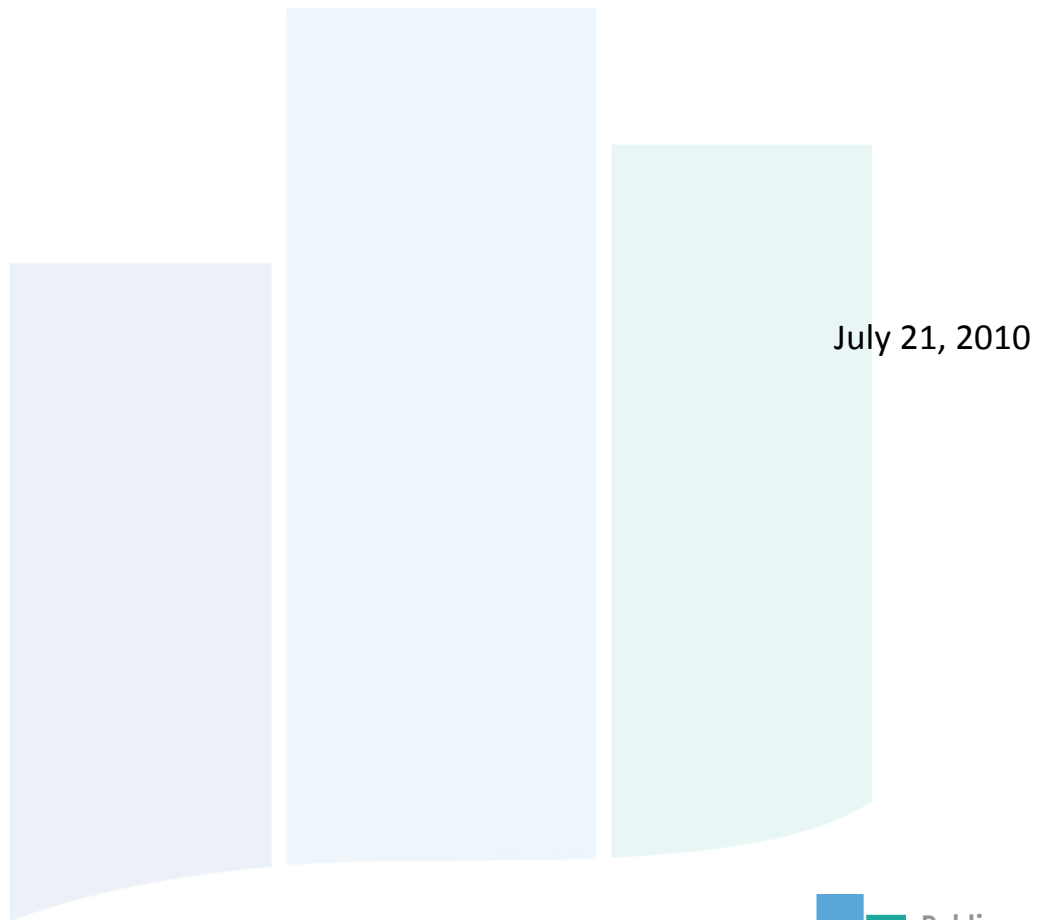


Religion and Same-sex Marriage in California:

A New Look at Attitudes and Values Two Years after Proposition 8

Analysis by Robert P. Jones, Ph.D. and Daniel Cox



1101 Vermont Ave, 9th Floor
Washington, DC 20005
www.publicreligion.org

Acknowledgements

This research was funded by the Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund, with additional support from the Ford Foundation. Public Religion Research Institute would like to thank both foundations for their generous support of this research.

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Robert P. Jones, Ph.D., CEO
1101 Vermont Avenue NW, 9th Floor
Washington, DC 20005
www.PublicReligion.org

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Executive Summary

The results below are based on a statewide public opinion survey conducted by Public Religion Research Institute. Interviews were conducted between June 14, 2010 and June 30, 2010, by telephone among a random sample of 3,351 adults in California, including oversamples of 350 African Americans and 200 Latino Protestants.

Among the top findings:

- Only 1-in-5 (22%) Californians believe the passage of Proposition 8 was a good thing for the state. Most Californians believe Proposition 8 was either a bad thing for California (29%) or believe it has not made any difference (45%).
- If another vote similar to Proposition 8 were held tomorrow, a majority (51%) say they would vote to allow gay and lesbian couples to marry, compared to 45% who say they would vote to keep same-sex marriage illegal.
 - Younger Californians, the religiously unaffiliated, and Democrats are the most likely to report that they would vote to allow gay and lesbian couples to marry.
 - Among religious groups, solid majorities of Latino Catholics and white mainline Protestants say they would vote to allow gay and lesbian couples to marry, while solid majorities of white evangelicals, Latino Protestants, and African American Protestants say they would vote to keep same-sex marriage illegal.
- An overwhelming majority of Californians say they favor laws that would protect gay and lesbian people from job discrimination and favor allowing gay and lesbian people to serve openly in the military (75% and 69% respectively). A majority (56%) favors adoption rights for same-sex couples.
- One-in-four Californians report that their views on rights for gay and lesbian people have become more supportive over the last five years, compared to only 8% say they have become more opposed. Most report that their views have not changed over this period.
- A significant number of Californians who initially say they support civil unions but not same-sex marriage say they would support same-sex marriage if the law addresses either of two basic concerns about religious marriages:
 - With a religious liberty reassurance that the law would guarantee that no congregation would be forced to conduct same-sex marriages against its beliefs, support for same-sex marriage increases 12 points, from initial support of 42% to a solid majority at 54%.
 - With a civil marriage reassurance that the law would only provide for ‘civil marriages like you get at city hall,’ support increases 19 points, from 42% to about 6-in-10 (61%).
- There is a striking Catholic-Protestant divide within the California Latino community on public policy issues related to gay and lesbian rights.
 - A majority of Latino Catholics (57%) say they would vote to make same-sex marriage legal, compared to just 22% of Latino Protestants.
 - The Catholic-Protestant gap within the Latino community is evident across a range of gay and lesbian public policy issues.

- Across a range of gay and lesbian policy issues, Republicans express far less support than either Democrats or Independents. On average there is a 7-point gap between Democrats and Independents and a 19-point gap between Republicans and Independents.
- Different religious groups hear very different messages about homosexuality from their clergy:
 - Nearly half (48%) of regular religious attenders in California report hearing their clergy talk about the issue of homosexuality at their place of worship. Protestants are much more likely than Catholics to hear about homosexuality from their clergy.
 - White mainline Protestants are slightly more likely to hear positive messages (21%) about homosexuality than negative messages (19%) from their clergy. All other major religious groups hear overwhelmingly negative messages from their clergy.
 - The messages about homosexuality that Californians hear at their place of worship are positively correlated to their views on same-sex marriage. Among Californians who report hearing negative messages from their clergy, few (19%) support same-sex marriage, and nearly half (46%) say there should be no legal recognition of gay couples' relationships. In striking contrast, among Californians who report hearing positive messages from their clergy, fully 6-in-10 say gay and lesbian people should be allowed to marry, an additional 22% support civil unions, and less than 1-in-5 (18%) say there should be no legal recognition for same-sex relationships.
- The theological views held by religious Californians are significantly correlated to their views on same-sex marriage.
 - More than 6-in-10 (61%) Californians who believe God is an impersonal force say they would vote to allow gay and lesbian couples to get married. A majority (55%) who hold a personal view of God say they would vote to keep same-sex marriage illegal.
 - Approximately three-quarters (76%) of Californians who believe the Bible is a book written by men say they would vote to allow gay and lesbian people to marry. Among those who hold a literal view of the Bible as the word of God, support drops to 26%.
- Of six distinct categories of people, Californians report that doctors and therapists and the parents of gay or lesbian children are the most trustworthy sources of information and opinions about homosexuality.
 - White evangelical Protestants, Latino Protestants, and black Protestants all ranked their own clergy leaders as the most trusted source of information about homosexuality.
 - Both white and Latino Catholics say they trust the parents of gay or lesbian children more than their own clergy as a source of information about homosexuality.
- Californians strongly agree with applying the Golden Rule to the issue of same-sex marriage. Nearly 6-in-10 (58%) agree that 'we should apply the Golden Rule to gay and lesbian couples who are in long-term committed relationships and allow them the same opportunity to get married as everyone else.'

