

*Determining context vs. character portrayal as
crucial variable in constructing a viewer's
attitude towards homosexuality when watching
fiction TV.*

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1. Introduction

In recent years, marriage equality has increasingly become a political and cultural hot topic across the globe. Although it has been legal in several European countries, such as The Netherlands and France, for quite some time, it is only a recent development in the U.S. where gradually, different states are passing the same sex marriage bill. While this is a clear sign of political society progressing and moving towards equal rights for all, it does not automatically mean that the thoughts and hearts of all Americans, and the rest of the world for that matter, are in favor of marriage equality, nor that they accept same-sex relationships and homosexuality.

While society seems to have become more accepting at the most, and tolerant at the least, of LGB (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual) persons, often people still do not know (out) LGB persons as they do not come across them in their ordinary daily lives. What happens is that they obtain all their knowledge and ideas about the LGB community, and evidently form their expectations and opinions, based on the information given to them by people and organizations they consider to be trustworthy, such as parents and friends, but also political leaders, religious leaders. It goes without saying that these parties have a lot of influential power, regardless whether their messages are morally right.

However, it can be argued that their influences are increasingly conjoining with and, to some extent, are even being replaced by the mass media. For centuries, the media have been used as a tool to spread political and religious messages (Rokeach & DeFleur, 1976; McQuail, 1977; Scheufele, Nisbet & Brossard, 2003). However, increasingly its content consists of programs purely for the sake of entertainment, which are very popular and well watched among the masses. Considering an average person's media consumption, then, which on average is a couple hours a day, the media can be considered as having a large influence on society's information acquisition. Media consumption by otherwise homogenous populations, contributes to one shared culture of entertainment, which results in audiences from different groups of society consuming the same entertainment, which effectively creates one shared culture of entertainment. Evidently, it is highly likely that this shared culture increasingly obtains the same beliefs and views as the information they receive from the media is the same.

According to Avila-Saavedra (2009), 2003 was a 'breakthrough' year for gay male characters on American television, as more "audacious gay male characters" started appearing on prime-time network television, for instance *Will & Grace*, *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*,

and *Queer as Folk*. In his article on the construction of gay male characters on television, he states that while homosexuals are becoming more visible, they are often still represented “in a way acceptable for heterosexual audiences”. Although there has been a significant shift in media representation of homosexual characters due to an increase in visibility, for the most part television portrays these characters with stereotypical portrayals. While stereotypes are convenient tools to quickly categorize people who belong to the same groups by ascribing them a limited number of characteristics, they also have the potential to jeopardize our way of thinking (Taylor, 1995). That is to say, stereotypes often go hand in hand with negativity, and by repeatedly falling back on them, we allow them to steer us into a territory marked by narrow-mindedness and prejudice.

In his article *Can Two Real Men Eat Quiche Together? Storytelling, Gender-Role Stereotypes, and Legal Protection for Lesbians and Gay Men*, Fajer (1991) describes three myths about gay people in which these stereotypes find their roots. The first myth is that “gay sexuality [...] is all-encompassing, obsessive, and completely divorced from love, long-term relationships, and family structure” (p.514). Fajer calls this the “sex-as-lifestyle assumption”, which basically proposes that heterosexuals perceive gay people’s sexual activity as out of the ordinary i.e. not normal. Secondly, the author states that “while being gay may be acceptable, talking about being gay is not” (p. 515). The myth that stems from this is that homosexuality is taboo and should not be discussed. Thirdly, the author brings up the “cross-gender assumption” which relates to heterosexual people believing gay people behave as the opposite gender i.e. “gay men behave like ‘normal’ women and lesbians like ‘normal’ men.” Stereotypes that relate to this assumption are the feminine gay male and the masculine butch lesbian.

Prior research has indicated that stereotypes in the media have implications for how audience perceptions and attitudes are constructed (Taylor, 1995). Moreover, Taylor suggests that stereotypes not only influence how others think about the social groups that are being stereotyped, but also how the people in these stereotyped social groups think about themselves. The authors goes as far as saying that stereotypes can even work as self-fulfilling prophecies, as the minorities adapt and behave according to their stereotypes. For instance, a young lesbian might think she needs to adopt a crew cut and wear flannel in order for people to know she is a lesbian, but also a gay man might be the last to be asked to help with construction work because he is thought of as weak and feminine. LGB youths who do not know LGB persons in real life, often turn to main stream media as a source for LGB role models (Evans, 2007). While they do not always like the stereotypes they find, and even fear

that their family and friends adopt negative attitudes towards LGB persons as a result of this media representation, they continue to watch the media as they are searching for media representation of people who are like them. According to a study by Martins et al. (2007), especially among gay men there already is an “extreme emphasis on physical attractiveness, possessing a lean and muscular body, overall appearance, and fashion” (p. 636). Whereas self-objectification was once considered as something for women, Barlett, Vowels and Saucier (2008) conclude that men too feel pressure from mass media to conform to the perpetuated male body ideal. Moreover, they state that this pressure causes men to feel worse about their bodies, affecting their self-image caused by feelings significantly relating to body satisfaction, self-esteem, and psychological disorders, including feelings of anxiety and depression (p. 282).

As cultivation theory has it, media not only influence, but shape the mentality of their audiences (Gerbner, 1998). What we are consistently exposed to, strengthens our ideas that that which we see is true and reality. Consistency across media, like television and internet, further reinforces these ideas. Linking this to homosexuality in the media, if we were to see more homosexual characters in soap operas, talk shows, and movies, we would gradually believe them to be parts of our society. Vice versa, it is likely that minimal to zero representation causes unfavorable attitudes towards homosexuals, as they are unusual and different. Few studies have shown that research participants who watch media with homosexual content are more accepting and experienced more favorable attitudes towards the homosexual characters (Walter, 1994; Riggle & Crawford, 1996; Bonds-Raacke et al., 2007).

Now more than ever, it seems media can give the final push, reinforce morally right ideas regarding homosexuality, and bring about a permanent social change. In communication and media research, agenda setting and framing theories are often used to explain mass media’s role and behavior. According to these theories, “media tell people both what is important in the world around them, and how to think about the events and people who inhabit the world” (Brown, 2002; 44). Evidently, media are extremely influential when it comes to what we are exposed to, how we learn about issues and situations, and how we are supposed to respond to these things. Apart from news programs that teach us real life stories and issues from all around the world, media offer us fictional shows and movies for the sake of entertainment. We do not watch these media with the intent to learn, but to be entertained. However, according to cultivation theory we are still influenced by the representation and portrayal of characters, situations, and social and political issues, of which repeated exposure will cause us to adopt the ideas/ideologies and behaviors that we see, and repeat them in our

daily lives. Moreover, “exposure to depictions of LGB sexuality in mainstream media likely relays the message that LGB individuals exist in society” (Bonds, 2011; 138).

Especially now that LGB representation is increasing, “attitude-change research is needed to investigate what can be done to decrease negative attitudes towards homosexuality” (Bonds-Raacke et al. 2007; 23). Few studies have examined media portrayals of homosexual men and women and changes in the attitude of viewers with traditional beliefs, and even less studies have focused on bisexual characters. Their results indicated that non-stereotypical portrayals in the media, as well as repeated violence towards non-stereotypical gay male characters, elicited more positive attitudes with viewers (Walter, 1994; Riggle & Crawford, 1996; Mazur & Emmers-Sommer; 2003). These findings suggest that a non-stereotypical portrayals of gay males in the media evoke more positive responses among viewers. In contrast, there is a notably larger line of research that focuses on gender differences in attitudes towards homosexuality (Herek, 1988; Kite & Whitley, 1996; LaMar & Kite, 1998; Hudephol, Parrot & Zeichner, 2010). Men are more likely to differ in their attitudes towards gay males and lesbians, whereas women do not show significant differences. Moreover, these studies showed that male-male intimate behavior often elicits anger with males, whereas female-female intimate behavior does not. This could be explained by the assumption that homosexuality is “a negation of masculinity” and that as such, “homosexual men must be effeminate” (Connell, 1992; 736).

Despite the value of past research, there are several limitations. Firstly, the majority of these studies used video material that contained pornography, erotica, and intimate male-male behavior. While this research has provided relevant and valuable results, it can be argued these results are not applicable to non-erotic material, such as daytime television. Secondly, the material that is used does not take into account the different subtypes of gay males and non-stereotypical portrayals. The few studies that did, reported promising results that suggest positive homosexual characters elicit positive viewer attitudes, whereas negative characters do the opposite. More research is necessary to investigate whether these results are generalizable, and thus whether they can be put into practice in order to decrease negative attitudes towards homosexuality among television audiences. Thirdly, the participants in the majority of the studies were heterosexual. As such there is hardly any literature on attitudes of LGB people. Therefore, it would be interesting to include LGB people in future research and investigate their attitudes towards homosexuality, and whether or not these differ from the attitudes of heterosexuals.

Similar to abovementioned research, which investigated the relationship between

stereotypical and non-stereotypical portrayals of male and female homosexuals and audience attitudes towards homosexuality in general, a recent study by Ferguson (2012) suggests that the extent to which a character is depicted either subordinate or dominant is the crucial influencing variable in how audience attitude is formed. This is in contrast to content is not the crucial influence variable, but instead that this depends on He found that viewers who watched a female character who was strong and dominant but who was also portrayed as sexually deviant, had more positive attitudes towards women than viewers who watched a female character who was weak and submissive, and a victim of sexual assault. While Ferguson focused on (mostly heterosexual) female characters, he has demonstrated a new angle of research in which he contests the established notion among scholars that sexualization and denigration of women is caused by the contexts they are portrayed in (2012). A topic well worth researching.

Likewise, there is a gap in scientific literature that addresses this notion for the representation and portrayals of LGB characters. In light of recent developments surrounding marriage equality, but also the continuous reporting of anti-gay crimes as a result of social problems such as prejudice, as well as the increased risk for suicidal thoughts and behavior among LGB youth, it is important to investigate if and how media portrayals change viewer attitudes. Mullin and Linz (1995) report that viewing violence has several negative consequences. Firstly, it has proven to increase aggressive behavior. Secondly, it “may increase desensitization to violence, resulting in calloused attitudes toward violence directed at others and a decreased likelihood to take action on behalf of the victim when violence occurs” (p. 449).

The aim of this thesis is to address the existing gap in literature, and contribute new and valuable data to the existing body of literature. This study focuses on gay male characters, and not on gay females or explicitly bisexual male and female characters due to the limited size of the study. Moreover, as the small body of literature that was previously discussed indicates, attitudes towards gay males appear to be more explicitly negative and violent in general, and thus an area of research that is well worth investigating to gain insight into how these negative attitudes are formed, and could possibly be influenced otherwise. As such, this study is an attempt to investigate to what extent there are nuances and gradations in level of feelings of negativity after watching a gay male character in a fiction television show, and to what extent this is influenced by the character’s portrayal. Whereas past research mostly used the terms ‘weak’ and ‘strong’ to describe the portrayals of gay male characters, in present study the terms ‘stereotypical’ and ‘non-stereotypical’ will be used instead. These terms

encompass a larger number of character traits, and illustrate a better and more accurate contrast between the gay male character portrayals that are used in this study, and that are present in today's fiction media.

As past research has indicated, stereotypical portrayals of a social group can have negative effects on viewers belonging to that social group. Therefore, the four measures are assessed among viewers of different sexual orientations, which are categorized into two types of viewers, heterosexual viewers and non-heterosexual viewers. This decision is based on the knowledge that the LGB community consists of people attracted to individuals of the same-sex. Thus, these people are expected to have similar feelings with regards to gay males. Moreover this decision is based on past research findings which indicate that existing stereotypes concerning bisexual and homosexual persons are similar, and that indicate that heterosexuals' attitudes are less favorable towards both bisexual and homosexual persons, especially males (Herek, 2002; Israel & Mohr, 2008; Yost & Thomas, 2011). The author, however, is aware it is possible there are different views within the LGB community, for instance due to internalized homophobia, and in the heterosexual community. While this could be a possible limitation to this study, for the purpose of this study, LGB persons are categorized in the same group of viewers.

Moreover, while the author of this study is aware that there are obviously nuances in how people view homosexuality, for the purpose of this study, women of all sexual orientations are categorized into one subtype of viewer. This is based on research findings that suggest that in general, heterosexual women do not view male homosexuality as negatively as heterosexual men do, which is due to the fact that it is not threatening to their own gender identity, nor does it violate their traditional role (Herek, 1988; Kite & Whitley, 1996; LaMar & Kite, 1998; Hudephol, Parrot & Zeichner, 2010).

In this study, it is argued that the violent content in which gay male characters are portrayed is not the central variable that negatively influences audience attitude towards these characters. Past research on media effects has established that our continuous exposure to violent media content can influence real-life behavior and attitudes to be violent and negative (McGuire, 1986; Shrum, Wyer & O'Guinn, 1998, Taylor, 2005). However, a recent study by Ferguson (2012) on female character portrayal in sexually violent media suggests that the violent nature of media content is not the crucial variable in influencing the viewer's feelings and attitudes towards women, but instead it is the manner in which a character is portrayed that is the crucial variable. As such, present study adopts this approach, and adapts it to gay male characters in fiction television shows.

I argue that the portrayal of the gay male characters as stereotypical or non-stereotypical is the central influencing variable for feelings of negativity in general, but also towards gay males in particular. 'Feelings of negativity' is a rather broad terminology, which is why four measures are used to assess viewer's feelings of negativity after watching particular portrayals, namely levels of prejudice towards gay males, self-objectification, anxiety, and depression respectively. Besides the influence, or lack of influence, of violent content, the main focus in this study is to determine two interaction effects on these four measures. Firstly, an interaction effect between character portrayal and gender, and secondly an interaction effect between character portrayal and sexual orientation.

Past research findings indicate that self-objectification is increasing among men in general due to media's emphasis on the male body ideal. No previous studies have investigated whether this is also the case for heterosexual males if the man they see portrayed is explicitly gay, yet masculine i.e. non-stereotypical, which is why present study will attempt at doing so. For similar reasons, this study aims at determining to what extent the levels of anxiety and depression among heterosexuals differ depending on the portrayal of the gay male. Results of this study could offer insight into how gay male character portrayals in the media influence audience attitudes and behaviors towards gay males, as well as how mass media could use this knowledge for useful purposes in bringing about social change.

RQ1: To what extent does watching a stereotypical or non-stereotypical portrayal of a gay male character have a positive or negative effect on heterosexual males' and females' vs. non-heterosexual males' level of prejudice towards gay men?

RQ2: To what extent does watching a stereotypical or non-stereotypical portrayal of a gay male character have a positive or negative effect on heterosexual males' and females' vs. non-heterosexual males' level of self-objectification?

RQ3: To what extent does watching a stereotypical or non-stereotypical portrayal of a gay male character have a positive or negative effect on heterosexual males' and females' vs. non-heterosexual males' level of depression?

RQ4: To what extent does watching a stereotypical or non-stereotypical portrayal of a gay male character have a positive or negative effect on heterosexual males' and females' vs. non-heterosexual males' level of anxiety?

2. Theory and previous research

2.1. Attitudes and their functions

According to Ajzen and Fishbein “a person's attitude represents his evaluation of the entity in question” (1978; 889). Similarly, Fishbein states that it is “an evaluative dimension of a concept – e.g. is the concept ‘good’ or ‘bad’?” (Fishbein, 1963;233). According to Nelson (2009) “attitudes are formed and maintained because they serve a psychological need for the individual,” (p. 456) and serve different functions depending on the individual’s needs, objects, and situations. Moreover, according to the author, attitudes can pertain to concepts such as people, objects, behaviors and opinions, and can be positive and negative.

While there are no definite or specific functions for an individual to adopt and use a particular attitude, The *Handbook of Prejudice, Stereotyping, and Discrimination* highlights four main functions of an attitude: a social adjustment or social expressive function, value-expressive function, defensive function, and object-appraisal or schematic function (Nelson, 2009; 456-457). In the past decades, there has been an increase in research interest on attitudes of both heterosexual and homosexual individuals towards homosexuality (Kite & Whitley, 1996; Herek, 1988; Hudephol, Parrot & Zeichner, 2010; LaMar & Kite, 1998; Corley & Pollack, 1997; Mazur & Emmers-Sommer, 2003). It appears that especially heterosexual males often have a negative attitude towards homosexual men. The line of research that focuses on heterosexual men’s attitudes towards homosexuality has identified several motives for the negative responses to male-male behavior, which can be explained through the four functions described by Nelson (2009). Firstly, through the *social adjustment function*, adopting a particular attitude can strengthen an individual’s relation with a specific group. For example, a heterosexual individual’s prejudiced attitude towards homosexuality can serve as a way of bonding with other heterosexuals who are equally prejudiced.

Secondly, the *value-expressive function* of an attitude allows an individual to express and affirm values pertaining to the *self*. For example, adopting a prejudiced attitude towards homosexuality strengthens their own heterosexual self-image. In the case of a religious heterosexual individual, it would strengthen the notion surrounding his or her as being moral and righteous.

Third, the *defensive function* of an attitude is used “for warding off or coping with perceived threats to self-esteem” (Nelson, 2009; 457). This is often linked to internalized homophobia or the fear of being perceived as homosexual, and thus overcompensating the opposite by adopting a prejudiced and antigay attitude.

Lastly, the *object-appraisal* or *schematic function* of an attitude is used for “making sense of past experiences” (p. 457), and recalled for dealing with future situations that are similar. For instance, the attitude an individual adopts after his or her first contact with a gay man influences how he or she acts in future encounters with gay men.

2.2. Attitude cultivation

As people learn new knowledge, they “increase understanding about a particular domain and may enhance the ability to perform a behavior related to that domain” (Perse, 1986; 131). Through learning, they acquire cognitions (or more knowledge), affect (or feelings about a particular instance), and behaviors. While learning is often understood as an active process, social cognitions, and behaviors often operates unconsciously (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995). As such, we are not always in control over the initial acquisition of cognitions, feelings, and behaviors.

2.2.1. Attitude-behavior relationship

A line of research that focuses on an attitude-behavior relationship argues that a person’s behavior towards a concept is cultivated according to his or her respective attitude (Regan & Fazio, 1977; Glassman & Albarracin, 2006; McConnell et al. 2008) Moreover, it suggests that it is possible to predict an individual’s general behavior towards an entity based on his or her attitude. Based on an individual’s prejudiced attitude towards homosexuality, then, we would be able to predict and thus expect their behavior towards a gay male to be possibly unpleasant and even hostile. In their literature review, Glassman and Albarracin (2006) report that people construct stable attitudes when the information they continuously perceive is homogenous. They also state that stable attitudes are constructed when we base new attitudes on information that older attitudes are also based on. This notion shares similarities with the phenomena of mental schemas, the storage theory of memories (Barlett, 1932; Wagoner, 2013). According to Barlett, a schema is "an active organization of past reactions and experiences which are always operating in any well-developed organism" (p. 201). Since its development by Barlett in the early 1930’s, social psychologists have adapted the concept of schemas to different social contexts and processes. At the core, however, they all share the idea that people internalize initial experiences with people, situations or events i.e. storage them, and recollect these past experiences in the future when they find themselves in similar situations or encounter similar people or events. Based on this theory then, if the

only homosexual males a person has ever witnessed were all portrayed with stereotypically feminine characteristics, this person would anticipate all homosexual males to be feminine. Similarly, if a person has only seen situations in which a homosexual male was victimized, they would process this information into mental schemas that say this is normal behavior and how one is supposed to go about homosexuals/homosexuality. In short, the experienced behavior that is processed after past experiences, becomes a guide for future situations. As such, past experiences have influence on how new social information is processed (Baldwin, 1993). The old knowledge interacts with new knowledge in perception, language, thought, and memory (Brewer & Nakamura, 1984). However, special attention should be paid to a warning by Gilbert (2008), who states that “if there is an underlying attitude it will not be the sole determinant of [...] behavior, and strong relationships can be expected only if the entire situation is very carefully analyzed” (p. 208).

