A Sexual Orientation Not Listed Here:

Traits and Socio-Political Attitudes of "Something Else"

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Abstract

There is a relatively large percentage of adults who indicate they have a sexual orientation that is Something Else. In some policy reports, it has become a growing practice to group those who express a non-heterosexual and non-LGB orientation with LGB people to describe the experiences and political viewpoints of "LGB+" people. Are those who select a Something Else sexual orientation politically similar to LGB people and different from straight people? Two theoretical perspectives motivate different expectations: identity rejection may reflect either a radical rejection of labels or an ambivalence to existing labels, reflecting either a markedly progressive politics or a moderate diffuse politics. We also argue that those who select Something Else may comprise a mixture of both political orientations. Relying on a nationally representative survey of adults in the United States, we find Something Else adults to be more politically moderate than LGB adults but more progressive than straight adults. We further find that Something Else adults consist of a mixture of two groups: one more politically progressive and one more moderate and politically diffuse. Our findings suggest that it may be premature to group all Something Else adults with LGB adults to describe a broader group. Further research needs to examine the social and political meaning of Something Else before assuming their group membership.

Introduction

Younger generations tend to identify as lesbian, gay, or bisexual (LGB) at far higher rates than older generations (Jones 2023). For example, the Public Religion Research Institute (PRRI) estimated that 20% of Generation Z adults identified as LGB, and an additional 8% indicated they were "Something Else" (PRRI 2024). Some policy reports have begun to group those labeled as Something Else with LGBT-identified people, sometimes referring to this category as "LGBTQ" (e.g., PRRI 2024) or "LGBTQ+" (Goldberg et al. 2022).[1] However, it is not necessarily clear how similar or how different those who select Something Else are to that of those who identify as LGBT. For example, Flores et al. (2020) showed that patterns of violence and the demographic make-up of LGBT and Something Else persons were not the same (see Eliason and Streed Jr. 2017; Eliason et al. 2016). Further, American LGBT adults, while politically more progressive and active, already evidence substantial heterogeneity within the group (Jones 2021). What are the characteristics of Something Else adults and how do they compare to LGB adults and straight adults?[2] What are the political orientations of Something Else adults? We analyze a nationally representative survey of adults to provide a snapshot of Something Else adults. We further propose and test an argument that the political makeup of Something Else adults is a mixture of people who reject labels – presenting as moderate label rejectors or radical label rejectors.

In many ways, the demographics of Something Else adults are close to Bisexual adults. We find that Something Else adults are more politically moderate relative to LGB adults. We

[1] "T" refers to transgender people, and "Q" refers to queer, which is an umbrella term for other gender and sexual minorities.

[2] We focus solely on sexual orientation in this paper, largely out of small sample sizes of those who indicate an "Other" gender identity, though future research should explore this group.

further find that Something Else adults consist of a roughly even mixture of two subpopulations: a more solidly politically progressive group and a more moderate and politically diffuse group. While only a single snapshot, our findings suggest that about half of Something Else adults mirror political attitudes similar to LGB adults while half do not, reflecting similar heterogeneity in political attitudes among the broader LGBT population (Jones 2021). Thus, it may be a conceptual stretch to lump Something Else adults (i.e., non-identifiers) with those who outwardly identify as LGB.

The Political Meaning of Identity and the Rejection of Labels

Social identity theory suggests that people tend to categorize themselves and others as members of various groups (Tajfel 1970; 1978). Sometimes, these categories have a distinct political meaning, and they wax and wane in their salience leading to political action (Brewer 1991; Hertzog 1996). In LGBT politics, it was the novel construction of the outward "gay" and eventually "transgender" identity that became a political organizing feature (Armstrong 2002; Hertzog 1996; Nownes 2019; Vaid 1995).

But how do scholars understand the rejection of identity labels? Some elements of the queer rights movement sought to upend labels and identity-based politics due to their tendency to reproduce systems of marginalization (Cohen 1997, 1999; Coleman-Fountain 2014; Strolovitch and Crowder 2018). While many mainstream gay activists sought inclusion through a politics of assimilation (i.e., the expression of sexual identity via sameness to heterosexuality), more radical queer activists built on a liberationist view of the gay rights movement that sought change through visibility and difference (Armstrong 2002; Coleman-Fountain 2014; Haider-Markel and

Miller 2017; Ng 2013).[3] Further, the assimilationist policy agenda and strategies of mainstream gay rights organizations has historically excluded or de-prioritized marginalized members at the intersections of class, race, and gender (Alimahomed 2010; Armstrong 2002; Pepin-Neff 2021). Liberationists used labels like "queer," which ran counter to the mainstream gay rights movement because these struggles were founded in more progressive social justice change (Worthen 2023).