Main Findings

Reconsidering Proposition 8

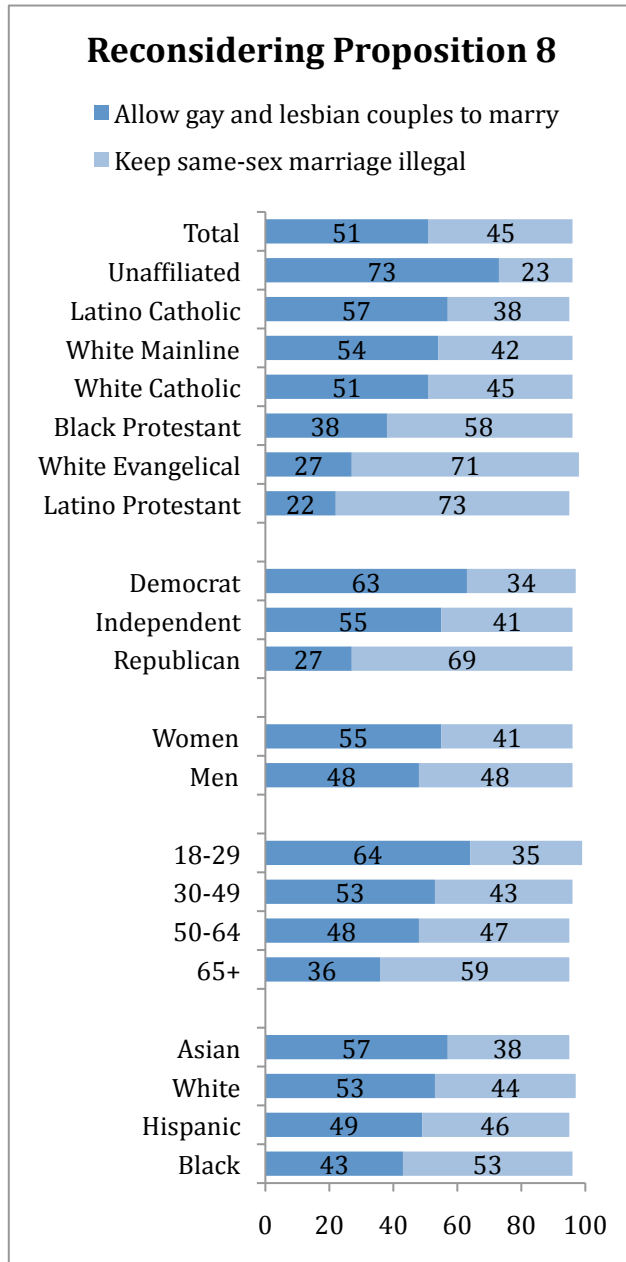
Two years after its passage, only about 1-in-5 (22%) Californians believe that the passage of Proposition 8 was a good thing for the state. Most Californians believe Proposition 8 was either a bad thing for California (29%) or believe it has not made any difference (45%).

Even among religious groups most supportive of Proposition 8—white evangelical Protestants and Latino Protestants—only 41% and 34% respectively report that the passage of Proposition 8 was a good thing.

Current Support for Legalizing Same-sex Marriage

Currently a slim majority (51%) of Californians say if they had to vote on a ballot measure similar to Proposition 8 tomorrow, they would vote to allow gay and lesbian couples the opportunity to get married. Forty-five percent say they would vote to keep same-sex marriage illegal in California.

Younger Californians, the religiously unaffiliated, and self-identified Democrats are among the strongest supporters of allowing gay and lesbian couples to marry. Nearly three-quarters (73%) of the unaffiliated, roughly two-thirds (64%) of Californians under 30, and more than 6-in-10 (63%) Democrats support allowing gay and lesbian couples the opportunity to get married. A solid majority of Latino Catholics and white mainline



Protestants (57% and 54%) also report that they would vote to allow gay couples to marry, as do a majority of political independents (55%) and Californians age 30 to 49 (53%).

In contrast, about 7-in-10 white evangelicals (71%), Latino Protestants (73%) and Republicans (69%) report that they would vote to keep same-sex marriage illegal. Nearly 6-in-10 black Protestants (58%) and Californians age 65 or older (59%) also report that they would vote to keep same-sex marriage illegal.

A majority of white Californians and Asians say they would vote to allow gay and lesbian couples to marry (53% and 57% respectively). Latino Californians are divided, with a plurality (49%) in support of legalizing same-sex marriage in California and 46% opposed. A majority (53%) of African Americans report that they would vote to keep same-sex marriage illegal, compared to 43% who say they would vote to allow gay and lesbian couples to marry.

Reasons for Voting Against Proposition 8

Among voters who report they voted against Proposition 8, the reason most commonly cited was a belief that it discriminates against gay and lesbian people (56%). About 1-in-5 say they voted ‘No’ because government should not be involved in personal relationships (22%) or because same-sex marriage does not affect them one way or the other (17%).

Among those who voted against Proposition 8, Black Protestants are roughly twice as likely as other religious groups to say that they voted against Proposition 8 because same-sex marriage does not affect them one way or the other (30% vs. 17% among all Californians). And they are less likely than Californians overall to say that their reason for opposing the ballot measure was because it discriminates against gay and lesbian people (44% vs. 56%).

Reasons for Voting For Proposition 8

Among Californians who reported voting ‘Yes’ on Proposition 8, the most frequently cited reason for doing so was ‘to preserve traditional marriage and values’ (48%). One-third of supporters reported that they voted for Proposition 8 because same-sex marriage violates their religious beliefs. Only about 1-in-10 (12%) voted for Proposition 8 because of the need to protect children from being taught that homosexuality is acceptable.

Although concerns about the impact of legalizing same-sex marriage on children figured prominently in arguments by Proposition 8 supporters during the 2008 campaign, few Californians view this as a concern. Six-in-ten Californians *disagree* that children would be more likely to experiment with homosexuality if same-sex marriage were legal. There are modest but significant differences between parents with children under the age of 18 and nonparents, with parents more likely to hold this concern than

nonparents (41% vs. 34%). There are few differences by gender, age or educational attainment.

However, the argument that legalized same-sex marriage would make children more likely to experiment with homosexuality holds sway among two religious groups. A majority of white evangelical Protestants and Latino Protestants agree that the legalization of same-sex marriage would have this effect on children (56% and 63% respectively).