As such, past research confirms the validity of attitude-behavior relationship for the most part. However, attitude-behavior consistency is greater when attitudes are held with more confidence, when attitudes are more easily recollected, and most importantly, when they are based on direct experience (Glassman & Albarracín, 2006). An individual’s attitude, whether positive or negative, is stronger when it is based on real life experiences instead of mediated experiences (Fazio, Zanna & Cooper, 1978). It is possible that this has to do with the individual having more information about an object after a direct experience, and thus were better capable of forming an attitude, and were more likely to behave according to that attitude in the future. It is then more likely people have stronger attitudes towards homosexuals if they know them in real life. Their current situation would activate a knowledge structure, which can be positive and negative depending on their past experience, which is called *priming* (Bargh, Chen & Burrows, 1996). The idea of homosexuality, then, would activate a more positive association with people who have mainly positive views or experiences about homosexuals, and vice versa in the case of people with mainly negative beliefs (Herek, 2004).

2.2.2. Learning through indirect experiences

In contrast to learning through direct experience which involves real life occurrences and events, an indirect experience implies the presence of a medium through which an individual obtains impressions and thus forms an attitude. This medium can be other people, like family members, peers and co-workers, but also print and broadcast media, such as

books, newspapers, television, and films respectively. This subchapter discusses several established theories surrounding mediated learning in order to make justified assumptions surrounding the formation of audience attitudes towards homosexuality through media.

2.2.2.1 Cultivation theory

Gerbner (1998) stresses that it is not through “families, schools, churches, neighborhoods [...] in fact, not anyone with anything relevant to tell” that we learn, but from “a small group of distant conglomerates with something to sell” (p. 176). According to the author, it is mainstream media that proliferates and thus creates popular opinions in today’s society, and evidently dominates people’s thinking processes. To put it in the words of Perse (2001), “learning from the mass media is at the heart of many media effects” (p.131).

Back in the 1970’s, Gerbner (1998) warned that television offers only a limited number of program options, and that these programs are even “designed to be watched by large a heterogeneous audiences” (p. 180). His cultivation theory states that the media not only influence, but shape the mentality of their audiences. What we are consistently exposed to, strengthens our ideas that that which we see is true and reality. This process is how mental schemata are created and strengthened. Consistency across media, like television and internet, further reinforces these ideas. Taking into account the daily media intake of an average Western individual, there lies the danger that society learns more through indirect experiences via media than through direct experiences in their day to day lives. If the media portrayal of gay males is consistently stereotypical, then, the heterosexual audience may start to believe gay males are like this in real-life. Similarly, if gay males are mostly, and in some cases exclusively, depicted as victimized and bullied by heterosexual individuals, the audience will believe this behavior towards homosexuals is normal and acceptable.

According to Morly and Robbins (2013), “[...] collective identity is based on the (selective) process of memory, so that a given group recognizes itself through its memory of a common past” (p. 46). As such, social groups can be seen as dynamic entities of which the limits, boundaries, and characteristics change as time passes. Given its omnipresence in today’s society, media plays a large role in the process of identity forming. Moreover, Morley and Robbins (2003) state that in modern day society, there is a fear of the unknown or the unpopular present “at the heart of the question of ‘identity’” (p.46). As a result, social homogenization of the cultural identity takes place as society clings to the popular opinion, belief, or representation, which is in line with cultivation theory and Gerbner (1998) who

stated that television's limited programming is aimed at homogenous audiences. In turn, this fear of "otherness" is perpetuated by the media through content homogenization, which makes it difficult to distinguish where the homogenization circle starts. This homogenization of content is something Gerbner already noticed in the 1970's, and what is still very much present today due to the concentration of media ownership., meaning only a handful of conglomerates is in charge of media content. This, then, would mean that they have the ability to constitute identities on a (sub)cultural level, a national level, and even a global level.

How this power should be put to use has been an important topic of debate for many years. Some argue that it should be put to more positive use, for instance by broadening and diversifying the representation of societal subcultures and minorities (Glaad.org). In the media, stereotypes are often still used to portray minority groups, such as racial minorities, religious minorities, political minorities, and sexuality minorities, the latter including the LGB community. Some scholars argue that gay males internalize these homogenous media portrayals of gay males, and evidently feel the pressure to act according to what is depicted in the media (Herdt & Continuing Features; 1989; McKee, 2000). In his study, McKee (2000) interviewed a number of gay males in Australia, and discovered that "the media were the most important source of information about gay identity in their youth" (p. 82) While at the time the number of homosexual men represented in the media were small, the ones the respondents did see made a positive strong impact, serving as role models in legitimizing their feelings and as examples of identities they could grow up to be. McKee (2000) concluded that both fictional entertainment media need to acknowledge the potential role they could play in boosting self-esteem of young gay males and "creating a sense of what is normal and accepting" (p. 82) .

2.2.2.2. Social comparison

It can be argued that through identity forming based on examples in the media alone, therein lies the danger that the gay male identity becomes a social construction. A gay male who does not have a gay role model in real life, or who has "a desire to gain a fuller understanding of gay identity" (Hamer, 2003; 80) but does not know where to look in real life, is likely to seek information in the media. As previously discussed, gay male media representation is both limited and often stereotypical. Consequently, it is possible that this gay male believes gay identity consists of having and showing particular characteristics represented in the media. In other words, being a gay male means having to talk as loud as Jack on *Will and Grace* or Elijah on *Girls*, or dressing in designer clothing and be as fashion

forward as Kurt and Blaine on *Glee*, or gossiping and acting as flamboyant as the gay male presenters on *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy*.

As Wood states it, “an important source of knowledge about oneself is comparisons with other people” (1989; 231). This notion is central in both Festinger’s social comparison theory (1954) and Bandura’s social learning theory (1977). Social comparison theory proposes that self-evaluation and self-enhancement are the prime motivations of self-comparison. Humans have the need for self-evaluation and compare their own abilities and limitations with others to serve this need (Festinger, 1954; 231). Moreover, Festinger hypothesizes that “the tendency to compare oneself with some other specific person decreases as the difference between his opinion or ability and one’s own increases” (p.120). Being too far removed from the other person makes it impossible to “accurately” evaluate one’s abilities.

Similarly, Bandura (1977) states that by looking at others who are similar, the individual attempts to define whether their performance is as good and successful as the others. By observing others through both direct and indirect experiences, and modeling after them, people learn. In the case of direct experiences, people mostly learn through rewarding and punishment of their actions. The responses to these actions are then strengthened either positively or negatively, depending on whether they were rewarding or punishing. However, the scholar states, it is difficult and possibly dangerous even, to solely rely on learning through real life trial-and-error because some situations do not allow for mistakes (Bandura, 1977; 5). This is why a lot of human behavior is learned by observing examples or models, which Bandura calls *modeling*. He even goes as far as saying that it is an “indispensable aspect of learning” as it is more efficient and shortens the process of knowledge acquisition (p. 6). However, he states that merely exposing people to a model does not guarantee they will learn anything from it. People will select only features that resonate with them and are relevant to them.

As such, both social comparison theory and social learning theory stress the fact that in the learning process people seek examples they share similarities, as this allows for better evaluation and enhancing of themselves. Since their origins, social psychologists have revisited both theories, and used them as research angles. Research has focused on social comparison in relation to body image, effects of violence, and social groups in television, film and advertising (Harwood & Anderson, 2002; Romer, Jamieson & Aday, 2003). People are more likely to define themselves based on their social surroundings and the people in it, than on objective standards (Harwood & Anderson, 2002). Moreover, in line with social

comparison theory, Romer, Jamieson and Aday found that watching news is related to an increase in fear of crime (2003). This could imply that through direct experiences, people learn about reality, create mental schemas, and, based on these schemas, adopt expectations.

However, as previously established, social comparison also takes place through indirect experiences. Harwood and Anderson (2002) found that television portrayals influence viewers attitude towards their own groups, but also towards other social groups (p.81). This suggests that seeing one's own social group portrayed on television, causes the viewers to compare themselves to these representations as well. Moreover, the authors state that "media are transmitting and perpetuating stereotypes of social groups, and these images are affecting majority and minority group members' perceptions of groups and intergroup relations" (p. 82). This means that media play a large role in shaping societal groups and evidently their mutual dynamics. Furthermore, the authors claim that a societal group's representation in the media is a "direct indicator" of that group's status and "vitality" in society (p.82). This implies that the amount of media representation, and thus visibility, reflects a group's existence in society. Meaning that if acknowledgement in society is low, media representation and visibility are low. Referring back to cultivation theory (Gerbner 1998), this reason could be turned around through the argument that media does not reflect society, but instead, society imitates the media. In other words, the bigger a group's representation on television is, the bigger its place in society. This reasoning suggests that media representation has the power to maintain a societal group. Through media representation, the audience learns of a minority group's place, and arguably level of importance, in everyday life as well as how to acknowledge it and respond to it. This would count for heterosexuals, the majority group, having expectations about homosexuals, the minority group, but also for homosexuals having expectations about being homosexual and about being treated by heterosexuals. Especially for homosexuals who have limited real life resources to turn to for information, media can serve as an important resource of information (Bond, 2014). Diverse and non-stereotypical portrayals of homosexuals, then, would have a positive effect on homosexual viewers. In contrast, stereotypical portrayals of minorities would have negative effects on the self-esteem of people belonging to that minority (McKee, 2000). These negative effects could even result in the stereotype threat, which is "being at risk of confirming, as self-characteristic, a negative stereotype about one's group" (Steele & Aronson, 1995; 797). Especially when the stereotype is negative, "this predicament may be self-threatening enough to have disruptive effects of its own" (p.797). What this means is that the negative stereotype that looms over male homosexuality, and the negative attitudes towards male homosexuality as a result of this,

could result in gay males behaving overtly non-stereotypical as a way to protect themselves. Moreover, people who feel stereotype-threatened are likely to experience higher levels of anxiety, and a decrease in performance. This was reported in a study by Bosson, Haymovitz and Pinel (2006) reported that this behavior is mostly prevalent among gay males who have either not come to terms with their sexuality, or gay males whose sexual orientation is a secret. In their study, gay males had to interact with children after they were either stereotype-threatened or not. The stereotype that was used, was related to the incorrect assumption among many people that homosexuality is linked to pedophilia. The stereotype threat was deemed to be activated after asking the participants to state their sexual orientation, after which they would interact with the children.

2.3. Attitudes towards homosexuality

2.3.1. Media effects on heterosexuals and their attitudes towards homosexuality

In recent years, research interest has increased on homosexuality in the media and audience perceptions. In this part, previous research about heterosexuals' attitudes towards homosexuality is discussed.

Connell (1992) states that “to many people, homosexuality is a *negation* of masculinity, and homosexual men must be effeminate” (p.736), and concludes that “antagonism against homosexual men may be used to define masculinity”. Similarly, Donaldson (1993) proposes that , “a fundamental element of hegemonic masculinity, then, is that women exist as potential sexual objects for men while men are negated as sexual objects for men” (p.3). This implies that homosexuality is excluded from the dominant form of masculinity, and homosexuals thus are not masculine.

Connell's and Donaldson's theories are supported by several studies. In their meta-analysis of existing research on attitudes and stereotypes, Kite and Whitley (1996) state that gender differences in heterosexuals' attitudes towards homosexuality are a result of a “generalized gender belief system” (p.337). This system includes “stereotypes about women and men, attitudes toward appropriate roles for the sexes, and perceptions of those who presumably violate the modal pattern (e.g. gay persons)” (p. 337). The appropriate gender role for men involves having masculine traits, and for women having feminine traits. The authors state that “violating appropriate gender roles is probably viewed more seriously for men than for women,” (p. 338) and that “people react more negatively to males who possess female-typed traits than to females who possess male-typed traits” (p. 338). This implies that

masculine traits are socially more desirable than feminine traits.

Similarly, Corley and Pollack (1997) report that people whose gender role beliefs are more traditional, have more negative attitudes towards homosexuals. The authors also stated that people who show negative attitudes are older and less educated than those who do not. Moreover, individuals who practice religion, which is often connected to traditional values and beliefs, have more prejudiced attitudes towards criminals, delinquents, prostitutes, homosexuals, and those in need of psychiatric treatment (Gerbner, 1998). Negative and prejudiced attitudes translate into homophobia and the perpetuation of negative stereotypes. Several studies have shown that gay men are seen as feminine, and consider them less likely to have masculine characteristics and occupations (Kite & Deaux, 1987; Madon, 1997). Moreover, they were less likely expected to show masculine traits such as leadership, aggressiveness, and competitiveness. Given the notion that homosexuality is often associated with femininity (Storms, 1978; Taylor, 1983; Herek, 1984; Madon, 1997), and that the stereotype often includes feminine traits, this would explain why a lot of heterosexual men show more signs of anxiety and anger when experiencing male-male intimate behavior. As established earlier, expressing a negative attitude can be perceived as a defensive function, used to reinforce their masculinity, and thus erase the fear of being perceived as a homosexual themselves (Nelson, 2009).

This defense mechanism was closely studied by Govorun et al (2006), who state that people activate stereotypes in others when their individual self-concept, or a specific part of it, is threatened. The authors call this “defensive projection,” which is “the process of perceiving one’s undesirable qualities in others,” as a way to “avoid recognizing negative qualities in the self” (p. 781). As is previously established, the social norm for men is that they are masculine and exhibit masculine traits. With defensive projection then, with men whose masculinity is threatened, stereotypes are activated as a means to defend their masculinity, and suppress the possibility of their own femininity. Because of this awareness of this threat, men become hyper aware, causing stereotyping thoughts and attention to be “more accessible” and men “more likely to construe other men’s ambiguous behaviors as effeminate” (Govorun et al., 2006; 782). As these other men are more likely to already be stereotyped individuals due to having unmasculine characteristics, the projection is then “justified” i.e. the projected judgment is not perceived as wrong, and will not conjure feelings of guilt (Govorun et al, 2006). This rings true for the stereotype of the gay male as being more feminine and having feminine traits. In other words, to protect their masculinity, men project undesired, for instance effeminate, traits onto other men.

Several studies have shown that in general heterosexual women hold similar attitudes towards gay men and lesbians, whereas heterosexual men are more likely to hold different attitudes (Herek, 1988; Kite & Whitley, 1996; LaMar & Kite, 1998; Hudephol, Parrot & Zeichner, 2010). Hudephol et al. (2010) found that erotic and non-erotic images between two men elicited increased feelings of anger among high-prejudiced heterosexual men in particular. Moreover, they concluded that “sexual prejudice is positively associated with anger,” (p.1034) after they measured heterosexual men’s state of anger before and after a viewing of both male-female and a male-male erotic videos, where men showed significant increases in signs of anger viewing the male-male content. In contrast, heterosexual men’s attitudes towards lesbians and female-female intimate behavior appears to be less negative overall (Corley & Pollack, 1997). In a study by Corley and Pollack (1997), results showed that men with traditional values about gender roles and stereotypes show more positive attitudes towards lesbians who are depicted as less stereotypical. Women did not show significant difference in attitude when watching stereotypical and non-stereotypical lesbians. Surprisingly, it seems this is the sole study that focuses on comparing stereotypical and non-stereotypical portrayals, and the differences in attitude towards homosexuality among viewers. Therefore, more research is needed. Firstly, for repeating and expanding this study, that in turn could possibly lead to generalizable results, and secondly, for testing the same theory using stereotypical and non-stereotypical portrayals in the case of not only gay men and women, but also bisexual and transsexual men and women.

Bonds-Raacke et al. (2007) report of the few experiments that have examined media portrayals of homosexuals and changes in the attitude of viewers with traditional beliefs. In one study, participants that were asked to watch a documentary film that depicted a prominent gay politician, showed a positive change in attitude towards homosexuals. It is possible this is due to the fact that the gay male was depicted with masculine traits such as leadership and dominance. In another study, one group of participants was asked to watch video material in which homophobia, homosexuality, and stereotypes were depicted, and another group serving as the control group was not. The results showed a significant increase in empathy for homosexuals and a decrease in homophobia in the group that had watched the material, whereas the second group that was not exposed to the same material had shown no change (Bonds-Raacke et al., 2007; 3-4). These findings suggest that despite the presence of a gay character, and the expectation viewers with traditional beliefs to have and express negative attitudes towards a gay male character, the rather non-stereotypical portrayal i.e. more masculine, could possibly have caused them to respond more positively. The results from the

second study are somewhat unexpected, yet promising, as stereotypes and homophobia are often more prevalent among people with traditional beliefs (Gerbner, 1998).

Fingerhut and Peplau (2006) argue that while it seems a lot of heterosexuals perceive all gay men as the same, namely feminine, they actually have a more nuanced view, and are able to distinguish different “subtypes.” These subtypes included “‘cross-dresser,’ ‘leather biker,’ ‘feminine,’ ‘flamboyant,’ ‘activist,’ ‘closeted,’ ‘straight acting,’ ‘hyper-masculine’ ‘artistic,’ ‘and ‘body-conscious’” (Clausell & Fiske qtd in Fingerhut & Peplau, 2006). Moreover, Clausell and Fiske demonstrated that not all heterosexuals think of gay men as feminine. Similarly, Kite and Whitley (1996) stress caution when interpreting these research findings that indicate negative attitudes towards homosexuality among heterosexuals, stating that not all heterosexuals hold the same negative attitudes. The authors argue that intolerant individuals are also “high in authoritarianism, are traditional in their attitudes toward gender roles, have relatively low levels of education, are negative towards other minority groups, and are male” and that “individuals displaying the opposite profile are typically more accepting of gay men and lesbians” (Kite & Whitley, 1996; 336).

2.3.2. Media effects on non-heterosexuals and their attitudes towards homosexuality

Previous subchapter has demonstrated that research on heterosexuals’ attitudes towards homosexuality as well as the role media play in influencing these attitudes is limited. Even less research has focused on non-heterosexual persons’ attitudes towards homosexuality, and the role media play in this. In this study, the terminology non-heterosexuals encompasses persons who self-identified as lesbian, gay, or bisexual. In this subchapter, the limited research surrounding this topic is discussed.

Bond, Hefner and Drogos (2009) examined how LGB persons used media during their coming out process, and state that these people to television as a source of information, as LGB representations are increasing. However, the main focus of their study was LGB person’s use of the Internet in their coming out process, and not so much on whether their attitudes was influenced by the media content they came across.

In his paper *Curved TV: The Impact of Televisual Images on Gay Youth*, Evans (2007) reports results of an extensive content analysis of fiction media that includes LGB characters and interviews with LGB youths. The interviewees stated that stereotypical characters such as Jack in *Will and Grace* and the characters from *Queer Eye for the Straight Guy* were “overtly exaggerated and used as comic relief” (p. 12). Moreover, they were afraid that their family and friends would consider these gay men as representations of the entire LGB community.

However, despite not enjoying these characters, the interviewees still watched the shows as they were “one of the few shows on television that featured characters like them” (p. 13). In contrast, the interviewees responded nothing but positive towards the strong female character Willow in *Buffy the Vampire Slayer*. The crucial difference between her character and that of Jack in *Will and Grace*, is that her existence on the show did not revolve around her sexuality, nor was she depicted with stereotypical traits. She was just a regular person “who just happened to be gay” (p.13). These findings are important indicators that non-heterosexual audiences not always appreciate or even like the gay LGB characters that are portrayed in the media. In spite of this, they still continue to watch shows with these characters, as they are searching for media representation of people who are like them.

Bonds (2011) conducted a similar study that focused on media effects of main-stream media with LGB content on LGB youths’ emotional well-being. The scholar found that LGB teens turn to media that include LGB representations for different reasons, depending on whether the teens are already committed to their sexual identities or not. Teens who have not yet committed, turn to media to learn information that will help them to understand their sexuality, whereas teens who are committed turn to media to “learn adaptive mechanisms to protect themselves against social rejection” (p.148). Moreover, results showed that main-stream media did not have a significantly negative effect on LGB youths’ emotional well-being, and concludes that “media may have a positive influence on the sexual identity development of LGB teens” (p.158).