While the queer rights movement of the 1990s has been critiqued for reproducing "queer" as an identity and thus reproducing the flaws of identity politics (Cohen 1999; 2001), modern queer movements have made strides to blur the boundaries of identity-based politics, at times by recognizing that a single axis political struggle can never lead to a fully realized liberation (DeFelippis et al. 2017; DeFilippis 2018; Pepin-Neff 2021; Swank and Fahs 2022). Because Something Else adults reject dominant sexual identities, we should expect the political orientations of Something Else adults to reflect more radical politics, which would be distinctively social justice oriented:

H1: Something Else adults are more politically progressive than LGB or straight adults.

However, refusing to take up certain identity labels to describe oneself may also reflect a different process. Self-identification with a group requires individuals to have both a self-awareness of being a part of the group and some psychological connection to that group (Conover 1988; Green et al. 2002). Those with a greater connection to a group seek social acceptance from group members and tend to regulate their behaviors to adhere to group norms (Gangestad and Snyder 2000; Snyder 1974). For example, numerous studies document that

[3] Mainstream refers to dominant or hegemonic gay rights organizations (see Armstrong 2002; Pepin-Neff 2021).

among LGBT people who have a closer connectedness to the LGBT community, their LGBT identity is more politically distinct, and they adopt policy preferences that benefit the group (Haider-Markel and Miller 2017; Hertzog 1996; Jones 2021; Swank 2019).

People who are less attached to their social group are less likely to adopt group attitudes and behaviors because they are more likely to express their individuality (Synder 1974). Individuals with non-majority identities, such as Something Else people, may not identify with the larger LGB community and their policy preferences due to differences in age, gender, race, and socio-economic status (e.g., Cohen 1999; Jones 2021). Because those who do not take up predominant labels (e.g., LGB or straight) may be rejecting any group norms and values, these individuals may be less connected to any group and may not share political views. Therefore, those with little-to-no group attachment or and group connection may express a different point of view (but see e.g., Haider-Markel and Miller 2017; Pepin-Neff 2021). For example, Rosik et al. (2021) and Lefevor et al. (2019) found that same-sex attracted or LGBQ people who rejected LGBQ labels were more likely to be religious and conservative. Those with potentially competing identities such as gay conservatives may prioritize assimilative politics and consider their sexual identities and rights less relevant to their daily lives than other attributes or issues (Cimino 2006), leading to the adoption of more moderate political attitudes (Burge 2020; Cravens III 2018; 2024).

Group socialization and activities foster distinct policy preferences and attitudes among members of marginalized groups (Dawson 1994; Hertzog 1996; Jones 2021). Those members who face multiple marginalizations may be unable to map their attitudes onto the overall group preferences (Cohen 1999; 2001; Pepin-Neff 2021) . Individuals with conflicting identities face increased psychological discomfort from groups with competing policy interests (Brader et al.

2014; Burge 2020; Hillygus and Shields 2008). As a consequence of conflicting social identity cues, those with conflicting identities may adopt more moderate political attitudes or participate less in politics to reduce their psychological discomfort (e.g., Brader et al. 2014; Burge 2020; Cravens III 2018; 2024; Hillygus and Shields 2008; Mutz 2002).

Like Something Else people, label rejectors, such as political independents, may reflect a broader lack of interest in certain labels to describe their lived experiences and frustration with existing dual power dynamics (Klar and Krupnikov 2016). Independents lack a coherent ideology – having policy preferences aligned to both major political parties (Hillygus and Sheilds 2008) and can lead conflicted individuals to adopt more moderate political attitudes (Lupton et al. 2015). Holding conflicting political views may cause people identify as Independent and be more moderate (Klar et al. 2022). The rejection of labels for Something Else people may similarly reflect an ambivalence to certain categories (e.g., being "mostly straight" or "not that kind of gay"). If such traits carry over to politics, then we might expect label rejectors to be more politically ambivalent (i.e., appear moderate) relative to others:

H2: Something Else adults are more politically moderate than LGB or straight adults.