Shifting Attitudes on Rights for Gay and Lesbian People

One-in-four Californians report that their views on rights for gay and lesbian people have become more supportive over the last five years, compared to only 8% who say they have become more opposed. Two-thirds report that their views have not changed over this period. Younger Californians are more likely to report shifting in a more supportive direction than Californians age 65 and over (29% to 19%). Latinos are also more likely than white Californians to report becoming more supportive (30% to 22%). African Americans resemble all Californians, with 26% saying they have become more supportive, compared to only 11% who say they have become more opposed.

Among religious groups, ethnic minority groups show more movement than white groups (approximately 4-in-10 and 3-in-10 respectively reporting some change in their views). Among Latino Catholics, more than 3 times as many report becoming more supportive as report becoming more opposed (31% vs. 9%). Among black Protestants, that ratio is 2-to-1 (27% vs. 13%), and among Latino Protestants that ratio is slightly less than 2-to-1 (25% vs. 15%).

There is also a sizable partisan gap. Democrats are more likely to report that their views have changed to become more supportive on rights for gay and lesbian people than Republicans (26% to 17%). However, the gap between independents and Republicans is even larger, with 28% of political independents reporting that they have become more supportive of rights for gay and lesbian people over the last five years.

Support for Same-sex Marriage and Civil Unions in California

In addition to a binary question about support for legalized same-sex marriage that mirrors the Proposition 8 vote, the survey included a three-part question that asked respondents which of the following statements comes closest to their view: gay couples should be allowed to marry; gay couples should be allowed to form civil unions but not marry; or there should be no legal recognition of a gay couple's relationship. When asked this three-part question, the overwhelming majority of Californians say they support some type of legal recognition for same-sex couples (either marriage or civil unions). More than 7-in-10 say that gay couples should be allowed to marry (42%) or gay couples should be allowed to form civil unions (31%). Less than 1-in-4 (24%) believe there should be no legal recognition for same-sex couples.

Notably, support for same-sex marriage using this three-part question is slightly lower than support for legalizing same-sex marriage in a binary question about voting. This difference, which has been replicated in other research, indicates that some proportion of the vote for legalizing same-sex marriage is coming from Californians who say that they support civil unions.

Support for Same-sex Marriage and Civil Unions by Religious Affiliation

Among religious groups, white mainline Protestants, Latino Catholics, and the religiously unaffiliated are most supportive of same-sex marriage (47%, 44% and 67% respectively). White evangelical Protestants, black Protestants, and Latino Protestants are most opposed to any legal recognition of gay couples’ relationships. A majority (53%) of Latino Protestants believe there should be no legal recognition for same-sex relationships, while 39% of black Protestants and 38% of white evangelical Protestants hold this view.

Support for Same-sex Marriage and Civil Unions by Religious Affiliation				
<i>Percent who favor....</i>	Same-sex <u>marriage</u>	<u>Civil unions</u>	No legal <u>recognition</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Total	42	31	24	3=100
Unaffiliated	67	21	10	2=100
White Mainline Prot.	47	36	14	3=100
Latino Catholic	44	28	23	5=100
White Catholic	37	41	22	*=100
Black Protestant	27	32	39	2=100
Latino Protestant	18	27	53	2=100
White Evangelical Prot.	17	45	38	*=100

*Note: < 1%.

There are also significant partisan differences in support for same-sex marriage and civil unions. Democrats and Independents are more likely to support same-sex marriage, while Republicans are more likely to support civil unions. A majority (53%) of Democrats and a plurality of Independents (46%) support same-sex marriage. Among Republicans, only 20% support same-sex marriage, but 45% support civil unions. Only about 1-in-5 Democrats (20%) and Independents (21%) say they do not support any legal recognition of gay couples’ relationships, as do one-third of Republicans.

Consistent with other research, the survey finds that younger Californians are more supportive than older Californians of same-sex marriage. A majority (54%) of Californians under the age of 30 support same-sex marriage, compared to only 30% of Californians age 65 or older. Interestingly, the differences among age groups are mostly reflected in different levels of support for same-sex marriage versus civil unions. For example, only about one-quarter of Californians across all age categories say there

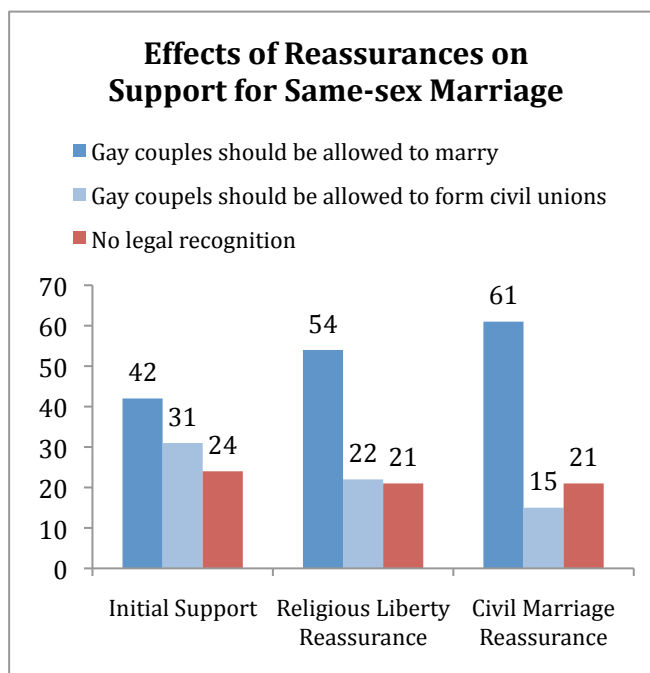
should be no legal recognition of gay couples' relationships. Among 18 to 29-year olds, 22% say there should be no legal recognition for a gay couples relationship, a view held by similar proportions of middle aged Californians (23%) and even by those age 65 and older (28%).

The relationship between education and views on same-sex marriage is fairly linear. Higher educational attainment is positively correlated with higher support for same-sex marriage and civil unions. Six-in-ten Californians with a post-graduate education support same-sex marriage, compared to about half (47%) of college graduates and roughly one-third (35%) of Californians with a high school education or less.

Women are also significantly more supportive than men on the issue of same-sex marriage (46% to 39% respectively).

Concerns about Religious Marriage: the Effect of Reassurances about Religious Liberty and Civil Marriage

A significant number of Californians who initially say they support civil unions but not same-sex marriage are willing to support marriage equality if the law addresses either of two basic concerns about religious marriages. When presented with an assurance that the law would guarantee that “no church or congregation would be required to perform marriages for gay couples,” nearly one-third of Californians who initially only supported civil unions are willing to support marriage equality. With this religious liberty reassurance, support for same-sex marriage increases 12 points, from initial support of 42% to a solid majority at 54%.



Similarly, when Californians are presented with an assurance that the law “only provided for civil marriages like you get at city hall,” more than half of Californians who initially supported only civil unions are willing to support marriage equality. This civil marriage reassurance results in a 19-point increase in support for same-sex marriage, from 42% to more than 6-in-10 (61%).

Concerns about Change

Most Californians believe that gay and lesbian couples who want to get married are trying to join (57%) the institution of marriage, compared to 39% who believe they want to change it. These perceptions are highly correlated to views on same-sex marriage. Among supporters of same-sex marriage, more than 9-in-10 agree that gay couples are trying to join the institution of marriage. In contrast, a majority (57%) of those who support civil unions only and 72% of those who do not support any legal recognition believe gay couples are trying to change the institution of marriage.

