexual

behavior, though private, to benefit the family and community (Okazaki 2002). These cultural norms do permeate to gay and lesbian Asian Americans as they are more likely to develop sexual identity in ways that are different from their white and African-American counterparts (Dubé and Savin-Williams 1999). We observe from this literature that Asians, like Latinos, have communitarian expectations of sexual behavior.

To sum up, then, our foundational approach leads us to the following expectations with respect to gender and support for gay rights across racial groups: We expect a clear gender gap for African Americans, based on survey research and qualitative research that identify African American men to have lower sexual affect than African American women. We expect white women to have more positive attitudes than white men, as various past studies have shown greater sexual affect among white women, and a greater level of compassion on a variety of social issues. At the same time, we do not expect to find gender differences among Latinos, based on qualitative research that has identified strong gender norm attachment among both Latinos and Latinas. Finally, we are unsure on the relationship between gender and support for Proposition 8 among Asian Americans, given the dearth of research on sexual affect among this group. From small-N studies on Asian Americans, the communitarian expectation of procreation indicates to us that there should not be a gender gap similar to Latinos. In essence, we expect similarities between whites and African Americans that are unique from the cultural scripts of Latinos and Asian-Americans.

Direct and Intersectional Effects of Religion: In addition to gender and race, religious identity and religiosity are both important on matters of morality. The direct effects of religion become significant and stable predictors of sexual affect and support for gay rights policies.

Members of Protestant religions that tend to support biblical literalism are less likely to support gay rights (Sherkat et al. 2010; Burdette, Ellison, and Hill 2005; Hunsberger and Jackson 2005; Fulton, Gorsuch and Maynard 1999; Hunburger 1996; Glenn and Weaver 1979). Biblical literalists tend to view same-sexual behavior as morally wrong and are less supportive of the civil liberties of those who engage in such behavior (Olson, Cadge, and Harrison 2006, Peterson and Donnerwerth 1998; Hertel and Hughs 1987). Religious identification with less literalist denominations—primarily mainline Protestant religions—and Catholicism increase support for gay rights (Finlay and Walther 2003). Those who attend church more often are less likely to be supportive gay rights issues (Whitley 2009; Lewis and Gossett 2008; Negy and Eisenman 2005; Schulte and Battle 2004; Lewis 2003; Herek and Capitanio 1995). Finally, as we discussed earlier, religion and religiosity have at times weakened the black-white difference in sexual affect (Negy and Eisenman 2005; Lewis 2003). The persistent presence of religion as a predictor of gay rights attitudes makes it seem that the same would be the case for same-sex marriage.

Complicating the story of religiosity and public opinion, however, is also the finding regarding the intersections between religion and gender. Past studies, primarily of white women, have shown that religiosity is associated with support for traditional values among women as well as men, including opposition to premarital sex, drug use, and the like (Wolbrecht et al. 2008, Eagly et al. 2004). Indeed, religious women often score higher on many of these traditional values than men. At the same time, the higher level of religiosity among women leads to political consequences that are different from men. Not only are women more likely to identify as Democrats, even among the more religiously identified (Kauffman 2004), they also express greater support for civil liberties and for social welfare policies that benefit the disadvantaged (Wolbrecht et al. 2008; Golebiowska 1999). Thus, we would expect that

controlling for religiosity should widen gender gaps in support for constitutional bans on gay marriage like Proposition 8. It is not clear, however, whether this gendered relationship between religiosity and public opinion holds across racial groups, because the prior literature on religion-gender gaps is virtually non-existent for African Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans.

Data and Findings

One of the reasons why race became a central narrative to the passage of Proposition 8 in California was the lack of good public opinion data on gender differences within the major racial and ethnic groups in the state. Furthermore, the data were only presented in aggregate form, making it difficult to have even simpler models that control for competing explanations such as religiosity, age, and education. Pat Egan and Ken Sherrill (2009) overcame some of these limitations, by using ecological inference to arrive at an estimate of black support for Proposition 8 that was lower than what the exit polls suggested. Still, given the lack of individual-level data, they were unable to move beyond seeing gender and religiosity as competing explanations instead of as intersectional identities. Here, we seek to advance the scholarship on intersectionality and public support for gay rights by relying on a dataset that has individual-level data with variation on these three important factors (race, gender, and religion), in addition to others such as age, education, and partisanship.

