

Giving Voice to the Queer?

Social Actors and Engagement Strategies in the US Media upon the Legalisation of Nationwide Same-sex Marriage

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YLI-MUILU, LASSI: Giving Voice to the Queer? Social Actors and Engagement

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On 26 June 2015 the Supreme Court of the United States ruled in *Obergefell v. Hodges* that same-sex couples have a right to marry in every state of the US. This study focused on four news articles that reported on this ruling by examining the social actors, their roles and the engagement strategies identified in the articles. The aim of the study was to find out, which voices were engaged in the articles and if the authorial voice appraised the subject matter by advancing or downplaying particular points of view.

The theoretical framework of the thesis was based on the notions of representation and discourse as social interaction. The concept of social actors in discourse was based on a taxonomy by Van Leeuwen (2008). LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, transgender and queer/questioning) media representation and the history of US same-sex marriage were also discussed. The appraisal analysis was based on the subsystem of engagement from the appraisal theory, developed by Martin and White (2005). The study approached the issue also from a critical point of view, using critical discourse analysis and queer theory to assess whether same-sex marriage was set against heteronormative ideals.

The analysis was two-fold, comprising a social actor and an appraisal analysis, and used both quantitative and qualitative methods. The results show that all the articles entailed both institutional and personal voices and offered anti- and pro-same-sex marriage perspectives. Institutional social actors were often activated and individualised whereas personal, often queer, voices were often passivated and assimilated. The identified engagement strategies signalled more of genre conventions than of individual author appraisals, relying mainly on neutral reporting expressions. Even though the ruling was grounded e.g. in equality, the results suggest that same-sex marriage was seen in comparison to traditional ideals of marriage rather than as a fully-fledged queer institution. Further research into queer media representation is needed to understand how language reflects ongoing sociocultural changes in the LGBTQ community and in society.

Keywords: same-sex marriage, homosexuality, sexual minorities, discourse analysis, media analysis, appraisal theory, queer theory, heteronormativity, queer discourse studies

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List of abbreviations

LGBTQ = lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer/questioning people

CDA = critical discourse analysis

SCOTUS = The Supreme Court of the United States

CT = The Chicago Tribune

HP = The Huffington Post

NYT = The New York Times

WT = The Washington Times

1 Introduction

Today's society is arguably becoming more and more pluralistic as individuals look for an apt representation of themselves, conveyed by the discourse they encounter. People are looking to have their social identities and relationships portrayed and recognised as they themselves experience them. Even though it is increasingly possible for individuals to construct and live their identities as they see fit – and gain visibility and recognition for these identities – acceptance take time as attitudes are often slow to change. The visibility and acceptance of minority groups has arguably improved during the last few decades, but some identities and relationships are still more accepted than others and more likely to be held as the default. Today's society is, for instance, still largely a heteronormative one. Even though sexual minorities are beginning to receive equal treatment in society, same-sex relations are still often compared to a heterosexual default and might be set against heterosexual ideals.

The present thesis focuses on an issue concerning LGBTQ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer/questioning) individuals. More specifically, this study examines the discourse on the nationwide legalisation of same-sex marriage in the US as reported in a range of newspaper articles. The US Supreme Court ruled on 26 June 2015 in *Obergefell v. Hodges* that same-sex couples are allowed to marry in every state of the United States. Using a selection of articles from four mainstream media outlets that report on this ruling I aim to find out, which social actors and voices are engaged in the articles and what is the role given to these actors in the given context. Additionally, I aim to discover whether the authorial voices of the articles seem to appraise the decision, the engaged social actors or the issue of same-sex marriage by employing different engagement strategies. Using the domain of engagement from appraisal theory as formulated by J. R. Martin and P. R. R. White (2005), I will assess the ways the authorial voice positions itself in the heteroglossic environment where multiple voices are at play. I argue that the engagement framework from appraisal theory is suited to examining a phenomenon such as same-sex marriage since discourse surrounding the institution is often characterised by competing voices and polarising language use.

In addition to becoming more and more pluralistic, today's society is arguably becoming increasingly mediated. We explore the world around us via the media we

consume every day and construct a version of reality via these media. Media and the language different media channels employ thus exert a major influence on what kind of a reality we construct for ourselves and how we perceive this reality and the individuals around us. Ideas about sexual minorities and societal norms are often communicated through everyday language use. Therefore it is important to look into how mainstream media outlets respond to the legalisation of same-sex marriage and to assess the frameworks and the voices that are engaged. In the age of new and social media the way media affects our lives and the ways we can respond and contribute to the media landscape ourselves has changed drastically. I have, however, decided to focus on stories that represent more of a traditional way of reporting events since mainstream media outlets cater to a large public and can therefore offer insights into possible normative assessments of the topic. Many news pieces have reported the issue from a legal or a political point of view, but as Frantz (2015) points out, “media representations that personalise gay and lesbian concerns by showing the impact on individuals are arguably one of the most powerful factors influencing attitudes in favour of gay and lesbian rights”. Choosing mainstream news articles I hope to uncover some of the ways the topic is handled by mainstream media and to see whether the articles engage more official or personal voices (i.e. the role of a given social actor) following the decision.

In the present thesis, I aim to answer the following research questions:

Which social actors and voices are engaged in the articles?

What is the role given to these voices?

Which engagement strategies does the authorial voice of the article employ?

Looking into these questions will enable me to assess, which voices are engaged, how they are engaged and to see, which points of view the authorial voice seems to advance or downplay. I therefore aim to discover more about the power relations between personal and institution voices and the angle from which same-sex marriage as a phenomenon is understood and represented. This in turn will help me to understand who is entitled to be part of the marriage equality debate upon the legalisation of nationwide same-sex marriage and whether the institution is understood from a heteronormative or a non-heteronormative point of view. I contend that research into

normative assessments of same-sex relations and marriage is important since questions of normativity and acceptability ultimately become questions of power use in society.

While there have been many studies on LGBTQ media representation (e.g. Frantz 2006, Ragusa 2003) and how same-sex marriage is framed by the media (e.g. Liebler, Schwartz, and Harper 2009, Li and Liu 2010, Pan, Meng, and Zhou 2010, Price, Nir, and Cappella 2005), I argue that such an important watershed as a nationwide legalisation of these unions calls for further research into the phenomenon during a specific point in time. This study will add a further dimension to the existing body of research by focusing on the engaged voices and bringing in a dimension of evaluation. My primary aim is not necessarily to unearth hidden power structures but to enrich the understanding of how a phenomenon such as the legalisation of same-sex marriage has gained wider social acceptance and to present ways the issue is discussed and reported, especially considering the fact the reporting is largely done in a heteronormative context and not necessarily from a queer point of view. In the present thesis, the term *queer* is used as an umbrella term for sexual and gender minorities, with the focus of the study being sexual minorities in particular. However, it should be noted that while I employ the term queer in this study, not all LGBTQ individuals necessarily identify as queer themselves or share a similar understanding of the term.

I maintain further that same-sex marriage is still a contested issue whose meaning is somewhat in flux. Though largely supported today, the issue of same-sex marriage still divides not only the general public but to an extent also the LGBTQ community. Even though a large number of LGBTQ individuals are in favour of expanding the meaning and the institution of marriage to same-sex couples on the basis of equal treatment in the eyes of the law, there are those voices who regard same-sex marriage as assimilating to the public mainstream and to a heteronormative institution, which is inherently not queer. This is one of the secondary frameworks used in the present study and the data will be later discussed in view of this.

I have divided my background chapters in two broad themes: representation and discourse. I shall begin by discussing the construction of identities, the representation of social actors in discourse and sexual identities in the media, including a brief history of LGBTQ media representation. Following this, I will summarise the history of same-sex marriage in the US up to the point when the Supreme Court legalised the unions

nationwide. The second part of the background section will cover the idea that the discourse we encounter shapes the way we understand the reality we live in. I will also consider the influence and relevance of critical discourse analysis and queer theory & linguistics for my topic. Media discourse and its power to influence our thinking will be discussed separately. Following the discussion on media discourse, I will present the notion of appraising discourse, an idea that has been formulated into appraisal theory by J. R. Martin and P. R. R. White. The focus will be on the domain of engagement and its relevance for the present study. The section on previous studies will outline examples of research done in the field of LGBTQ and same-sex media representation and connect these to my treatment of the topic. Let us first, however, focus on the theoretical frameworks underpinning the study and turn to questions of representation.

2 Representation

One of the most important premises in this study is the issue of representation of individuals, identities and voices. A thorough discussion of how identities can be constructed and individual social actors represented in discourse does not serve the purposes of the present thesis. Therefore, in the following I will discuss some key notions of how identities and social actors can be constructed and may be represented. Having discussed this, I will offer a brief overview of how LGBTQ individuals have been represented in the media, a section which is meant to serve as background to the discussion section. Finally, I will offer a concise history of same-sex marriage in the US. In the present study, notions of identity and social actors are mainly intended to serve as an introduction to a wider discussion of the representation of individuals in media discourse. I consider media discourse an important site to study the representation of LGBTQ individuals and relations, since it is in media discourse that power relations are contested, interests advanced and different actors allocated space and given voice.

2.1 The representation of identities and social actors in discourse

Identity is a complex phenomenon but can for instance refer to how “people see themselves in relation to others and to society at large” (Bloor and Bloor 2007: 20-21). In one sense every identity is individual, but in another sense the components of one’s

identity are always drawn from some common social pool (Edwards 2011: 99). Boor and Bloor (2007: 85) follow this line of thought by maintaining that individuals are often seen “as members of a group or other social category”. Identities are then constructed in relation to someone else and are based on shared ideas of existence, and the language we encounter during our lifetime shapes this sense of existence. Through language we negotiate and construct ourselves by constantly reflecting our identity and view of the world against those views we see represented around us. I argue that what we see represented as desirable or ‘normal’ we connect in our minds as acceptable and valuable. As individuals we position ourselves in the context of the discourse we are currently engaged in, i.e. we discursively construct our identities and our relations to other people based on our own and others’ language use. I contend that we position ourselves in the social sphere not only in relation to others, as Bloor and Bloor (2007: 20-21) see it, but also in relation to norms and societal structures.

According to Baker (2008: 15), language is an important way in communicating our sexual and gender identities as well as being also the way “in which ideas and ideals about gender and sexuality are circulated within society”. The way we discuss different sexual minorities mirrors our perception of said minorities, in other words language provides a way of understanding the identities of individuals in society, marginalised or not – or as Baker puts it, “language is the key process by which we develop accounts of sexuality and gender” (ibid.). The media, for instance, not only uses different terms for the LGBTQ community, but also applies different names for essentially the same phenomenon: gay marriage, same-sex marriage or sometimes same-sex unions, all of which might trigger different reactions.