As was previously established, stereotypical media portrayals of minority groups can have a negative influence on people belonging to these groups in real life.

2.5. Self-objectification

2.5.1. Self-objectification among women

The majority of existing research on self-objectification focuses on women. Fredrickson and Roberts (1997) have coined the term ‘self-objectification’ as the consequences of society objectifying the female body. They state that women and girls “are socialized to view and treat *themselves* as objects, becoming preoccupied with their own physical appearance” and that “[they] are typically acculturated to internalize an observer's perspective as a primary view of their physical selves” (p. 173). As such, girls and women are taught that their body’s outward appearance is more important than its health or how it functions (Robberts & Gettman, 2004). Moreover, through society’s emphasis on looks and

the beauty ideal, as well as the prevalence of thin, beautiful women in the mass media, women are taught that “other people’s evaluations of their physical appearance can determine how they are treated and, ultimately, affect their social and economic life outcomes” (p. 17). The negative effects of self-objectification and sexualization of women are well-known and much discussed. It can lead to low or disturbed body image and body dissatisfaction, low self esteem, depressive symptoms and disordered eating (Rodin, Silberstein & Striegel-Moore, 1998; Tiggemann & Lynch, 2000; Muehlenkamp, & Saris–Baglama, 2002). Tiggeman and Lynch (2000) report that while the ideal image presented by the media have become thinner, women themselves have become heavier (p. 243). As a result of this discrepancy between reality and what is perpetuated by the media, the majority of all women experience body dissatisfaction, a development that Rodin, Silberstein & Striegel-Moore (1998) call ‘normative discontent’. Fredrickson et al.(1998) reported a similar trend, stating that “repeated exposure to the array of external pressures to enhance physical beauty could effectively socialize girls and women to experience their attentiveness to appearance as self-chosen or even natural” (p. 270), resulting in girls and women to become “chronically preoccupied” (p. 270) with their appearance. It can be argued this is why women report higher rates of body-related disorders, and why on average women score higher on self-objectification than men (Fredrickson et al, 1998; Rodin, Silberstein & Striegel-Moore, 1998; Muehlenkamp, & Saris–Baglama, 2002; Hebl, King & Lin, 2004). A recent study by Franzoi et al. (2012) confirms that women are more likely than men to compare themselves to others from the same-sex who have better physical qualities. However, they emphasize that despite the presumption that men are less likely to be affected by media portrayals of physically fit men, both men’s and women’s comparison to a higher standard has a negative effect on body image. In their study, women’s self-comparison in particular was associated with self-criticism and negative body esteem, whereas men were more self-hopeful with self-comparison was associated with perfection beliefs. This suggests that men are more hopeful in attaining the similar characteristics of the examples they compare themselves to, and are less likely to be as negatively affected as women. As such, these findings suggest there are differences between men and women when it comes to self-objectifications, which is why it is important to consider male self-objectification as a separate focus of research, and thus analyze it accordingly.

2.5.2. Self-objectification among men

Numerous research has been dedicated to study self-objectification among women, yet a much smaller number of studies has focused on self-objectification among men, and to what extent its effects are as similar as with women. It is probable this discrepancy is due to the longer history of women's sexual objectification in media. In recent years, however, the male body has become a more frequent focus of attention in modern Western media. While in the past, print media put emphasis on the male's head and face (Fredrickson et al., 1998), increasingly, the male body has become a point of focus. Simultaneously, the ideal male body type that has become prevalent and evidently desired due to mass media's perpetuation, is lean, muscular, and fat free. In their meta-analysis of 25 studies, Barlett, Vowels and Saucier (2008) conclude that due this perpetuation, men too feel pressure from mass media to conform to the mesomorphic body ideal. Moreover, they state that this pressure causes men to feel worse about their bodies, affecting their self-image caused by feelings significantly relating to body satisfaction, self-esteem, and psychological disorders, and behavioral outcome (p. 282). Negative behaviors include increased steroid use, food supplement intake, heavy exercising, and developing an eating disorder. These findings suggest that not only is self-objectification very much present among men, but that as a result of wanting to achieve the ideal body that is perpetuated by the mass media, it also has effects on men very similar to the described effects on women.

Among several scholars who distinguished sexual minority status in their studies on self-objectification among men, there appears to be a consensus that compared to heterosexual men, homosexual men score significantly higher on self-objectification, body shame, body dissatisfaction, and drive for thinness (Yelland and Tiggemann, 2003; Wood, 2004; Martins, Tiggeman & Kirkbride, 2007; Michaels, Parent & Moradi, 2013). Moreover, past research seems to indicate that homosexual men and heterosexual women are more similar when it comes to their concerns about body image, self-esteem, and appearance, and the negative effects that can follow (Yelland & Tiggemann, 2003; Morrison, Morrison & Sager, 2004; Wood, 2004; Martins, Tiggeman & Kirkbride, 2007). In fact, Wood (2004) found that similar to women, gay men also perceive normative discontent, causing "the body itself [to] become a crucial site of social struggle, not only between men and women but also between dominant masculinities and subordinate male gender styles that are marginalized and stigmatized" (p. 57). Gay males are not only observed by other gay males, but also observe other gay males themselves, which elicits a 'body-comparison dynamic' that evokes fear of never being able

to attain the body ideal. Moreover, he states that while pressures to conform have their roots in heterosexism and non-gender conformity stigmatization led by men, “they nonetheless have assumed a life of their own within gay social circles, where gender oppression is not merely reenacted but actively reconstructed, revitalized, and redeployed throughout gay cultural life” (p.57).

These findings are supported by Martins et al. (2007), who state that “‘a high level of sexual objectification’ is present in the gay male subculture, with an “extreme emphasis on physical attractiveness, possessing a lean and muscular body, overall appearance, and fashion” (p.636). Moreover, they argue that similar to heterosexual women, gay men are concerned with engaging other men who deem physical attractiveness important. As such, their self esteem is found to be significantly lower compared to heterosexual males (Yelland & Tiggeman, 2003; Martins, Tiggeman & Kirkbride, 2007). What is interesting however, is that in one experiment, homosexual males showed a higher motivation for being muscular compared to heterosexual males, and also a higher drive to be thin compared to heterosexual females (Yelland & Tiggeman, 2003). They did not, however, differ in terms of body satisfaction, shape, and weight compared to heterosexual males, and were even more satisfied in those areas than women. These findings suggest gay males mostly experience pressure for body change behavior from their immediate social circles. However, Tylka and Andorka (2012) found that media portrayals also put pressure on gay males. In their study, participants indicated to want bodies similar to those of models, athletes, and actors portrayed in the media. Moreover, the authors argue that social pressure to be muscular and have a mesomorphic body is fueled and conserved by media’s focus on these body types.

Research findings up until now indicate that the differences between homosexual and heterosexual males, and homosexual males and heterosexual females are more complex than originally anticipated, and should be further investigated.

2.6. Hypotheses

The aim of this thesis is to address the existing gap in literature surrounding the influence of character portrayal on audience attitude towards homosexuality, and contribute new and valuable data to the existing body of literature. As such, the main focus of this study is to measure the influence of character portrayal. Ferguson (2012) found that heterosexual men showed an increase in negative attitudes towards women who were portrayed as weak. In contrast, they did not show an increase in negative attitude after watching a strong portrayal.

Bonds-Raacke et al. (2007) found that positive portrayal of a homosexual male decreased homophobic attitudes among heterosexual viewers, which suggests character portrayal is of influence. Other scholars found that heterosexual men show more negative attitudes towards homosexuals than women (Herek, 1988; Kite & Whitley, 1996; LaMar & Kite, 1998; Hudephol, Parrot & Zeichner, 2010). Moreover, literature strongly indicates that self-objectification is higher among women and gay men compared to heterosexual men (Morrison, Morrison & Sager, 2004; Martins, Tiggeman & Kirkbride, 2007).

Based on these findings, twelve hypotheses are proposed, which are taken from Ferguson's research (2012; 890) and adapted to fit this study.

2.6.1. Heterosexuals' attitudes with conditions stereotypical, non-stereotypical, and control

The following hypotheses refer to the first part of the study, for which heterosexual respondents are divided between three conditions. The first condition includes a clip containing a stereotypically depicted gay male character. The second condition includes a clip containing a non-stereotypically depicted gay male character. The third condition serves as the control group and does not include stimulus material. The results of heterosexuals' respondents levels of self-objectification, anxiety, depression, and prejudice towards homosexual males, are measured for each condition.

Based on previously discussed research findings that suggest that heterosexual men and women respond differently towards male homosexuality (Herek, 1988; Kite & Whitley, 1996; LaMar & Kite, 1998; Bonds-Raacke et al.; 2007; Hudephol, Parrot & Zeichner, 2010) the initial predictions assume that interaction effects take place between gender and condition. This means the combination of a viewer's gender and the condition the viewer is assigned to, which is either watching stimulus material containing a stereotypical or not stereotypical gay male character, or watching no stimulus material, has different influences on the viewer's feelings of negativity i.e. level of self-objectification, prejudice towards gay males, anxiety, and depression respectively. Therefore, null hypotheses are included below.

H1a: Heterosexual men and heterosexual women exposed to media with a stereotypical portrayal of a gay male in a violent context will not show a higher level in self-objectification compared to heterosexual men and heterosexual women who are not exposed to stimulus material.

H1b: Heterosexual men and heterosexual women exposed to media with a non-stereotypical portrayal of a gay male in a violent context will show a higher level in self-objectification compared to heterosexual men and heterosexual women who are not exposed to stimulus material.

H2a: Heterosexual men exposed to media with a stereotypical portrayal of a gay male in a violent context will show a higher level of prejudice towards gay men compared to heterosexual men in the control group who are not exposed to stimulus material.

H2b: Heterosexual men and heterosexual women exposed to media with a non-stereotypical portrayal of a gay male in a violent context will not show a higher level of prejudice towards gay men compared to heterosexual men and heterosexual women in the control group who are not exposed.

H3a: Heterosexual men and women exposed to media with a stereotypical portrayal of a gay male in a violent context will not show a higher level of anxiety compared to heterosexual men in the control group who are not exposed to stimulus material.

H3b: Heterosexual men and heterosexual women exposed to media with a non-stereotypical portrayal of a gay male in a violent context will not show a higher level of anxiety compared to heterosexual men and heterosexual women in the control group who are not exposed to stimulus material.

H4a: Heterosexual and heterosexual women exposed to media with a stereotypical portrayal of a gay male in a violent context will not show a higher level of depression compared to heterosexual men and heterosexual in the control group who are not exposed to stimulus material.

H4b: Heterosexual men and heterosexual women exposed to exposed to media with a non-stereotypical portrayal of a gay male in a violent context will not show higher a level of depression compared to heterosexual men and heterosexual women in the control group who are not exposed to stimulus material.

2.5.2. Heterosexuals' and non-heterosexuals' attitudes with conditions stereotypical and control

The following hypotheses refer to the second part of the study, for which heterosexual and non-heterosexual respondents are divided between two conditions. The first condition includes a clip containing a stereotypically depicted gay male character. The second condition serves as the control group and does not include stimulus material. Similar to the first part of this study, the results of heterosexuals' and non-heterosexuals' levels of self-objectification, prejudice towards gay males, anxiety, and depression are measured for each condition. While only one portrayal of a gay male character is used for this part of the study, the hypotheses explicitly state 'stereotypical portrayal' for the reason this character has particular characteristics that pertain to the gay male stereotype, and are considered to be of possible influence as to how all participants respond to him.

Based on previously discussed research findings that suggest heterosexual men can respond very differently towards male homosexuality compared to women and non-heterosexual males, the initial prediction assume that interaction effects take place between sexual orientation and condition. This means the combination of a viewer's sexual orientation and the condition the viewer is assigned to, which is either watching stimulus material containing a stereotypical gay male character, or watching no stimulus material, has different influences on the viewer's feelings of negativity i.e. level of self-objectification, prejudice towards gay males, anxiety, and depression respectively. Therefore, null hypotheses are included below. H5 is based on previous research findings that reported the stereotypical portrayals of gay males are not automatically positively received by non-heterosexual males (McKee,2000) and that an activation of the stereotype-threat can result in non-stereotypical behavior as a way to compensate (Steele & Aronson, 1995; Bosson, Haymovitz and Pinel (2006). The initial prediction then, is that non-heterosexual males do not identify with the stereotypically portrayed gay male, and will not be triggered to self-objectify. Moreover, past findings indicate that women and non-heterosexual males have more similar responses, which is why they are categorized together in H6. H1a, H2a, H3a, and H4a are also taken into consideration in this part of the study. Results of all twelve hypotheses are discussed in Chapter 4.

H5: Non-heterosexual men exposed to media with a stereotypical portrayal of a gay male in a violent context will not show a higher level of self-objectification compared to non-

heterosexual men who are not exposed to stimulus material.

H6: Women and non-heterosexual men exposed to media with a stereotypical portrayal of a gay male will not show a higher level of prejudice towards gay men compared to women and non-heterosexual men who are not exposed to stimulus material.

H7: Non-heterosexual men exposed to media with a stereotypical portrayal of a gay male will show a higher level of anxiety compared to non-heterosexual men who are not exposed to stimulus material.

H8: Non-heterosexual men exposed to media with a stereotypical portrayal of a gay male will not show a higher level of depression compared to non-heterosexual men who are not exposed to stimulus material.

3. Method

3.1. Overview

Quantitative research in the form of a survey was the chosen methodology for this study to investigate how both heterosexual and non-heterosexual participants perceive homosexual male characters on fiction television shows. This study is an extension of a study by Ferguson that focused on audience attitudes towards strong and weak portrayals of female characters. The measurements that were used in Ferguson's study, were used and modified for this study. To determine viewer attitudes, several variables were taken into account.

Surveys also allow for drawing a random sample so that inferences can be made about attitudes of a larger population based on a relatively small sample (Gilbert,2009; 166). In doing so present study can add data to the body of existing literature on attitudes of homo- and heterosexuals between 20-40 years old.

The surveys were online and self-administered, ensures respondents' anonymity and allows them to answer the questions in their own time It also decreases the risk of the Hawthorne effect, which "occurs when participants' responses are influenced by the fact that they are aware of being observed" (Baxter & Babbie, 2004;207). This ties in with the risk of a social desirability effect, with the participant choosing the answers which they think the researcher wants to hear. Moreover, an online survey is a more efficient and less time consuming manner of conducting a survey, and at the same time it enables the researcher to approach participants from a long distance.

3.2. Study Design

In this study, interaction effects between variables are measured by studying data collected through surveys which contain different stimulus materials to investigate effects of portrayal on attitude. As such, this study has an experimental design. In the first part of the study, the interaction effects between gender and condition were measured, in the second part this was the case for sexual orientation and condition. The term condition refers to the survey the respondents filled in. There were three different surveys in total. Survey A contained stimulus material that had a stereotypical gay male character, survey B contained stimulus material that had a non-stereotypical gay male character, and survey C did not contain stimulus material, but served as a control group. The respondents for the first part of the

study were heterosexual males and heterosexual females, whereas the respondents for the second part of the study were both heterosexual and non-heterosexual males and females. As such, the study had a 3 (portrayal: non-stereotypical, stereotypical, control) x 2 (gender: male, female) x 2 (sexual orientation: heterosexual, non-heterosexual) design.

3.3. Data Sample

The unit of analysis of this study is both heterosexual and non-heterosexual individuals. Seeing as this study has an experimental design, random sampling techniques would have been most ideal and appropriate. However, during the process of data collection, it proved to be too difficult to find enough non-heterosexual respondents in the time at hand. Therefore, the author decided to simultaneously use snowball sampling as well. The author is aware this decision would have implications for the results, which she will address in Chapter 7.

Firstly, respondents were generated on crowd sourcing website [crowdfunder.com](https://www.crowdfunder.com). This website not only attracts respondents with different demographic backgrounds, it also offers the option of targeting respondents from specific countries. As such, fifteen Western countries were targeted, namely Belgium, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Netherlands, New Zealand, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, The United Kingdom, and the United States. An advantage of this type of sampling, is that there is still somewhat of a sampling frame. However, the study is still low in terms of external validity, limiting this study in generalizing its results to the total population. Each survey was launched individually and at different points in time i.e. with a week in between each launch. This was done as a way to establish random allocation of respondents to the surveys. In addition, possible non-heterosexual respondents were approached on online forums on websites specifically aimed at LGB persons. These websites included the Dutch websites [expreszo.nl](https://www.expreszo.nl) and [forum.fok.nl](https://www.forum.fok.nl), and the U.S. website [thebacklot.com](https://www.thebacklot.com). On these forums, the author posted the three links in one message, again, as a means to establish random allocation of respondents to the surveys by letting the respondents click one of the three. As such, the surveys were accessible to anyone who found the links. The author was aware of the possibility that respondents would fill in more than one survey, however, she did not deem it a likely possibility, as the surveys were rather long.

Secondly, when it became clear that the target number of non-heterosexual respondents would not be met on time, non-heterosexual acquaintances of the author were

approached through Facebook, and asked to participate in the study. Moreover, they were asked to approach non-heterosexuals in their personal networks and ask them to participate in the study by filling in one of the surveys.

Respondents were told that the surveys was part of an academic study being conducted by a master student at the Erasmus University of Rotterdam in the Netherlands. In total, the three online surveys were completely filled out by 104, 81, and 98 people respectively. All incomplete survey results were not included in the final/subsequent analysis. Moreover, based on the questions relating to demographics, results from respondents who were not suitable for the study were excluded from the final analysis. In particular, respondents who were over the age of 40 were excluded from the study, as people from older generations tend to have more traditional, and, often times, negative beliefs about homosexuality (Corley & Pollack, 1997; Clausell & Fiske qtd in Fingerhut & Peplau, 2006).

3.4. Stimulus material

3.4.1. Character portrayal

The independent variable in this study is the character's portrayal, which is either non-stereotypical or stereotypical. In the previous chapter which included a review of past literature, it was established that homosexual characters in fiction media are often portrayed as stereotypical and with stereotypical characteristics. The stereotype of the gay man is characterized by feminine traits and lacking masculine characteristics or having masculine occupations. Conversely, a non-stereotypical gay man would lack the overtly feminine traits and has masculine traits instead.

According to Aube et al. (1995) a person's gender identity is comprised by both attitudes, behaviors, psychological as well as physical traits. For this study, two video clips were used that contained gay male characters that had overtly stereotypical or non-stereotypical behavioral and attitudinal characteristics. The clip that features the strong and dominant i.e. non-stereotypical gay male character is from *Game of Thrones* and the clip that features the weak and subordinate i.e. stereotypical gay male character is from *True Blood*. The non-stereotypical gay male character presents masculine components, including psychological traits such as leadership, dominance, self-assertiveness, hiding emotions, and competitiveness, and physical attributes such as physical fitness (Rosenkrantz et al., 1968). He shows preference for adventure, takes risks, is respected and admired. Relating to this, is the character's masculine occupation as a leader, namely a king. Conversely, the more

stereotypical gay male character that was chosen, exhibits various feminine components, like psychological traits such as caring, submissive, gentle, interested in own appearance, expressing tender feelings, and quiet (Rosenkrantz et al., 1968). Based on the pre-test, these shows were picked as they both matched on their level of excitement and violence. Clips from both shows included scenes that were violent and contained references to male homosexuality.