Approximately 7-in-10 (71%) Californians agree that ‘our culture and way of life are changing too rapidly,’ and this perception of the rate of cultural change is also positively correlated with views on same-sex marriage. Those who completely agree with this statement are nearly 2.5 times less likely to support same-sex marriage as those who mostly or completely disagree with this statement (26% vs. 63% respectively).

These two different views about change are also positively correlated. Californians who are most sensitive to cultural changes are more apt to believe that gay and lesbian people are trying to change the institution of marriage. Among Californians who completely agree that their culture and way of life are changing too rapidly, a majority (54%) say that gay and lesbian people are trying to change the institution of marriage. Among those who completely disagree that cultural change is happening too rapidly, only 18% believe gay and lesbian people are trying to change marriage, and more than three quarters (76%) believe they are trying to join it.

The Broader Context: Selected Gay and Lesbian Policy Issues

An overwhelming majority of Californians say they favor laws that would protect gay and lesbian people from job discrimination and favor allowing gay and lesbian people to serve openly in the military (75% and 69% respectively). A solid majority also favor allowing gay and lesbian couples to adopt children (56%). Californians are divided on the question of whether gay and lesbian people should be eligible for ordination as clergy with no special requirements, with 47% in favor and 46% opposed.

Selected Gay and Lesbian Policy Issues			
<i>Percent in favor of or opposed to...</i>	<u>Favor</u>	<u>Oppose</u>	<u>Don't know</u>
Laws that would protect gay and lesbian people against job discrimination	75	22	3=100
Allowing gay and lesbian people to serve openly in the military	69	27	4=100
Allowing gay and lesbian couples to adopt children	56	40	4=100
Gay and lesbian people being eligible for ordination as clergy with no special requirements*	47	46	7=100
*Note: Scaled as agree/disagree.			

Support by Religious Affiliation

Majorities of every major religious group support laws that would protect gay and lesbian people from job discrimination. With one exception (Latino Protestants), a majority of all religious groups also support allowing gay and lesbian people to serve openly in the military. Latino Protestants are more divided, with half (50%) favoring a policy that would allow gay and lesbians to serve openly in the military and 45% opposing it.

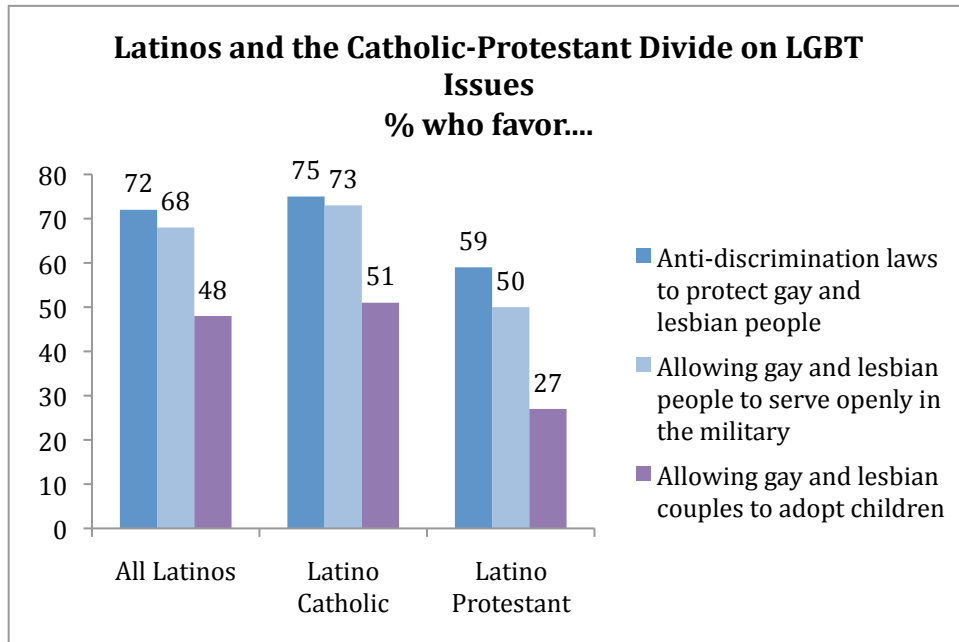
There is considerably more diversity of opinion among religious groups on the issues of adoption rights for gay and lesbian couples and ordination of gay and lesbian clergy. Majorities of white mainline Protestants (63%), white Catholics (58%) and Latino Catholics (51%) support allowing gay and lesbian couples to adopt children. On the other side, majorities of Latino Protestants (70%), white evangelical Protestants (63%) and black Protestants (55%) oppose adoption rights.

While Californians overall are divided over whether gay and lesbian people should be eligible for ordination as clergy with no special requirements, most religious groups oppose it. White mainline Protestants are the only religious group among which a majority (54%) support ordination of gay and lesbian clergy. White Catholics and black Protestants are divided over the issue with nearly equal numbers supporting and opposing it. A majority (53%) of Latino Catholics oppose the ordination of gay and lesbian clergy, compared to 44% who support it. White evangelical Protestants (67%) and Latino Protestants (74%) are overwhelmingly opposed to ordination of gay and lesbian clergy.

Californians who have no formal religious affiliation are highly supportive across all of these public policy areas, with more than three-quarters expressing support for workplace discrimination protections, allowing gay and lesbian people to serve openly in the military, and adoption rights for gay and lesbian couples (86%, 83% and 77% respectively).

The Catholic-Protestant Divide among Latinos

There is a substantial Catholic-Protestant divide among the California Latino community on public policy issues related to gay and lesbian rights. About three-quarters of Latino Catholics favor workplace protection laws (75%) and allowing gay and lesbian people to serve openly in the military (73%). A majority (51%) also favor allowing gay and lesbian couples to adopt children. Among Latino Protestants, support is dramatically lower across all three issues. Less than 6-in-10 (59%) Latino Protestants support workplace discrimination protections for gay and lesbian people. Half favor a policy that would allow gay and lesbian people to serve openly in the military, and only about one-quarter (27%) favor adoption rights for gay and lesbian couples.



The Partisan Divide: Democrats and Independents vs. Republicans

A close examination of these issues also reveals a significant partisan divide, between Republicans on the one hand and Independents and Democrats on the other. On average there is a 7-point gap between Democrats and Independents and a 19-point gap between Republicans and Independents.

A majority of both Democrats (57%) and Independents (51%) agree that gay and lesbian people should be eligible to be ordained as clergy with no special requirements, compared to only 31% of Republicans. Roughly two-thirds (65%) of Democrats and nearly 6-in-10 (59%) Independents favor allowing gay and lesbian couples to adopt children, while less than 4-in-10 (37%) Republicans favor adoption rights.

Majority support crosses party lines on the issues of allowing gay and lesbian people to serve openly in the military and the issue of workplace discrimination protections, but even on these issues, there are significant differences in the levels of support. Nearly 8-in-10 (79%) Democrats and 7-in-10 Independents favor allowing gay and lesbian people to serve openly in the military, a position that finds support among only a slim majority (52%) of Republicans. Approximately 8-in-10 (82%) Democrats and more than three-quarters (76%) of Independents support workplace discrimination protections, as do 62% of Republicans.