Baker (2008: 11) argues that any given individual possesses multiple identities that are in part also overlapping categories. We are born with some identities (like those pertaining to gender or ethnicity), but will inevitably acquire more as we grow older and join different social groups and communities. These socially constructed identities are then likely to change throughout our lives. As Baker points out, one of the key issues in understanding identities is the fact that they are always created in relation to something else, something they are not (2008: 12). Some identities hold more power than others, some are more stigmatised than others and many are presented as binary

categories – man/woman, heterosexual/homosexual and so forth, even though in reality these categories may display a good deal of intra-categorical diversity.

For Van Leeuwen (2008), discourse is a site where different social practices and actors (or participants) are formed and represented. Van Leeuwen's starting point is, therefore, largely a sociosemantic one and he posits that a given culture (and a particular context in a given culture) will always have its own ways of representing its social world and particular "ways of mapping different semiotic modes" (2008: 25). Koller (2010) takes a somewhat similar approach and sees social actors as "the textual instantiations of models of the self and others, individual and collective". Koller's (2010) outlook goes back to Van Leeuwen and to Fairclough's (e.g. 1995) ideas about texts being embedded in wider cultural, social, political and economic contexts, which is why a critical analysis of discourse will need to combine the textual micro-level, the discursive meso-level and the social macro-level contexts. Koller (2010) further maintains that social and discursive practices and formations shape social actors. The representation of social actors in a given communicative context is then likely to be contingent upon the wider social currents operating in a given society. This notion links the analysis of social actors to appraisal theory and systemic functional linguistics, since social actors, their representation, inclusion and exclusion are shaped by the choices of the author, which in their turn operate in (and are shaped by) wider dialogical, historical and cultural contexts. When looking at the representation of social actors, taking this kind of interdiscursivity into consideration is important for "it shows what other discourses the author draws on and thus what social contexts she aligns herself with or distances herself from" (Koller 2010). By looking at both the ways in which an author engages in the heteroglossic resources operating in a text and the way s/he engages different social actors into that text, we may be able to find out more about larger discursive and social networks the author operates in and as noted by Koller.

According to Van Leeuwen, representations may either include or exclude social actors and thus advance particular interests and purposes to suit the needs of their respective authors (2008: 28). Some exclusions may be 'innocent' or deemed unnecessary to a recipient, others might be deliberate (ibid.). Excluded actors can further be *backgrounded* or *suppressed*, the former meaning that particular actors

might not be mentioned in conjunction of a certain activity and therefore de-emphasised and the latter meaning a lack of reference to social actors in question (2008: 29). My own analysis will only include those actors that are included in the communicative context, but in the discussion I will also reflect on the possible actors that are excluded from the chosen discourse.

The role social actors can take (or be given) in discourse is either *active* or *passive*. Active participants represent “active, dynamic forces in an activity” and passive participants represent actors that “undergo” an activity or are recipients of an activity (Van Leeuwen 2008: 33). Social actors may be activated linguistically by “grammatical participant roles” or “transitivity structures” whereby a social actor can be coded as “actor in material processes, behavior in behavioral processes, senser in mental processes, sayer in verbal processes, or assigner in relational processes” (Halliday 1985 in Van Leeuwen 2008: 33). Activation may also be done with prepositional circumstantials (such as *by* or *from*) and with “premodification or postmodification of nominalisations or process nouns” where possessive pronouns are used to activate or passivate a participant (Van Leeuwen 2008: 33). Subjected actors can be conceptualised as “objects in the representation” whereas beneficialised actors benefit from an action, positively or negatively (ibid.). Van Leeuwen considers the question of role allocation important for critical discourse analysis, since the roles social actors play in social practices need not be congruent with the grammatical roles they are assigned in texts (2008: 32). In other words, a given grammatical role does not necessarily correspond to the sociological role of that participant, possibly altering the social relations between the participants (ibid.). This in turn brings us back to the power relations critical discourse analysis is interested in. Koller (2010) also acknowledges this by stating how the meso-level of discourse practice affects the linguistic features at the micro-level, further linking discourse practices to the power different participants hold. Critical discourse analysis and its relation to power relations will be discussed separately in 3.1.1.

Van Leeuwen further categorises social actors as *generic* or *specific* (2008: 35) and as *individuals* (the process of *individualisation*) or *groups* (the process of *assimilation*) (2008: 37). For example, elite persons can be individualised and “ordinary people” assimilated (ibid.). Koller (2010) also considers the generic/assimilated and

specific/individualised division important for an analysis of social actors, something that I will also consider in my analysis. Van Leeuwen distinguishes two major ways to assimilate individuals, namely *aggregation* and *collectivisation* (ibid.). The former modifies actors with quantifiers whereas the latter does not. Van Leeuwen's taxonomy of social actor network details also further ways to assess the representation of social actors in discourse. We can e.g. look more closely into how actors are either given unique identities, i.e. *nominated*, or referred only in relation of identities and functions they may share with others, i.e. *categorised* or into how actors are *functionalised* (defined in terms of what they do) or *identified* (defined in terms of what they are) (2008: 40; 42). The functionalisation/identification division roughly corresponds to defining actors as *institutional* or *personal* as I have done in my own analysis. Even though the network Van Leeuwen proposes is more intricate than what was discussed, for the purposes of the present thesis the preceding discussion will, however, suffice. Having now laid out some basic principles on identities and social actor representation I will give a brief historical account of LGBTQ representation in the media.

2.2 Sexual identities in the media

The scope of the present thesis does not allow for an exhaustive account of how sexual identities and sexual minorities have been represented and can be conceptualised in the media in general and in newspaper discourse specifically – nor is it necessary. Nonetheless, what will follow, is a brief historical description of LGBTQ media representation, which will mainly be based on Hilton-Morrow and Battles (2015). The idea of this section is to set the context in which LGBTQ individuals have found themselves in as social actors and it will serve as background when discussing the results of my study. Let us begin by looking into how sexual minorities have been represented in the media from the late 19th century onwards.

2.2.1 A brief history of LGBTQ media representation

The idea of this section is to give the reader a general overview of the tendencies LGBTQ individuals have been represented in the media as well as offer a concise account of the history of the lexical choices used for sexual minorities. For the purposes of the present study, I focus on the written word, covering mainly newspaper writing and therefore ignoring television, film and other media. Given that my study

focuses on US media discourse, this section mainly covers representation in American media. The following account will help the reader to understand how a contemporary framework to understanding sexual minorities has formed with shifting cultural understandings. It should also be noted that even though LGBTQ individuals are labelled here under the same acronym, such individuals do not necessarily share the same kind of history or an understanding of it, since race, class and gender will always play a role, as noted by Hilton-Morrow and Battles (2015: 36).

An overarching way to conceptualise LGBTQ individuals in the media has crudely gone from focusing on behaviour to focusing more on identity (Hilton-Morrow and Battles 2015: 37). The emergence of a coherent gay identity as a social identity is thus a fairly recent phenomenon. The language with which LGBTQ individuals are referred to has also changed over the years and is naturally therefore historically bound. Developments in medical science and socio-economic conditions have played a crucial role in how queer individuals are “understood” and how heterosexuals and homosexuals as categories relate to each other (Hilton-Morrow and Battles 2015: 38). In time, the more rigid boundaries of society have given way to a more individualistic and fluid expression of the self.

Beginning in the mid-19th century, it was increasingly possible for people to arrange their identities around sex outside of marriage or procreation, which contributed to the understanding that sexual acts or practices somehow define who we are (ibid.). One of the earlier terms to refer to people who expressed same-sex desire was *invert* and the words *homosexual* and *heterosexual* were first used in 1869 by the German-born Hungarian writer and sex-law reformer Karl Maria Kertbeny (Katz 2007). The growth of capitalism and urban centres with their emerging gay subcultures allowed more and more people to define themselves irrespective of traditional ties, which also had an effect on how the developing modern mass media reflected these cultural assumptions (Hilton-Morrow and Battles 2015: 42). By and large, sexual minorities were framed and referred to in a framework of abnormality and deviancy. Homosexuality was mainly reported with a relation to the reversal of gender norms, for instance with recognising cross-dressing behaviours by late 19th century (Hilton-Morrow and Battles 2015: 42-43). Other frameworks through which inverts or cross-dressers were

understood were those of criminality and humour, since coverage often focused on violations of the law (ibid.).

Throughout the 1920s and 1930s, sexual minorities began to have more visibility, but not necessarily in a positive light, as news coverage reflected dominant ideologies of the time, as noted by Sears (2006) in her study of framing and newspaper coverage of the turn of the century cross-dressing in San Francisco. From early on, the marginalisation of homosexuals in the media (especially in film and radio) left a legacy that still shapes the way we understand sexual identity and visibility today (Hilton-Morrow and Battles 2015: 46). The idea of sexual minorities deviating from the norm is still occasionally persistent in contemporary media discourse when compared to a heterosexual ideal.

In the 1940s and 1950s, sexual minorities often faced legal persecution and the press coverage of the time reflected cultural fears of the time (Hilton-Morrow and Battles 2015: 48). As mentioned before, homosexuality was often coded with language referring to crimes, indecency, deviance or illness, but not overtly named until 1950s press coverage began questioning the moral character of homosexuals (ibid.). The vocabulary of the time reflected this, including words like *pervert*, *deviate*, *homo*, *degenerate*, *queer* or *fairy* (Streitmatter 2009: 15). Such coverage often meant explicitly gay men, who were sometimes even compared to rapists and paedophiles, leaving women often ignored. Sexual minorities were thus often framed in terms of being somehow in the fringes of society and moral acceptance. The 1950s also marked the initiation of alternative gay press and the understanding of transvestism and transsexuality as distinct identity categories from homosexuality and intersexuality with the wide and sensationalistic press coverage of the gender re-assignment surgery of Christine Jorgensen in 1952 (Hilton-Morrow and Battles 2015: 51-53).

The less prescriptive gender norms and gay and lesbian liberation movement and activism of the 1960s and 1970s led to increasing media visibility, but most references still continued to be negative, depicting sexual minorities still as social outcasts (Hilton-Morrow and Battles 2015: 57). At the same time, the now-politicised term *gay* was often the preferred choice over the originally medical term homosexual. At the time, gay activists continuously lobbied for better media representation and continued to produce their own media to balance out the negative portrayal of mainstream media.

Even though papers like *The New York Times* and *The Washington Post* did cover for instance the Stonewall Riots in 1969, they privileged the perspectives of the police officers (ibid.).

Greater visibility led to less hostile and dismissive media images by the beginning of the 1980s, but experienced a radical change with the outbreak of the AIDS crisis. AIDS and homosexuality were a common front-page topic and the epidemic, for better or for worse, led to a wider media visibility. Hilton-Morrow and Battles (2015: 64) describe the 1980s climate of homosexuality as somewhat schizophrenic. The work of gay activists entailed changing media representations, but fears and misconceptions about AIDS challenged the progress until the 1990s. Early press coverage of AIDS was homophobic and rare and often portrayed gay men as a threat to the health of the nation, polarising gay men as either villains or victims. However, news of the HIV status of the famous movie star Rock Hudson in 1985 shifted the public opinion to a degree and widespread news coverage during the 1980s meant that homosexuality was no longer something to be swept away or whispered about (Hilton-Morrow and Battles 2015: 67).