3.4.2. Description of TV shows and clips

Game of Thrones is an American fantasy television show based on the book series *Song of Ice and Fire* by George R.R. Martin. The show contains multiple storylines that follow several royal families battling over the absolute reign of the mythical realm Westeros. The clip used for this study includes several scenes from episodes of season 1 and 2. The scenes in question feature Renly Baratheon, the youngest brother of the king. When his older brother dies, Renly successfully proclaims himself as king of the seven Kingdoms and is set on seizing the Iron Throne. In the first scene he can be seen standing in front of his older brother Stannis, who is also set on the Iron Throne. They threaten each other, but neither of them backs down. Renly appears equally dominant as his brother, confident, and does not back down. When his brother rides away, Renly appears to be disappointed yet angry and determined to defeat him. In the next scene, Renly is sitting on a stage surrounded by his soldiers, viewing two knights battling for his enjoyment. One of these knights is the knight of Flowers, Loras. Renly exhibits several strong and masculine traits, for instance dominance, self-confidence, power. Moreover, he appears both intrigued and amused by the violence in front of him. He also promises Lady Starke that he will seek vengeance for the death of her husband, after which he is cheered on by his soldiers. When she voices her doubts about his army surviving winter, Renly does not answer her, but immediately dismisses her. In the third scene he is inside his tent and intimate with his lover Loras, one of the knights who was battling in the previous scene. Renly is dominant and confident, and in physical good shape. Moreover, he tries to dismiss Loras' jealousy of the knight who beat him, as well as tries to make it up by initiating sex. When Loras denies him and states his reason, Renly does not answer him verbally, but instead tries to initiate sex again. In the fourth scene, Renly is in his tent where he accuses 'Little Finger' of not being loyal. He continues by explicitly stating he does not like him and is not impressed by Little Finger's attempts at regaining Renly's trust. Renly appears calm, confident about his army and power, and dominant of the situation. In

the last scene, Renly is in his tent with Lady Starke sitting across from him. He asks her to swear to him that her son has no interest in the Iron Throne. Renly appears calm, and dominates the conversation as he takes his time to give her his answer. He confidently claims he will reward her loyalty by destroying his own brother's army, and that together, they can end the war in no time.

True Blood is an American television drama show surrounding vampires living in the fictional southern town Bon Temps. The show is characterized by its explicit sexual and violent content. The clip includes scenes from three consecutive episodes from Season 1, and surround the character Eddie. In contrast to other vampires on the show, Eddie is not a strong vampire. He does not know how to glamour someone i.e. will them to do what he wants, he is not strong as he does not go out on the town to suck other people's blood, and he is not surrounded by beautiful men. In the first scene, Eddie can be seen sitting at home and waiting for Lafayette, with whom he has an agreement; in turn for his vampire blood, which is very valuable, Lafayette has sex with him. For the purpose of showing only one gay character, the parts of the scene in which Lafayette is particularly dominant are cut. Eddie and Lafayette can be seen kissing. Eddie moans and expresses his desire to be with Lafayette, and moans how bad he wants him. He is docile when Lafayette pulls him off the couch saying "Come on baby, I'll take care of you", presumably so they can go to the bedroom. In the next scene, Jason and his girlfriend Amy see Lafayette leaving Eddie's house, and kidnap Eddie so that they can tap his blood. They overpower him by covering him in silver, which appears to be extremely painful. In the next scene, Jason and seen tying him up to a lawn chair. Eddie is weak, defenseless and powerless. Gay male characters are often portrayed this way. He visibly expresses his pain and agony. He shares his feelings about his disappointing life and afterlife. He is subordinate to both Jason and Amy. In an attempt to save himself, he tries to manipulate both of them, and manages to convince Jason to release him. Amy, however, kills Eddie before Jason finishes to untie him.

3.5 Pre-test

Firstly, a pre-test was conducted to test the stimulus material for the actual surveys. Based on the results of the pre-test, two clips that were both scored as similar in context, would be selected for the final survey. In doing so, reliability would be increased as the context would not be an influencing variable. The pre-test was constructed on the website qualtrics.com. Six clips of television shows were pre-selected, three contained a non-

stereotypical gay male character, three contained a more stereotypical gay male character. During the selection of these clips, the shows' genres were taken into consideration, and shows with similar genres were picked, as it would offer a more valuable comparison. HBO's *True Blood*, HBO's *Game of Thrones*, *Spartacus*, *Torchwood*, and *Hollyoaks*.

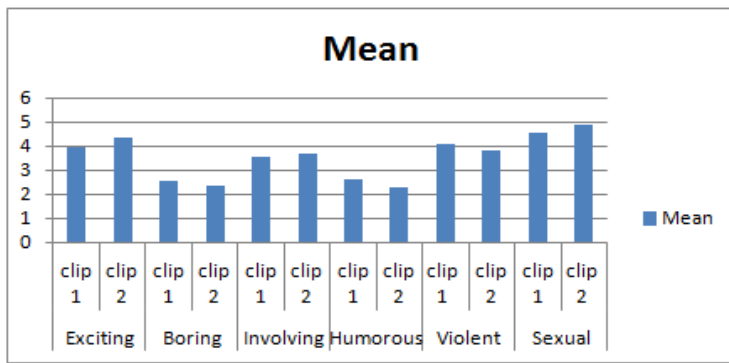
During the pre-test, six levels of the independent variable 'context' were measured. This was done to ensure that the context of the show would not be of influence. Moreover, two levels of the independent variable 'character portrayal' were measured, as a preliminary test to see if the characters portrayed were indeed considered strong or weak, i.e. non-stereotypical or stereotypical.

The pre-test consisted of one survey that contained all six clips, each followed by the same set of questions. Each of these questions was a five point Likert-type scale that measured to what extent the respondent perceived the show as exciting, boring, involving, humorous, violent, and sexual, with answers ranging from not at all to very much so. These standardized questions were taken from Chris Ferguson's research, and adapted to present study. Moreover, for each clip the respondent was asked to indicate for each male character portrayed how weak or strong he was. This question was also a five point Likert-type scale. After completing the survey, each respondent was asked to give his or her feedback.

A group of 20 respondents was asked to fill in this survey. These respondents were approached through snowball sampling. These respondents included family members and friends who were willing to fill out the survey, as well as forward it to their acquaintances. The survey was online from 1 March 2014 until 21 March 2014. 34 surveys were started, of which 21 were completely filled in. There was a close-to-equal representation of males (42%) and females (58%). Of the respondents, the majority (90%) was Dutch, one person (5%) was Bulgarian, and one person (5%) was Portuguese.

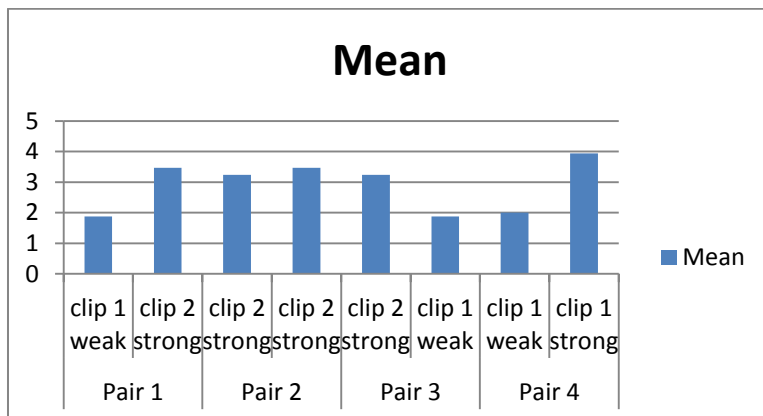
Results from the pre-test were entered into SPSS and analyzed. Firstly, a one-way ANOVA was carried out to compare the means of the six independent variables in the six clips. The means of clip 1 and clip 2, containing a stereotypical character and non-stereotypical character respectively, were consistently the most similar. Subsequently, a paired *t* test was performed to consider the significance between the variables of each clip. For each variable, the difference was not significant (See Figure 3.1).

Figure 3.1 - Results from ANOVA of clips 1 and 2 for all six variables



Furthermore, a paired t-test was performed to determine to what extent the characters were perceived as stereotypical and non-stereotypical respectively. To save time, this was only done for the clips with similar means for each variable. The *t* test revealed significant differences between characters from clip 1 and clip 2 (see pair 3 and pair 4 in Figure 3.2).

Figure 3.2 - Results from paired t-test with characters from clip 1 and clip 2



3.6. Main study

Results from the pre-test were used to design the three surveys that would be used to answer the research question. The surveys were designed on the website Qualtrics and accessible to anyone who was provided with a link. The surveys were conducted in English as it would enable non-Dutch speaking respondents to participate as well, and lasted an average of 25 minutes (surveys containing a video clip) and 10 minutes (control condition without video material) respectively.

3.6.1. Measures

Each survey contained a set of questions that was the same for every condition i.e. portrayal. Survey A contained a clip with the stereotypical portrayal, survey B contained the clip with the non-stereotypical portrayal, and survey C did not contain stimulus material, thus serving as the control group. The survey consisted of five parts. To determine viewer attitudes, four measurements inspired by Ferguson's study were taken into account. The first four parts of the survey contained scales measuring self-objectification, prejudice towards gay men, anxiety, and depression respectively. To ensure validity, this study draws upon preexisting scales and standard questions that have been used for many years, and have thus proven their validity. For each of the scales there is a brief discussion below that explains their relevance to present study.

The *Self-Objectification questionnaire (SOQ)*. The SOQ is a self-report ranking system that assesses to what extent a person views his or her body as an object, in objectified terms (Noll & Fredrickson, 1998). It does not measure a person's satisfaction, but instead their concern with their physical appearance. The respondents were asked to rank order 10 body attributes by how important each is to their self-concept, from that which has the most impact on their physical self-concept (ranked 1), to that which has the least impact (ranked 10).

Attitude Towards Gay men Scale (ATG Scale). The ATG scale consists of nine statements about homosexuality (Herek, 1984). Participants are asked to indicate whether they agree or disagree with each statement by using a 5-point Likert-type scale spanning from *disagree strongly* to *agree strongly*. This instrument has a Gay Men subscale (ATG), which is a 10-item scale specifically designed to assess cognitive and affective dimensions of heterosexuals' attitudes toward gay men. A review of measuring instruments indicated that this scale "had the strongest evidence of validation," as it has an extensive body of literature to back this up (Grey et al. 2013; 349). Moreover, this scale has a relatively short form, meaning it is not as long as a lot of other scales. This brevity will be useful as it reduces participants burden, thus will hopefully make it easier to find willing participants. Besides it measuring attitudes, which is what I am interested in, this brevity feature is what was the deciding factor for me for using the ATG.

The *Beck Anxiety Inventory (BAI)*. The BAI is a 21-item self-report inventory for measuring the severity of anxiety (Steer & Beck, 1993). Each item consists of a common symptom of anxiety. The respondent were asked to indicate to what extent they were bothered by each symptom when watching the clip by using a 4-point Likert-type scale, spanning from

not at all to *severely – it bothered me a lot*. To each statement, a numerical value from zero to three will be allotted to represent the severity of the symptom. The total score is obtained by adding up the score of all items.

The *Beck Depression Inventory-11 (BDI)*. The BDI is a 21-item self-report inventory for measuring symptoms of depression and their severity (Beck, Steer & Brown, 1996). Each item consists of a 0-3 Likert type scale of which each numerical value consisting of a statement. The total score is obtained by adding up the score of all items.

The fifth part of the survey contained questions relating to demographics, such as gender, age, sexual orientation, political preference, and religion. These questions were purposefully put last in order to avoid socially desirable or otherwise biased answers. (For the full set of questions used in the surveys, see Appendix).

4. Results

In this chapter, the results from the survey are reported.

4.1. Sample size

The total number of respondents was 181, with Survey A, Survey B, and Survey C being completely filled in by 48, 64, and 69 people respectively. Within this sample, there was an unequal distribution for males (61%) and females (39%), respectively $N = 111$ and $N = 70$. Moreover, there was an unequal distribution for heterosexuals (65%) and non-heterosexuals (35%), respectively $N = 65$ and $N = 35$. Within group A, the group that watched the stereotypical portrayal, there was an uneven distribution for males (63%) and females (38%), respectively $N = 30$ and $N = 18$. However, there was an almost equal distribution for heterosexuals (58%) and non-heterosexuals (42%), respectively $N = 28$ and $N = 20$. As such, this sample was used for further analysis. Within group B, the group that watched the non-stereotypical portrayal, there was an even distribution for males (50%) and females (50%), respectively $N = 32$ and $N = 32$. However, there was an uneven distribution for heterosexuals (69%) and non-heterosexuals (31%), respectively $N = 44$ and $N = 20$. Moreover, within the group of non-heterosexuals, there were only 7 gay males who filled in the survey. As this study's focus lies on gay males in the media and audience response to it, having a sample size of a considerate number of homosexual males in the group that is used to measure audience attitude is important to generate representative results. A gay male sample of $N = 7$ was considered too small to be included in this study. Therefore, the results from non-heterosexual respondents that filled in survey B were not used in subsequent analysis. Within group C, the control group that did not watch stimulus material, there was an uneven distribution for males (71%) and females (29%), respectively $N = 49$ and $N = 20$. Moreover, there was an uneven distribution for heterosexuals (46%) and non-heterosexuals (23%), respectively $N = 46$ and $N = 23$. However, the uneven distributed sample was still deemed useable for subsequent analyses, as its results could still be compared to results from group A, which could offer insight into whether possible differences in the measures are due to the stimulus material. The author is aware the results from the study would not be representative of the entire population and thus not generalizable.

Due to the exclusion of the results from non-heterosexual respondents in group B, the author decided to do two separate analyses. One analysis that compared the results of heterosexual respondents in all three groups, and second analysis that compared the results of

heterosexual and non-heterosexual respondents in group A and group C. The new sample sizes for both analyses are discussed in the next subchapters.

4.1.1. Sample size for analysis 1

In analysis 1, the results of heterosexual respondents for all three conditions are compared. The total number of heterosexual respondents was 118, with the surveys being completely filled in by 28, 44, and 46 people respectively. Within this sample, there was an unequal distribution for males (64%) and females (37%), respectively $N = 75$ and $N = 43$. The respondents were all between 18-39 years old, with an average age of 28 ($M = 27.88$, $SD = 5.66$). In terms of highest degree of education, 1 person had no schooling completed (1%), 25 persons had graduated high school (21%), 30 persons had some college credit but no degree (25%), 47 persons had a Bachelor's degree (40%), 11 persons had a Master's degree (9%), and 4 persons had a Doctorate degree (3%). In terms of religion, 38 persons identified as Catholic (33%), 5 persons identified as Evangelist (4%), 9 persons identified as Muslim (8%), 3 persons identified as Jewish (3%), and 60 persons identified as 'Other' (51%) of which 5 persons identified as 'atheist', 1 person as 'agnostic' 2 persons as Christian, 4 persons as Greek orthodox, 2 persons as protestant, 2 persons as Hindu, 2 persons as spiritual and spiritually awoken, and 14 persons did not consider themselves to be religious at all. In political terms, 4 persons placed their ideas as extreme left (3%), 34 persons left (30%), 53 persons center (45%), 22 persons right (19%) and 3 persons extreme right (3%). When asked about how many hours per week they watched television, respondents answers varied from zero hours to 80 hours per week ($M = 15.71$, $SD = 16.23$).

4.1.2. Sample size for analysis 2

The total number of respondents was 117, with Survey A and Survey C being completely filled in by 48 and 69 people respectively. Within this sample, there was an unequal distribution for males (64%) and females (36%), respectively $N = 79$ and $N = 38$. Moreover, there was an unequal distribution for heterosexuals (63%) and non-heterosexuals (37%), respectively $N = 74$ and $N = 43$. The respondents were all between 18-39 years old, with an average age of 27 ($M = 27.38$, $SD = 5.16$). In terms of highest degree of education, 1 person had no schooling completed (1%), 23 persons had graduated high school (20%), 23 persons had some college credit but no degree (20%), 52 persons had a Bachelor's degree (44%), 15 persons had a Master's degree (13%), and 3 persons had a Doctorate degree (3%).

In terms of religion, 36 persons identified as Catholic (31%), 6 persons identified as Evangelist (5%), 10 persons identified as Muslim (9%), 4 persons identified as Jewish (3%), and 58 persons identified as 'Other' (50%) of which 5 persons identified as 'atheist', 2 persons as 'agnostic' 1 person as Christian, 4 persons as Greek orthodox, 2 persons as protestant, 2 persons as Hindu, 1 person as Sikh, and 14 persons did not consider themselves to be religious whatsoever. In political terms, 4 persons placed their ideas as extreme left (3%), 37 persons left (32%), 45 persons center (39%), 27 persons right (23%) and 2 persons extreme right (2%). When asked about how many hours per week they watched television, respondents answers varied from zero hours to 80 hours per week ($M = 16.16$, $SD = 15.74$).

4.2. Results from analysis 1

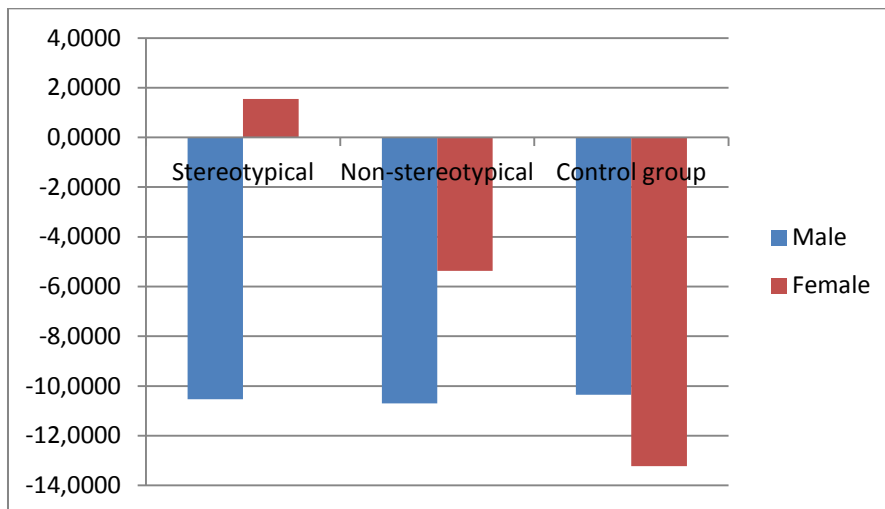
This subchapter will describe the a comparison of the results of the three surveys filled in by only heterosexual respondents. To determine the effects of the portrayals on the four measures (self-objectification, prejudice, anxiety, and depression) one-way analyses of variance (hereafter ANOVAs) tests were conducted for all four measures. Subsequently, independent t tests were conducted for each dependent variable to determine if the means differed based on gender, condition, and interaction.

4.2.1. Self-objectification

One-way ANOVA revealed a significant main effect for gender for respondents on self-objectification $F(1, 106) = 5.97$, $p = .016$, $\eta_p^2 = .053$ (see Figure 4.1). As predicted, for the entire sample, self-objectification was higher among heterosexual females, ($M = -5.24$, $SD = 12.70$) compared to heterosexual males ($M = -10.49$, $SD = 7.45$). An independent-samples t test was then conducted to compare self-objectification for heterosexual males and heterosexual females when watching a stereotypical portrayal. There was a very significant difference in the scores, indicating that self-objectification was higher among females ($M = 1.55$, $SD = 9.21$) compared to males ($M = -10.54$, $SD = 8.25$), conditions; $t(22) = -3.39$, $p = .003$. Additionally, a t test was conducted to compare self-objectification for heterosexual males and heterosexual females when watching a non-stereotypical portrayal. There was no significant difference in the scores between heterosexual males and heterosexual females, conditions; $t(33.75) = -1.60$, $p = .126$. Lastly, an independent-samples t test was then conducted to compare self-objectification for heterosexual males and heterosexual females when not being exposed to stimulus material containing a gay male character. There was no

significant difference in the scores for heterosexual males and heterosexual females, conditions; $t(9.93) = .772, p = .458$.