Selected Gay and Lesbian Policy Issues					
By Partisanship					
<i>Percent in favor of allowing gay and lesbian people to...</i>	<u>Democrat</u>	<u>Independent</u>	<u>Republican</u>	<u>Dem-Ind Diff.</u>	<u>Rep-Ind. Diff.</u>
Have workplace discrimination protections	82	76	62	6	-14
Serve openly in the military	79	70	52	9	-18
Adopt children	65	59	37	6	-22
Become ordained clergy	57	51	31	6	-20

Views about Homosexuality and Gay and Lesbian Relationships

The Nature and Morality of Homosexuality

A slim majority (51%) of all Californians believe that sexual orientation is determined at birth, compared to 41% who disagree. Roughly 1-in-10 (8%) express no opinion on this question. A strong majority (58%) of Californians believe that homosexual orientation cannot be changed. Only about one-third (34%) believe that it is possible for gay and lesbian people to change their sexual orientation.

Views about the nature of homosexuality are significantly correlated to support for legalizing same-sex marriage. Solid majorities of those who believe sexual orientation is determined at birth and those who *disagree* that homosexual orientation can be changed report they would vote to allow gay and lesbian couples to get married.

There is also strong agreement among Californians about the morality of sexual relationships between people of the same gender. Six-in-ten Californians do not believe that sex between people of the same gender is always wrong. Nearly 7-in-10 white Mainline Protestants (68%) and about 6-in-10 white Catholics (60%) and Latino Catholics (59%) *disagree* that sexual relationships between people of the same gender are always wrong. On the other hand, nearly two-thirds (65%) of white evangelical Protestants agree they are always wrong. Black Protestants and Latino Protestants are more divided on the question of the morality of same-gender sexual relationships.

Acceptance of Gay and Lesbian Relationships in Society

More than two-thirds (67%) of Californians believe that gay and lesbian relationships should be accepted by society, compared to 3-in-10 who disagree.

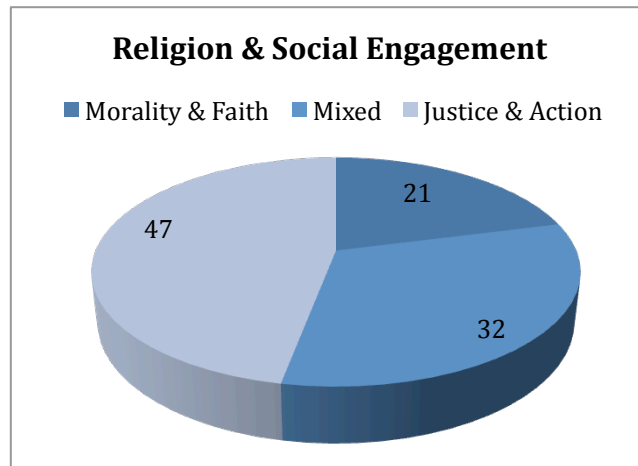
Despite differences among religious groups about the nature of homosexuality and the morality of same-gender sexual relationships, there is significantly more widespread agreement that gay and lesbian relationships should be accepted by society. Strong majorities of every religious group except white evangelical Protestants and Latino Protestants agree that gay and lesbian relationships should be accepted by society.

There is also evidence that a significant proportion of religious Californians are differentiating between their personal moral evaluations of same-gender sexual activity and their views on whether society should accept these relationships. For example, 65% of white evangelical Protestants agree that sexual relations between two adults of the same gender is always wrong, but 48% nevertheless agree that gay and lesbian relationships should be accepted by society. Likewise, 51% of black Protestants believe same-gender sexual relationships are always wrong, but 59% nevertheless say that these relationships should be accepted by society.

The Impact of Theology

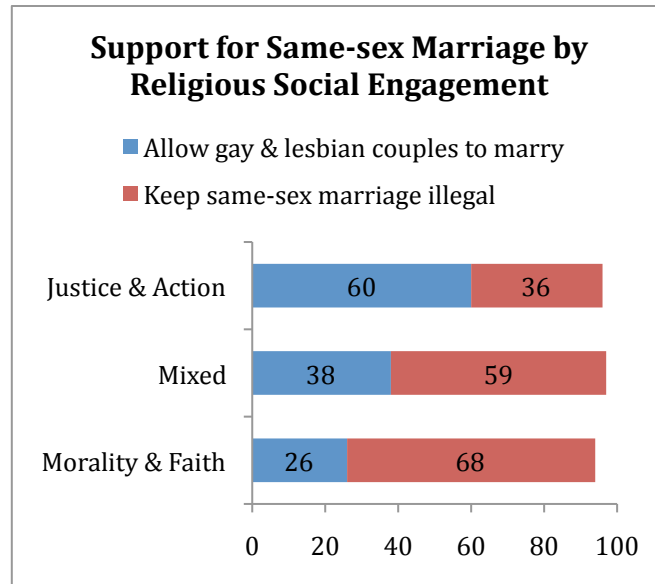
Styles of Religious Social Engagement: Justice and action vs. Personal morality and faith

The survey included a battery of questions designed to distinguish between two types of religious social engagement: one focused on justice and action, and one focused on personal morality and faith. A majority (55%) of religiously affiliated Californians agree that when religious people get involved in politics, they should focus primarily on issues of equality and economic justice, compared to 35% who say they should focus primarily on issues of personal morality and responsibility. Similarly, 6-in-10 religiously affiliated Californians agree that being a religious person is primarily about living a good life and doing the right thing, compared to approximately one-third (34%) who say it is primarily about having faith and the right beliefs.



Using these two questions, we constructed a composite scale to capture these different styles of religious social engagement.¹ A plurality (47%) of Californians lean toward a religious social engagement that prioritizes justice and action, compared to 21% who lean toward religious social engagement that prioritizes personal morality and faith. Approximately one-third (32%) of religiously affiliated Californians hold mixed views.

White evangelical Protestants (36%) and Latino Protestants (37%) are the most likely to lean toward a religious social engagement that prioritizes personal morality and faith, while white Mainline Protestants (56%) and white Catholics (59%) are the most likely to embrace a religious social engagement prioritizing justice and action. Latino Catholics (41%) and black Protestants (38%) are the most likely to hold mixed views.



These orientations are correlated to views on same-sex marriage. Six-in-ten Californians who lean toward a religious social engagement prioritizing justice and action say they would vote to allow gay and lesbian couples to marry if a vote similar to Proposition 8 were taken tomorrow. In contrast, strong majorities of Californians who embrace a religious social engagement prioritizing personal morality and faith (68%) and those with mixed views (59%) say they would vote to keep same-sex marriage illegal if a vote similar to Proposition 8 were held tomorrow.

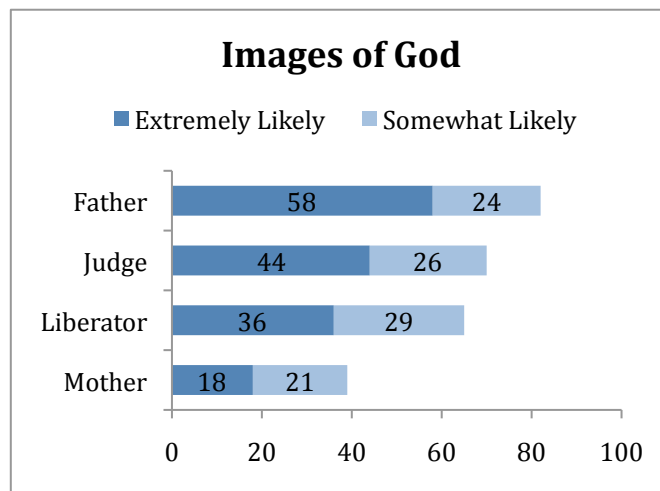
Conceptions of God

Approximately 9-in-10 (89%) Californians say they believe in God. However, they hold different conceptions of God, and these different conceptions are correlated to their views about same-sex marriage. A majority (53%) of Californians say that God is a person with whom one can have a relationship, compared to 31% who say that God is an impersonal force. Majorities of every religious affiliation group believe God is a person, in contrast to unaffiliated Californians, among whom only one-quarter believe God is a person. Latino Catholics stand out for the relatively high proportion who believe that God is an impersonal force. While a majority (54%) of Latino Catholics agree with the California public that God is a person, more than 4-in-10 (41%) believe that God is an impersonal force.