We use data from the October 2008 Public Policy Institute of California Statewide Survey (PPIC) and the 2008 Collaborative Multi-racial Post-election Survey (CMPS). Each of these surveys has its strengths and weaknesses. The PPIC survey is a random-digit telephone survey of California residents, with 88 Asian Americans, 112 African Americans, 287 Latinos, and 1,051 whites who were asked how they would likely vote on Proposition 8. However, the

survey has some drawbacks: it is not conducted in Asian languages, and it is a pre-election survey with some uncertainty about vote intentions. By contrast, the CMPS is a post-election survey from 18 states that included support for four Asian languages.⁵ The California sample has a sizable number of Asian Americans (210) and Latinos (334), but there are only 58 African Americans and 67 whites in the California sample, making intergroup and intragroup differences more difficult to establish.

Our outcomes of interest are the extent to which respondents support or oppose the California state constitutional ban on gay marriage. The CMPS question was worded as follows: “How did you vote on Proposition 8 here in California? This is the measure that would change the California constitution so that only marriage between a man and woman is valid. Did you vote yes or no on Prop 8?” The PPIC question was far more detailed in its description of the Proposition, in keeping with the descriptions of other California ballot propositions in the survey.⁶ In Figure 1, we present the variation in responses to the Proposition 8 question by racial

⁵ The CMPS—conducted between November 9, 2008 and January 5, 2009—is the first multiracial and multilingual survey of registered voters across multiple states and regions in a presidential election. The sample was drawn from 18 states: the top states with significant Asian, Black, and Latino populations, plus five battleground states with at least one racial minority group with 10 percent or greater of the registered voter population.

⁶ The PPIC question was as follows: “Proposition 8 is called the “Eliminates Right of Same-Sex Couples to Marry Initiative Constitutional Amendment.” It changes the California Constitution to eliminate the right of same-sex couples to marry. It provides that only marriage between a man and a woman is valid or recognized in California. Fiscal impact over the next few years includes potential revenue loss, mainly sales taxes, totaling in the several tens of millions of

and ethnic group, first from the PPIC pre-election survey and subsequently from the CMPS post-election survey. As Figure 1 indicates, the proportion of voters indicating that they would vote for Proposition 8 is nearly identical across all four groups in the PPIC survey (44% to 46%). Among those indicating that they would vote *against* Proposition 8, the levels are slightly higher among whites and Latinos, but the differences are not statistically significant, even at the 90% level. What is significant, however, is the higher proportion of African Americans who answered “don’t know” (13%) when compared to white and Latino respondents (4% each).

[INSERT FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE]

Given that Proposition 8 passed with a slight majority in California a month after the PPIC survey, it is possible that nearly all of the “don’t know” voters ultimately ended up voting in favor of Proposition 8. Indeed, the CMPS data show majority support for Proposition 8 among all four racial and ethnic groups in California, with the highest levels of support among African Americans. However, there is still a sizable proportion of African Americans and Asian Americans who answered “don’t know” after the 2008 election—although given the relatively small samples of whites, the differences are not statistically significant. Thus, it is possible that the “don’t know” responses continue to reflect a social desirability bias from critical news coverage on racial voting patterns after the passage of Proposition 8.

dollars, to state and local governments. In the long run, it will likely have little fiscal impact on state and local governments. If the election were held today, would you vote yes or no on Proposition 8?”

What about gender differences in opinion on Proposition 8 among these different racial and ethnic groups? For ease of interpretation, we compare the results by race and gender by showing the proportion of “yes” votes for Proposition 8 in the pre- and post-election surveys, excluding “don’t know” responses (Figures 2a and 2b). As the results indicate, most of the bivariate gender differences in opinion are not statistically significant at the .10 level—with only one exception, where 69% of Latina respondents indicated that they had voted for Proposition 8 while only 54% of Latinos reported that they had done so. However, these bivariate differences between Latinos and Latinas are not borne out in the pre-election PPIC survey, and it also remains to be seen if they hold up in the multivariate results.

[INSERT FIGURES 2A and 2B ABOUT HERE]

In our multivariate analyses, we analyzed our outcomes using five different models that control for age, education, religious affiliation, born again status, and party identification. Model A is a logit model with “don’t know” responses coded as missing data; Models B and C are logit models with “don’t know” responses collapsed into “yes” and “no” responses, respectively; and Model D is an ordered logit model with “don’t know” responses as the intermediate category. For ease of interpretation, we present in Table 1 the results from Model A, which is the most conventional way that public opinion research treats “don’t know” responses and refusals to answer by excluding them from the analysis. However, we also note below any variation in findings from the other models, and include all of the full model results in the Appendix.