Both *H1* and *H2* may be correct in describing distinct *types* of identity rejectors. While LGBT people tend to hold liberal attitudes and policy stances, LGBT people's attitudes are not monolithic (Jones 2021). Individuals who identify as Something Else may comparatively share a mix of political attitudes and policy positions.

Among Something Else adults, there is likely a mix of political attitudes. For one subset, the labels are arcane and do not reflect what is a more radical worldview. These individuals likely reject mainstream labels in favor of more progressive policies (e.g., Worthen 2023). For

another, the labels are too polar and do not reflect identity ambivalence. These individuals likely have conflicting identities and reject labels that do not capture the nuances of their experiences (e.g., Burge 2020; Cravens III 2018; 2024). Thus, we expect:

H3: Something Else adults are a mixture of two distinct groups with one more progressive and the other more moderate.

Data

To look into Something Else adults, we analyze the PRRI 2023 Gen Z Survey, which consists of 5,860 adults who were interviewed between August 21 and September 15, 2023.[4] The survey was designed by PRRI and sponsored by the Rockefeller Philanthropy Advisors and the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation. The survey was administered by Ipsos to empaneled members of their KnowledgePanel, which is a panel whose members were recruited via address-based sampling. An additional sample of 602 was recruited via an opt-in panel to oversample 18–25-year-olds and smaller states. The survey is weighted for probabilities of selection and to post-stratify to demographic targets. Further details of the survey methodology are available at PRRI (2024). The survey aimed to evaluate generational differences in political attitudes and outlooks, and it had a response rate of 56% (RR#).

Measures

We focus our analyses on responses to sexual orientation, which is documented in respondents' demographic profiles (i.e., before the survey was administered), and we focus on political orientations and policy opinions of the respondents.

[4] The survey also surveyed 756 13-17 year-olds, which we do not include here.

Sexual orientation. In their demographic profile, respondents were asked their sexual orientation with the following question: "Which of the following best describes how you think of yourself?" The response options were: "gay or lesbian", "straight, that is, not gay", "bisexual" or "something else." This follows recommended best practices in measuring sexual orientation (Bates, Chin, and Becker 2022). There were 946 respondents that did not have this data in their profile, which reduces our analytic sample to 4,914. About 89.6% (*CI*: 88.4, 90.6, *n* = 4,458) indicated they were straight, 3.4% (*CI:* 2.8, 4.1, *n* = 164) were gay or lesbian, 4.6% (*CI*: 3.9, 5.5, *n* = 196) were bisexual, and 2.4% (*CI*: 1.9, 3.0, *n* = 96) were "Something Else." Thus, 8.0% (*CI* = 7.1, 9.0) were LGB and 10.4% (*CI* = 9.3, 11.6) were "LGB+." This percentage of LGB identification is consistent with recent population estimates of LGBT adults in the United States (Flores and Conron 2023).

Political attitudes. We evaluate a series of variables that measure the political orientations and social attitudes of respondents, including: partisanship, ideological self-placement, and a series of opinions on abortion, sexual orientation, and gender identity policy (see Appendix for question wording). A factor analysis suggested that there was only one eigenvalue greater than one, so we combined these items into a single scale for further analysis ($\alpha = 0.84$). While some approaches would treat ideology and partisanship as causally antecedent to political attitudes, we consider such variables to be outcomes of interest, and the data support combining all these characteristics to a single scale. Notably, we are limited to a set of social attitude questions, so our inclusion of ideology and partisanship may cover a broader set of political attitudes (e.g., economic policies). This scale is standardized with a mean of zero and a standard deviation of one, with positive values indicating more politically progressive viewpoints.

Other covariates. We consider respondents' sex, gender, age, race/ethnicity, educational attainment, marital status, and Evangelical Born Again identification. This allows us to assess differences across sexual orientation by these characteristics. It also allows us to examine whether observed differences in political orientations and attitudes are attributable to these other characteristics. Importantly, there are selection mechanisms that lead people to identify as LGB (Egan 2012), so we should consider these background differences.

Analysis

All our analyses rely on the weights provided in the PRRI dataset, which account for probabilities of selection and post-stratify demographics to known population targets. We provide a demographic summary by sexual orientation, and we then summarize political orientations by sexual orientation. Afterward, we use linear regressions on the political orientations scale to examine sexual orientation differences and include covariates. We finally rely on a latent class analysis (LCA) to assess the possibility that the political attitudes of "Something Else" adults represent a mixture of two distinct subpopulations.[5] We first assess the number of classes by evaluating the model fit of a 1- 2-, and 3-class model. Afterward, we compare the distribution of political attitudes by latent class. All analyses are complete case except for the LCA, which relies on full information maximum likelihood.