Figure 4.1. ANOVA results for self-objectification analysis 1



One-way ANOVAs revealed a significant main effect for condition for respondents on self-objectification $F(2, 106) = 3.96, p = .022, \eta_p^2 = .070$. Self-objectification was higher among heterosexual respondents who watched the stereotypical portrayal ($M = -5.00, SD = 10.50$) compared to heterosexual respondents who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal ($M = -7.90, SD = 11.25$). Self-objectification was lowest among heterosexual respondents in the control group when there was no exposure to stimulus material ($M = -10.91, SD = 7.98$). Post-hoc independent sample t tests were then conducted to compare self-objectification between different conditions, which revealed a significant difference for self-objectification between heterosexual respondents who watched a stereotypical portrayal ($M = -5.00, SD = 10.50$) and heterosexual respondents in the control group ($M = -10.91, SD = 7.98$), conditions; $t(68) = 3.02, p = .010$. However, there was not a significant difference between heterosexual respondents who watched the stereotypical portrayal and heterosexual respondents who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal, conditions; $t(64) = 1.03, p = .306$. There was also not a significant difference between heterosexual respondents who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal and heterosexual respondents in the control group, conditions; $t(73.21) = 1.43, p = .156$.

One-way ANOVAs revealed that the interaction effect between gender and condition on self-objectification for all respondents was significant, $F(2,106) = 4.21, p = .017, \eta_p^2 = .074$. However, t test revealed no significant difference in self-objectification between males

who watched the stereotypical portrayal and males in the control group, conditions; $t(48) = -.08, p = .939$ (= H1a). Additionally, there was no significant difference in self-objectification between males who watched the stereotypical portrayal and males who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal, conditions; $t(31) = .06, p = .954$. There was also no significant difference in self-objectification between heterosexual males who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal and heterosexual males in the control group, conditions; $t(55) = -.17, p = .866$ (\neq H1b).

Post-hoc t test revealed there was a very significant difference in self-objectification between heterosexual females who watched the stereotypical portrayal ($M = 1.55, SD = 9.21$) and heterosexual females in the control group ($M = -13.22, SD = 10.56$), conditions; $t(18) = 3.34, p = .004$. Self-objectification was higher among heterosexual females who watched the stereotypical portrayal compared to heterosexual females in the control group (\neq H1a). However, post-hoc t test showed there was no significant difference in self-objectification between heterosexual females who watched the stereotypical portrayal and heterosexual females who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal, conditions; $t(27.69) = 1.73, p = .095$. Additionally, a post-hoc t test did not reveal a significant difference in self-objectification between heterosexual females who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal and heterosexual females in the control group, conditions; $t(29) = 1.56, p = .129$ (\neq H1b).

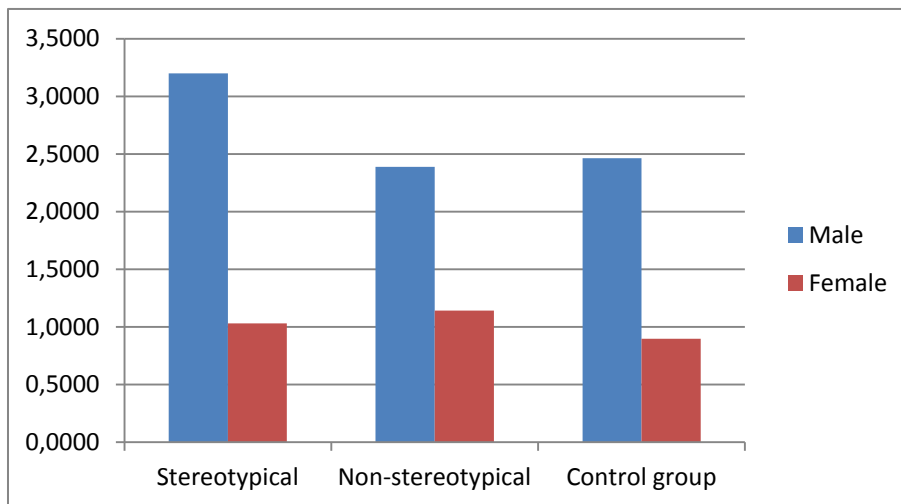
4.2.2. Prejudice

One-way ANOVA did reveal a significant main effect for gender for respondents on prejudice $F(1, 112) = 6.69, p = .011, \eta_p^2 = .056$ (see Figure 4.2). Among heterosexual males, prejudice was higher ($M = 2.61, SD = 1.04$) compared to heterosexual females ($M = 2.16, SD = 0.90$). A post-hoc independent-samples t -test revealed a very significant difference between the scores of heterosexual males ($M = 3.20, SD = 1.03$) and heterosexual females ($M = 1.86, SD = .72$) who watched the stereotypical portrayal, conditions; $t(26) = 3.75, p = .001$. Among respondents who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal, there was not a significant difference in level of prejudice between heterosexual males and heterosexual females, conditions; $t(42) = .63, p = .531$. In the control group there was also no significant difference in level of prejudice between heterosexual males and heterosexual females, conditions; $t(44) = -.02, p = .984$.

There was no significant main effect for condition for respondents on prejudice $F(2, 112) = 0.602, p = .550, \eta_p^2 = .011$. Post-hoc independent sample t -tests were then conducted

to compare prejudice between different conditions. These revealed there was not a significant difference in level of prejudice between respondents who watched the stereotypical portrayal and the control group, conditions; $t(72) = .89, p = .376$. There was also not a significant difference between respondents who watched the stereotypical portrayal and respondents who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal, conditions; $t(70) = 1.49, p = .140$. There was also not a significant difference in level of prejudice between respondents who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal and the control group, conditions; $t(88) = -.88, p = .380$.

Figure 4.2. ANOVA results for prejudice analysis 1



The interaction effect between gender and condition on prejudice for all respondents was not significant, $F(2, 112) = 4.02, p = .021, \eta_p^2 = .021$. However, post-hoc t test did reveal a significant difference in prejudice between heterosexual males who watched the stereotypical portrayal and heterosexual males in the control group, conditions; $t(52) = 2.68, p = .010$. Prejudice was higher among heterosexual males who watched the stereotypical portrayal ($M = 3.20, SD = 1.03$) compared to heterosexual males in the control group ($M = 2.46, SD = .90$) (= H2a). Moreover, there was a significant difference between heterosexual males who watched the stereotypical portrayal and heterosexual males who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal, conditions; $t(36) = 2.27, p = .029$. Prejudice was higher among heterosexual males who watched the stereotypical portrayal ($M = 3.20, SD = 1.03$) compared to heterosexual males who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal ($M = 2.39, SD = 1.14$). However, t test revealed no significant difference between heterosexual males who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal and heterosexual males in the control group, conditions; $t(56)$

= -.27, $p = .787$ (= H2b).

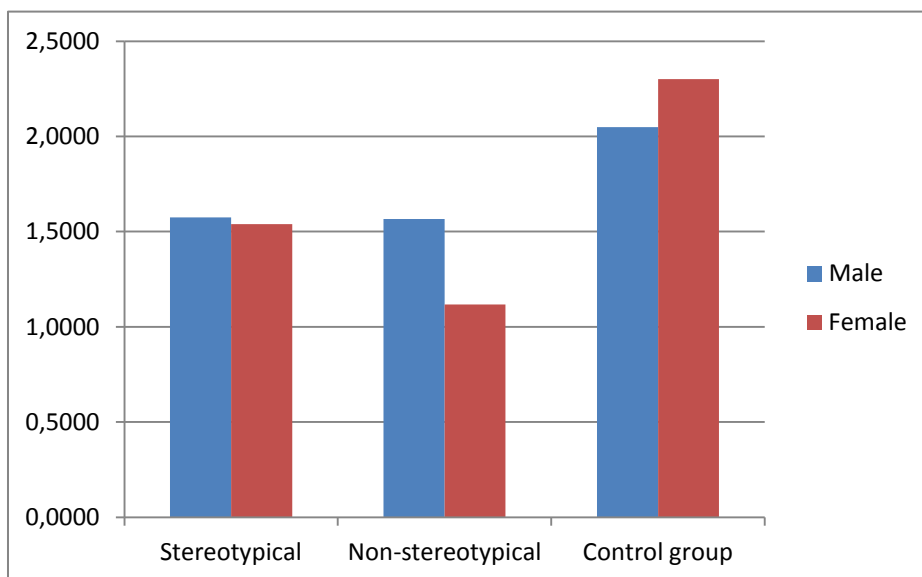
In addition, post-hoc t test did not reveal a significant difference in prejudice between heterosexual females who watched the stereotypical portrayal and heterosexual females in the control group, conditions; $t(18) = -1.73$, $p = .102$. Post-hoc t test also showed there was no significant difference in prejudice between heterosexual females who watched the stereotypical portrayal and heterosexual females who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal, conditions; $t(32) = 2.55$, $p = .329$.

Moreover, a post-hoc t test did not reveal a significant difference in prejudice between heterosexual females who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal and heterosexual females in the control group, conditions; $t(30) = -.76$, $p = .455$ (=H2b).

4.2.3. Anxiety

One-way ANOVA did not reveal a significant main effect for gender for respondents on anxiety $F(1, 112) = 0.331$, $p = .566$, $\eta_p^2 = .008$ (see Figure 4.3). Post hoc t -tests revealed that between males and females there is no significant difference in anxiety when there is a stereotypical portrayal, conditions; $t(26) = 1.41$, $p = .889$. However, when the portrayal was non-stereotypical, there was a significant difference in anxiety between males ($M = 1.57$, $SD = .72$) and females ($M = 1.12$, $SD = .26$), conditions; $t(24.86) = 2.79$, $p = .013$. Anxiety is higher among males compared to females. There was no significant difference between heterosexual males and heterosexual females in the control group, conditions; $t(9.44) = -.66$, $p = .523$.

Figure 4.3. ANOVA results for anxiety analysis 1



One-way ANOVA did reveal a significant main effect for condition for all respondents on anxiety $F(2, 112) = 14.42, p = .000, \eta_p^2 = .205$. If the portrayal was stereotypical, anxiety was higher ($M = 1.56, SD = .64$) compared to if the portrayal was non-stereotypical ($M = 1.33, SD = .57$). Anxiety was highest when there was no exposure to stimulus material ($M = 2.10, SD = .74$).

Moreover, post hoc t-tests revealed that there is a significant difference between a stereotypical portrayal ($M = 1.56, SD = .64$) and the control group ($M = 2.01, SD = .75$), conditions; $t(72) = -3.15, p = .002$. Anxiety is lower when a stereotypical character is portrayed. *T* test revealed that there is no significant difference in anxiety for all respondents between a stereotypical portrayal and a non-stereotypical portrayal, conditions; $t(70) = 1.58, p = .119$. *T* test revealed there is a significant difference in anxiety between respondents who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal ($M = 1.33, SD = .57$) and respondents in the control group ($M = 2.10, SD = .75$), conditions; $t(83.86) = -5.44, p = .000$.

One-way ANOVA revealed that the interaction effect between gender and condition on anxiety for all respondents was not significant, $F(2, 112) = 2.61, p = .078, \eta_p^2 = .045$. *T* test did reveal a significant difference between males who watched a stereotypical portrayal ($M = 1.57, SD = .61$) and males in the control group ($M = 2.05, SD = .66$), conditions; $t(52) = -2.52, p = .015 (= H3a)$. Anxiety was lower among males who watched the stereotypical portrayal compared to males in the control group. *T* test showed there was not a significant difference between males who watch a stereotypical portrayal and males who watch a non-stereotypical portrayal, conditions; $t(36) = .35, p = .972$. *T* test did reveal a significant difference between males who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal ($M = 1.57, SD = .72$) and males in the control group ($M = 2.05, SD = .66$), conditions; $t(56) = -2.59, p = .012 (= H3b)$.

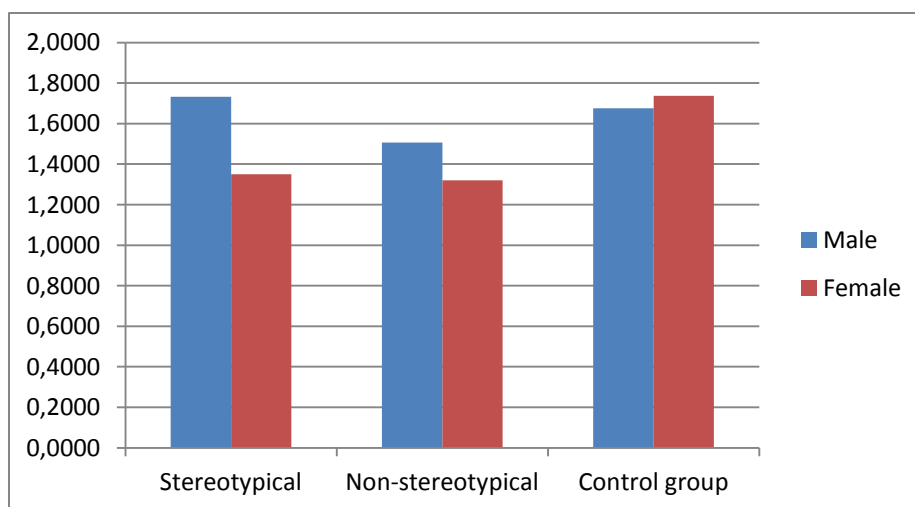
Moreover, *T* test did not reveal a significant difference between females who watched a stereotypical portrayal and females in the control group, conditions; $t(13.11) = 1.80, p = .094 (= H3a)$. *T* test showed there was not a significant difference between heterosexual females who watch a stereotypical portrayal and heterosexual females who watch a non-stereotypical portrayal, conditions; $t(1.92) = 11.37, p = .080$. However, *t* test did reveal a significant difference between females who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal ($M = 1.32, SD = .29$) and females in the control group ($M = 1.74, SD = .53$), conditions; $t(8.37) = -3.20, p = .012 (\neq H3b)$.

4.2.4. Depression

One-way ANOVA did not reveal a significant main effect for gender for respondents on depression $F(1, 112) = 2.61, p = .109, \eta_p^2 = .023$ (see Figure 4.4). Post-hoc t -tests did not reveal a significant difference in depression between heterosexual females and heterosexual males when watching a stereotypical portrayal, conditions; $t(26) = 1.83, p = .078$. Post hoc t test also did not reveal a significant difference in depression between heterosexual females and heterosexual males who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal, conditions; $t(26.81) = 1.20, p = .243$. Post-hoc t test did not reveal a significant different depression between heterosexual females and heterosexual males in the control group, conditions; $t(44) = -.33, p = .744$.

One-way ANOVA did not reveal a significant main effect for condition for respondents on depression $F(2, 112) = 2.89, p = .060, \eta_p^2 = .049$. Post-hoc t test revealed there was no significant difference in depression between heterosexual respondents who watched the stereotypical portrayal and heterosexual respondents who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal, conditions; $t(70) = 1.58, p = .179$. Additionally, post-hoc test revealed a significant difference in level of depression between respondents who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal ($M = 1.41, SD = .50$) and the control group ($M = 1.69, SD = .50$), conditions; $t(88) = -2.65, p = .010$. Depression was higher among respondents in the control group. However, post-hoc t test revealed no significant difference in level of depression between respondents who watched the stereotypical portrayal and the control group, conditions; $t(72) = -.85, p = .399$.

Figure 4.4. ANOVA results for depression analysis 1



The interaction effect between gender and condition on depression for all respondents was not significant, $F(2, 112) = 1.33, p = .269, \eta_p^2 = .023$. Post-hoc t test revealed no significant difference for depression between males who watched the stereotypical portrayal and males who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal, conditions; $t(36) = 1.10, p = .278$. Post-hoc t test revealed no significant difference for depression between males who watched the stereotypical portrayal and males in the control group, conditions; $t(52) = .36, p = .718$ (= H4a). Post-hoc t test revealed no significant difference for depression between males who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal and males in the control group, conditions; $t(56) = -1.11, p = .271$ (= H4b).

In addition, post-hoc t test revealed no significant difference for depression between females who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal and females who watched the stereotypical portrayal, conditions; $t(32) = .23, p = .819$. Post-hoc t test revealed no significant difference for level of depression between females who watched the stereotypical portrayal and females in the control group, conditions; $t(18) = -1.77, p = .094$ (= H4a). Post-hoc t test did reveal a marginal significant difference for depression between females who watched the stereotypical portrayal ($M = 1.32, SD = 1.32$) and females in the control group ($M = 1.74, SD = .53$), conditions; $t(9.90) = -2.24, p = .050$ (\neq H4b).

4.3. Results analysis 2

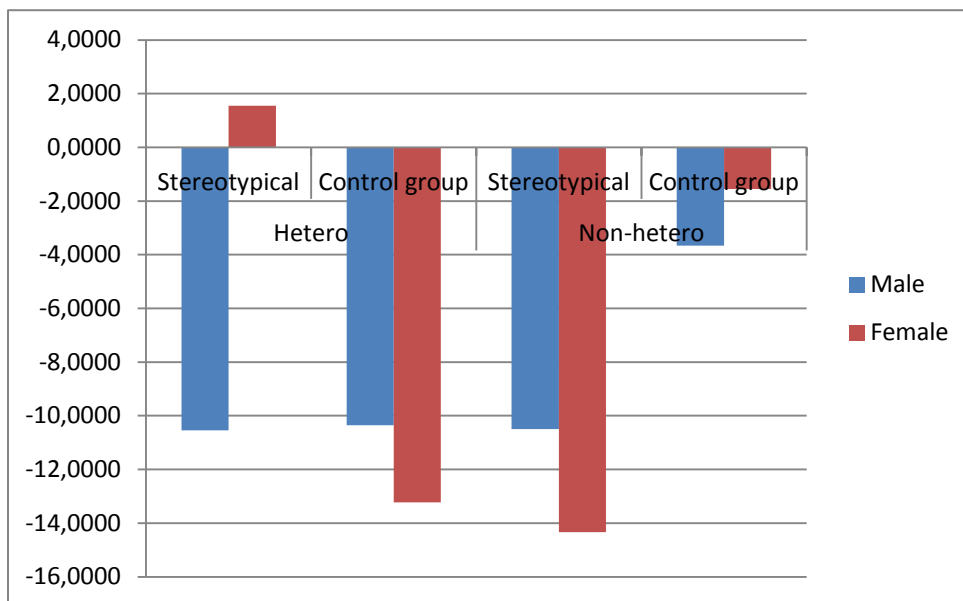
This subchapter reports the results of the analysis that compared the results of Survey A, which measured viewer attitude after watching the stereotypical portrayal, and survey C, which was filled in by the control group. Firstly, descriptive statistics are presented with demographic information about the respondents. Thereafter, results of statistical analyses are presented per dependent variable. To determine the effects of the portrayals on the four measures (self-objectification, prejudice, anxiety, and depression) one-way analyses of variance (hereafter ANOVAs) tests were conducted for all four measures. Subsequently, independent t tests were conducted for each dependent variable to determine if the means differed based on gender, condition, and interaction.

4.3.1. Self-objectification

One-way ANOVA did not reveal a significant main effect for sexual orientation for respondents on self-objectification, $F(1, 99) = 0.09, p = .760$ (see Figure 4.5). However, post-hoc t test showed that there was a significant difference between heterosexuals' and non-

heterosexuals' level of self-objectification if the portrayal was stereotypical, conditions; $t(36) = 2.25, p = .031$. Self-objectification was higher among non-heterosexuals ($M = -12.14, SD = 10.50$) compared to heterosexuals ($M = -5.00, SD = 10.50$). Moreover, post-hoc t test also revealed that there was a significant difference between heterosexuals' and non-heterosexuals' level of self-objectification in the control group, conditions; $t(31) = -2.83, p = .008$. Self-objectification was higher among non-heterosexuals ($M = -2.65, SD = 12.80$) compared to heterosexuals ($M = -10.91, SD = 7.98$).

Figure 4.5. ANOVA results for self-objectification analysis 2



One-way ANOVA did not reveal a significant main effect for gender for respondents on self-objectification, $F(1, 99) = .83, p = .364$. However, post-hoc t -test showed that there was a significant difference in self-objectification between men and women when the portrayal was stereotypical. Self-objectification was higher among women ($M = -4.06, SD = 11.77$) compared to men ($M = -10.52, SD = 7.24$), conditions; $t(36) = -2.08, p = .045$. Post-hoc t -test showed that there was no significant difference in self-objectification between men and women in the control group, conditions; $t(24.72) = -.56, p = .583$.