Californians also differ on the metaphors or images they use to conceive of God. More than 8-in-10 (82%) Californians say they are extremely or somewhat likely to think of God as “father”, 7-in-10 think of God as “judge,” nearly two-thirds (65%) think of God as “liberator,” and less than 4-in-10 (39%) think of God as “mother.”

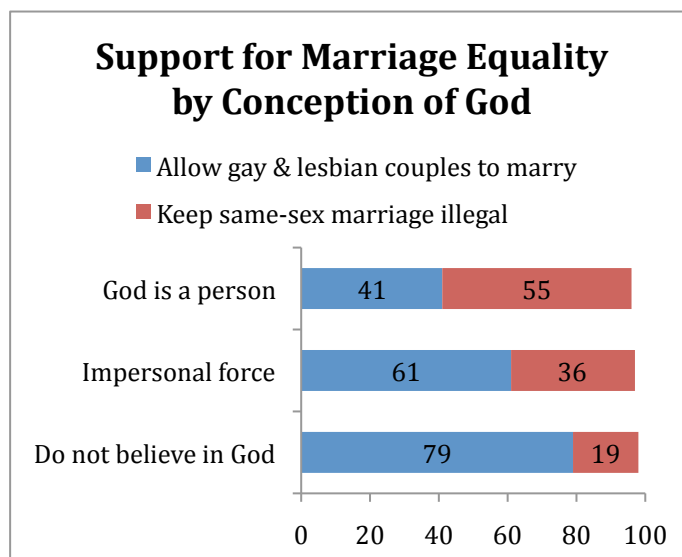
There are significant differences in views of God among religious groups in California. For example, white Mainline Protestants are the only religious group in which a majority is not extremely likely to see God as father (only 43%). Likewise, white Mainline Protestants and white Catholics are the only groups where a majority is not extremely likely to see God as judge (only 32% and 33% respectively).

More than 8-in-10 religiously affiliated Latinos are extremely or somewhat likely to see God as liberator (85% of Latino Protestants and 83% of Latino Catholics). While African American Protestants mirror the general California population with two-thirds seeing God as liberator, 55% are extremely likely to hold this view. Older African American Protestants (age 65 or older) are significantly more likely than younger African American Protestants (under 50 years of age) to say that they are extremely likely to see God as liberator (63% vs. 51%).



Finally, there is a significant racial gap with regard to seeing God as mother between religiously affiliated white Californians and Californians of color. African American and Latino Protestants (46% and 43% respectively) are more than 1.5 times as likely as white Protestants (24%) to say they are extremely or somewhat likely to view God as mother; Latino Catholics (60%) are more than twice as likely as white Catholics (33%) to view God as mother.

These conceptions of God are correlated to support for legalizing same-sex marriage. When asked how they might vote on a similar ballot measure to Proposition 8 if it were on the ballot tomorrow, a majority (55%) of Californians who



believe God is a person with whom one can have a relationship say they would vote to keep same-sex marriage illegal. On the other hand, more than 6-in-10 (61%) Californians who believe God is an impersonal force say they would vote to allow gay and lesbian couples to get married. Nearly 8-in-10 (79%) of Californians who do not believe in God would also vote to allow gay and lesbian couples to marry.

Californians who say they are *extremely* likely to identify with specific images of God as judge, father, or liberator are more likely than those who less strongly identified with these specific images of God to say they would vote to keep same-sex marriage illegal. Approximately 6-in-10 of Californians who say they are extremely likely to see God as judge, father, or liberator would vote to keep same-sex marriage illegal (63%, 60%, and 59% respectively). On the other hand, solid majorities of those who are not extremely likely to see God as judge, father, or liberator would vote to allow gay and lesbian couples to marry. Interestingly, views of God as mother were not strongly correlated to views on same-sex marriage.

View of the Bible & Prosperity Gospel

How Californians view the Bible or their own sacred texts is strongly correlated with their views about gay and lesbian issues. Across all issues, an overwhelming majority of Californians who believe the Bible is a book written by men and is not the word of God say they support rights for gay and lesbian people. Three-quarters (76%) say they would vote to allow gay and lesbian people to marry, 79% support adopt rights, 84% support open military service, and 86% support workplace discrimination protections for gay and lesbian people.

Among those who view the Bible as the literal word of God, only about 1-in-4 (26%) would vote to make same-sex marriage legal, and less than 3-in-10 (29%) support adoption rights for gay and lesbian couples. However, a majority favor anti-discrimination laws for gay and lesbian people in the workplace and allowing them to serve openly in the military (58% and 52% respectively).

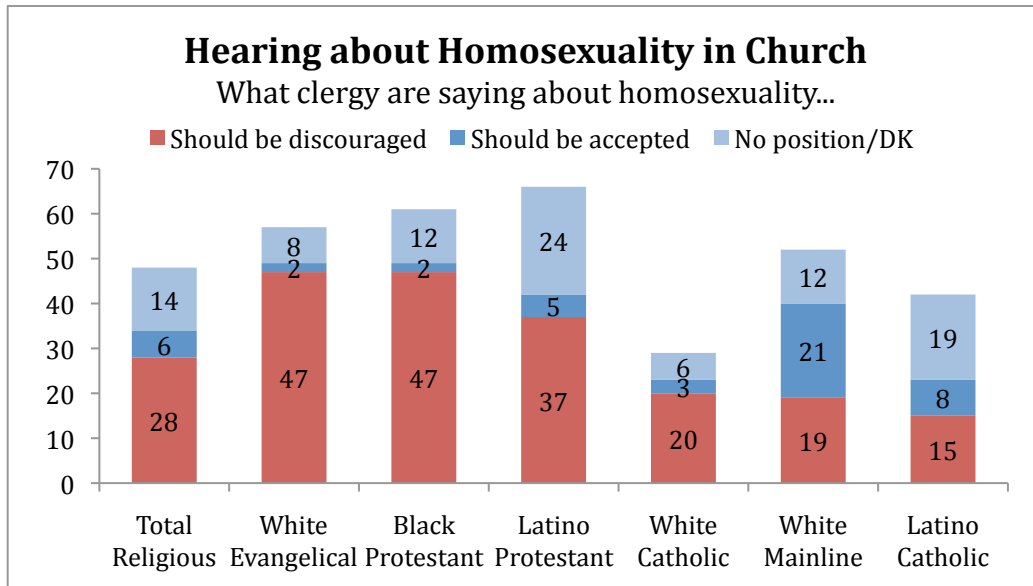
Californians who believe in the prosperity gospel—that ‘God rewards individuals who have faith with good health and success at home and work’—are significantly less supportive of rights for gay and lesbian people than those who do not hold this belief. Among those who embrace this theological outlook, roughly 4-in-10 (42%) say they would vote to make same-sex marriage legal. In contrast, a majority (56%) of those who eschew this orientation say they would vote to make marriage legal for gay and lesbian couples.