The ongoing work of LGBTQ activists and changing cultural and social understanding of homosexuality has gradually led to more diverse representation of LGBTQ individuals. This progression has slowly led to a situation where also same-sex relations have become less marked, although great individual differences persist both in the media and in society at large. By the late 20th century, as more and more countries offer some form of union or legal partnerships to same-sex couples, media coverage has also changed drastically. The focus of the present study deals specifically with the discourse surrounding the legal recognition of same-sex unions, especially same-sex marriage. Therefore, in the following I will sum up the history of same-sex marriage in the US.

2.3 The concise history of same-sex marriage in the US

The purpose of this section is to offer a rough timeline and to set the overall context in which the legalisation of same-sex marriage was reported in June 2015 and is therefore heavily summarised to include only major key points. The history of same-sex marriage in the US has seen states having either constitutional or statutory bans on

same-sex marriage or a situation where same-sex marriage is neither legal nor banned with differing names applied to same-sex unions, ranging from domestic partnerships to civil unions and same-sex or gay marriages. The main source used in this section was Pew Research Center (<http://www.pewforum.org/2015/06/26/same-sex-marriage-state-by-state>).

The history of same-sex marriage in the US dates back to 1970, when a same-sex couple, Jack Baker and Michael McConnell, applied for a marriage licence in Minnesota. Even though their initial efforts were unsuccessful and the licence was denied, they managed to wed in 1971 in another county. In 1993, a Hawaii Supreme Court decision, *Baehr v. Lewin*, suggested that the state's ban on same-sex marriage might be unconstitutional, ruling that same-sex marriages cannot be denied without a "compelling" reason to do so. In 1997, Hawaii becomes the first state to offer domestic partnership benefits to same-sex couples. 1995 saw the enactment of a Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), which defined marriage between a man and a woman. President Clinton signs a federal DOMA in 1996. In 1999, same-sex couples are allowed to register as domestic partners in California and enter into civil unions in Vermont in 2000.

On 17 May 2004, Massachusetts becomes the first state to legalise same-sex marriage. In 2006, New Jersey allows same-sex couples to enter into civil unions with New Hampshire following suit in 2007. The second state to allow gay couples to wed is Connecticut in 2008. The Supreme Court of California ruled in 2008 that same-sex couples have the right to marry, but later in the year a constitutional amendment known as Proposition 8 overturns this decision and bans same-sex marriage. 2009 sees Iowa as the third state to allow gay couples to marry with Vermont and District of Columbia following suit the same year and New Hampshire the following year. In 2011, Hawaii allows civil unions. Maine, Maryland and Washington legalise same-sex marriage in 2012 and Barack Obama becomes the first sitting president to endorse same-sex marriage. In 2013, same-sex marriages are valid again in California and the Supreme Court strikes down part of the DOMA, requiring federal governments to recognise same-sex marriages in the states that they are legal (Frantz 2015: 293). In the same year, Governors sign bills and courts issue rulings in Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Minnesota, Rhode Island, New Jersey and New Mexico that allow same-sex marriage.

By late 2014, same-sex marriage is legal in 24 states and the District of Columbia. The patchwork of same-sex commitments with various names and changing bans ends on 26 June 2015 when the US Supreme Court ruled that all state bans on same-sex marriage are unconstitutional. In the previous decade the public opinion on same-sex marriage had already shifted with the majority of Americans favouring such unions and the debate and evolution of same-sex marriage debate deeply rooted in questions and structures of family, sexuality, politics and religion (Sherkat 2016: 1-2). It is safe to say that the discourse and media coverage around the issue of same-sex unions has been lively and varied throughout the decades and this in its part reflects an ongoing cultural change.

In addition to the terms same-sex marriage and gay marriage, legally recognised same-sex relationships have also been called domestic partnerships, civil unions or reciprocal beneficiary relationships in the US. The extent to which such unions have resembled marriage has varied state by state. While one can argue whether legalised same-sex partnerships should be called same-sex or gay marriages, terms such as civil unions or domestic partnerships have different connotations and might trigger different reactions in people. From an equality point of view, extending marriage rights to same-sex couples is justified. Domestic partnerships, civil unions and reciprocal beneficiary relationships not only entail different rights compared to marriages in most cases, but arguably set LGBTQ relationships apart from heterosexual relationships. Such unions might bring about questions of social acceptance and validity of LGBTQ relationships and frame these forms of legalised partnerships as somehow second-rate versions of actual marriages that might not conjure up similar ideals of *love* or *commitment* that a marriage usually does. In this, recognising same-sex relationships as marriages becomes also a question of power and ideology behind the institution of marriage. Who has the right to define the “boundaries” of marriage?

According to Frantz (2015: 294), public resistance to refer to same-sex unions as *marriages* can be seen in the larger framework of language practices that contribute to and constitute social change. In the context of the same-sex marriage debate calling a same-sex commitment a marriage may be seen as way to “engineer the direction of [social and cultural] change through a change in language practice” (ibid.). This highlights the importance of the landmark 2015 Supreme Court ruling and leads us to

the next main framework of the thesis. In the next section, I will discuss the idea of how discourse and language practices contribute to and construct our perception of our everyday realities and eventually lead into cultural and social change.

3 Discourse

The idea of this section is to present and assess some of the ways in which the notion of discourse can be understood and how the discourse that we create and that surrounds us eventually creates everyday social realities for us. I will discuss critical discourse analysis (CDA) and queer theory as examples of critical approaches and assess their usefulness for my topic. The present study will be informed by the tenets of both frameworks, but will mainly use them in the critical interpretation of the results. Having discussed the concepts of discourse, CDA and queer theory, I will specify ways to conceptualise media discourse. I will discuss the power media discourse has in shaping our understanding of ourselves and societal phenomena and detail some of the aspects that need to be considered when using media discourse as data. Thereafter I will introduce Martin and White's appraisal theory with a particular focus on the subtype of engagement, which deals with introducing additional voices into a communicative context and the way the authorial voice positions itself with regard to these voices. Let us first, however, start with the broader concept of discourse.

3.1 Discourse as social interaction

For me discourse is something that generates and regulates social and ideological practice, or as Foucault (1972: 49) would have it, "practices that systematically form the object of which they speak". In other words, we as individuals actively form the discourse we use and that discourse (and the forms of discourse we encounter) in its turn forms us. For Blommaert (2005: 3) the term discourse entails "all forms of meaningful semiotic human activity seen in connection with social, cultural, and historical patterns and developments of use". Macdonald (2003: 1) views discourse as "a system of communicative practices that are integrally related to wider social and cultural practices, and that helps to construct specific frameworks of thinking". If we define discourse in these terms, we acknowledge the fact that discourse is something 'above' and more than text or even language, comprising multiple forms of semiosis, i.e. sign processes that produce meaning. In other words, discourse is "a general mode

of semiosis, i.e. symbolic behaviour that is meaningful” (Blommaert 2005: 2). From this we can deduce that if meaning is generated through discourse, these meanings will eventually turn into something ‘real’ in the social sense as we define the phenomena around us and build our own frameworks of understanding these phenomena. In short, it guides and affects the schemata we build of the world and the way we engage with that world.

Van Dijk posits the idea that “language users engaging in discourse accomplish social acts and participate in social interaction [...] and this action is embedded in various social and cultural contexts” (1997: 2). We engage in discourse to act, influence and achieve goals guided by larger cultural and social currents. Van Dijk (1997: 3) also emphasises the fact that as language users (and also as users and recipients of certain speech acts, I would argue) we act as members of various social categories and therefore assume different roles and identities. We actively construct and perform such roles and identities and sometimes certain roles might also be construed or even imposed on us.

We can treat discourse as language-in-action, communication that simultaneously creates, maintains and forms social interaction and practice. For me, discourse cannot be separated from the social for it is “a site of meaningful social differences, of conflict and struggle” and “transforms our environment into a socially and culturally meaningful one” (Blommaert 2005: 4). By analysing the different modes of discourse we engage in our lives, we learn how meanings are produced and given not only social dimensions but also value. I argue that (critical) discourse analysis is especially suited to examining a phenomenon such as same-sex marriage, since it is a concept whose social dimensions are constantly in flux and re-defined in our contemporary society. When people think about the words “marriage” and “same-sex”, they will connect their separate meanings to wider social and cultural understandings of the words and the norms we attach to these. Conflating these two opens the door to further (and more complex) social understandings of what it means simultaneously in a same-sex relationship and married. It taps into how human relationships are understood in a given society.

In the same vein, Fairclough points out how discourse analysis deals with texts and practices, with discourse practices and sociocultural practices. He defines discourse

practices as “the ways in which texts are produced [...] and received by audiences [...] as well as how texts are socially distributed” (1995: 16). According to him, sociocultural practices may be thought of at situational, institutional and societal levels, i.e. “the specific social goings-on that the discourse is part of, the institutional framework(s) that the discourse occurs within, and the wider societal matrix of the discourse” (ibid.). Fairclough (1995: 55) characterises discourse as both socially shaped and socially shaping, the latter of which he calls a constitutive function of language in the sense that it maintains existing social identities, relations and systems of belief and helps to transform them.

Many of the considerations and arguments that for instance Fairclough advocates are based on a Hallidayan view of language and discourse, namely systemic functional linguistics. According to Halliday (1978), as given in Fairclough (1995), languages and texts always entail ideational, interpersonal and textual functions. While ideational functions generate representations of the world and interpersonal functions constitute relations and identities, textual functions constitute texts out of individual sentences. This systemic take on language sees texts as a set of options and choices (Fairclough 1995: 17). The variable nature of language and its social determinants ties in well with the idea I presented earlier that different forms of discourse will have an effect on how people interpret these and therefore act.

Looking at discourse and language from a social perspective often becomes a question of power, ideology, action or control, but an extensive discussion on the relations between these would not entirely serve the purposes of this thesis. However, to sum up it is worthwhile to consider the aim of social discourse analysis. Van Dijk states that

Although the overall aim of social discourse analysis is to understand the relationship between discourse structures and (...) local and global social contexts, it appears that such a relation cannot be established without also dealing with another fundamental aspect of social interaction and society, namely the socially acquired and socially shared mental representations that define cultures and groups and that organize and monitor their beliefs as well as their social practices and discourses. (Van Dijk 1997: 35).

If we can constitute that mental representations (often triggered by the discourse we encounter) define cultures, groups and their practices, then surely it is worthwhile to assess the mental representations, cultural values and the way social relationships are

defined by the media with a topic, which is very much about values and social relationships. In the present study I will especially apply the socially shaping, constitutive function of discourse. If we define a same-sex relation as *same-sex marriage* it maintains the identities and relations of those involved, ultimately transforming the institution of marriage into a more inclusive one, thus contributing to a wider social change.