One-way ANOVA did not reveal a significant main effect for condition for respondents on self-objectification, $F(1, 99) = .376, p = .541, \eta_p^2 = .004$. Post-hoc t test revealed there is no significant difference in self-objectification between respondents who watched the stereotypical portrayal and respondents in the control group, conditions; $t(105) = .253, p = .801$.

One-way ANOVA revealed that the interaction effect between sexual orientation and condition on self-objectification for all respondents was significant, $F(1, 99) = 17.31, p = .000$. Post-hoc t test showed that there was no significant difference between heterosexual males and non-heterosexual males if the portrayal was stereotypical, conditions; $t(19) = -.01, p = .991$. Post-hoc t test showed that there was a significant difference between heterosexual males ($M = -10.35, SD = 7.29$) and non-heterosexual males ($M = -3.67, SD = 10.53$) in the control group, conditions; $t(47) = -2.47, p = .017$. Self-objectification among non-heterosexual men was greater compared to heterosexual men. Post-hoc t test showed a very significant difference between heterosexual females ($M = 1.55, SD = 9.21$) and non-heterosexual females ($M = -14.33, SD = 8.82$) who watched the stereotypical portrayal, conditions; $t(15) = 3.44, p = .004$. Post-hoc t test showed there was not a significant difference between heterosexual females and non-heterosexual females in the control group, conditions; $t(17.56) = -2.01, p = .060$.

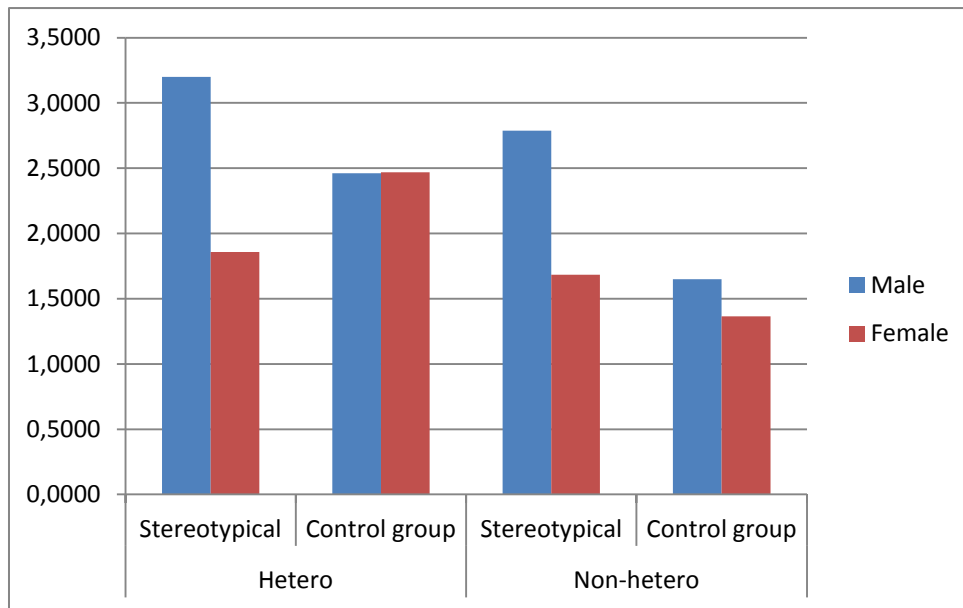
Post-hoc t test revealed there was no significant difference between level of self-objectification among non-heterosexual males that watched the stereotypical portrayal and non-heterosexual males in the control group, conditions; $t(18) = -1.67, p = .112$. (= H5).

Moreover, post-hoc t test revealed there was no significant difference between level of self-objectification among women who watched the stereotypical portrayal and women in the control group, conditions; $t(35) = .63, p = .535$.

4.3.2. Prejudice

One-way ANOVA did reveal a significant main effect for sexual orientation for respondents on prejudice, $F(1, 109) = 11.71, p = .001, \eta_p^2 = .097$ (see Figure 4.6). Prejudice was higher among heterosexual respondents ($M = 2.54, SD = .98$) compared to non-heterosexual respondents ($M = 1.93, SD = 1.01$). Post-hoc t test revealed that there was no significant difference in prejudice between heterosexuals and non-heterosexuals who watched the stereotypical portrayal, conditions; $t(46) = .85, p = .401$. Post-hoc t test revealed that there was a significant difference in prejudice between heterosexuals and non-heterosexuals in the control group, conditions; $t(67) = 4.39, p = .000$. Prejudice was higher among heterosexual respondents ($M = 2.46, SD = .88$) compared to non-heterosexual respondents ($M = 1.51, SD = .78$).

Figure 4.6. ANOVA results for prejudice analysis 2



One-way ANOVA did reveal a significant main effect for gender for respondents on prejudice, $F(1, 109) = 13.79, p = .000, \eta_p^2 = .112$. Prejudice was higher among male respondents ($M = 2.55, SD = 1.03$) compared to female respondents ($M = 1.83, SD = .87$). Post-hoc t test revealed a significant difference in prejudice between male and female respondents who watched the stereotypical portrayal, conditions; $t(46) = 4.46, p = .000$. Prejudice was higher among male respondents ($MD = 3.02, SD = .99$) compared to female respondents ($M = 1.79, SD = .80$). Post-hoc t test did not reveal a significant difference in prejudice between male and female respondents in the control group, conditions; $t(67) = 1.60, p = .114$.

One-way ANOVA did reveal a significant main effect for condition for all respondents on level of prejudice, $F(1, 109) = 4.67, p = .033, \eta_p^2 = .041$. Moreover, post-hoc t test revealed there is a significant difference in level of prejudice between respondents who watched the stereotypical portrayal and respondents in the control group, conditions; $t(115) = 2.16, p = .033$. Level of prejudice was higher among respondents who watched the stereotypical portrayal ($M = 2.56, SD = 1.10$) compared to respondents in the control group ($M = 2.15, SD = .96$).

The interaction effect between sexual orientation and condition on prejudice for all respondents was not significant, $F(1, 109) = 3.29, p = .073$. Post-hoc t test showed that there was no significant difference in prejudice between heterosexual males and non-heterosexual

males who watched the stereotypical portrayal, conditions; $t(28) = 1.14, p = .265$. However, post-hoc t test showed that there was a significant difference in prejudice between heterosexual males and non-heterosexual males in the control group, conditions; $t(47) = 2.76, p = .008$. Prejudice among heterosexual males ($M = 2.46, SD = .90$) was higher compared to non-heterosexual males ($M = 1.65, SD = .85$).

Additionally, post-hoc t test showed no significant difference between heterosexual females and non-heterosexual females who watched the stereotypical portrayal, conditions; $t(16) = .44, p = .664$. Post-hoc t test showed a significant difference between heterosexual females and non-heterosexual females in the control group, conditions; $t(18) = 3.16, p = .005$. Prejudice among heterosexual females ($M = 2.47, SD = .86$) was higher compared to non-heterosexual females ($M = 1.36, SD = .70$).

Post-hoc t test revealed there was a significant difference between level of prejudice between non-heterosexual males that watched the stereotypical portrayal and non-heterosexual males in the control group, conditions; $t(23) = 3.20, p = .004$. Level of prejudice was higher among the non-heterosexual males who watched the stereotypical portrayal ($M = 2.79, SD = .92$) compared to non-heterosexual males who did not watch stimulus material ($M = 1.65, SD = .85$) ($\neq H_6$).

Moreover, post-hoc t test revealed there was no significant difference between level of prejudice among women who watched the stereotypical portrayal and women in the control group, conditions; $t(36) = -.25, p = .805$ ($= H_6$).

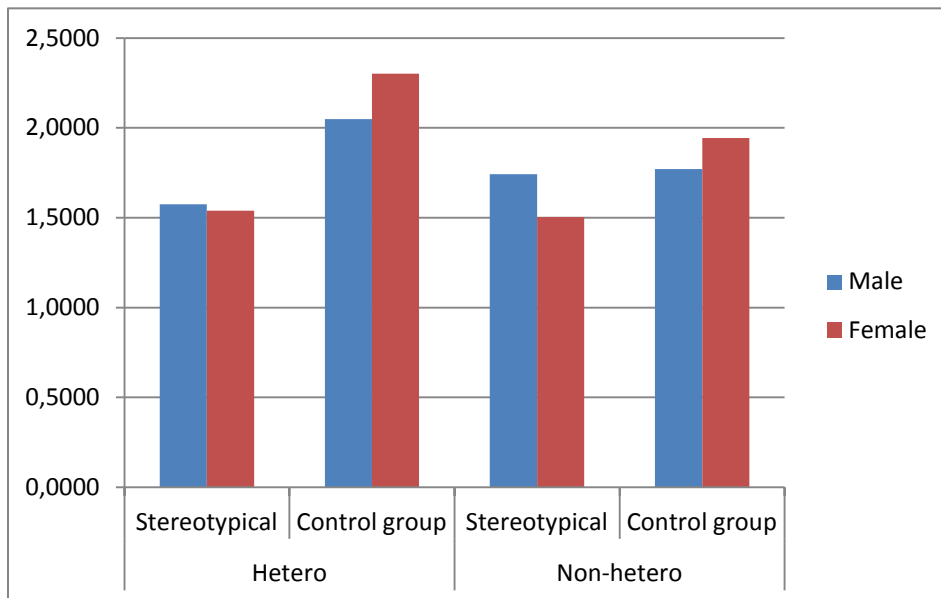
4.3.3. Anxiety

One-way ANOVA did not reveal a significant main effect for sexual orientation for respondents on level anxiety, $F(1, 109) = 0.69, p = .408$ (see Figure 4.7). Post-hoc t test revealed that there was no significant difference in level of anxiety between heterosexuals and non-heterosexuals who watched the stereotypical portrayal, conditions; $t(46) = -.51, p = .612$. Post-hoc t test also revealed that there was no significant difference in level of anxiety between heterosexuals and non-heterosexuals in the control group, conditions; $t(67) = 1.24, p = .218$.

One-way ANOVA did not reveal a significant main effect for gender for respondents on anxiety, $F(1, 109) = 0.06, p = .803$. Post-hoc t test revealed no significant difference in level of anxiety between male and female respondents who watched the stereotypical portrayal, conditions; $t(46) = .63, p = .535$. Moreover, post-hoc t test revealed no significant

difference in level of anxiety between male and female respondents in the control group, conditions; $t(67) = -.60, p = .550$.

Figure 4.7. ANOVA results for anxiety analysis 2



One-way ANOVA reveal a significant main effect for condition for all respondents on level of anxiety, $F(1, 109) = 7.88, p = .006, \eta_p^2 = .067$. Moreover, post-hoc t test revealed there was a significant difference in level of prejudice between respondents who watched the stereotypical portrayal and respondents in the control group, conditions; $t(115) = -3.03, p = .003$. Level of anxiety was higher among respondents in the control group ($M = 2.02, SD = .78$) compared to respondents who watched the stereotypical portrayal ($M = 1.60, SD = .65$).

The interaction effect between sexual orientation and condition on level anxiety for all respondents was not significant, $F(1, 109) = 1.61, p = .208$. Post-hoc t test showed that there was no significant difference in level anxiety between heterosexual males and non-heterosexual males who watched the stereotypical portrayal, conditions; $t(28) = -.66, p = .513$. Post-hoc t test also showed that there was no significant difference in level of anxiety between heterosexual males and non-heterosexual males in the control group, conditions; $t(47) = 1.20, p = .235$. In addition, post-hoc t test showed that there was no significant difference in level of anxiety between heterosexual females and non-heterosexual females who watched the stereotypical portrayal conditions; $t(16) = .12, p = .907$. Lastly, post-hoc t test showed that there was no significant difference in level of anxiety between heterosexual females and non-heterosexual females in the control group, conditions; $t(18) = .83, p = .415$.

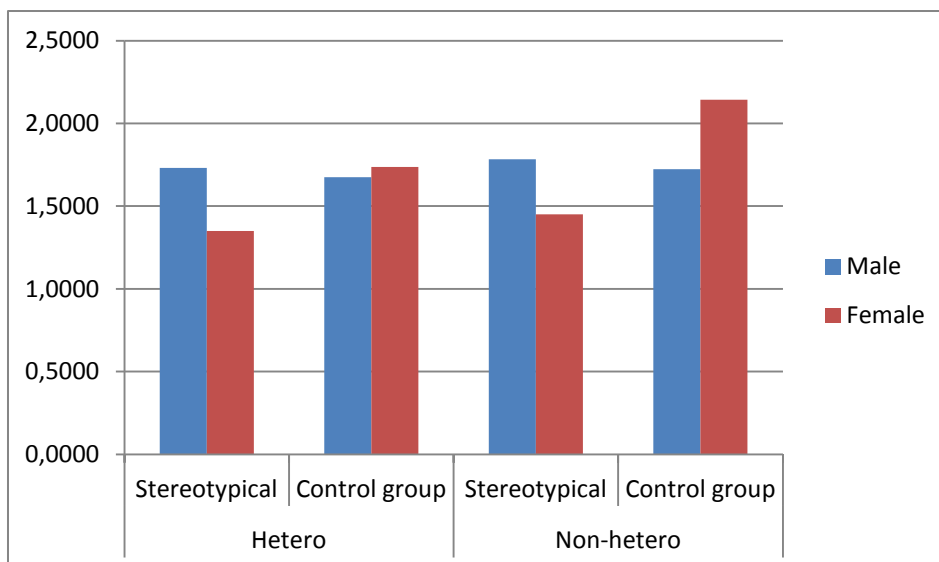
Post-hoc *t* test revealed there was not a significant difference between level of anxiety between non-heterosexual males that watched the stereotypical portrayal and non-heterosexual males in the control group, conditions; $t(23) = -.08, p = .934. (\neq H7)$.

Post-hoc *t* test revealed there was a significant difference between level of anxiety among women who watched the stereotypical portrayal and women in the control group, conditions; $t(33) = -2.27, p = .030$. Level of anxiety was higher among the women who watched the stereotypical portrayal ($M = 1.53, SD = .61$) compared to the women who did not watch the stimulus material ($M = 2.10, SD = .95$).

4.3.4. Depression

One-way ANOVA did not reveal a significant main effect for sexual orientation for respondents on level of depression, $F(1, 109) = 1.55, p = .216$ (see Figure 4.8). Post-hoc *t* test did reveal no significant difference for level of depression between heterosexuals and non-heterosexuals who watched the stereotypical portrayal, conditions; $t(46) = -.49, p = .624$. Post-hoc *t* test also did not reveal a significant difference for level of depression between heterosexuals and non-heterosexuals in the control group, conditions; $t(31.11) = -1.33, p = .195$.

Figure 4.8. ANOVA results for depression analysis 2



One-way ANOVA did not reveal a significant main effect for gender for respondents on level of depression, $F(1, 109) = 0.23, p = .634$. Post-hoc *t* test did reveal a significant

difference on level of depression between all male ($M = 1.75, SD = .64$) and all female ($M = 1.39, SD = .41$) respondents who watched the stereotypical portrayal, conditions; $t(45.73) = 2.41, p = .020$. However, post-hoc t test did not reveal a significant difference between males and females in the control group, conditions; $t(67) = -1.71, p = .092$.

One-way ANOVA did not reveal a significant main effect for condition for all respondents on level of depression, $F(1, 109) = 3.91, p = .051, \eta_p^2 = .035$. Moreover, post-hoc t test revealed there is no significant difference in level of depression between respondents who watched the stereotypical portrayal and respondents in the control group, conditions; $t(115) = -1.32, p = .188$.

One-way ANOVA did not reveal a significant interaction effect between sexual orientation and condition for respondents on level of depression, $F(1, 109) = .38, p = .538$. Post-hoc t test showed that there was no significant difference in level of depression between heterosexual males and non-heterosexual males who watched the stereotypical portrayal, conditions; $t(28) = -.23, p = .830$. Post-hoc t test also showed that there was no significant difference in level of depression between heterosexual males and non-heterosexual males in the control group, conditions; $t(47) = -.28, p = .781$. In addition, post-hoc t test showed that there was no significant difference in level of depression between heterosexual females and non-heterosexual females who watched the stereotypical portrayal conditions; $t(16) = -.50, p = .623$. Lastly, post-hoc t test showed that there was no significant difference in level of depression between heterosexual females and non-heterosexual females in the control group, conditions; $t(16.27) = -1.23, p = .238$.

Post-hoc t test revealed there was not a significant difference between level of depression between non-heterosexual males that watched the stereotypical portrayal and non-heterosexual males in the control group, conditions; $t(23) = .23, p = .824 (= H8)$.

Post-hoc t test revealed there was a significant difference between level of depression between women that watched the stereotypical portrayal and women in the control group, conditions; $t(29.2) = -2.85, p = .008$. Level of depression was higher among women in the control group ($M = 1.96, SD = .79$) compared to the women who watched the stereotypical portrayal ($M = 1.39, SD = .41$) ($= H8$).

45. Discussion

5.1. Comparing stereotypical, non-stereotypical, and control group for heterosexuals

5.1.1. Self-objectification

Results revealed a significant main effect for gender on self-objectification, revealing that it was higher among female respondents compared to male respondents for the entire sample. Moreover, results showed a significant main effect for condition. However, in contrast to H1a, which stated that heterosexual men and heterosexual women would not show a higher level of self-objectification after watching a stereotypical portrayal compared to the control group, results showed that self-objectification was higher among heterosexual females who watched the stereotypical portrayal, compared to the control group. This is in contrast to the established notion that self-objectification among women is usually higher when there is an emphasis on physical appearance and the female beauty ideal. It is unexpected that self-objectification is higher after watching the portrayal of a gay male who is weak and physically not an example of the beauty ideal for men or women. A possible explanation for this is the notion that seeing the gay male in a weak position and portrayed as being dominated over by a man, causes women to see him more as one of their own and emphasize with him. In line with H1a was that among heterosexual men there was no significant difference in level of self-objectification for the two conditions. What is noticeable is that in the control group there was no significant difference between heterosexual men and women in self-objectification. This seems odd, seeing as in general, women self-objectify more (Fredrickson and Roberts, 1997; Rodin, Silberstein & Striegel-Moore, 1998).

Moreover, in contrast to H1b, which predicted that heterosexual men and heterosexual women would show a higher level of self-objectification after watching a non-stereotypical portrayal, results showed that self-objectification was not higher among heterosexual men and heterosexual women who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal, compared to the control group. This is in contrast to prior research that reports men are more likely to self-objectify if they see a man who is physically in shape and has masculine features portrayed in the media (Franzoi et al. (2012), which was presented in the *Game of Thrones* clip with Renley. A possible explanation for this is the fact that the male character, while showing masculine characteristics, was intimate with another man. It is likely that heterosexual men do not identify with the gay male character, and are thus not triggered to self-objectify. It is possible that heterosexual women are not triggered to self-objectify for two reasons. Firstly, on screen

there was a male character, and not a female character. Secondly, because the male character was seen being intimate with another man, and thus not interested in women.

5.1.2. Prejudice

Results showed there was a significant main effect for gender on prejudice, revealing that it was higher among male respondents compared to female respondents for the entire sample. Moreover, results did not show a significant interaction effect between gender and condition for level of prejudice towards gay males. In line with H2a, which predicted that heterosexual men and heterosexual women would not show a higher level of prejudice after watching the non-stereotypical portrayal compared to the control group, results did not reveal a significant difference in prejudice between respondents who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal and the control group. This finding suggests that a positive portrayal neither increases nor decreases prejudice towards homosexual males. Moreover, in line with H2b, which predicted that heterosexual men would show a higher level of prejudice after watching a stereotypical portrayal compared to the control group, results showed that the level of prejudice was higher among heterosexual men who watched the stereotypical portrayal compared to heterosexual men in the control group. What is worth noting is that in the control group there was no significant difference between heterosexual men and women in prejudice. This seems odd, as past research revealed that in general men have more prejudice towards homosexual men than women.