Results

Table 1 details the demographic characteristics of adults by sexual orientation, and differences were statistically significant by sexual orientation.[6] Something Else adults had a sex

[5] LCA was performed in *Mplus* v. 8.4.
[6] All contingency table statistics were statistically significant except for race/ethnicity and Born Again identification.

distribution similar to that of straight adults; whereas, gay or lesbian adults were more likely to be male than female, and bisexual adults were more likely to be female than male. Something Else adults were also more likely to be transgender, non-binary, or have an "other" gender identity. Something Else and bisexual adults tended to be younger than straight or gay and lesbian adults, though gay and lesbian adults were younger than straight-identified adults. Consistent with previous research (Mittleman 2022), gay and lesbian adults had higher levels of educational attainment relative to the other sexual orientation groups. Likely attributable to age composition, bisexual and Something Else adults were less likely to have a Bachelor's degree or more. Straight adults were more likely to be married, separated, divorced, or widowed than others, with LGB and Something Else adults more likely to be single and never married. There were few differences in the racial and ethnic composition and Born Again affiliation of adults by sexual orientation.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics by Sexual Orientation

	Something Else	**Straight**	**Gay or Lesbian**	**Bisexual**
	(*n* = 96)	(*n* = 4,458)	(*n* = 164)	(*n* = 196)
	% (CI)	*% (CI)*	*% (CI)*	*% (CI)*
Sex				
Male	50.8 (38.9, 62.6)	48.7 (46.9, 50.5)	65.2 (55.7, 73.6)	34.6 (26.7, 43.5)
Female	49.2 (37.4, 61.1)	51.3 (49.5, 53.1)	34.8 (26.4, 44.3)	65.4 (56.5, 73.3)
Gender				
Man	40.4 (28.7, 53.3)	48.3 (46.5, 50.1)	61.7 (52.0, 70.6)	31.1 (23.4, 40.1)
Woman	36.8 (26.8, 48.1)	51.6 (49.8, 53.4)	31.7 (23.5, 41.3)	57.7 (48.8, 66.2)
T/NB/O	22.8 (14.1, 34.9)	0.2 (0.0, 0.3)	6.5 (3.2, 13.1)	11.2 (6.5, 18.7)
Age				
18-29	40.4 (29.1, 52.9)	14.1 (12.7, 15.6)	25.0 (16.9, 35.3)	49.8 (41.2, 58.4)
30-49	43.9 (32.5, 56.0)	31.8 (30.1, 33.6)	38.5 (29.5, 48.4)	32.6 (25.0, 41.1)
50-64	10.5 (5.2, 20.0)	28.8 (27.3, 30.4)	24.5 (18.1, 32.3)	12.3 (8.3, 17.9)
65+	5.2 (2.5, 10.6)	25.3 (24.0, 26.7)	12.0 (8.3, 17.2)	5.3 (3.3, 8.4)
Race/Ethnicity				
White	53.9 (41.7, 65.8)	64.0 (62.1, 65.8)	59.7 (49.7, 68.9)	63.8 (54.6)
POC	27.4 (17.0, 41.1)	20.0 (18.5, 21.6)	25.1 (17.2, 35.2)	20.2 (13.4, 29.3)
Latino	18.7 (11.1, 29.6)	16.0 (14.7, 17.5)	15.3 (9.3, 24.1)	16.0 (10.5, 23.7)
Education				

BA+	29.9 (21.1, 40.5)	36.0 (34.4, 37.7)	47.6 (38.3, 57.0)	27.8 (21.2, 35.4)
Less BA	70.1 (59.5, 78.9)	64.0 (62.3, 65.6)	52.5 (43.1, 61.7)	72.2 (64.6, 78.8)
Marital Status				
Married	24.9 (16.7, 35.4)	59.6 (57.8, 61.4)	27.0 (19.9, 35.4)	31.7 (24.2, 40.2)
Single	71.1 (60.2, 80.0)	23.6 (22.0, 25.3)	68.7 (59.9, 76.2)	60.1 (51.5, 68.1)
Other	4.1 (1.4, 11.0)	16.8 (15.6, 18.1)	4.4 (2.1, 9.1)	8.2 (5.2, 12.9)
Born Again				
Yes	23.0 (10.6, 42.8)	37.9 (35.8, 39.9)	26.1 (15.6, 40.3)	36.9 (23.9, 52.2)

Note: T/NB/O = transgender, nonbinary, or other. POC = Person of Color. Other relationship statuses include separated, divorced, or widowed.

