Understanding what factors inform our attitudes about LGBT people may be important in mitigating prejudice. Support for same-sex marriage has increased over the past decades, but support for marriage equality lags for conservative and religious people (Sherkat, Powell-William, Maddox, & de Vries, 2011). Conservatism and religiosity predict disapproval of gay marriage (Todd & Ong, 2012), transgender bathroom laws (Pew, 2016; CNN, 2016), and attitudes about LGBT people (Norton & Herek, 2013).

There is insufficient evidence exploring ways to decrease LGBT prejudice. Intergroup contact theory hypothesizes that diversity in social networks decreases prejudice towards outgroup members (Allport, 1954). This intervention has been observed to reduce LGBT prejudice (Hoffarth & Hodson, 2020). The question becomes whether this intervention is generalizable to the real-world, especially for conservatives and religious people.

We utilized data from the GSS-ANES joint 2020 survey. Subjects completed several items that measure constructs like political ideology, religiosity, and attitudes towards LGBT people. Results show that conservatives and religious people are more likely to view LGBT people unfavorably and disapprove of same-sex marriage. However, LGBT favorability is moderated through diversity in social network, but not same-sex marriage. The findings suggest intergroup contact informs attitudes about LGBT people, but not policy support.