5.1.2. Anxiety

Results revealed there was no significant main effect for gender on anxiety for all respondents. Moreover, results did not reveal a significant interaction effect between gender and condition. After watching the stereotypical portrayal, anxiety was not higher among male respondents compared to the control group. In fact, the level of anxiety was slightly lower in the group who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal. Results showed no significant difference in level of anxiety between female respondents who watched the stereotypical portrayal and females in the control group. These findings are in line with H3a, which predicted that both heterosexual men and heterosexual women who watched the stereotypical portrayal would not show higher levels of anxiety compared to the control group. A possible explanation for this is that the stereotypical portrayal, which had more feminine

characteristics, and was weaker and submissive, was perceived as a threat to masculinity and a violation of the traditional male gender role, which caused heterosexual males not to identify or empathize with the gay male character. In contrast to H3a, which also predicted that women who watched the stereotypical portrayal would not show a higher level of anxiety compared to women in the control group, results showed a significant difference in level of anxiety between women who watched the stereotypical portrayal and women in the control group. Women who watched the stereotypical portrayal had a higher level of anxiety compared to the women who were not exposed to the stimulus material. It is possible the women emphasized more with the character, due to his role as a victim. However, it is also possible feelings of anxiety were higher due to other factors, for instance religion. In contrast, it is possible the non-heterosexual males did not empathize for the same reason they had higher levels of prejudice after watching. Both findings are noteworthy, and require future research's attention.

In line with H3b, which predicted that heterosexual men and heterosexual women who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal would not show an increase in level of anxiety compared to the control group, both heterosexual men and heterosexual women did not show higher levels of anxiety compared to the control group. In fact, in the case of heterosexual men, the level of anxiety was slightly lower in the group who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal. Moreover, results showed there was no significant difference in level of anxiety between heterosexual men who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal and heterosexual men in the control group. These findings suggest that a stereotypical portrayal of a gay male causes heterosexual men to empathize less with the character. It is likely the heterosexual male viewer considers the gay male as a violator of the traditional male gender role, and does not identify with the character because of this.

5.1.2. Depression

Results did not reveal a significant main effect for gender on depression for all respondents. Moreover, there was no significant main effect for condition on depression on all respondents. There was also no significant interaction effect found between gender and condition. In line with H4a, which predicted that the level of depression would not be higher among heterosexual men and heterosexual women who watched the stereotypical portrayal compared the control group, the level of depression was higher among respondents in the control group compared to the heterosexual men and women who watched the stereotypical

portrayal. These findings are a promising sign as it indicates that watching a gay male character, regardless of whether he is portrayed stereotypical or non-stereotypical, does not increase feelings of depression. Worth noting is that the level of depression was higher among women in the control group compared to the women who watched the stereotypical portrayal. This seems odd, seeing as the level of anxiety was higher among women who watched the stereotypical portrayal compared to the women the control group, yet the opposite appears to be the case for the level of depression. It is possible that this is due to external factors, such as respondents misunderstanding the questions in the survey, or respondents already having higher levels of either anxiety or depression preliminary to participating in the study. A replication study could shed more light on whether this is the case, or whether character portrayal is in fact of influence on having less or more feelings of depression and anxiety respectively.

Moreover, in line with H4b, which predicted that heterosexual men and heterosexual women who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal would not show higher levels of depression, heterosexual men and heterosexual women did not show a higher level of depression after watching the stereotypical portrayal compared to the control group. In fact, results found a significant difference in level of depression between respondents who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal and respondents in the control group, that showed the level of depression was higher in the control group. It is likely this is due to external factors.

5.2. Stereotypical portrayal and control group for heterosexuals and non-heterosexuals

Based on previous research findings, the initial predictions assumed that interaction effects would take place between sexual orientation and condition. This means the combination of a viewer's sexual orientation and the condition the viewer is assigned to, which is either watching stimulus material containing a stereotypical or not stereotypical gay male character, or watching no stimulus material has different influences on the viewer's feelings of negativity.

5.2.1. Self-objectification

Results did not show a main effect for sexual orientation on self-objectification. It is possible that this is due to the difference in number of heterosexual respondents and non-heterosexual respondents. Results did show a significant difference in level of self-

objectification between heterosexual and non-heterosexual respondents who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal. Self-objectification was higher among heterosexual respondents compared to non-heterosexual respondents. It is likely this is due to the fact that there were more heterosexual female respondents than non-heterosexual male respondents. However, results did show a significant interaction effect between sexual orientation and condition for self-objectification. However, there was no significant difference between level of self-objectification between heterosexual males and non-heterosexual males who watched the stereotypical portrayal. In contrast, there was a significant difference in the control group, where the level of self-objectification was higher among non-heterosexual males. These findings indicate that although someone from their community i.e. someone gay, is portrayed, non-heterosexual males do not necessarily self-objectify with him. It is possible this is due to the character's stereotypical portrayal.

In line with H5, which predicted that non-heterosexual men who watched the stereotypical portrayal would not show a higher level of self-objectification compared to non-heterosexual men in the control group, results showed there was no significant difference in level of self-objectification between non-heterosexual men who watched the stereotypical portrayal and non-heterosexual men in the control group. It is likely this is due to the fact that there was no emphasis on the standard male beauty ideal and the character did not show masculine characteristics pertaining to this ideal.

What is worth noting is that self-objectification was significantly higher among heterosexual females compared to non-heterosexual females after watching the stereotypical portrayal. Prior research indicated that self-objectification is usually higher when there is an emphasis on physical appearance and the beauty ideal. It is therefore unexpected that self-objectification was higher among heterosexual women who watched the portrayal of a gay male, who is physically not an example of the beauty ideal for women. It is possible heterosexual females empathize more with the character, who had feminine characteristics and was shown as weak and submissive towards another man, and were triggered to objectify themselves. Non-heterosexual females may have less experience with being in this position. However, these are speculations, and future research could benefit from studying possible explanations.

5.2.2. Prejudice

Results did reveal a significant main effect for sexual orientation on the level of

prejudice, with prejudice being higher among heterosexual respondents. However, there was no significant difference between heterosexual and non-heterosexual respondents who watched the stereotypical portrayal. Neither was there a significant difference between heterosexual males and non-heterosexual males, and between heterosexual females and non-heterosexual females who watched the stereotypical portrayal. In contrast, there was a significant difference between heterosexual and non-heterosexual males in the control group, where prejudice was higher among heterosexual males. As such, in contrast to H6, which predicted that non-heterosexual men who watched the stereotypical portrayal would not show a higher level of prejudice compared to non-heterosexual men in the control group, results revealed a significant difference in level of prejudice between non-heterosexual males for the two conditions. Non-heterosexual men who watched the stereotypical portrayal had a higher level of prejudice towards gay males than non-heterosexual men who did not watch stimulus material. These findings suggests that a stereotypical portrayal causes equal prejudice among heterosexuals and non-heterosexuals, indicating that despite seeing someone “like them” i.e. gay, a stereotypical portrayal also causes prejudice among non-heterosexual males. Future studies should investigate this more, as it could provide insight and better understanding of how stereotypical media representations influences prejudice amongst non-heterosexual males towards their own sub-society.

In line with H6, which also predicted that women who watched the stereotypical portrayal would not show a higher level of prejudice compared to women in the control group, results did not reveal a significant difference in level of prejudice between women for both conditions. However, it is worth noting that in the control group prejudice was significantly higher among heterosexual females compared to non-heterosexual females. This is noticeable, as it is in contrast to past research findings which reported that women in general have less negative attitudes towards gay males, as they are not perceived as a threat to their gender identity like they are for heterosexual men. It is possible this is due to the fact there were more religious persons among the heterosexual group.

5.2.3. Anxiety

Results revealed a significant main effect for sexual orientation on the level of anxiety. However, there was no significant difference between heterosexuals and non-heterosexuals in who watched the stereotypical portrayal. There were also no significant difference in level of anxiety between heterosexuals and non-heterosexuals in the control group. Worthy to note is

that there was no significant difference in level of anxiety between heterosexual and non-heterosexual men who watched the stereotypical portrayal.

Moreover, the interaction effect between sexual orientation and condition on level anxiety for all respondents was not significant. In contrast to H7, which predicted that non-heterosexual men who watched the stereotypical portrayal would show a higher level of anxiety compared to non-heterosexual men in the control group, results did not reveal a significant difference in level of anxiety between non-heterosexual men who watched the stereotypical portrayal and non-heterosexual men in the control group. Moreover, heterosexual males did not show higher anxiety after watching the stereotypical portrayal compared to heterosexual males in the control group. This is a positive sign, as it indicates that seeing a stereotypical portrayal does not have more negative effects on their feelings of anxiety compared to no exposure.

5.2.4. Depression

Results did not reveal a significant main effect for sexual orientation on the level of depression. There was no significant difference between heterosexual and non-heterosexual respondents who watched the stereotypical portrayal. It is possible, however, this is due to the uneven distribution of heterosexuals and non-heterosexuals. There was no significant difference between heterosexual males and non-heterosexual males in level of depression in both conditions. Levels of depression were higher among males compared to females when watching the stereotypical portrayal. It is possible this is due to the notion that violating “appropriate gender roles” is viewed as more serious for men than women. This would make sense, seeing as video clip contained a male character that had unmasculine traits.

Results did not reveal a significant interaction effect between sexual orientation and condition for respondents on level of depression. In line with H8, which predicted that non-heterosexual men who watched the stereotypical portrayal would not show a higher level of depression compared to non-heterosexual men in the control group, results did not reveal a significant difference in level of depression between non-heterosexual men who watched the stereotypical portrayal and non-heterosexual men in the control group.

6. Conclusion

In this chapter the results of the three surveys will be compared to existing theory and previous findings. This study aimed at investigating to what extent a stereotypical or non-stereotypical character portrayal of a gay male character in a violent context has effects on heterosexual vs. non-heterosexual viewer's levels of self-objectification, prejudice towards gay males, feelings of anxiety, and feelings of depression respectively. Despite the fact that not all hypotheses were supported, taken the two analyses together, a number of conclusions can be drawn.

Firstly, results indicate that self-objectification among viewers can be influenced by a gay male's character portrayal. In line with previous studies, women showed higher levels of self-objectification than men for all three conditions (Fredrickson et al, 1998; Rodin, Silberstein & Striegel-Moore, 1998; Muehlenkamp & Saris-Baglana, 2002; Hebl, King & Lin, 2004). However, what is unexpected, is that heterosexual females who watched the stereotypical portrayal, showed higher levels of self-objectification compared to women who did not watch stimulus material, whereas heterosexual females who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal did not. It is possible that because the character had more feminine traits and was thus more similar to a woman, female respondents identified more with the stereotypical male character compared to the non-stereotypical character and thus self-objectified more (Franzoi et al. 2012). However, this does not explain why these female respondents showed higher levels of self-objectification compared to females in the control group, which is something that should be studied in future research.

In addition, it was expected that heterosexual men would self-objectify more when they watched the non-stereotypical gay male, as he had more typically masculine characteristics, such as leadership and confidence, and was physically more attractive and muscular. This however, did not happen, which indicates that despite having masculine characteristics, non-stereotypical gay male characters do not cause heterosexual men to self-objectify more. Taking into account self-objectification theory that states people are more likely to self-objectify when they observe others who they share similarities with, these findings suggest that heterosexual men do not perceive homosexual men as similar to them, despite them being more masculine and thus more similar to the typical male (Fredrickson & Roberts, 1997; Franzoi et al. 2012).

Secondly, this study has also shown that the level of prejudice towards gay males

among viewers can be influenced by gay male character's portrayal . On the one hand, there was no significant difference in level of prejudice between heterosexual males and heterosexual females who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal, which was also the case in the control group. On the other hand, in the group that watched the non-stereotypical portrayal, the level of prejudice was significantly higher among heterosexual males compared to heterosexual females. These findings indicate that watching a non-stereotypical character portrayal of a gay male negatively influences a heterosexual male's attitude towards homosexuality. Moreover, the results indicate that watching a non-stereotypical gay male character does not negatively influence a heterosexual male's attitude towards gay males. While this finding is not entirely similar to those from a previous study by Bonds-Raacke et al. (2007) in which a strong portrayal had positive effects on audience attitude towards homosexuality, it is still an interesting and important result, as it suggests that non-stereotypical representations of gay males do not increase prejudice among heterosexual males' attitudes towards gay males. Further research is necessary in order to generate more generalizable results.

In addition, an interesting and unexpected result is that in comparison to the control group, prejudice was higher among both heterosexual and non heterosexual men who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal. While it was predicted this would be the case for heterosexual males based on previous studies (Kite & Whitley, 1996; Herek, 1988; LaMar & Kite, 1998; Fingerhut & Peplau, 2006; Hudephol, Parrot & Zeichner, 2010), it is an unexpected finding that non-heterosexual males also had more prejudice. This suggests that despite seeing "one of their own" being mistreated and harmed, non-heterosexuals in fact feel less amicable towards the gay male character that is portrayed. Moreover, it indicates that character portrayal is also of influence on how gay males perceive fictional gay males in the media. As such, these findings are similar to those of Evans (2007) who found that stereotypical portrayals of gay characters are not automatically accepted or positively looked at by LGB youths. Research thus far has primarily focused on how LGB persons are represented in the media, how these are received by heterosexual viewers, and how LGB persons see these representations as role models and use them to understand their sexuality. As such, it is an important area of research that also needs further exploration.

Thirdly, research findings also suggest that levels of anxiety among viewers can be influenced by a gay male's character portrayal. In this study, heterosexual males' level of anxiety were lower after watching the stereotypical gay male, compared to heterosexual males who did not watch stimulus material. Similarly, the level of anxiety was lower among

heterosexual men who watched the non-stereotypical portrayal compared to heterosexual men in the control group. These findings suggest that a portrayal of a gay male, regardless of whether it is stereotypical or non-stereotypical, causes heterosexual men to empathize less with the character. It is likely the heterosexual male viewer considers the gay male as a violator of the traditional male gender role, even despite the more masculine characteristics of the non-stereotypical gay male character, and does not (want to) identify with the characters because of this (Kite & Whitley, 1996; Corley & Pollack, 1997; Govorun et al., 2006; Nelson, 2009). An interesting finding was that women, but not non-heterosexual males, had higher levels of anxiety after watching the stereotypical gay male compared to the control group. On one hand, it is possible that women identify more with the role of victim and being submissive to a dominant male. However, it is also likely that the results in this study were due to reasons relating to demographics, such as religion and political preference. It is possible that non-heterosexual males did not experience a higher level of anxiety after seeing the stereotypical portrayal for similar reasons they did have higher levels of prejudice. Future research is needed for a more decisive answer.

Lastly, research findings did show some significant differences in levels of depression among women. Among women in the control group there was a significantly higher level of depression compared to women who watched the stereotypical portrayal. However, it is likely this is due to external factors. As such, an answer to research question 4 is that a non-stereotypical or stereotypical character portrayal does not seem to have a significant influence on the level of depression among heterosexual and non-heterosexual viewers. Future research is needed to determine whether this is indeed the case.

7. Limitations and future research

As in most studies, there are limitations to this study to keep in mind. First, the initial research design contained one study that would compare results for stereotypical portrayal, non-stereotypical portrayal and the control group for both heterosexual and non-heterosexual respondents. However, due to limited time, the sample was unequally distributed for heterosexual and non-heterosexual respondents. Moreover, in the group of respondents that watched the non-stereotypical portrayal, the number of non-heterosexual respondents was deemed too low and therefore excluded from subsequent analyses. As such, the study was split into two parts, with one part comparing results for the stereotypical portrayal, the non-stereotypical portrayal, and the control group for heterosexual respondents, and one part comparing results for the stereotypical portrayal and the control group for both heterosexual and non-heterosexual respondents. While this has still provided valuable results, they are not representative of the entire population due to the small and limited sample size. Future research could extend this study by using a bigger sample size for all three groups that is more equally distributed in terms of gender and sexual orientation, as well as more stimulus material containing both non-stereotypical and stereotypical portrayals. This would also enable a comparison of results from both heterosexual and non-heterosexual respondents who watched non-stereotypical and stereotypical portrayals. In addition, future research could consider extending this study to non-stereotypical and stereotypical portrayals of bisexual, lesbian, and transgender characters.

A second limitation to this study, is that the stimulus material was rather short. The original study by Ferguson used entire episodes, whereas this study used 15 minutes that consisted of manipulated material, in the sense that it was cut and edited together. Ferguson organized screenings for larger groups respondents. The decision to use shorter clips and online surveys opposed to entire episodes and screenings, was based on the risk of not finding enough non-heterosexual respondents. Online surveys enabled non-heterosexual respondents, and heterosexual respondents for that matter, to stay anonymous. For future studies, using entire episodes could generate more interesting and possibly valid results, as the respondents would have a more context surrounding the characters. Moreover, this study used clips from fantasy shows. It is possible that using video material from genres more similar to real-life, such as sitcoms, dramas, and comedies, might evoke different responses or changes in attitudes with the viewer.

A third limitation to this study was the sampling method. Due to a limited amount of

time, random sampling and snowball sampling were both used to find non-heterosexual respondents. It is possible that during the process of snowball sampling, respondents discussed the surveys among each other, or filled in biased or socially desired answers due to the fact they knew the researcher personally. Future studies that aim to use a similar type of respondents should take this into account, and should attempt to avoid this sampling method.

Lastly, an area future research could focus on is possible interaction effects caused by variables relating to respondents' demographic backgrounds. As previous research has found, people who are more religious and are more likely to have higher levels of prejudice towards homosexuals, can be positively influenced by positive portrayals of homosexuals (Bonds-Raacke et al., 2007). It would be interesting to study to replicate this study to investigate to what extent these people's attitudes are influenced by positive portrayals of gay males. Future findings could contribute to a better understanding of societal groups and their reception of gay representation in mass media texts. Moreover, additional research might shed a more detailed light on the workings of mass media in relation to influencing audience attitude towards homosexuality, and to what extent this influence can be positive or negative depending on the nature of mass media's content and character portrayals in particular. In light of the increase in LGB youth suicides (Trevorproject.com), providing positive, well-rounded, varied, and non-stereotypical media representations of LGB persons is not only something that should happen to support equality and bring about positive change (Glaad.org), but also because it provides LGB teens role models and sources of knowledge that facilitates their individual processes of coming to terms with their sexuality, which could ultimately save lives.

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Appendix A: The survey

Note: all three surveys consisted of the same set of questions. The introduction text below was added to survey A and survey B. Survey C had a similar introduction without mentioning of a video clip.

Dear participant,

This survey will take you approximately 25 minutes. The first 15 minutes you will be watching a clip from [HBO's Game of Thrones or HBO's True Blood]. Afterwards, you are asked to answer several questions, which will take you 10 minutes.

Note: once you press 'Next,' you cannot return to the previous page.

If you have any questions, please feel free to e-mail me at mathesis666@gmail.com
Thank you for your time!

Part 1:

I am interested in how people think about their bodies. The questions below identify 10

different body attributes. I would like you to rank order these body attributes from that which has the greatest impact on your physical self-concept (rank this a "1"), to that which has the least impact on your physical self-concept(rank this a "10").

Note: It does not matter how you describe yourself in terms of each attribute. For example, fitness level can have a great impact on your physical self-concept regardless of whether you consider yourself to be physically fit, not physically fit, or any level in between.

Please first consider all attributes simultaneously, and record your rank ordering by dragging the attributes either up or down.

1 = greatest impact 2 = next greatest impact 9 = next to least impact 10 = least impact

- Physical coordination
- Health
- Weight
- Strength
- Sex appeal
- Physical attractiveness
- Energy level (e.g. stamina)
- Firm/sculpted muscles
- Physical fitness level
- Measurements (e.g. chest, waist, hips)

Part 2:

Below are 10 statements regarding homosexuality. I would like you to indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each statement.