The Impact of California Clergy and Congregations

What Californians are Hearing at their Place of Worship

Among Californians who attend religious services at least once or twice a month, roughly half (48%) report hearing their clergy talk about the issue of homosexuality at their place of worship. Roughly an equal number (49%) say their clergy do not talk about this issue.

Protestants are much more likely to hear about homosexuality from their clergy than Catholics. Only 29% of white Catholics and 42% of Latino Catholics report hearing about homosexuality from their clergy. In stark contrast, two-thirds of Latino Protestants, more than 6-in-10 (61%) black Protestants, and majorities of white evangelical and white mainline Protestants (57% and 52% respectively) report hearing their clergy talk about the issue of homosexuality. The Protestant-Catholic divide is larger than twenty points, with a 24-point gap between Latino Catholics and Protestants (42% to 66%) and a 26-point gap between white Catholics and all white Protestants (29% to 55%).



The nature of the rhetoric that Californians hear from their clergy about homosexuality also varies dramatically between religious traditions. For instance, although white Catholics are less likely to hear about the issue than members of other traditions, what they hear is overwhelmingly negative. White Catholics are about six-times more likely to hear that homosexuality should be discouraged than accepted (20% to 3%). In contrast, white mainline Protestants are more likely to hear positive messages

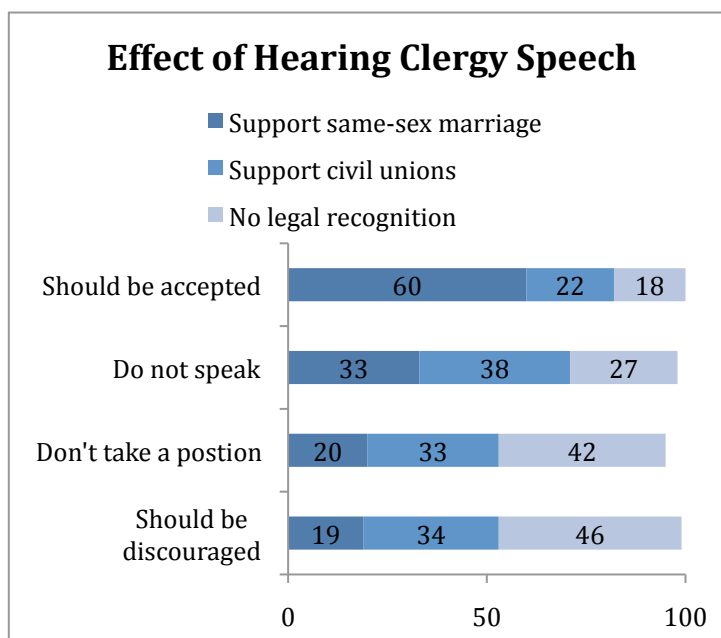
(21%) about homosexuality than negative messages (19%) from their clergy—the only religious group for which this is true.

White evangelical Protestants, Black Protestants and Latino Protestants are more likely than other religious groups to hear about homosexuality from their clergy, and they primarily hear negative messages about the issue. Nearly half of white evangelicals (47%) and black Protestants (47%) who attend services regularly report that their clergy say homosexuality should be discouraged. Among Latino Protestants, nearly 4-in-10 (37%) say they hear negative messages from clergy.

The Impact of Clergy Speech

The messages about homosexuality that Californians hear at their place of worship are positively correlated to their views on same-sex marriage. Among Californians who report that their clergy does

not address the issue of homosexuality, one-third support same-sex marriage, 38% support civil unions, and 27% say there should be no legal recognition for gay couples' relationships. Among Californians who report hearing negative messages from their clergy, fewer (19%) support same-sex marriage, and a plurality (46%) say there should be no legal recognition. In striking contrast, among Californians



who report hearing positive messages from their clergy, fully 6-in-10 say gay and lesbian people should be allowed to marry, an additional 22% support civil unions, and less than 1-in-5 (18%) say there should be no legal recognition for same-sex relationships.

Support for Clergy Speaking Out

A majority (51%) of Californians say clergy should not be speaking out about the issue of homosexuality, compared to 42% who believe they should. Californians who are more opposed to same-sex marriage are more likely to support clergy speaking out.

More than 6-in-10 (62%) white evangelicals, 54% of black Protestants, and 53% of Latino Protestants support clergy speaking out on the issue of homosexuality. On the other side, majorities of white Catholics (59%), Latino Catholics (54%), and white mainline Protestants (52%) say clergy should not be speaking out on this issue.

Trusted Public Sources on the Issue of Homosexuality

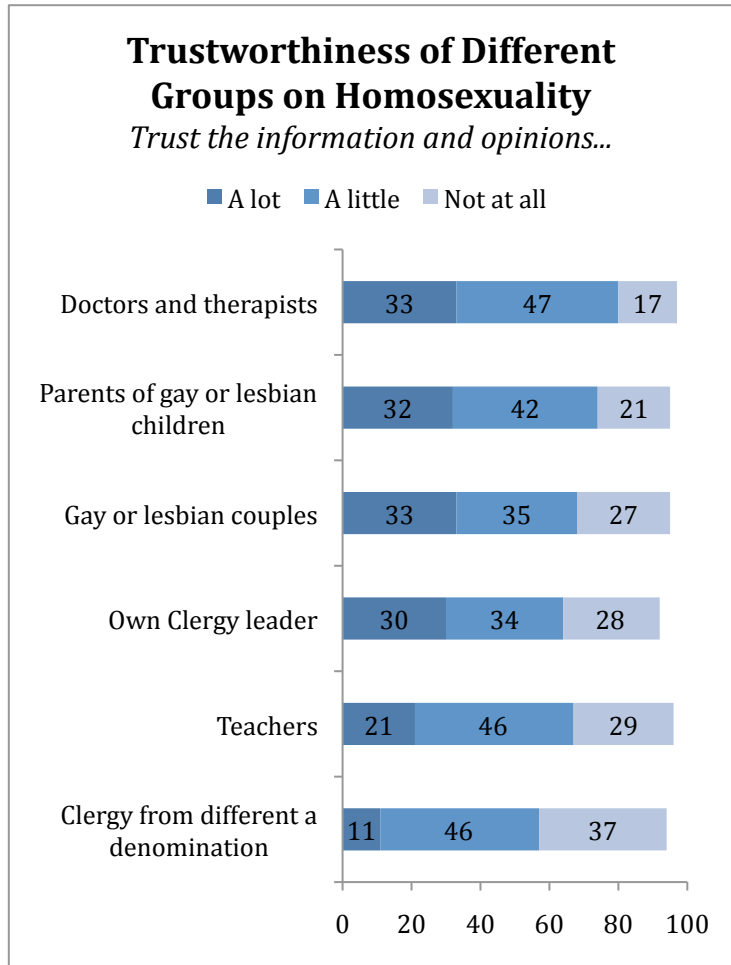
Californians hear about the issue of homosexuality from a variety of sources in the public and through their social networks, and Californians do not see them all as equally trustworthy. Of six distinct categories of people, Californians report that doctors and therapists and the parents of gay or lesbian children are the most trustworthy sources of information and opinions about homosexuality, although no group had more than one-third of Californians saying they were trusted “a lot.”

Eight-in-ten Californians report that they trust the opinion and information provided by doctors and therapists a lot (33%) or a little (47%). Less than 1-in-5 report that they do not trust this group. Nearly three-

quarters of Californians also say they trust parents of gay or lesbian children a lot (32%) or a little (42%) as sources of information on this issue.