3.1.1 Critical discourse analysis

In the following section, I will outline some of the central ideas of critical discourse analysis (CDA), its connections to media discourse and consider its relevance for the present study. While the study will not be focused on CDA, especially the ideas related to power and empowerment will be considered when analysing the results.

Critical discourse analysis can be defined as the critical study of the linguistic aspects of discourse. Whereas linguists in general are interested in language for its own sake, critical discourse analysts are interested in the role language and discourse play in achieving social goals, social maintenance and change (Bloor & Bloor 2007: 2). The legalisation of same-sex marriage is an important social change and a long-time goal for many, and the discourse used for and against same-sex marriage has been an important part of the change. According to Ruth Wodak, the main idea of CDA is to analyse “opaque as well as transparent structural relationships of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language” (1995: 204). What this essentially means is that concepts that are evident on a societal ‘macro level’ are manifested on the ‘micro level’ of a certain discourse. By analysing the relationship between linguistic practice and social structure, CDA aims at “empowering the powerless, giving voices to the voiceless, [and] exposing power abuse” (Blommaert 2005: 25, 27). A critical reading of my data will therefore enable me to assess the ways in which individuals might be empowered by discourse and how they are given voice in the chosen context. The concept of ideology is crucial to CDA since ideologies are transmitted and “values and identities are taught and learnt” through discourse (Fairclough 1995: 219). Ideas, identities and practices are thus filtered through and built on everyday language use and thus inherently intertwined with each other.

CDA is sometimes defined not as a school of thought as such, but a critical perspective and a critical way of conducting research (van Dijk 2001: 96). The interdisciplinary nature of CDA offers a diverse perspective, one which is arguably essential when trying to account for social phenomena through discourse features. Blommaert (2005: 35) echoes this by stating that in doing CDA one must look for inequality inside and outside of language. Admittedly it can be hard to get into what is ‘behind the discourse’, as one must take into consideration the motives and aims behind a certain discourse and consider whom it is produced for and by. Van Dijk calls this the text-context relationship (2001: 98). A text cannot exist on its own but must be placed in the relevant socio-political context.

CDA has been criticised for building biased interpretations of discourse. While some consider this as a hindrance and state that in doing CDA one risks the chance of projecting one’s own political biases and prejudices onto the analysed data thus analysing it accordingly (Blommaert 2005: 32), others take the view that CDA should wear its biased crown proudly and consider bias an innate feature of CDA (van Dijk 2001: 96). I argue that every analysis is always undertaken from some ideological point of view despite the fact that the analysis and power relations should be placed in their specific context. The concept of bias can also be useful when interpreting whether a given discourse presents a biased version of events.

3.1.2 CDA, queer theory and queer linguistics

Throughout the thesis, I have used the word *queer*. Once a derogatory term, it can for instance refer to “a coalition of culturally marginal sexual self-identifications” (Jagose 1996: 1). Lacking a clear definition and a consensus, most often the term queer refers to anti-heteronormative and/or anti-cisnormative identities, but nowadays increasingly also to non-normative identities, politics, practices and sexualities in general. Emerging in the 1990s, queer theory is a multidisciplinary and a post-structuralist critical approach that aims to question and deconstruct hegemonic power relations and heterosexual bias in society and offer critical readings and understandings of sexuality and gender. Queer theorists aim to reconceptualise dominant discourses and offer alternative readings by questioning “the discursive construction of certain forms of heterosexuality as natural, normal and preferable” (Motschenbacher and Stegu 2013: 520). Queer theory draws from the works of Judith Butler and Michel Foucault and

emphasises the understanding of gender, sexuality and identity as historically and culturally defined with shifting boundaries and ambivalence. Indeed, in discussing the premises of queer theory, Sullivan (2003: 1) sees sexuality as discursively constructed as well as “constructed, experienced, and understood in culturally and historically specific ways”. Therefore, looking into the patterns of discursive queer representation is needed to understand their connections to prevalent, socio-culturally defined practices and values.

Under the overarching term queer theory, the term queer linguistics can be used of analyses that apply a queer theoretical perspective to language data. Given that queer theory and queer linguistics primarily adopt a critical perspective to the conceptualisation and realisation of sexual identities in society, often set against the backdrop of a dominantly heterosexual normative framework and power relations, it is perhaps a bit surprising that studies combining a queer linguistic perspective with other perspectives that examine language use critically are relatively few, as noted by Motschenbacher and Stegu (2013: 528) who point out that contemporary discourse analytic approaches have “only marginally been employed for queer linguistic purposes”. This remark makes it all the more important that further bridges be built between a queer analytical framework and linguistic studies, given that linguistic practices often maintain norms in society.

The agendas of both CDA and queer linguistics are compatible in that both aim to reveal underlying hegemonic power structures in society as realised through language. As Motschenbacher (2010: 2) states, “Queer Linguistics is well compatible with most other approaches in contemporary language and gender research and may employ their methodologies for achieving its central aim: critical heteronormativity research.” Combined, CDA and queer linguistics then offer a take on language data that is simultaneously critical of dominant power structures in society as well as well critical of heterosexual readings and practices as normal and default.

When different sexual minorities gain more recognition and visibility in the media, it becomes increasingly important to examine the ways different non-heteronormative people and their identities are represented, and how this has changed. As identities are growing more complex and layered, so are the voices demanding a certain kind of visibility in the media and in society. Motschenbacher and Stegu (2013: 528)

acknowledge the critique that CDA has faced with regard to its agenda but argue that because of this, CDA is suited to examining “the linguistic consequences of heteronormativity as a social macro-issue that affects all contexts, even if with varying degrees of salience” (Motschenbacher and Stegu 2013: 528). Koller (2013: 575) echoes the same line of thought by postulating that a critical examination of language use may reveal the ways in which heteronormativity is “construct[ed] and reinforce[ed] or challeng[ed] and subvert[ed]” linguistically. I agree that the two perspectives (CDA & queer theory) go well together when fruitfully combined and are especially suited to critically examining questions of heteronormativity. Morrish and Sauntson further argue that

Sexual identity, rather than being an essential, pre-existing property, may be produced in relation to particular material conditions, and particular relations of power between those at the margins of society and those whose interests are represented in structures such as government, culture and commerce. A sense of community is formed around shared knowledge, experience and access to power within society and strategies of visibility. (Morrish and Sauntson 2007: 4)

Particular power relations in society can then affect the way an individual’s sexual identity is formed, which also ties in with questions of visibility and representation. Combining a critical and a queer theoretical perspective in my work will help me to assess not only the representation of queer individuals and the power relations between official and personal voices but also how queer individuals may or may not be empowered by certain forms of representation.

3.2 Approaches to media discourse

The idea of this section is to provide some discussion on the topic of media discourse in how it mediates reality, acts as a catalyst for socio-cultural change, exerts power, forms our understanding of phenomena and influences the representation of people. I am fully aware that the influence and pervasiveness of contemporary media could be discussed exhaustively and therefore for the purposes of this study will keep the discussion concise and focused on the relationship between media and discourse studies.

The reason I am focusing on media discourse and language is aptly worded by Macdonald (2003: 2) who argues that via the media ideas and values originate - and

discourse is an analytic concept that is ready to acknowledge this and by Fairclough (1995: 3) who wishes to accentuate the “linguistic and discursal nature of media power”. In other words, social discourse analysis is willing to see behind the powers that are at play in media discourse and therefore approaching media language with discourse analytical theories and methods means assessing the socio-cultural significance and dimensions of media language. This is also one of Fairclough’s main objectives as one of his major concerns is being able to show how social and cultural change is constituted by discursive practices and shifting language in the media (1995: 29). The way we speak about same-sex relations and the terms we favour have all varied extensively in the media and therefore I argue that further research into the discursive construction of same-sex relations is still called for.

The media in its different forms permeate much of our experiences of contemporary life. Thus, the media can be thought of as a powerful site where social meanings are produced and circulated (Thornborrow 2004: 56). This applies to both traditional mainstream media and to user-generated, interactive new media. This social dimension is often focused within a discourse perspective as the aim of a discourse analysis on media texts is often to unravel questions pertaining to sociocultural or ideological phenomena. A key concept for a linguist interested in media discourse is representation, since looking into the way events are organised will give us insights into how “different points of view, or ideologies, are constructed linguistically” (Thornborrow 2004: 59). Reflecting on the relationship between representation and reality, Macdonald states how

Media help to construct versions of reality, and constructions are always open to contest. It refuses a sharp dividing line between ‘reality’ and its ‘representation’, especially since apparent realities are often discursively shaped. (Macdonald 2003: 16)

Since we cannot always experience the reality a media outlet will describe, we will have to rely on the representation a particular medium will convey of that reality since we may not be able to access that reality. Fairclough (1995) presents some of the ways media discourse can be approached, ranging from (socio)linguistic, semiotic and critical analyses to a socio-cognitive model. He poses three important questions to consider: how is the world presented, what identities are set up for those involved and what relationships are set up between those involved, i.e. what kinds of

representations, identities and relations are involved in a news story. For the present study, the first two are the most important as I am interested in how the issue of the legalisation of same-sex marriage is presented and what kind of actor identities seem to be involved in the articles. Naturally, the social relations between the actors tie in with the first two as I analyse the space allocated for different actors.

Fairclough (1995: 56) maintains that when analysing any type of discourse, including media discourse, there are two essential foci, namely the communicative events (text, discourse practice and sociocultural practice) and the order of discourse. Fairclough (1995: 29) discusses the ‘social-cognitive model’ proposed by van Dijk and explains how this approach of news production and comprehension is shaped by cognitive ‘models’ and ‘schemata’ at micro and macro levels. A micro level here refers to the semantic, syntactical and lexical relations in media texts whereas the macro level concerns the thematic and schematic structure of texts, i.e. its ‘building blocks’ and its themes and topics, respectively. What Fairclough considers missing in this approach to media discourse is, however, attention to social relations and identities, an intertextual analysis and a consideration for diverse and heterogenous practices (1995: 30). In discussing my topic I hope to be able to draw from the insights offered by both scholars to assess some of the implications my data could have for social or cultural change.

Of vital importance is the question of the relationship between the media and ideology. It is a question I do not intend to answer here, but it is safe to say that the two are intrinsically linked as oftentimes we find different ideologies at play through media course, covertly or overtly. Fairclough (1995: 16) posits that media language should be analysed as discourse since a discourse analysis of a text will take also discourse and sociocultural practices into consideration. Therefore discourse analysis is arguably a fruitful way of conducting research on media language.

It is fairly easy to understand why media has such such a power on individuals. Thornborrow expresses this well by stating that

The mass media provide the means of access to much information and represent a potentially powerful force in our society. This is partly due to the fact that the media can select what counts as news, who gets into the papers and onto television and radio and, most importantly for linguists, the way that

stories about people and events get told and the frameworks in which people get to appear and talk (Thornborrow 2004: 57).