[INSERT TABLE 1 ABOUT HERE]

Table 1 presents differences in the predicted probability of a “yes” vote for Proposition 8 between women and men of the four major racial and ethnic groups in California, after controlling for various other factors. As we can see, the gender gap in public opinion on gay marriage is biggest among African Americans: the PPIC pre-election survey indicated that black women were 36% less likely than black men to say that they would vote in favor of Proposition 8. The CMPS post-election survey revealed a similar gender gap, as black women were 41% less likely to have reported voting in favor of the ballot measure. Among whites, too, we see a gender gap, although it is smaller in magnitude than for blacks in the pre-election survey, and is only statistically significant at the 0.15 level in the post-election survey. However, the size of the gender gap is still substantively large in the post-election survey (white women are 30% less likely than white men to have reported voting for Proposition 8), and its weak statistical significance is due to the fact that the sample of whites in the CMPS survey is considerably smaller than it is for Latinos and Asian Americans.

In contrast to African Americans and whites, Latinos and Asian Americans do not exhibit the same gender gap pattern, with women less likely to support Proposition 8 than men. Indeed, in the case of Latinos, the CMPS post-election survey indicates that, after controlling for age, education, religion, and partisanship, Latinas were 15% more likely to have reported voting for the ballot measure than Latinos. However, this same pattern was not found in the October pre-election survey for Latinos. For Asian Americans, the gender gap results are inconsistent and are not statistically significant even at the 0.15 level in either survey. Finally, it is important to note that the contrasting gender gaps on Proposition 8 for whites and African Americans (where

women were less likely to support the measure than men) and for Latinos and Asian Americans (where the results are either inconsistent or in the opposite direction than non-intersectional research on gender would suggest) is evident regardless of the modeling strategy we use. In the case of ordered logits, with don't know/refused responses treated as the intermediate category, women are less likely to have supported Proposition 8 than men for whites and African Americans, but not for Latinos and Asian Americans (Appendix Table A-4). A similar picture emerges when we conduct standard logit analyses where don't know/refuse responses are collapsed into the "yes" and "no" categories, respectively (Appendix Tables A-1 and A-2).

What accounts for our finding the standard gender gap in public opinion on gay marriage does not seem to apply to Latinos and Asian Americans? As past research on public opinion among these groups suggests, it is possible that the heavily immigrant nature of the Latino and Asian American populations makes national origin much more salient for public opinion than gender (Montoya 1996). To test for this possibility, we added controls for factors such as nativity, national origins, and language of interview to the explanatory model for Latinos and Asian Americans, and we still do not find that women were less supportive of Proposition 8 than men. Indeed, the finding in the CMPS, that Latinas were more likely than men to have reported voting for Proposition 8, continues to persist after these controls.

It is possible that religiosity among Latinas leads to more conservative opinion, whereas the same is not true for whites. To account for this possibility, we compared a partial model that excludes religion variables to the full model that includes them.⁷ We found that adding religion

⁷ We also analyzed the effects of education, age, religion, and gender in a structural equation model by racial group. For education, we found that there is an independent effect on opinion on Prop 8, with those having a higher level of attainment more against the amendment. The gender

proves critical to the gender gap among whites: when those variables are excluded from the model, the gender gap disappears in both the pre-election and post-election surveys. This lends support to prior research on the gendered ways that religion and religiosity operates among whites, as religious women are more likely to express greater support for civil rights and concern for the disadvantaged than religious men (Wolbrecht et al. 2008). However, this same gendered divergence in the relationship between religiosity and public opinion is not found among African Americans, Latinos, and Asian Americans: excluding the religion variables does nothing to

gap fails to have a direct effect on Prop 8 for white and black respondents; the effect occurs indirectly through partisanship. White and black female Democrats were significantly less likely to support the issue. However for Latinos, we continue to find a null effect directly or indirectly. For Asian-Americans, the indirect effect is not significant, but the direct effect is significant but is in the opposite direction (i.e., women more supportive than men). The story is quite similar for religion. We find that religion has both direct and indirect effects on Prop 8 opinion, indirectly through partisanship. White and black Born Again Christians are less likely to be Democrats, and this factor reinforced an already significant positive relationship between Born Again Christians and support for Prop 8. For Latinos, we find null effects for religion regardless of using Catholic or Born Again identification. For Asians, there are no indirect effects of religion—meaning, we find no significant relationship between religious affiliation and partisanship for Asians. But we do find a direct and significant effect for identifying as Born Again on support for Prop 8. In total, we find religion and gender to operate through political parties for white and black respondents, but to operate independent of party for Asians. For Latinos, we continue to find null results.

change the statistical significance of the findings, and the magnitudes of the coefficient for gender are only slightly affected.