Roughly two-thirds of Californians also report trusting gay or lesbian couples, their own clergy leader, and teachers a lot or a little as sources of opinion and information on the issue of homosexuality. However, nearly 3-in-10 also say they do not trust any of these groups “at all” on this issue. Few Californians trust clergy from a denomination different from their own. Only about 1-in-10 (11%) report trusting the information and opinions of other extra-denominational clergy a lot, and nearly 4-in-10 (37%) say they do not trust them at all.

White evangelical Protestants, Latino Protestants, and black Protestants all ranked their own clergy leaders as the most trusted source of information about homosexuality. More than 6-in-10 (62%) white evangelical Protestants say they have a lot of trust in their own clergy leader’s opinions on the issue of homosexuality. Roughly 4-in-10 Latino Protestants (42%) and black Protestants (39%) also say they trust their own clergy leader a lot.



In contrast, 32% of white Catholics and only 25% of Latino Catholics say they trust their own clergy leader a lot. Both white and Latino Catholics say they trust the parents of gay or lesbian children more than their own clergy as a source of information about homosexuality. Thirty-nine percent of white Catholics trust the parents of gay and lesbian children a lot, compared to only 32% who trust their own clergy leader a lot. Likewise, 30% of Latino Catholics trust the parents of gay or lesbian children and gay or lesbian couples a lot, compared to only 25% who trust their own clergy leader a lot.

Clergy from other denominations were ranked as the least trustworthy source of information by Californians in every religious group.

Perceptions of Fairness and the Golden Rule

Fairness and Same-sex Marriage

When asked whether the fact that gay and lesbian couples in long-term committed relationships cannot get married in California is fair, only 9% say it is fair, and 44% say it is unfair. However, a plurality (45%) of Californians say that it is not a matter of fairness. Those who say it is fair are more likely to say there should be no legal recognition of gay couples' relationships; those who say it is unfair are more likely to say they support same-sex marriage; and those who say it is not a matter of fairness are more likely to say they support civil unions.

Californians who are divorced are more likely than those who are married to believe that the current situation is unfair to gay and lesbian couples. A majority (52%) of divorced Californians say it is unfair that gay and lesbian people cannot get married, compared to 40% of married Californians.

Values: The Golden Rule and Support for Same-sex Marriage

Californians strongly agree with applying the Golden Rule to the issue of same-sex marriage. Nearly 6-in-10 (58%) agree that 'we should apply the Golden Rule to gay and lesbian couples who are in long-term committed relationships and allow them the same opportunity to get married as everyone else.'

Support varies by religious tradition, and political outlook. Strong majorities of Latino Catholics (65%), white Catholics (60%), and white mainline Protestants (58%) agree with this the application of the Golden Rule. Black Protestants are divided, with 48% agreeing and 49% disagreeing. On the other side, strong majorities of Latino Protestants (66%) and white evangelical Protestants (63%) disagree with this application of the Golden Rule.

More than 6-in-10 California Democrats (68%) and political Independents (63%) agree that we should apply the Golden Rule to gay and lesbian couples in long-term committed relationships and allow them to get married. Only about one-third (35%) of Republicans agree with this application of the Golden Rule.

Methodology

The survey was designed and conducted by Public Religion Research Institute and funded by the Evelyn and Walter Haas, Jr. Fund, with additional support from the Ford Foundation. Results of the survey were based on bilingual (Spanish and English) telephone interviews conducted between June 14, 2010 and June 30, 2010 by professional interviewers under the direction of Directions in Research. Interviews were conducted by telephone among a random sample of 2,801 adults age 18 years of age or older in California, with additional oversamples of 350 African Americans and 200 Latino Protestants. The final sample was weighted to ensure proper representativeness.

The weighting was accomplished in two stages. The first stage corrected for the oversampling of the African Americans and Latino Protestants. In the second stage, sample demographics were balanced by form to match target population parameters for gender, age, education, race and Hispanic ethnicity, region, and population density. The population density parameter was derived from Census 2000 data. The region parameter was derived from the Census Bureau's Population Estimates Program data. All other weighting parameters were derived from an analysis of the Census Bureau's 2009 Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC) data.

The sample weighting was accomplished using Sample Balancing, a special iterative sample weighting program that simultaneously balances the distributions of all variables. Weights were trimmed to prevent individual interviews from having too much influence on the final results. The use of these weights in statistical analysis ensures that the demographic characteristics of the sample closely approximate the demographic characteristics of the target populations.

The margin of error is +/- 2.0% for the general state sample at the 95% confidence interval. In addition to sampling error, surveys may also be subject to error or bias due to question wording, context, and order effects.

About Public Religion Research Institute

Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI) is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, independent organization specializing in work at the intersection of religion, values, and public life.

For a full list of recent projects, see our research page:

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The PRRI Management Team

The Public Religion Research Institute management team brings deep expertise and experience to their work on issues at the intersection of religion, values, and public life.

Robert P. Jones, Ph.D.

CEO and founder of PRRI, Dr. Jones is a leading scholar and pollster in both the academy and in public policy circles. The author of two books—*Progressive & Religious* (2008) and *Liberalism’s Troubled Search for Equality* (2007)—and numerous articles on religion and public policy, Dr. Jones brings to each PRRI project a deep knowledge of religion and expertise in both qualitative and quantitative research. Dr. Jones is one of six members of the national steering committee for the Religion and Politics Section at the American Academy of Religion and is an active member of the Society of Christian Ethics and the American Association of Public Opinion Research. He holds a Ph.D. in religion from Emory University, where he specialized in sociology of religion, politics, and religious ethics. He also holds a M.Div. from Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary. Prior to his work in Washington, he served as assistant professor of religious studies at Missouri State University.

Dr. Jones is a sought after speaker, and he is frequently featured in major national media, including NPR’s “Morning Edition” and “All Things Considered,” Newsweek, USA Today, The Washington Post, The Chicago Tribune, The Nation, and others.

Daniel Cox

Director of Research and co-founder of PRRI, Mr. Cox also brings a wealth of expertise to PRRI projects. Prior to joining PRRI, he served as Research Associate at the Pew Forum on Religion & Public Life, where he worked on the core research team for

dozens of polls, including the groundbreaking Religious Landscape Survey, one of the largest public opinion surveys on religion ever conducted. Mr. Cox specializes in youth politics and religion, and his work has appeared in numerous national news and religious publications including the *New York Times*, *ABC News*, *CNN*, *Newsweek*, *World Magazine*, and others.

Cox holds an M.A. in American government from Georgetown University and a B.A. in political science from Union College. He is an active member of the American Association of Public Opinion Research (AAPOR).

ⁱ We constructed this scale by combining Q20b and Q20c. In Q20b, strong agreement with statement one (equality and justice) was given a score of 2, agreement a score of 1; strong agreement with statement two (personal morality and responsibility) was given a score of -2, agreement a score of -1. On Q20c, strong agreement with statement one (action-doing the right thing) was given a score of 2, agreement a score of 1; strong agreement with statement two (faith and right beliefs) was given a score of -2, agreement a score of -1. For each respondent, scores were summed, producing a range of 4 to -4. Respondents with positive scores were identified as having a “justice and action” style of religious social engagement. Respondents with negative scores were identified as having a “personal morality and belief” style of religious social engagement. Respondents with scores of zero were identified as having mixed views.