However, Thornborrow (2004: 57) reminds us that each medium is a complex institution and we should not see the media as being able to control and manipulate what we read or watch. Even though media will hold power over how events and individuals are represented, people will usually draw their conclusions from a wider pool of sources and considerations. Macdonald (2003: 11) echoes the same thought by postulating how the relationship between public discourses and the media needs to be redefined as constant interaction and not a transmission model of communication. In an age of social media prevalence an interactional, multi-channel relationship will also need to be considered.

Van Dijk (1997: 4) maintains that news reports may have to be analysed “in relation to elaborate social, political and cultural conditions and consequences.” While this might seem like a fairly simple idea, it serves as a valuable impetus for the current study and underlines the fact that my own analysis will need to take these conditions and dimensions into consideration. The act of legalising same-sex marriage is every bit a social as it is a political and a cultural phenomenon. Therefore, opting to undertake discourse analysis from the present point of view only accentuates the need to treat discourse as a form of social interaction. When analysing media texts, it must be noted that news discourse, such as an individual news article, is a symptom of the intentions of the sender (Renkema 2004: 266). This process always involves choices, presenting the information from a certain perspective, which contains a vision, a focalisation and empathy (ibid.). In this way, the schemata and the experiences of a journalist will affect their reporting of a certain issue. Even though news items are usually intended to be produced from a neutral perspective, objectivity is still nearly impossible to achieve. News reporting, interviews and other pieces within media discourse are always produced from a viewpoint.

If we look at media discourse from a discourse perspective, there are some challenges to consider. Renkema (2004: 267) points out how one of the key challenges is to prove with a discourse analytical framework whether a news item is biased or not, to what extent this is caused by the schemata and opinions of the journalist and to what extent this influences readers. Renkema (ibid.) defines discourse analysis that is focused on the media as “an extended stylistic analysis”, which includes examining the content,

the structure and the wording. The topics chosen, the information structure of a piece, the structuring of the information and lexical choices, as well as their connotations all play a crucial role in the perception of a covered issue and its subjects and actors.

In its part, media language creates and maintains certain norms in society. Since it exerts normative influences, media language can reinforce feelings of belonging or exclusion from the mainstream (Conboy 2007: 175). Media discourse is crucial in creating a sense of community among its recipients. The news, in its selection of ‘insider’ and ‘outsider’ groups, and its use of language to present these groups is “a powerful influence in moulding the social expectations of the groups which we perceive as welcome or acceptable within our society” (ibid.). This may be done consciously, but even unconsciously and depending on which groups are represented, how and by whom. Access to institutions such as marriage will arguably increase the chances of LGBTQ individuals to feel part of a larger community. Looking into media discourse can offer valuable insights into how welcome or acceptable such a social change is.

3.3 Appraisal theory

In addition to how media discourse and news articles are thematically and structurally organised, they are naturally affected by the choices and evaluations opted by their authors. This was already briefly raised in 3.2 when I discussed the intentions a writer has when authoring a piece of news. Looking at the choices language users make in a social context leads us back to some of the central tenets of systemic functional linguistics, briefly introduced in 3.1. How writers and language users in general evaluate their production and take a stance, in other words, appraise what they produce, has been formulated into appraisal theory by J. R. Martin and P. R. R. White (2005).

Appraisal theory looks into how writers and speakers “approve and disapprove, enthuse and abhor, applaud or criticise, and [...] how they position their readers/listeners to do likewise” (Martin and White 2005: 1). The theory aims at understanding how “shared feelings and values” are constructed and how linguistic mechanisms produce shared emotions and tastes as well as normative assessments (ibid.). Appraisal theory continues the work of M.A.K. Halliday and systemic functional linguistics (SFL) by focusing on the interpersonal in language. Interpersonal

meanings are concerned with how people interact, i.e. how social relations between them are negotiated (Martin and White 2005: 7). In the following, I will describe briefly some of the most central tenets of appraisal theory and present in more detail the domain of engagement, which is the most useful part of appraisal theory for the present study since it focuses on how language users engage and align with different voices in a communicative context, further linking an author's treatment of these voices to value judgements and normative assessments of a topic.

Appraisal can be conceptualised as three domains or subtypes: *attitude*, *engagement* and *graduation* (Martin and White 2005: 35). Appraisal theory ties in with the concept of affect, a concept that Martin and White (2005: 2) define as “the means by which writers/speakers positively or negatively evaluate the entities, happenings and states-of-affairs with which their texts are concerned”. In other words, appraisal theory deals with formulations that “express, negotiate and naturalise particular inter-subjective and ultimately ideological positions” (White 2001). This is in direct relation to writers' status of authority as they construct relations between them and their audiences, thus contributing to the power media discourse may exert on its audiences and the way the media and different ideologies are connected, as discussed earlier in 3.2.

Attitude is to do with our feelings, reactions, judgements of behaviour and evaluations and is further divided into *affect*, *judgement* and *appreciation* (Martin and White 2005: 35). *Engagement* is concerned with “sourcing attitudes and the play of voices around opinions in discourse” (ibid.), how the author's voice is positioned against the proposals and propositions that a text conveys and how speakers and writers acknowledge or ignore different viewpoints (White 2001). When examining *graduation* in discourse, analysts look into how speakers and writers “graduate (raise or lower) the interpersonal impact, force or volume of their utterances” (ibid.). In other words, graduation deals with how language users amplify their feelings and blur certain categories (Martin and White 2005: 35).

For the sake of conciseness, I will not go into further details concerning attitude and graduation, but will instead discuss the domain of engagement. I deemed engagement to be the most relevant of the subsystems for the present study since looking into engagement strategies can shed light on the viewpoints the authorial voice of the article chooses to include or downplay. Not only telling of genre conventions, differences in

alignment between the news outlets and in authorial styles and values, these choices may also be signs of further normative ideals operating in media discourse, some of which may be traced back to the norms society holds about sexual minorities. In the following section I will present the subsystem of engagement more thoroughly.

3.3.1 Engagement

Martin and White (2005: 92) see the appraisal theory as being part of a tradition where all utterances are treated as stanced or attitudinal. Their approach to stance-taking and evaluation is informed by the concepts of dialogism and heteroglossia (developed especially by Bakhtin), in which all verbal communication is always in some way related to preceding discourse. Engagement is concerned with finding out how language users align themselves with, acknowledge and engage with these prior discourses and the way they present themselves in relation to prior value judgements (Martin and White 2005: 93). Writers and speakers thus negotiate their own space in contexts that build on previous contributions by other writers and speakers. The aim of an analysis that examines engagement in discourse is to look systematically into how speakers and writers take such positionings linguistically and to assess their interpersonal style and rhetorical strategies by examining the voices and viewpoints they include and the ways they engage with these (ibid.).

Engagement looks into how speakers and writers position themselves (and therefore their audiences, too) with the voices that are present in the communicative event. They may for instance quote, report, acknowledge, deny, counter, affirm a particular value position or a point of view (Martin and White 2005: 36). Analysing engagement strategies will enable me to look more closely into the value positions being included, advanced, denied or downplayed in a particular article. This coupled with an analysis of the social actors will shed light on how an author presents the issue and which roles they allocate to the actors involved.

Speakers and writers can be said to “invite others to endorse and to share with them feelings, tastes or normative assessments”, thereby “aligning the addressee into a community of shared value and belief” (Martin and White 2005: 95). For Martin and White, “all verbal communication occurs against a heteroglossic backdrop of other voices and alternative viewpoints” (2005: 99). In other words, heteroglossic

expressions take into consideration the alternative viewpoints and voices that Martin and White (2005: 100) dub dialogistic alternatives of a text whereas monoglossic expressions do not. When assessing whether a text is heteroglossic or monoglossic in nature, one must also bear in mind that the communicative objective of the text might influence the play of voices (ibid.). A text that argues as supposed to a text which aims to recount will in most cases have a somewhat different structure as well as a different objective. Therefore it is also necessary to assess whether appraisal theory in general and engagement in particular are suited to examining news articles that at least seemingly aim for neutrality and objectivity. While the assumed objectivity of broadsheet news writing is sometimes taken as given (depending on the source), the neutrality and objectivity of a ‘reporter voice’ have also been problematised e.g. by White (2012: 57-58) who posits that a seemingly objective journalistic author may implicitly advance certain value positions, even though overt evaluations might be attributed to quoted sources.

Many texts make use of some related previous discourse and this can be realised directly or indirectly. Heteroglossic resources can be divided into *dialogically expansive* and *dialogically contractive* expressions, which either allow for dialogically diverse viewpoints and voices or challenge or restrict such voices (Martin and White 2005: 102). Examples of dialogically contractive words are for instance the verbs *show* and *demonstrate* since they leave little room for alternative viewpoints. A verb such as *claim* will in most cases question a proposition and thus leave room for other interpretations and viewpoints therefore being used in dialogically expansive way.

Martin and White (2005: 97) propose a taxonomy of engagement with which meanings can be located in the communicative environment. These include the categories of *disclaim*, *proclaim*, *entertain* and *attribute* and include both dialogically expansive and contractive expressions. I shall briefly summarise each category and offer a few examples how a text can be analysed using these.

With *entertain* a writer or a speaker will indicate that his or her position is but one of many possible viewpoints, therefore entertaining different dialogic alternatives (Martin and White 2005: 104). Wordings that entertain include modal auxiliaries such as “*may, might, could, must, etc.*”, modal adjuncts such as “*perhaps, probably, definitely, etc.*”, modal attributes such as “*it’s possible that ..., it’s likely that ... etc.*”

and certain expressions or mental verbs that convey an opinion, including such wordings as “*in my view*”, “*I suspect that*” or “*I’m convinced that*” (Martin and White 2005: 105). Martin and White (ibid.) also include evidence/appearance-based postulations (of the form *it seems/appears* or *research suggests...*) into the domain of entertain. All of the aforementioned indicate that no single value proposition holds true but that the proposition in question may be one of several possible viewpoints or interpretations. The authorial voice may also guide the addressee towards a certain judgement or express solidarity with a certain viewpoint. Additionally, Martin and White (2005: 109-111) include certain ‘evidentials’ (when a proposition is surmised), open-ended ‘expository questions’ and expressions to do with permission or obligation (*you must...*) whereby the speaker or writer assesses the proposition being advanced.

The category of *attribution* deals with “formulations which disassociate the proposition from the text’s internal authorial voice by attributing it to some external source”, of which the most typical example is reported speech with verbs like *say* or *believe* (Martin and White 2005: 111). While the category of entertain deals with the writer’s or speaker’s own assessment of a proposition, expressions that can be grouped under attribution do not necessarily signal of the author’s evaluation of the topic since evaluation is attributed to someone else. Martin and White (2005: 112) distinguish two sub-categories of attribution: *acknowledge* and *distance*. Acknowledge pertains to locutions which do not indicate how the author relates to what is being proposed (expressed with such verbs as *say*, *report*, *believe* or *think*) and distance to locutions where the authorial voice clearly distances themselves from the proposition at hand (such as with the verb *claim*), in other words declines to take responsibility for the proposition and thereby opening up the space for further dialogistic alternatives (Martin and White 2005: 113-114). Martin and White (2005: 115-116) also suggest ways in which the writer or speaker may support or oppose to the advanced value position by either offering multiple sources or voices of high credibility or by offering sources that are in the minority or voices who represent low credibility.