Table 2 summarizes the political attitudes of adults by sexual orientation. LGB adults were more likely to identify or lean toward the Democratic Party, and straight adults were more politically independent. Something Else adults were slightly more leaning toward the Democratic Party, which was different from straight adults ($\Delta = 0.54$, $SE = 0.21$) and also different from lesbian and gay ($\Delta = -1.17$, $SE = 0.25$) and bisexual adults ($\Delta = -0.71$, $SE = 0.25$). Similar patterns were observed for ideological self-placement and across numerous opinions on social policies. Thus, Something Else adults appear politically more progressive than straight adults but less progressive than LGB adults.

Table 2: Political Orientations and Attitudes by Sexual Orientation

		Something Else	**Straight**	**Gay or Lesbian**	**Bisexual**
		(*n* = 96)	(*n* = 4,458)	(*n* = 164)	(*n* = 196)
	Range	*M (SD)*	*M (SD)*	*M (SD)*	*M (SD)*
Partisanship (R → D)	1, 7	4.6 (1.6)	4.1 (2.1)	5.8 (1.7)	5.3 (1.6)
Ideology (C → L)	1, 3	2.3 (0.8)	1.9 (0.8)	2.6 (0.6)	2.5 (0.7)
Abortion (Legal → Illegal)	1, 4	2.0 (1.0)	2.2 (0.9)	1.5 (0.7)	1.7 (0.8)
LGBT NDO (Favor → Oppose)	1, 4	1.7 (0.9)	2.0 (0.9)	1.1 (0.6)	1.3 (0.7)
Refusals (Favor → Oppose)	1, 4	3.2 (1.0)	2.7 (1.1)	3.5 (0.7)	3.4 (0.9)
SS Marriage (Favor → Oppose)	1, 4	1.7 (1.0)	2.1 (1.1)	1.1 (0.4)	1.3 (0.6)
Trans Kids (Favor → Oppose)	1, 4	3.1 (1.0)	2.5 (1.1)	3.4 (0.9)	3.1 (1.1)
Illegal Pill (Favor → Oppose)	1, 4	3.4 (0.8)	2.9 (1.1)	3.5 (0.8)	3.4 (0.9)
Political Orientations	-2.3, 1.5	0.4 (0.9)	-0.1 (1.0)	1.0 (0.6)	0.8 (0.8)

Table 3 contains linear regression results examining the political orientations scale, which is a combination of the political measures in Table 2 with positive values indicating more politically progressive viewpoints. Model 1 suggests that lesbian and gay, bisexual, and Something Else adults were more politically progressive than straight adults. However, Something Else adults were more moderate than lesbian and gay adults (Δ = -0.60, *SE* = 0.12) and bisexual adults (Δ = -0.42, *SE* 0.12). We add gender, age, and race or ethnicity in Model 2, and Something Else adults remain statistically distinguishable from straight adults.[7] Model 3 adds education, marital status, and Born Again identification to the model. The differences between Something Else and straight adults are greatly attenuated and not statistically significant (*p* = .066), while LGB adults remain more politically progressive in their attitudes net the other covariates. Auxiliary models suggest that Born Again identification is what contributes to the reduced estimated partial slope coefficient. Model 3 also performs well in explaining political attitudes with about 27% of variation explained with the current covariates.

Table 3: Regression Results on Political Orientations Scale

	(1)	(2)	(3)
Something Else	0.50 (0.11)***	0.39 (0.12)***	0.21 (0.11)^
Gay or Lesbian	1.10 (0.05)***	1.12 (0.06)***	0.89 (0.07)***
Bisexual	0.92 (0.07)***	0.84 (0.08)***	0.72 (0.07)***
Woman	--	0.22 (0.03)***	0.28 (0.03)***
T/NB/O	--	0.41 (0.13)**	0.41 (0.13)**
30-49	--	0.03 (0.06)	0.10 (0.06)^
50-64	--	-.04 (0.06)	0.10 (0.06)^
65+	--	-0.03 (0.06)	0.11 (0.06)^
POC	--	0.26 (0.04)***	0.32 (0.04)***
Latino	--	0.03 (0.05)	0.13 (0.04)**
College	--	--	0.34 (0.03)***
Never Married	--	--	0.20 (0.04)**

[7] We modeled current gender identity as opposed to sex assigned at birth, since there were notable differences between Something Else adults and others. However, our analyses are descriptive and observational, some covariates may be causally downstream or confounded (e.g., current gender identity), which is a common limitation with cross-sectional research.