Discussion and Conclusions

In two different surveys of voters in California—one pre-election and one post-election, with different sampling frames and languages of interview—we find the same pattern with respect to gender gaps in public opinion on Proposition 8. Among whites and African Americans, women were less likely than men to support the ballot measure that made gay marriage unconstitutional in the state, after controlling for other important factors such as education, partisanship, and religion. Indeed, for whites, a gender gap does not become apparent until religion is controlled. This is in line with prior research among whites, that indicates religion’s dual role in accentuating social conservatism among men and compassion among women.

For African Americans, the gender differences were strongest—in line with our expectations regarding past findings of hypermasculinity at the individual level, and macro-level patterns of gender and queer marginalization within the African American community and historical legacies of exclusion from the gay rights movement. For Latinos, however, we find no significant gender gaps. Indeed, in the post-election survey, we find that Latinas were more likely to report having voted for Proposition 8 than Latinos, after controlling for factors such as education, partisanship, and religion. The internalization of *marianismo* among Latinas is likely responsible for these findings among Latinos. Whether the contrasting pulls of *machismo* and *marianismo* find aggregate expression as a null relationship for gender, or even a counter-intuitive one (with Latinas less supportive of gay marriage than Latino men), may vary based on

survey question wording and sample design. Finally, for Asian Americans, we find a pattern that is similar to Latinos. Just as *marianismo* is a significant norm that shapes the attitudes of women and men alike among Latinos, the results suggest that a similar dynamic may be present for Asian Americans. These similarities are expected due to the community ties of cultural scripts of sexual behavior. Interestingly, the similarities we observe are consistent with the similarities of sexual identity formation between these two groups (Dubé and Savin-Williams 1999).

Clearly, more theoretical and empirical work in political science needs to be done on the intersectionality between race, gender, and public opinion on gay rights. Race and ethnicity, gender, and sexuality are co-constitutive, and analyses concerning gay rights need to evaluate these constitutive features (Nagel 2003). With every new ballot proposition on gay rights in racially diverse states, and with the President's recent declaration of personal support for gay marriage, attention turns anew to differences in support for gay rights by racial group (Cohen, 2012). If California's experience from 2008 is any indication, however, gendered differences within racial groups may be as important to study as differences across racial groups. And these differences are likely to change over time, given the historical and contingent nature of macro-level processes with respect to race, gender, and public opinion, and the ways that they may be affected by developments such as the President's recent declaration on gay marriage.

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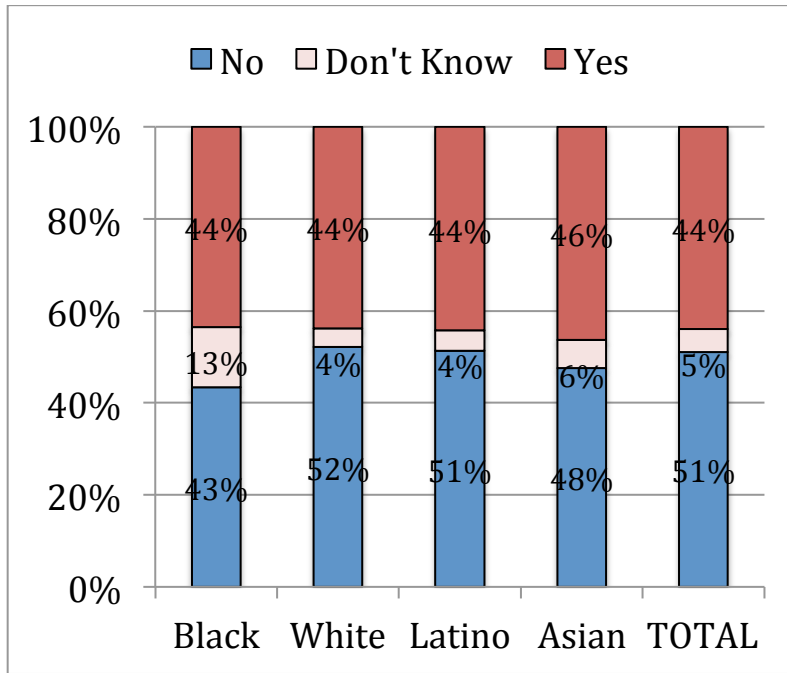
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Figure 1: Votes on Proposition 8, by Race