1. Male couples should be allowed to adopt children the same as heterosexual couples.

Disagree strongly Disagree Uncertain Agree Agree strongly

2. I think male homosexuals are disgusting.

Disagree strongly Disagree Uncertain Agree Agree strongly

3. Male homosexuals should not be allowed to teach school.

Disagree strongly Disagree Uncertain Agree Agree strongly

4. Male homosexuality is a perversion.

Disagree strongly Disagree Uncertain Agree Agree strongly

5. Male homosexuality is a natural expression of sexuality in men.

Disagree strongly Disagree Uncertain Agree Agree strongly

6. If a man has homosexual feelings, he should do everything he can to overcome them.

Disagree strongly Disagree Uncertain Agree Agree strongly

7. I would not be too upset if I learned that my son were a homosexual.

Disagree strongly Disagree Uncertain Agree Agree strongly

8. Sex between two men is just plain wrong.

Disagree strongly Disagree Uncertain Agree Agree strongly

9. The idea of male homosexual marriages seems ridiculous to me.

Disagree strongly Disagree Uncertain Agree Agree strongly

Part 3:

Below is a list of common symptoms of anxiety. Please carefully read each item in the list. Indicate how much you have been bothered by that symptom when you were watching the clip, by selecting the number in the corresponding space in the column next to each symptom.

	Not At All	Mildly but it didn't bother me much	Moderately – it wasn't pleasant at times	Severely – it bothered me a lot
Numbness or tingling	0	1	2	3
Feeling hot	0	1	2	3
Wobbliness in leg	0	1	2	3
Unable to relax	0	1	2	3
Fear of worst happening	0	1	2	3
Dizzy or lightheaded	0	1	2	3
Heart pounding/racing	0	1	2	3
Unsteady	0	1	2	3
Terrified or afraid	0	1	2	3
Nervous	0	1	2	3
Feeling of choking	0	1	2	3
Hands trembling	0	1	2	3
Shaky/unsteady	0	1	2	3
Fear of losing	0	1	2	3

control				
Difficulty breathing	0	1	2	3
Fear of dying	0	1	2	3
Scared	0	1	2	3
Indigestion	0	1	2	3
Faint / lightheaded	0	1	2	3
Face flushed	0	1	2	3
Hot/cold sweats	0	1	2	3

Part 4

Below are 21 groups of statements. Please read each group of statements carefully, and then pick out the one statement in each group that best describes the way you have been feeling when you were watching the clip. If several statements in the group seem to apply equally well, pick the highest number for that group.

1. Sadness

- 0. I do not feel sad
- 1. I feel sad much of the time.
- 2. I am sad all of the time.
- 3. I am so sad or unhappy that I can't stand it

2. Pessimism

- 0. I am not discouraged about my future.
- 1. I feel more discouraged about my future than I used to be.
- 2. I do not expect things to work out for me.
- 3. I feel my future is hopeless and will only get worse.

3. Past failure

- 0. I do not feel like a failure.
- 1. I have failed more than I should have.
- 2. As I look back, I see a lot of failures.
- 3. I feel I am a total failure as a person.

4. Loss of pleasure

- 0. I get as much pleasure as I ever did from the things I enjoy.

- 1. I don't enjoy things as much as I used to.
- 2. I get very little pleasure from the things I used to enjoy.
- 3. I can't get any pleasure from the things I used to enjoy.

5. Guilty feelings

- 0. I don't feel particularly guilty.
- 1. I feel guilty over many things I have done or should have done.
- 2. I feel quite guilty most of the time.
- 3. I feel guilty all of the time.

6. Punishment feelings

- 0. I don't feel I am being punished.
- 1. I feel I may be punished.
- 2. I expect to be punished.
- 3. I feel I am being punished.

7. Self-dislike

- 0. I feel the same about myself as ever.
- 1. I have lost confidence in myself.
- 2. I am disappointed in myself.
- 3. I dislike myself.

8. Self-criticalness

- 0. I don't criticize or blame myself more than usual
- 1. I am more critical of myself than I used to be.
- 2. I criticize myself for all my faults.
- 3. I blame myself for everything bad that happens.

9. Suicidal thoughts or wishes

- 0. I don't have any thoughts of killing myself.
- 1. I have thoughts of killing myself, but I would not carry them out.
- 2. I would like to kill myself.
- 3. I would kill myself if I had the chance.

10. Crying

- 0. I don't cry anymore than I am used to.
- 1. cry more than I used to.
- 2. I cry over every little thing.
- 3. I feel like crying, but I can't.

11. Agitation

- 0. I am no more restless or wound up than usual.
- 1. I feel more restless or wound up than usual.
- 2. I am so restless or agitated that it's hard to stay still.
- 3. I am so restless or agitated that I have to keep moving or doing something.

12. Loss of interest

- 0. I have not lost interest in other people or activities.
- 1. I am less interested in other people or things than before.
- 2. I have lost most of my interest in other people or things.
- 3. It's hard to get interested in anything.

13. Indecisiveness

- 0. I make decisions about as well as ever.
- 1. I find it difficult to make decisions as usual.
- 2. I have much greater difficulty making decisions than I used to.
- 3. I have trouble making any decisions.

14. Worthlessness

- 0. I do not feel like I am worthless.
- 1. I don't consider myself as worthwhile and useful as I used to.
- 2. I feel more worthless as compared to other people.
- 3. I feel utterly worthless.

15. Loss of Energy

- 0. I have as much energy as ever.

- 1. I have less energy than I used to have.
- 2. I don't have enough energy to do very much.
- 3. I don't have enough energy to do anything.

16. Changes in sleeping pattern

- 0. I have not experienced any change in my sleeping pattern.
- 1a I sleep somewhat more than usual
- 1b I sleep somewhat less than usual.
- 2a I don't have enough energy to do anything.
- 2b I sleep a lot more than usual.
- 3a I sleep most of the day.
- 3b I wake up 1-2 hours early and can't get back to sleep.

17. Irritability

- 0 I am no more irritable than usual.
- 1 I am more irritable than usual.
- 2 I am much more irritable than usual.
- 3 I am irritable all the time.

18. Changes in appetite

- 0 I have not experienced any change in my appetite.
- 1a My appetite is somewhat less than usual.
- 1b My appetite is much less than before.
- 2a My appetite is much less than before.
- 2b My appetite is much greater than usual.
- 3a I have no appetite at all.
- 3b I crave food all the time.

19. Concentration difficulty

- 0 I can concentrate as well as ever.

- 1 I can't concentrate as well as usual.
- 2 It's hard to keep my mind on anything for very long.
- 3 I find I can't concentrate on anything.

20. Tiredness or fatigue

- 0 I am no more tired or fatigued than usual.
- 1 I get more tired or fatigued more easily than usual.
- 2 I am too tired or fatigued to do a lot of the things I used to.
- 3 I am too tired or fatigued to do most of the things I used to do.

Part 5 (Last one, hang in there!)

Questions relating to demographics

What is your age?

What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Other, namely

What is your sexual orientation?

- Heterosexual
- Bisexual
- Homosexual
- Other, namely

What is your highest degree or level of school you have completed? If currently enrolled, highest degree received.

- No schooling completed
- High school graduate
- Some college credit, no degree
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Doctorate degree

Do you consider yourself a religious person?

- Catholic
- Evangelist
- Muslim
- Jewish
- Other, namely

In political matters people frequently speak of left and right. Where would you place your ideas in the following scale?

Extreme left Left Center Right Extreme right

How many hours per week do you watch television? (programs, shows)

You have reached the end of the survey. Again, thank you so much for participating.

Please click 'Next' one more time to send in your results.

Appendix B: Most important results in SPSS

Analysis 1

Heterosexual respondents, condition = 2 (strong portrayal)

T-TEST GROUPS=gender(1 2) (comparing males and females)

	What is your gender?	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
selfobjectification	Male	20	-10,7000	7,60263	1,70000
	Female	22	-5,3636	13,44670	2,86685
prejudice	Male	21	2,3889	1,14315	,24946
	Female	23	2,1872	,97623	,20356
anxiety_total	Male	21	1,5669	,72216	,15759
	Female	23	1,1177	,26457	,05517
depression	Male	21	1,5063	,65789	,14356
	Female	23	1,3205	,28680	,05980

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% CID	
									Lower	Upper
selfobj	Equal variances assumed	13,492	,001	1,561	40	,126	-5,33636	3,41789	12,24417	1,57144
	Equal variances not assumed			1,601	33,752	,119	-5,33636	3,33299	12,11164	1,43891
prejudice	Equal variances assumed	,746	,393	,631	42	,531	,20169	,31963	-,44335	,84673
	Equal variances not assumed			,626	39,558	,535	,20169	,32197	-,44926	,85264
anxiety_total	Equal variances assumed	22,797	,000	2,788	42	,008	,44919	,16113	,12401	,77437
	Equal variances not assumed			2,690	24,863	,013	,44919	,16697	,10522	,79316
depression	Equal variances assumed	11,888	,001	1,233	42	,224	,18577	,15067	-,11829	,48983
	Equal variances not assumed			1,195	26,809	,243	,18577	,15552	-,13344	,50498

Analysis 1

Heterosexual respondents, condition = 3 (control group)

T-TEST GROUPS=gender(1 2) (comparing males and females)

Group Statistics

	What is your gender?	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
selfobjectification	Male	37	-10,3514	7,28856	1,19823
	Female	9	-13,2222	10,55673	3,51891
prejudice	Male	37	2,4625	,89791	,14762
	Female	9	2,4691	,86384	,28795
anxiety_total	Male	37	2,0489	,65614	,10787
	Female	9	2,3016	1,09679	,36560
depression	Male	37	1,6757	,49381	,08118
	Female	9	1,7368	,52894	,17631

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
selfobjectification	Equal variances assumed	4,121	,048	,968	44	,339	2,87087	2,96701	-3,10874	8,85048
	Equal variances not assumed			,772	9,933	,458	2,87087	3,71732	-5,41941	11,16115
prejudice	Equal variances assumed	,006	,940	-,020	44	,984	-,00667	,33146	-,67469	,66134
	Equal variances not assumed			-,021	12,565	,984	-,00667	,32358	-,70820	,69485
anxiety_total	Equal variances assumed	9,135	,004	-,900	44	,373	-,25268	,28084	-,81868	,31332
	Equal variances not assumed			-,663	9,438	,523	-,25268	,38118	-1,10891	,60355
depression	Equal variances assumed	,167	,684	-,329	44	,744	-,06117	,18598	-,43598	,31364
	Equal variances not assumed			-,315	11,635	,758	-,06117	,19411	-,48556	,36323

Analysis 1
 Heterosexual females, comparing condition 1 (weak) with condition 3
 (control)

T-Test

Group Statistics

	condition	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
selfobjectification	surveyA	11	1,5455	9,21264	2,77772
	surveyC	9	-13,2222	10,55673	3,51891
prejudice	surveyA	11	1,8586	,72024	,21716
	surveyC	9	2,4691	,86384	,28795
anxiety_total	surveyA	11	1,5392	,70381	,21221
	surveyC	9	2,3016	1,09679	,36560
depression	surveyA	11	1,3498	,44954	,13554
	surveyC	9	1,7368	,52894	,17631

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
selfobjectification	Equal variances assumed	,332	,571	3,341	18	,004	14,76768	4,41948	5,48270	24,05266
	Equal variances not assumed			3,294	16,081	,005	14,76768	4,48313	5,26776	24,26760
prejudice	Equal variances assumed	1,573	,226	-1,725	18	,102	-,61055	,35387	-1,35400	,13290
	Equal variances not assumed			-1,693	15,640	,110	-,61055	,36066	-1,37654	,15544
anxiety_total	Equal variances assumed	5,176	,035	-1,885	18	,076	-,76241	,40448	-1,61219	,08737
	Equal variances not assumed			-1,804	13,108	,094	-,76241	,42272	-1,67488	,15006
depression	Equal variances assumed	1,021	,326	-1,770	18	,094	-,38703	,21863	-,84636	,07231
	Equal variances not assumed			-1,740	15,827	,101	-,38703	,22239	-,85889	,08484

Analysis 1
 Heterosexual females, comparing condition 2 (strong) with condition 3
 (control)

T-Test

Group Statistics

	condition	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
selfobjectification	surveyB	22	-5,3636	13,44670	2,86685
	surveyC	9	-13,2222	10,55673	3,51891
prejudice	surveyB	23	2,1872	,97623	,20356
	surveyC	9	2,4691	,86384	,28795
anxiety_total	surveyB	23	1,1177	,26457	,05517
	surveyC	9	2,3016	1,09679	,36560
depression	surveyB	23	1,3205	,28680	,05980
	surveyC	9	1,7368	,52894	,17631

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for		t-test for Equality of Means						
		Equality of Variances		t	df	Sig. (2- tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.						Lower	Upper
selfobjectification	Equal variances assumed	1,895	,179	1,562	29	,129	7,85859	5,03122	-2,43141	18,14858
	Equal variances not assumed			1,731	18,962	,100	7,85859	4,53889	-1,64272	17,35989
prejudice	Equal variances assumed	,004	,952	-,757	30	,455	-,28194	,37256	-1,04281	,47893
	Equal variances not assumed			-,800	16,496	,435	-,28194	,35263	-1,02766	,46379
anxiety_total	Equal variances assumed	54,056	,000	-	30	,000	-1,18389	,23984	-1,67371	-,69406
	Equal variances not assumed			-	8,367	,012	-1,18389	,36974	-2,03003	-,33774
depression	Equal variances assumed	8,495	,007	-	30	,007	-,41635	,14442	-,71130	-,12140
	Equal variances not assumed			-	9,899	,050	-,41635	,18618	-,83176	-,00094

Analysis 2

Heterosexual and non-heterosexual males, condition 1 (=weak portrayal)

Sexorient = 1.00 = heterosexual, sexorient = 2.00 = non-heterosexual

T-Test

Group Statistics

	sexorient	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
selfobjectification	1,00	13	-10,5385	8,25243	2,28881
	2,00	8	-10,5000	5,73212	2,02661
prejudice	1,00	17	3,2002	1,03142	,25016
	2,00	13	2,7863	,92347	,25613
anxiety_total	1,00	17	1,5746	,61153	,14832
	2,00	13	1,7429	,78150	,21675
depression	1,00	17	1,7315	,58710	,14239
	2,00	13	1,7832	,72272	,20045

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for		t-test for Equality of Means						
		Equality of Variances		t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
		F	Sig.						Lower	Upper
selfobjectification	Equal variances assumed	1,311	,267	-,012	19	,991	-,03846	3,33609	-7,02097	6,94405
	Equal variances not assumed			-,013	18,597	,990	-,03846	3,05709	-6,44643	6,36951
prejudice	Equal variances assumed	,006	,937	1,138	28	,265	,41384	,36350	-,33076	1,15844
	Equal variances not assumed			1,156	27,230	,258	,41384	,35802	-,32047	1,14814
anxiety_total	Equal variances assumed	1,457	,237	-,662	28	,513	-,16823	,25405	-,68862	,35216
	Equal variances not assumed			-,641	22,216	,528	-,16823	,26264	-,71260	,37614
depression	Equal variances assumed	3,062	,091	-,216	28	,830	-,05167	,23901	-,54125	,43792
	Equal variances not assumed			-,210	22,811	,835	-,05167	,24587	-,56053	,45720

Analysis 2

Heterosexual and non-heterosexual males, condition = 3 (=control)

Sexorient = 1.00 = heterosexual, sexorient = 2.00 = non-heterosexual

T-Test

Group Statistics

	sexorient	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
selfobjectification	1,00	37	-10,3514	7,28856	1,19823
	2,00	12	-3,6667	10,52558	3,03847
prejudice	1,00	37	2,4625	,89791	,14762
	2,00	12	1,6481	,85127	,24574
anxiety_total	1,00	37	2,0489	,65614	,10787
	2,00	12	1,7698	,82224	,23736
depression	1,00	37	1,6757	,49381	,08118
	2,00	12	1,7237	,58398	,16858

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
selfobjectification	Equal variances assumed	3,706	,060	-2,465	47	,017	-6,68468	2,71148	-12,13947	-1,22990
	Equal variances not assumed			-2,047	14,580	,059	-6,68468	3,26620	-13,66396	,29459
prejudice	Equal variances assumed	,576	,452	2,763	47	,008	,81431	,29474	,22138	1,40725
	Equal variances not assumed			2,841	19,591	,010	,81431	,28667	,21554	1,41309
anxiety_total	Equal variances assumed	1,592	,213	1,203	47	,235	,27906	,23207	-,18779	,74592
	Equal variances not assumed			1,070	15,807	,301	,27906	,26072	-,27419	,83232
depression	Equal variances assumed	,591	,446	-,280	47	,781	-,04801	,17153	-,39307	,29706
	Equal variances not assumed			-,257	16,423	,801	-,04801	,18711	-,44383	,34782

Analysis 2

Heterosexual and non-heterosexual females, condition = 1 (weak portrayal)
 Sexorient = 1.00 = heterosexual, sexorient = 2.00 = non-heterosexual

T-Test

Group Statistics

	sexorient	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
selfobjectification	1,00	11	1,5455	9,21264	2,77772
	2,00	6	-14,3333	8,82421	3,60247
prejudice	1,00	11	1,8586	,72024	,21716
	2,00	7	1,6825	,96955	,36646
anxiety_total	1,00	11	1,5392	,70381	,21221
	2,00	7	1,5034	,47129	,17813
depression	1,00	11	1,3498	,44954	,13554
	2,00	7	1,4511	,36064	,13631

Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
selfobjectification	Equal variances assumed	,108	,747	3,444	15	,004	15,87879	4,61082	6,05107	25,70651
	Equal variances not assumed			3,491	10,803	,005	15,87879	4,54901	5,84421	25,91337
prejudice	Equal variances assumed	,531	,477	,443	16	,664	,17605	,39774	-,66712	1,01921
	Equal variances not assumed			,413	10,199	,688	,17605	,42597	-,77056	1,12266
anxiety_total	Equal variances assumed	,666	,426	,118	16	,907	,03578	,30306	-,60668	,67823
	Equal variances not assumed			,129	15,900	,899	,03578	,27706	-,55187	,62342
depression	Equal variances assumed	,153	,701	-,501	16	,623	-,10131	,20230	-,53018	,32755
	Equal variances not assumed			-,527	14,957	,606	-,10131	,19223	-,51114	,30851

Analysis 2

Heterosexual and non-heterosexual females, condition = 3 (= controlgroup)

Sexorient = 1.00 = heterosexual, sexorient = 2.00 = non-heterosexual

T-Test

Group Statistics					
	sexorient	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
selfobjectification	1,00	9	-13,2222	10,55673	3,51891
	2,00	11	-1,5455	15,36466	4,63262
prejudice	1,00	9	2,4691	,86384	,28795
	2,00	11	1,3636	,70113	,21140
anxiety_total	1,00	9	2,3016	1,09679	,36560
	2,00	11	1,9437	,82336	,24825
depression	1,00	9	1,7368	,52894	,17631
	2,00	11	2,1435	,93207	,28103

Independent Samples Test										
		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
selfobjectification	Equal variances assumed	5,713	,028	1,933	18	,069	-11,67677	6,04165	-24,36980	1,01626
	Equal variances not assumed			2,007	17,561	,060	-11,67677	5,81755	-23,92092	,56739
prejudice	Equal variances assumed	2,513	,130	3,163	18	,005	1,10550	,34953	,37116	1,83984
	Equal variances not assumed			3,095	15,375	,007	1,10550	,35722	,34572	1,86528
anxiety_total	Equal variances assumed	2,517	,130	,834	18	,415	,35786	,42906	-,54356	1,25929
	Equal variances not assumed			,810	14,596	,431	,35786	,44192	-,58634	1,30206
depression	Equal variances assumed	4,996	,038	1,161	18	,261	-,40670	,35018	-1,14239	,32899
	Equal variances not assumed			1,226	16,271	,238	-,40670	,33176	-1,10905	,29565