Other	--	--	0.06 (0.04)
Born Again	--	--	-0.83 (0.04)***
Intercept	-0.09 (0.02)***	-0.26 (0.06)***	
N	4,604	4,589	4,589
R^2	0.08	0.10	0.27
F	189.8***	65.7***	115.8***

So far, we have learned that Something Else adults may be politically more progressive than straight adults but less progressive than LGB adults. We also learned that some of these differences may be attributable to other factors. Now, we focus solely on Something Else adults to examine whether their political attitudes represent a mixture of distinct groups of people. Table 4 contains Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC) model fit statistics from three LCA models. Generally, the model that has the lowest BIC would be the preferred model. We learned that a 2-class model produces the lowest BIC relative to a 1-class or a 3-class model. Thus, the data support the idea that Something Else identifiers may be a mixture of two different groups.

Table 4: Number of Classes for Latent Class Analysis, Something Else Only (*n* = 96)

N Classes	Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC)
1	1,973.961
2	1,820.505
3	1,832.224

To describe these groups, Table 5 presents the response probabilities across the political variables used in the LCA. Class 1, which is almost half of Something Else adults, have political attitudes that are solidly more progressive. Members of Class 1 are more likely Democratic, politically liberal, and strongly hold politically progressive opinions on various social policies. Class 2, which is about half of Something Else adults, have more moderate and politically diffuse opinions. There is a 0.40 probability that members of Class 2 identify as politically conservative, and they tend to be more restrictive in their abortion opinions. Class 2 members also are less strongly favorable of other progressive social policies.

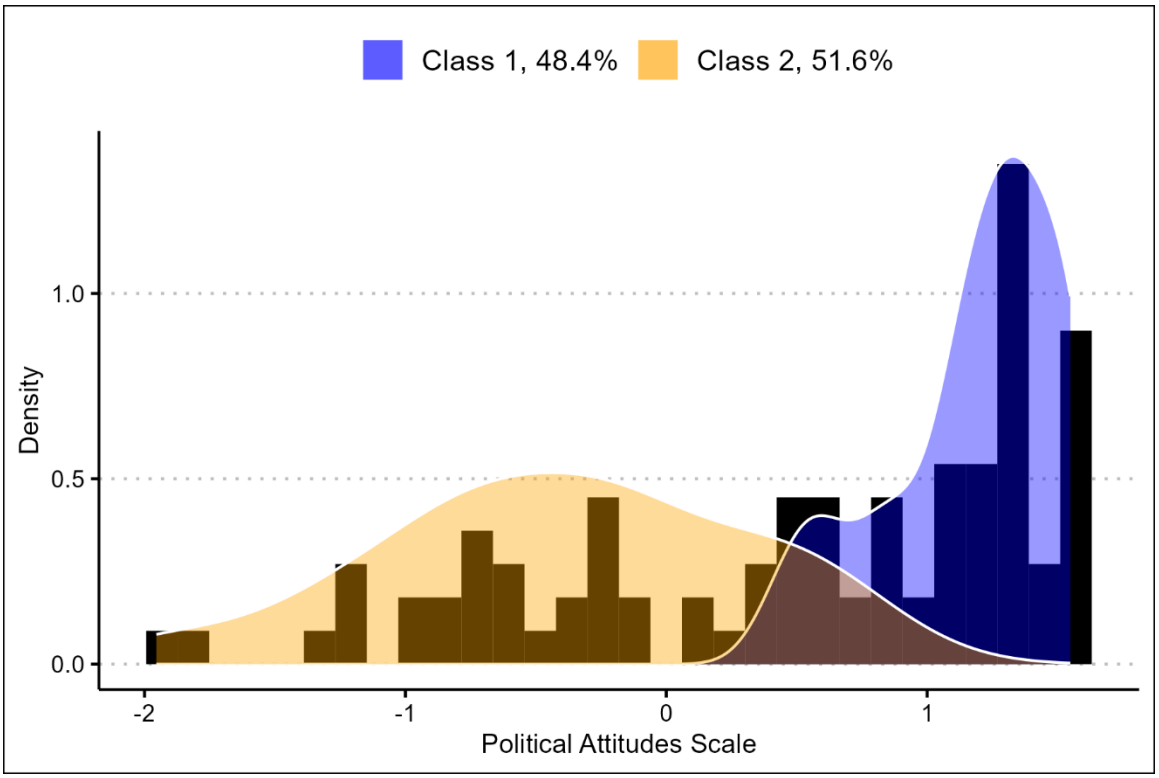
Table 5: Description of the Two Latent Classes, Something Else Only (*n* = 96)