A: PPIC Pre-election Survey



B: CMPS Post-election Survey

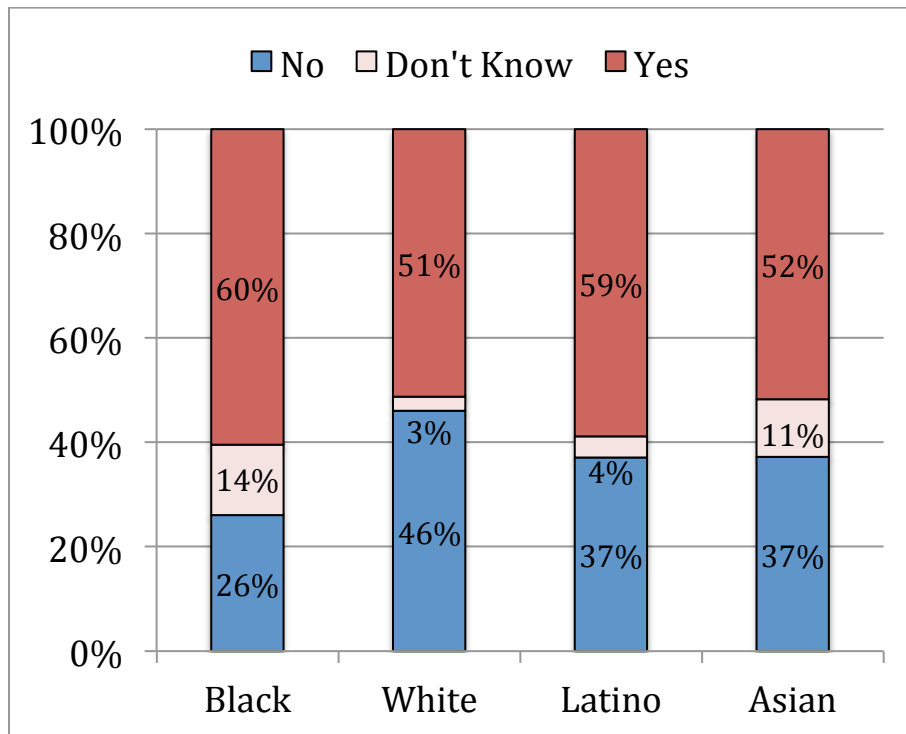
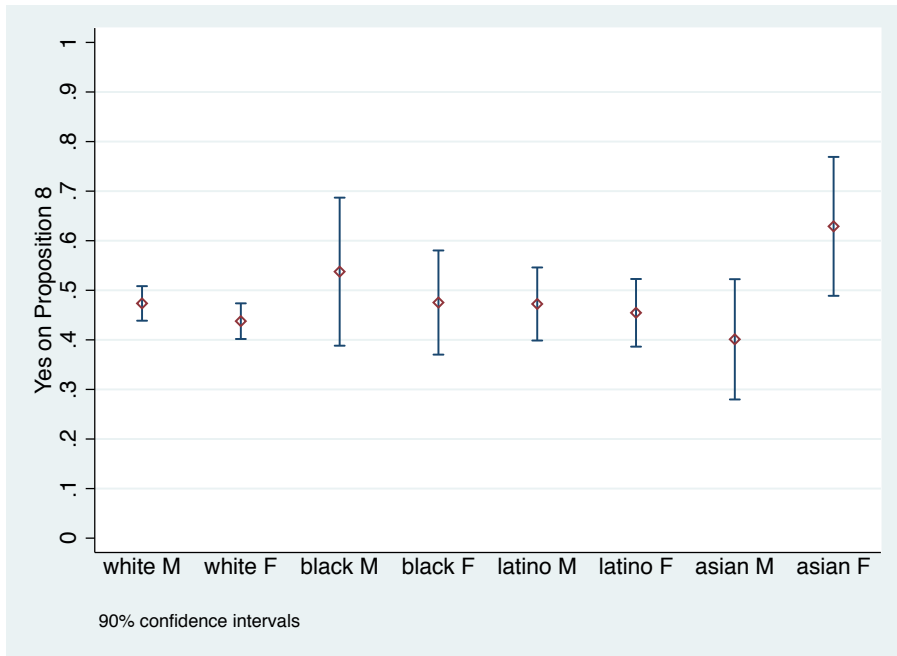