The categories of entertain and attribute largely open up and expand the dialogistic space of utterances, whereas the categories of *disclaim* (dialogistic alternatives rejected or supplanted) and *proclaim* (dialogistic alternatives challenged) aim to contract the space of dialogistic alternatives (Martin and White 2005: 117-118). The

category of disclaim includes *denial* (introducing a viewpoint and then denying or rejecting it with e.g. *no*, *didn't* or *never*) and *counter* (replacing or supplanting an otherwise expected proposition), which is realised with conjunctions and connectives such as *although*, *however*, *yet* and *but* or with adjuncts or adverbials such as *surprisingly*, *even*, *only*, *just* and *still* (Martin and White 2005: 118-121).

Under proclamation Martin and White (2005: 121) distinguish between three subtypes that aim to contract the dialogistic alternatives at play, namely expressions that *concur*, *endorse* or *pronounce*. Concur involves locutions with which the addresser agrees with the addressee or expects them to have the same information, expressed with such expressions as “*of course*, *naturally*, *not surprisingly*, *admittedly* and *certainly*” or with so-called leading questions (Martin and White 2005: 122-123). Martin and White (2005: 125) further divide the expressions of concur into conceding concurrences (somewhat reluctant expressions such as *admittedly*) and affirming concurrences (such as *naturally*). Endorsement refers to propositions held correct or valid by the authorial voice with verbs such as *show*, *prove* or *point out* and associate such propositions with individual subjectivity of the authorial voice (Martin and White 2005: 126-127). The final category of pronounce encompasses expressions that emphasise the authorial voice or have the authorial voice directly intervene or interpolate into the communicative context with propositions such as “*I contend...*, *The facts of the matter are that...*” as well as *really* or *indeed* (ibid.), which often revoke or challenge the proposition being advanced by the heteroglossic backdrop. Figure 1 summarises the taxonomy of engagement as outlined by Martin and White.

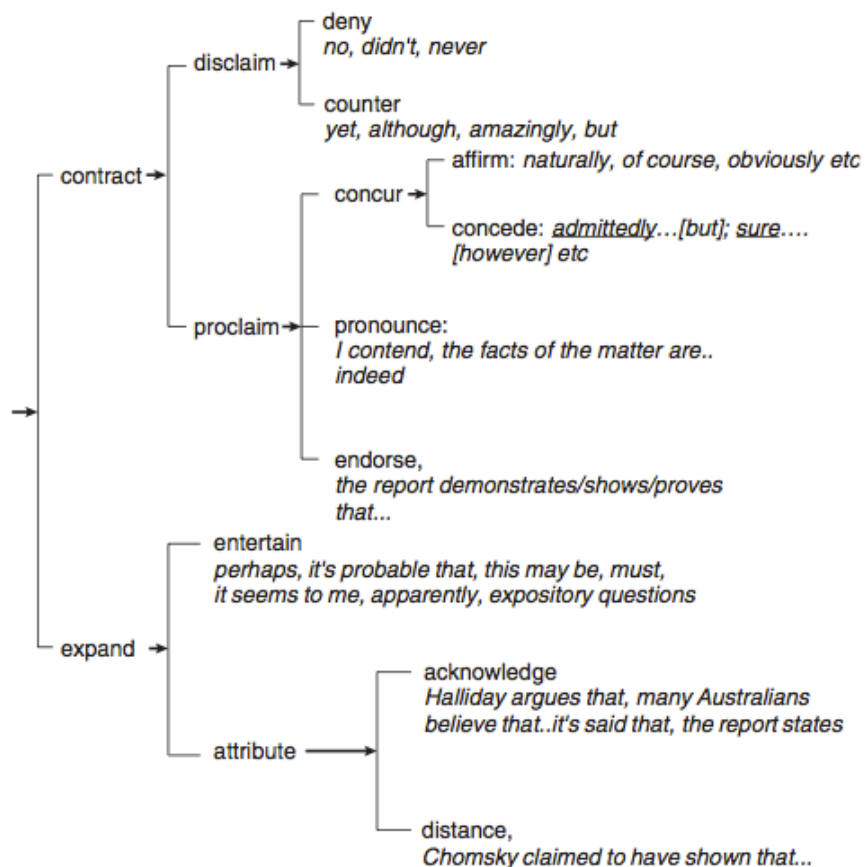


Figure 1 Taxonomy of engagement according to Martin and White (2005, 134).

4 Previous studies

Having now discussed two of my major frameworks for approaching the topic, representation and discourse, as well as the history of LGBTQ media representation and same-sex marriage, I will address some prior research more closely and place my own study and objectives into the field. I contend that research into how same-sex marriage is appraised and who is engaged at a very specific point in time is called for given that language use in news reportage can be said to mirror the “generally held social, cultural and political understandings” of a certain point in time (Frantz 2015: 290). This study will therefore add to the general understanding of how same-sex marriage was reported upon its nationwide US legalisation and whose voices were associated in this context. The results will offer some insights into the contemporary framework same-sex marriage is understood in, into the wider context in which the legalisation took place and enable me to consider the related sociocultural practices and normative assessments.

The issue of same-sex marriage has often been analysed in terms of its media frames (e.g. Liebler, Schwartz, and Harper 2009, Li and Liu 2010, Pan, Meng, and Zhou 2010). Discussing the framing of the issue, Frantz (2015: 295) refers to Crehan and Rickenbacker (2006-2007) who maintain that the same-sex marriage debate has often been framed according to the themes or categories of “religion/morality, procreation/welfare of children, family values, rights, and judicial activism” with morality and religion giving more prominence to judicial activism over time. Pan, Meng, and Zhou (2010) investigated the approach of The New York Times and The Chicago Tribune to the issue of gay marriage, using the 2003 Massachusetts legitimisation of same-sex marriage as a dividing point. At the time of the US presidential election campaign in 2000, the media covered the question of the legal status of homosexual partnerships rather extensively with morality and equality as major frames in the debate (Price, Nir, and Cappella 2005: 184). The aim of the researchers was to utilise these two core values and find out if gay marriage legitimisation was framed according to them before and after the Massachusetts ruling.

The results show that although proportions of different topics were somewhat different, four topics featured heavily in the data: “Constitutional amendment [...], equal rights [...], American tradition and family values [...], and religious disciplinary” (Pang, Meng, and Zhou 2010: 637-638). All in all, the NYT covered more topics related to equal rights than the CT whereas topics related to “American tradition and family values and religious disciplinary” featured more frequently in the CT than in the NYT (ibid.). Before the legitimisation, the NYT relied heavily on unofficial sources, i.e. “elite and ordinary people” whereas after the legitimisation, official sources increased considerably (Pang, Meng, and Zhou 2010: 639). The CT displayed similar tendencies in their choice of sources. The researchers found out that the NYT expressed a more liberal attitude towards same-sex marriage whereas the CT paid more attention to the moral angle, focusing more on American tradition and family values and religious disciplinary in the debate. Pan, Meng, and Zhou maintain that LGBTQ perspectives did not feature frequently in the CT coverage of same-sex marriage issues.

While framing has been a popular approach to the topic, studies that look into same-sex marriage or LGBTQ appraisal applying the appraisal theory seem more marginal.

Using the subsystem of Attitude, Bartley and Benitez-Castro (2016) looked into how evaluative language use may reflect the Irish society's mentality to the LGBTQ community in tabloid vs. broadsheet media. While I am not focused on the evaluation of homosexuality per se, comparing their results with mine will be useful in terms of assessing patterns of LGBTQ media representation. The authors found a strong tendency towards negative evaluations compared to positive ones with negative judgement being the most frequent category, followed by positive judgement and negative affect (Bartley and Benitez-Castro 2016: 10-11). The study revealed that while both types of newspaper showed a marked preference for negative appraisal, it was slightly more noticeable in the broadsheet though not statistically significant. Finally, Bartley and Benitez-Castro (2016: 16-17) analysed the evaluative patterns appraisers produced and found out that the gays themselves and the author of the article were most likely to appraise LGBTQ individuals positively while Irish politicians and the Catholic Church demonstrated a marked tendency towards negative portrayal.

What strikes me as very interesting is the fact that in Bartley's and Benitez-Castro's data the Irish politicians seemed to refer to homosexual practices more often than to homosexuals as individuals. Baker (2005: 73-74) arrived at a similar conclusion, maintaining that British newspapers have tended to frame homosexuality rather as a practice or as a behaviour than as an identity which would add more of a human interest angle. This is also largely in line with the tendencies of how LGBTQ individuals have traditionally been framed in the media, as noted by Hilton-Borrow and Battles (2015). I argue that some of the negative tendencies in Bartley's and Benitez-Castro's data might be due to the prevalence of Catholicism in Ireland and the varied topics of the articles. As minority visibility and recognition has progressed, the portrayal has largely shifted from evaluating homosexuality through behaviour and practice to focusing on homosexuality as a social identity. This progression will arguably affect also the way same-sex marriage is discussed and understood today. Indeed, Hart-Brinson (2016) argues that "the increase in support for same-sex marriage in the United States must be interpreted in light of the changing social imagination of homosexuality". In his study, Hart-Brinson discovered that whereas younger informants tended to refer to homosexuality as an identity, older informants characterised homosexuality rather as behaviour.

Viewing homosexuality or same-sex marriage as behaviour rather than identity is arguably intertwined with sociocultural practices and frameworks of a given time. Frantz (2006) analysed language use on the issue of same-sex marriage in media discourse in order to find more about the complexities of perspectives surrounding the issue. His analysis focused on how various people, events and institutions related to same-sex marriage were represented linguistically, i.e. how their identities were construed. Taking CDA as his guiding approach, Frantz's concluded that identities were constructed using various linguistic features. He found out a clear relationship between identity construction and sociocultural practice prevalent at a given article's publication time and maintained that even though language use at the time was often polarised, American perspectives on same-sex marriage seemed on closer inspection more complex than the polarisation would suggest. Contrasting my results to those given above will add a further dimension to this discussion.