	Class 1	**Class 2**
Class Percent	48.4	51.6
	p (SE)	*p (SE)*
Partisanship		
Strong Republican	0.0	0.12 (0.071)
Weak Republican	0.0	0.066 (0.038)
Lean Republican	0.0	0.180 (0.063)
Independent	0.397 (0.08)	0.237 (0.081)
Lean Democrat	0.231 (0.065)	0.161 (0.078)
Weak Democrat	0.123 (0.047)	0.180 (0.074)
Strong Democrat	0.247 (0.065)	0.054 (0.038)
Ideology		
Conservative	0.01 (0.01)	0.404 (0.090)
Moderate	0.145 (0.055)	0.301 (0.089)
Liberal	0.845 (0.06)	0.295 (0.093)
Abortion		
Legal in All Cases	0.736 (0.066)	0.139 (0.058)
Legal in Most Cases	0.241 (0.063)	0.290 (0.091)
Illegal in Most Cases	0.022 (0.019)	0.415 (0.094)
Illegal in All Cases	0.0	0.156 (0.071)
LGBT NDO		
Strongly Favor	1.0	0.105 (0.047)
Favor	0.0	0.525 (0.093)
Oppose	0.0	0.251 (0.080)
Strongly Oppose	0.0	0.118 (0.052)
Religion Refusals		
Strongly Favor	0.033 (0.032)	0.137 (0.0055)
Favor	0.055 (0.036)	0.182 (0.081)
Oppose	0.165 (0.054)	0.475 (0.095)
Strongly Oppose	0.747 (0.067)	0.207 (0.079)
Same-Sex Marriage		
Strongly Favor	0.983 (0.019)	0.193 (0.075)
Favor	0.017 (0.019)	0.448 (0.096)
Oppose	0.0	0.164 (0.069)
Strongly Oppose	0.0	0.195 (0.067)
Laws Ban Care for Trans Kids		
Strongly Favor	0.026 (0.026)	0.205 (0.069)
Favor	0.065 (0.042)	0.172 (0.067)
Oppose	0.104 (0.041)	0.475 (0.095)
Strongly Oppose	0.805 (0.060)	0.147 (0.062)
Laws Ban Mail Medicine		
Strongly Favor	0.020 (0.020)	0.051 (0.028)
Favor	0.0	0.241 (0.082)

Oppose	0.158 (0.055)	0.387 (0.092)
Strongly Oppose	0.822 (0.058)	0.321 (0.092)

To further characterize these two classes, we predicted each respondent's class membership based on the 2-class LCA. Figure 1 provides the full distribution of the standardized political attitudes scale in a histogram among Something Else adults. The density plots overlayed show how this overall distribution represents two distinct subgroups. Class 1 is more politically progressive; whereas, Class 2 is far more politically diffuse. Thus, the data suggest that Something Else adults contains a mix of political opinions.

Figure 1: Distribution of Political Attitudes by Class, Something Else Only (*n* = 96)



Note: Histogram is the full distribution of the political attitudes scale among Something Else adults (i.e., factor scores); density plots are the distribution of each latent class.

Table 6 provides a demographic breakdown of Something Else adults by their predicted class membership. These two classes significantly differ in their sex, current gender identity,

race/ethnicity, and educational attainment. Class 1, the more progressive class, consists of more females and women, white people, and college educated people than Class 2. These demographic differences clearly segment Something Else adults into two distinct cohorts. Given the sex, gender, and educational differences, it might be the case that for some, Something Else is identity label rejection that reflects a radical rejection of labels (Class 1), that may be linked to a person's gender and their educational attainment (e.g., highly educated people who view existing labels as arcane or limited). For Class 2, this identity rejection may be tied to identity ambivalence (e.g, "Down Low" men; see King and Hunter 2004; Snorton 2014).