Figure 2: Proportion of “Yes” Votes on Proposition 8, by Race and Gender

A: PPIC Pre-election Survey



B: CMPS Post-Election Survey

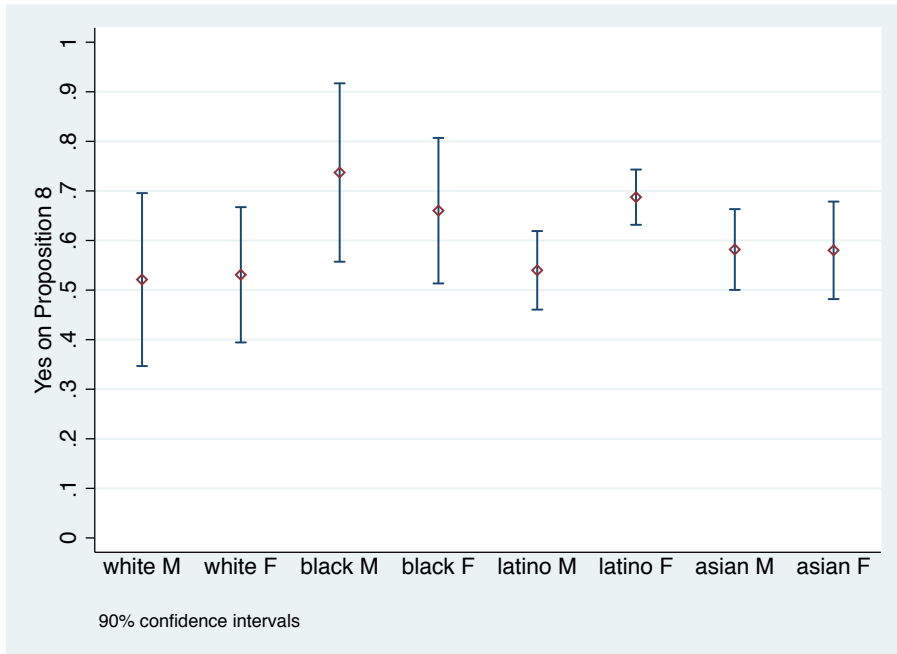


Table 1: Gender Gap in Predicted Vote For Proposition 8 (males as baseline)

	White	Black	Latino	Asian
PPIC	-7% *	-36% ***	-0.1%	+20%
CMPS	-30% ^	-41% **	+15% **	-9%

^ p< 0.15, * p <0.1, ** p<0.05, *** p<.01

Note: Don't Know/Refused coded as missing data

APPENDIX

Table A-1 Predictors of Support for Proposition 8 in California (Model A: Logit model with “don’t know” responses coded as missing data)

	PPIC Pre-Election Survey				CMPS Post-Election Survey			
	Whites	African Ams	Latinos	Asian Ams	Whites	African Ams	Latinos	Asian Ams
Female	-0.284* [0.151]	-1.620** [0.631]	-0.00694 [0.252]	0.835 [0.602]	-1.184 [^] [0.800]	-2.375** [1.015]	0.654** [0.305]	-0.388 [0.434]
Age	0.0321 [0.0268]	0.13 [0.103]	-0.0219 [0.0419]	0.166 [0.141]				
Age squared	-0.000149 [0.000237]	-0.00119 [0.000995]	0.000341 [0.000427]	-0.00149 [0.00152]	0.355 [0.319]	-0.25 [0.347]	0.0668 [0.128]	0.207 [0.162]
Education	-0.229*** [0.0719]	-0.109 [0.261]	0.0952 [0.0997]	-0.526 [0.355]	-0.283 [0.180]	-0.242 [0.179]	0.116*** [0.0369]	0.028 [0.0779]
Born Again	2.037*** [0.232]	3.960*** [1.116]	0.307 [0.306]	2.377*** [0.808]	3.583*** [1.240]	2.058** [0.857]	1.561*** [0.492]	1.909*** [0.569]
Catholic	1.111*** [0.237]	2.239* [1.150]	-0.0941 [0.323]	0.47 [0.955]	2.250** [1.014]	0.0000467 [1.707]	0.765* [0.394]	1.072** [0.493]
Other Religion	1.148*** [0.206]	2.474** [1.099]	-0.86 [0.662]	1.872** [0.805]	-2.199 [1.863]	-0.942 [0.857]	-0.0388 [0.693]	-0.88 [0.629]
Democrat	-1.486*** [0.161]	-1.335** [0.677]	-0.223 [0.261]	-0.754 [0.587]	-2.814*** [1.032]	1.198 [0.873]	0.854*** [0.324]	-0.468 [0.421]
Constant	-0.989 [0.750]	-3.55 [2.430]	0.00248 [1.003]	-3.344 [2.738]	3.863 [3.045]	4.728 [2.918]	1.316* [0.759]	-0.883 [1.363]
Observations	958	95	268	77	60	47	242	120