An important question in LGBTQ media representation is also to consider whether queerness is presented from its own point of view. While discourse analytic approaches and queer theory have not often been combined, as discussed in 3.1.2, some scholars have approached the issue from a queer-theoretical point of view as well. Liebler, Schwartz, and Harper (2009) examined the press coverage of same-sex marriage in the US by assessing the extent to which framing of same-sex marriage was consistent with opposing views (as lobbied by e.g. the American Family Association) or supporting views (as lobbied by e.g. the Human Rights Campaign). One of their aims was also to find out whether the accounts seemed to problematise traditional, hegemonic and heteronormative ideas of marriage, which has largely been defined with heterosexual terms (Halle 2001). With the support of Barnhurst (2007), Liebler, Schwartz, and Harper (2009: 656) describe LGBTQ media visibility as a paradox in that progress in visibility and representation has often come with the price of assimilation and nonthreatening stereotypes, e.g. in conforming to hegemonic ideals that do not constitute "a problem" for the heterosexual majority audience. According to the authors, media discourse has often presented LGBTQ individuals as a homogeneous crowd and sometimes downplayed the political elements of same-sex marriage.

Their key finding was that “although same-sex marriage-friendly frames appear more often than traditional-marriage frames, it is the latter that set the parameters of the debate” (Liebler, Schwartz, and Harper 2009: 653). Liebler, Schwartz, and Harper (2009: 666) maintain that nearly all the stories considered heterosexual marriage the norm against which same-sex marriage was compared, i.e. same-sex marriage was primarily understood as a contrast to heterosexual marriage. The authors suggest that same-sex marriage derives its meaning largely from heterosexual marriage with no real definition of its own. Therefore, dominant hegemony was not threatened and the debate takes place in the context of traditional marriage and within the standards of heteronormativity. The data also demonstrated a tendency of officialdom, i.e. the voices in the communicative context could more often be contributed to official sources than to private individuals.

From a queer-theoretical point of view, Liebler, Schwartz, and Harper’s findings are interesting and provide food for further thought. Even though same-sex marriage and the readjustment of the meaning of marriage are largely supported today, it is worthwhile to consider the meaning of same-sex marriage. How can same-sex marriage be defined as a proper queer institution and not simply as an opposite to heterosexual marriage? My study will partially continue the work of Liebler, Schwartz, and Harper in considering if LGBTQ people need to conform to heteronormative-derived ideals of marriage in order to be accepted as part of the institution of marriage.

In a somewhat similar vein, Ragusa (2003) analysed social change in The New York Times business news articles between 1970 and 2000, focusing on social representation, cultural norms, stereotypes and levels of visibility. Gay men were found to feature more prominently in the data than lesbians whereas bisexuals, transsexuals, transgenders and queers were found invisible. All in all, Ragusa discovered “a shift from deviantization and stigmatization of homosexuality to the commodification and spectacularization of GLBTQs” (2003: ii). The New York Times was deemed to contribute to the proliferation of norms, beliefs and values that characterise GLBTQ people and to the “creation of sexuality as a cultural product” (ibid.). Ragusa considers the media a stage where social norms contest culturally and aptly notes that even though “the media is a tool to be used and manipulated, [...] not every social actor has equal access to employ the media for their own purposes” (2003:

ii; 226). Her study demonstrated that LGBTQ individuals “have very little power and control over the images and degree of visibility attributed them in business articles written by *The New York Times*” (2003: 226-227). Today, this holds arguably true only to an extent since contemporary forms of media have somewhat changed who has access into which media platforms. However, a result which might still be relevant is her conclusion that while social tolerance towards homosexuality has changed, heterosexuality remains the norm against which homosexuality is compared. In this, Ragusa can be said to interpret her results through a critical queer lens. Her study was focused on a larger framework of LGBTQ representation, but provides still useful points of comparison.

While previous studies have been more focused on same-sex marriage framing and LGBTQ representation and visibility, many of which have had a longitudinal perspective, my study will be more focused on author evaluation and social actor representation during a specific point in time. Comparing my results with the studies presented will enable me to reflect on how LGBTQ media representation patterns have changed and how they might change in the future. To the existing body of research my thesis will add some insights on how contemporary same-sex marriage is understood in the US media and society, and whether reports on its legalisation seem to employ queer perspectives on the issue (and what these perspectives might be like). Moreover, while Bartley and Benitez-Castro did use appraisal theory to find out more about LGBTQ media representation, few studies seem to have addressed an LGBTQ issue, such as same-sex marriage, using the appraisal framework. My study will therefore also add to the understanding of how appraisal theory may be used to learn more about attitudes and evaluation towards LGBTQ people in the media and how well suited appraisal theory is to examining hard news writing. Since discussion on same-sex marriage in the media has often been polarised and emotive, I argue that using the appraisal theory to examine authorial engagement with the matter is both called for and justified.

5 The present study

Having now laid out the theoretical foundations of the study and discussed some of the previous research on same-sex marriage and queer representation in the media, I will turn more closely to the materials and methods of the present study. I will first

discuss my data more closely and further detail how I conducted the social actor and the appraisal analyses before moving on to presenting the results of the two analyses.

5.1 Data

The data for the present study comprise four online newspaper articles taken from four different US news sites. The chosen news sites are the websites for *The New York Times* (NYT), *The Huffington Post* (HP), *The Washington Times* (WT) and *The Chicago Tribune* (CT). In addition to offering news content online, The New York Times, The Chicago Tribune and The Washington Times are also popular daily broadsheet newspapers published in New York City, Chicago and Washington D.C., respectively. The Huffington Post is a news and opinion website as well as a blog.

These data were chosen both on the basis of the circulation and/or popularity of the news outlet and their somewhat different political alignments or reputation. Major news outlets were chosen since they can be considered to cater for a large audience and therefore reflect the opinions and values of a large number of people in addition to offering possible normative assessments of the subject matter. I decided to choose two news sites that have been considered more liberal and left-wing, i.e. The Huffington Post and The New York Times, and two sites that are usually regarded as more conservative (or centrist) in their views, i.e. The Washington Times and The Chicago Tribune. This was done partly to see if some of the results might be explained by the alignment or reputation of the news outlet. Additionally, Pan, Meng, and Zhou (2010) also focused on the CT and the NYT, which allowed me compare my results to theirs. Similar stories were also published by numerous other news outlets, but a larger data set would not have fitted the scope of the thesis. It should also be mentioned that while some of the content on The Huffington Post website represents a different genre compared to the other news outlets and might thus entail different kinds of appraisal structures and engage different voices, the chosen article compares well in content and form to the articles chosen from other news outlets and can therefore be expected to contain comparable engagement structures. It should also be noted that some of the articles had more than one contributor, as given below. The Washington Times also based its story partially on Associated Press material.

All of the chosen articles deal with the same topic, namely the nationwide legalisation of same-sex marriage by the Supreme Court of the United States (sometimes abbreviated as SCOTUS) on 26 June 2015. On this day, the Supreme Court ruled that all state-level bans on same-sex marriage are unconstitutional and that same-sex couples have a right to marry in each US state.

The chosen articles and their word counts are as follows (headings not included in the word count):

*Supreme Court extends gay marriage nationwide*¹ (The Chicago Tribune, published on 26 June 2015, 1119 words)

Supreme Court Legalizes Gay Marriage Nationwide by Dana Liebelson and Amanda Terkel (The Huffington Post, published on 26 June 2015, 868 words)

Supreme Court Ruling Makes Same-Sex Marriage a Right Nationwide by Adam Liptak with reporting contributions from Julie Hirschfeld and Nicolas Fandos (The New York Times, published on 26 June 2015, 1694 words)

Gay marriage legalized nationwide in 5-4 Supreme Court vote, Scalia seethes by Cheryl Wetzstein (The Washington Times, published on 26 June 2015, story partially based on Associated Press material, 773 words)

5.2 Methodology

There are two major methodological layers at work in the present thesis. Firstly, analysing the engaged social actors in terms of their form and role and secondly, analysing how the journalistic voices relate to the topic and the actors linguistically, i.e. if they appraise what they are reporting on. Combined, these two layers will help me to deem the overall perspective presented in the stories and consider whether the authors seem to take a clear stand on the topic. The analysis will combine both quantitative and qualitative approaches. The first layer will be focused on the social actor analysis and the second layer will deal with engagement structures of the appraisal theory. A small corpus of the articles was built and the data were coded with

¹ Author(s) missing due to the unavailability of The Chicago Tribune website in most European countries at the time of the thesis submission.

UAMCorpusTool3 with two separate layers for *actor* and *engagement*. I decided to organise the analysis in this order since presenting the results from the social actor analysis first enables me to discuss which voices are allocated space in the stories before moving on to the appraisal analysis, which then deals with the authors' assessment of these voices and the topic of same-sex marriage.

On the social actor layer, I coded all instances of actors or voices found in the data (i.e. who is speaking or referred to in the text, i.e. given space). I included all instances of human actors as well as organisations that have a human actor or human actors behind them (e.g. courts, states, religious organisations, political parties and movements). The layer was divided into *semantic type* of the actor (*human* or *organisation*) and *form* of the actor (*proper noun/name*, *common noun* or *pronoun*). Human actors were further categorised either as *personal* (someone featuring in the story as a private individual and therefore offering a human interest perspective) or *institutional* (someone featuring in the story mainly as a representative of an institution or their profession). Organisation actors were categorised as *government* (i.e. some form of governmental organisation) or *other* (e.g. a company, institution or other type of organisation or movement). These categorisations allowed me to find out if the voice was mainly given to government officials and organisations or individual (queer) persons offering their own perspective. The categorisations were based on what kind of individuals and organisations are likely to be found in an article on same-sex marriage legalisation and were designed to help me make a distinction between personal and institutional perspectives on the issue.

Categorising the actors according to their form was based on Van Leeuwen's concept of social actors as either individualised or assimilated. To assess the role given to different actors in the articles, they were further coded as either *active* or *passive*. Passivated actors were further coded as *subjected* or *beneficialised*. Individuals who were considered to be objects in the discourse (i.e. passive) were coded as either subjected or beneficialised, depending on whether they seemed to benefit from the action directed at them or not. The coding follows the same line of thought as Van Leeuwen's taxonomy of social actor representation, introduced earlier in 2.1. Even though Van Leeuwen's taxonomy is more intricate than what I make use of, I deemed it sufficient to analyse the form (generic/assimilated and specific/individualised) and

role (active/passive) of a given actor. Categorising the instances as either proper nouns or names, common nouns and pronouns offered me the chance to evaluate if the voices represented unique, named individuals or if they were engaged as members of a group or a class and as non-unique, assimilated individuals. Analysing the role of a given actor gave me the chance to assess whether the actor in question was given an active or a passive role in the discourse context – in other words, how they were represented.

On the engagement layer I sourced expressions and word choices that position the author's voice against the propositions and proposals conveyed by the text. My aim was to find out if and how the authors seemed to acknowledge the diversity of viewpoints that are salient in the given communicative context and how they relate to these viewpoints, i.e. if they conveyed a clear opinion on the subject matter. The engagement annotations included all those word choices, expressions and formulations that Martin and White group under the domain of engagement, namely instances of *deny* and *counter* (found under *disclaim*), *concur* (including *affirm* and *concede*), *pronounce* and *endorse* (found under *proclaim*), *entertain* as well as well *acknowledge* and *distance* (found under *attribute*). The analysis considered those heteroglossic expressions that aim to contract or expand the dialogistic space of the communicative context. Monoglossic expressions were not annotated or included in the appraisal analysis. Possible appraisals that were included in direct quotes were also not considered as the aim is to assess authorial evaluation of the topic.