Table 6: Demographic Characteristics of Something Else Adults by Class (*n* = 96)

	Class 1	**Class 2**
	% (CI)	*% (CI)*
Sex		
Male	32.5 (18.8, 50.0)	68.3 (50.0, 82.3)
Female	67.5 (50.0, 81.2)	31.7 (17.7, 50.0)
Gender		
Man	23.7 (11.3, 42.9)	56.1 (37.6, 72.3)
Woman	49.5 (34.2, 64.9)	24.9 (13.8, 40.7)
T/NB/O	26.8 (15.6, 42.2)	19.1 (7.5, 40.6)
Age		
18-29	46.4 (31.4, 62.1)	34.7 (19.0, 54.7)
30-49	38.6 (25.0, 54.2)	48.9 (31.0, 67.1)
50-64	10.5 (4.6, 22.4)	10.5 (3.3, 28.8)
65+	4.5 (1.6, 12.0)	5.9 (2.0, 16.0)
Race/Ethnicity		
White	68.1 (52.9, 80.3)	40.4 (24.8, 58.1)
POC	13.1 (6.1, 26.0)	41.1 (23.6, 61.2)
Latino	18.8 (9.7, 33.1)	18.6 (8.0, 37.4)
Education		
BA+	41.6 (28.0, 56.6)	18.6 (9.0, 34.7)
Less BA	58.4 (43.4, 72.0)	81.4 (65.3, 91.0)
Marital Status		
Married	19.2 (10.3, 33.1)	30.2 (17.3, 47.4)
Single	76.1 (61.4, 86.5)	66.3 (48.9, 80.2)
Other	4.7 (1.0, 18.7)	3.5 (0.8, 13.6)
Born Again		
Yes	26.7 (9.0, 57.1)	21.0 (6.4, 50.6)

Note: T/NB/O = transgender, nonbinary, or other. POC = Person of Color. Other relationship statuses include separated, divorced, or widowed.

Discussion

Some policy reports have begun to present analyses of LGBTQ+ people combining those who self-identify as LGBT with those who do not express an identity that is straight or cisgender (Goldberg et al. 2022). We aimed to examine whether these Something Else adults were politically similar or different from LGB adults. Prior research led us to expect that Something Else adults may be more politically progressive than LGB adults out of a queer orientation toward label rejection. While we do not have these measures for these mechanisms, it is reasonable to expect that if those were the reasons for not taking up a certain identity would be reflected in various political attitudes measures. We also considered that identity rejection may reflect a more ambivalent stance toward existing identity labels, which may be more politically diffuse ambivalence. Our findings tend to support our second consideration (*H2*) than our former (*H1*), but the LCA findings suggest that both hypotheses may be correct in describing distinct subpopulations of Something Else identifiers, supporting *H3*.

Our findings echo findings in similar studies of LGBT political behavior. Like LGBT Christians (Burge 2020; Cravens III 2018; 2024), our results suggest that Something Else adults' policy preferences may be reflect identity ambivalence. Such identity ambivalence translates to more political attitude ambivalence. Similarly, the mixture of Something Else adults' political attitudes show similarities with other research suggesting that LGBT people are not monolithic in political attitudes (Jones 2021).

Like political Independents (Hillygus and Shields 2008; Klar and Krupnikkov 2016), Something Else adults are a mix of people who hold overlapping policy preferences that compete between identity-based groups with which they may not fit. Policy disagreements within and between LGB and non-LGB people may lead Something Else people to disassociate from or reject these groups' policy preferences in favor of alternatives (see also Klar et al. 2022; Lupton et al. 2015).

Our findings contain limitations. A cross-sectional survey can only provide a single snapshot, and even a larger-than-average survey will contain smaller subsamples of non-straight individuals. Further, our findings are observational and descriptive, so future work should consider whether our findings replicate in other samples, and other methodologies may help trace the causal meaning of Something Else identification. The survey's representativeness is benefit, reflecting best practices in complex survey data design and analysis.

There are practical implications from our findings. It may not be the best for policy analysts to group Something Else people with LGBT people to describe a broader group of LGBTQ+. The politics of Something Else adults may be quite different, and it may be a conceptual stretch to group everyone into a single category. While scholars already recommend that focus should be placed on examining within-group differences among LGBT people (see Jones 2021; Murib 2017), our findings caution against using an expansive grouping to describe the politics of what is a diverse group. Further, given the unique policy preferences of Something Else adults, LGBT rights advocates may be better informed about the needs of the LGBT community by considering the diversity of identities and non-identities (Pepin-Neff 2021).

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