Note: CMPS age categories not continuous. Standard errors in brackets
 *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1 [^]p<0.15

Table A-2 Predictors of Support for Proposition 8 in California (Model B: Logit model with “don’t know” responses collapsed into “yes”)

	PPIC Pre-Election Survey				CMPS Post-Election Survey			
	Whites	African Ams	Latinos	Asian Ams	Whites	African Ams	Latinos	Asian Ams
Female	-0.254* [0.146]	-1.199** [0.581]	-0.0134 [0.245]	0.816 [0.586]	-1.257^ [0.793]	-2.345** [0.976]	0.601** [0.300]	-0.328 [0.408]
Age	0.0249 [0.0259]	0.1 [0.0880]	-0.00666 [0.0410]	0.225* [0.131]	0.264 [0.301]	-0.194 [0.342]	0.058 [0.126]	0.163 [0.152]
Age squared	-0.0000527 [0.000228]	-0.000914 [0.000857]	0.000167 [0.000418]	-0.00204 [0.00137]				
Education	-0.233*** [0.0696]	-0.196 [0.233]	0.0796 [0.0958]	-0.664* [0.347]	-0.311* [0.180]	-0.22 [0.175]	-0.121*** [0.0367]	0.0155 [0.0721]
Born Again	1.913*** [0.226]	2.955*** [0.866]	0.248 [0.302]	1.989*** [0.729]	3.462*** [1.232]	1.807** [0.826]	1.562*** [0.491]	1.686*** [0.543]
Catholic	1.098*** [0.227]	1.47 [0.938]	-0.0565 [0.318]	0.0474 [0.872]	2.133** [0.994]	-0.332 [1.669]	0.824** [0.392]	0.810* [0.467]
Other Religion	1.104*** [0.198]	1.642* [0.864]	-0.951 [0.661]	1.514** [0.720]	-2.309 [1.846]	-1.142 [0.841]	-0.0661 [0.691]	-1.120* [0.614]
Democrat	-1.383*** [0.154]	-0.992 [0.604]	-0.291 [0.252]	-0.841 [0.568]	-2.879*** [1.028]	1.365 [0.856]	-0.797** [0.322]	-0.38 [0.401]
Constant	-0.785 [0.728]	-1.922 [2.074]	-0.116 [0.996]	-3.687 [2.488]	4.708 [2.962]	4.49 [2.837]	1.420* [0.753]	-0.314 [1.254]
Observations	1,004	109	280	83	61	50	251	131

Note: CMPS age categories not continuous. Standard errors in brackets
 *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1 ^p<0.15

Table A-3 Predictors of Support for Proposition 8 in California (Model C: Logit model with “don’t know” responses collapsed into “no”)

	PPIC Pre-Election Survey				CMPS Post-Election Survey				
	Whites	African Ams	Latinos	Asian Ams	Whites	African Ams	Latinos	Asian Ams	
Female	-0.254* [0.145]	-1.868*** [0.616]	-0.0044 [0.247]	0.583 [0.552]	Female	-1.122 [0.802]	-1.586* [0.820]	0.694** [0.293]	-0.353 [0.400]
Age	0.0391 [0.0258]	0.115 [0.0939]	-0.0342 [0.0415]	0.116 [0.124]	Age	0.441 [0.309]	-0.243 [0.322]	0.11 [0.120]	0.233 [0.150]
Age squared	-0.000257 [0.000226]	-0.0011 [0.000912]	0.000481 [0.000424]	-0.00116 [0.00131]					
Education	-0.220*** [0.0690]	-0.0583 [0.233]	0.1 [0.0964]	-0.161 [0.294]	Education	-0.259 [0.176]	-0.192 [0.162]	-0.0930*** [0.0343]	0.0392 [0.0724]
Born Again	1.952*** [0.225]	4.034*** [1.071]	0.333 [0.303]	2.414*** [0.777]	Born Again	3.721*** [1.238]	2.234*** [0.780]	1.517*** [0.485]	1.657*** [0.500]
Catholic	0.974*** [0.229]	2.546** [1.122]	-0.107 [0.319]	0.85 [0.911]	Catholic	2.370** [1.021]	0.574 [1.660]	0.670* [0.390]	1.152** [0.466]
Other Religion	1.069*** [0.202]	2.834*** [1.060]	-0.773 [0.664]	1.926** [0.782]	Other Religion	-2.119 [1.880]	-0.576 [0.825]	0.0228 [0.692]	-0.622 [0.617]
Democrat	-1.413*** [0.156]	-1.318** [0.621]	-0.153 [0.254]	-0.892 [0.549]	Democrat	-2.775*** [1.038]	0.524 [0.753]	-0.902*** [0.315]	-0.337 [0.394]
Constant	-1.126 [0.730]	-3.532 [2.273]	0.1 [1.003]	-3.426 [2.564]	Constant	3.112 [2.890]	3.373 [2.634]	0.893 [0.720]	-1.409 [1.263]
Observations	1,004	109	280	83	Observations	61	50	251	131

Note: CMPS age categories not continuous. Standard errors in brackets

*** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1 ^p<0.15

Table A-4 Predictors of Support for Proposition 8 in California (Model D: Ordered logit model with “don’t know” responses as the intermediate category)

	PPIC Pre-Election Survey				CMPS Post-Election Survey			
	Whites	African Ams	Latinos	Asian Ams	Whites	African Ams	Latinos	Asian Ams
Female	-0.241* [0.141]	-1.642*** [0.577]	-0.0108 [0.241]	0.635 [0.537]	-1.212 [^] [0.795]	-1.680** [0.783]	0.667** [0.288]	-0.329 [0.379]
Age	0.0336 [0.0250]	0.104 [0.0808]	-0.0199 [0.0407]	0.166 [0.116]	0.352 [0.292]	-0.213 [0.315]	0.104 [0.119]	0.203 [0.141]
Age squared	-0.000169 [0.000218]	-0.000984 [0.000787]	0.000321 [0.000415]	-0.00159 [0.00121]				
Education	-0.234*** [0.0669]	-0.148 [0.210]	0.0885 [0.0928]	-0.318 [0.285]	-0.293* [0.176]	-0.186 [0.157]	-0.102*** [0.0342]	0.028 [0.0675]
Born Again	1.934*** [0.219]	3.429*** [0.857]	0.288 [0.299]	2.209*** [0.704]	3.661*** [1.230]	2.070*** [0.749]	1.579*** [0.485]	1.589*** [0.479]
Catholic	1.020*** [0.220]	1.973** [0.920]	-0.0736 [0.315]	0.522 [0.830]	2.289** [1.001]	0.228 [1.607]	0.758* [0.388]	0.988** [0.443]
Other Religion	1.084*** [0.194]	2.204*** [0.855]	-0.897 [0.660]	1.710** [0.700]	-2.248 [1.846]	-0.857 [0.800]	-0.00436 [0.689]	-0.934 [0.602]
Democrat	-1.379*** [0.150]	-1.122** [0.563]	-0.229 [0.246]	-1.013* [0.536]	-2.883*** [1.033]	0.777 [0.737]	-0.869*** [0.313]	-0.308 [0.377]
Cut 1	0.861 [0.708]	2.071 [1.935]	-0.071 [0.995]	3.497 [2.370]	-4.113 [2.832]	-3.641 [2.555]	-1.125 [0.716]	0.686 [1.171]
Cut 2	1.096 [0.708]	2.734 [1.945]	0.106 [0.995]	3.887 [2.378]	-3.98 [2.826]	-3.287 [2.542]	-0.944 [0.715]	1.086 [1.173]
Observations	1004	109	280	83	61	50	251	131

Note: CMPS age categories not continuous. Standard errors in brackets
 *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1 ^p<0.15