6 Analysis

In the following, the results of the analysis are presented layer by layer and article by article. I shall begin with the social actor analysis and continue with the analysis on engagement structures. In the analysis section results are presented on a method-first basis whereas in the discussion section they are discussed on a more result-first basis, i.e. focusing on the patterns that emerged from the analysis. It should additionally be noted that even though the results are presented in a comparative manner, comparing the articles' treatment of the topic is not the main goal but only a secondary goal. The analysis is, however, organised article by article to give the reader an idea of some of the differences between the results.

6.1 Social actor analysis

In the social actor analysis, all instances of actors, participants or voices in the data were coded according to their semantic type (*human* or *organisation*), form (*proper name/noun*, *common noun* or *pronoun*) and role (*active* or *passive*). The form corresponds to Van Leeuwen's categorisation of actors as either specific/individualised or generic/assimilated. Humans were further coded as *personal* or *institutional* and organisations as *government* (i.e. an organisation representing some form of government) or *other*. Passive roles were further categorised as *subjected* or *beneficialised*. Altogether 420 actors were identified in the data. In the analysis, I will describe *human actors* and *organisation actors* separately for each article. I will first describe the results for *personal humans* and discuss their form and role in the data and then for *institutional humans* as well as their form and role. Following this, I will describe the *governmental organisations* found in the data, their form and role and finally *other organisations* as well as their form and role. Proceeding with the analysis in an "actor first" method will enable to directly assess the way each group of actors is featured in the data.

Before moving on to discussing the results of each news outlet, it is worthwhile to look at some of the general tendencies that emerged from the analysis to have an idea of some of the similarities between the articles. Figures 2-7 compare the overall tendencies between each news outlet in terms of the semantic type, human type, organisation type, form, role and passive type of social actor.

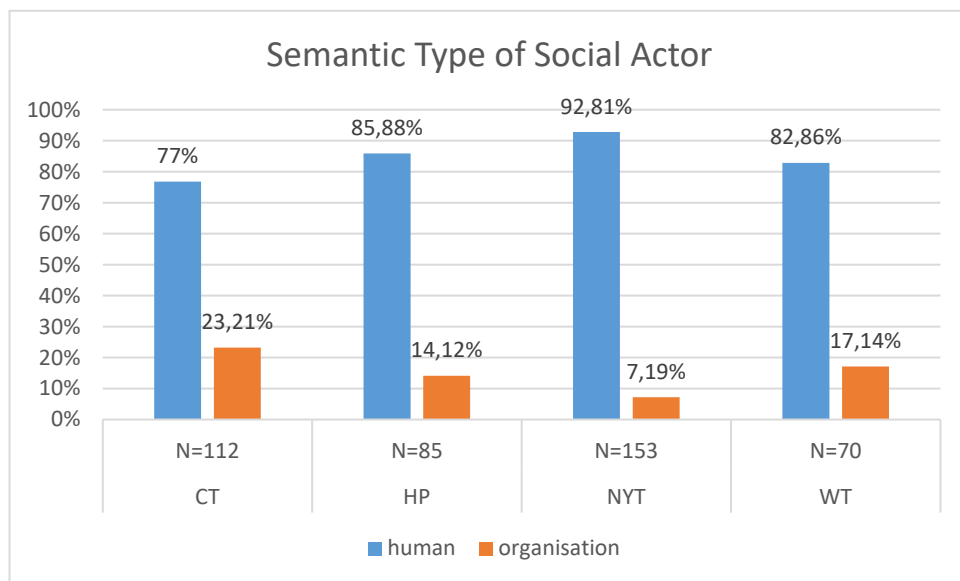


Figure 2 Semantic types of social actors in each news outlet, all actors considered.

Figure 2 presents the semantic types of social actors in each news outlet, i.e. the ratio between human and organisational actors. Percentages are calculated out of the total number of identified social actors in each news outlet (N). We can see that all of the four news outlets engaged mainly human actors with the CT using the most organisational actors and the NYT the least. The number of actors also corresponds to the length of the article.

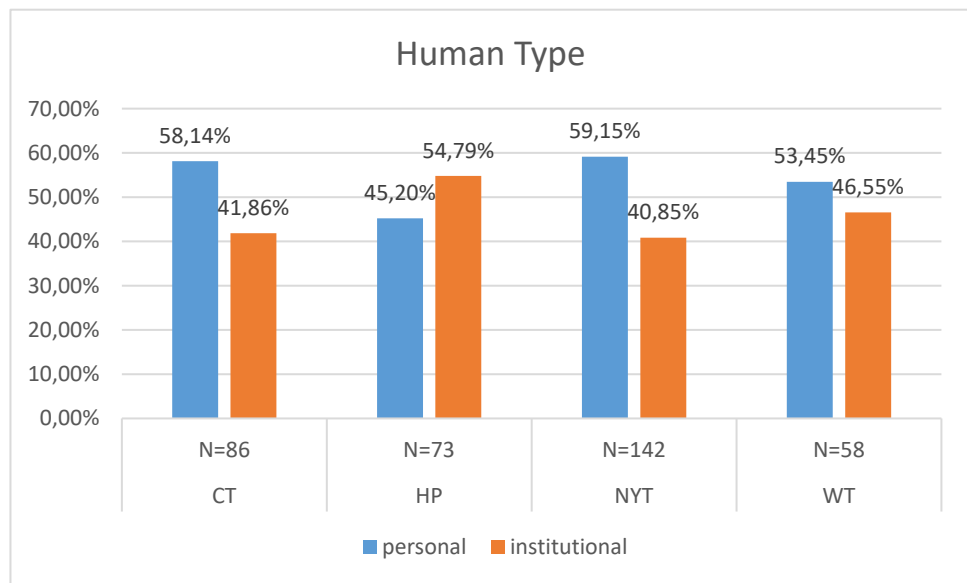


Figure 3 Human types in each news outlet, only human actors considered.

Figure 3 compares the ratio between human types, i.e. whether each news outlet included more personal or institutional actors. Percentages are calculated out of the total number of identified human actors in each news outlet (N). Figure 3 shows that all of the articles displayed a fairly good balance of both personal and institutional actors. The CT and the NYT favoured personal actors the most whereas the HP relied somewhat more on institutional actors.

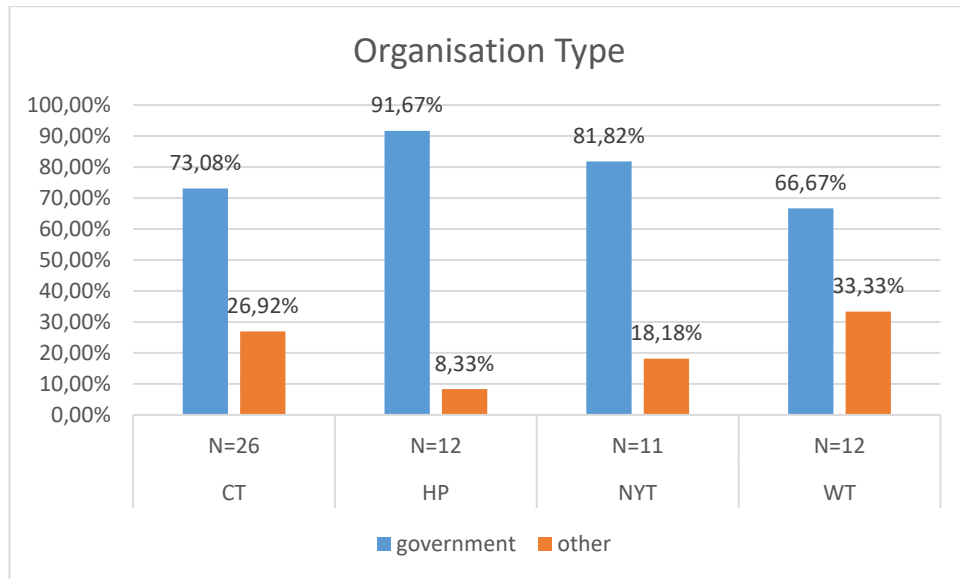


Figure 4 Organisation types in each news outlet, only organisation actors considered.

Figure 4 shows the ratio between governmental and other organisational voices, i.e. governments and other instances with a human actor behind them. Figure 4 entails only organisational actors (N) and percentages are calculated on the basis of these. All news outlets favoured governmental actors, which is somewhat understandable considering the articles are about a legalisation process. We can see that the HP relied on governmental organisations the most whereas the WT included more other organisations than the other news outlets.

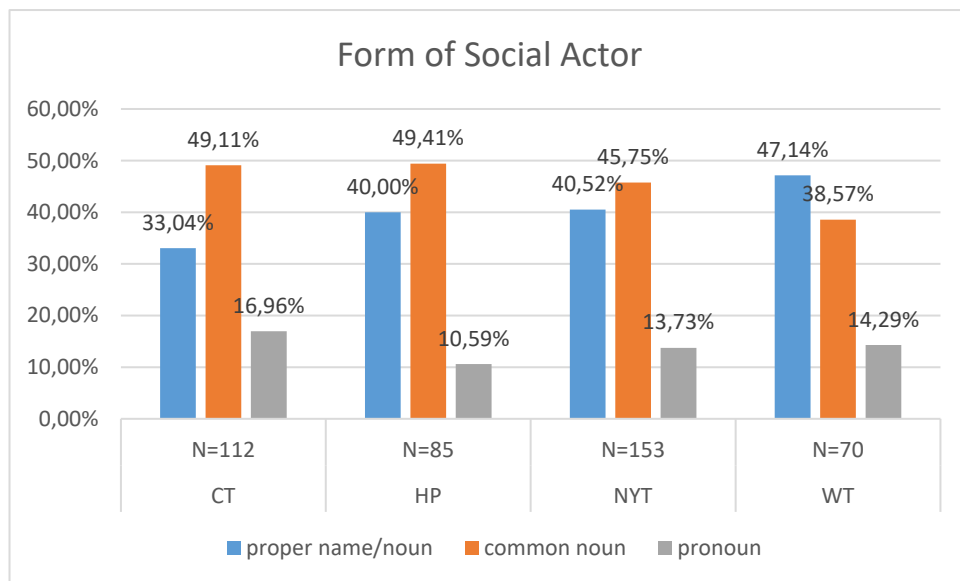


Figure 5 Forms of social actors in each news outlet, all actors considered.

Figure 5 presents the forms (proper name/noun, common noun or pronoun) of social actors and takes account of all the social actors identified in a given article (N). We can see that most news outlets referred to the actors with a common noun, i.e. assimilated them. The WT was an exception since it included more proper name/noun references than the other news outlets.

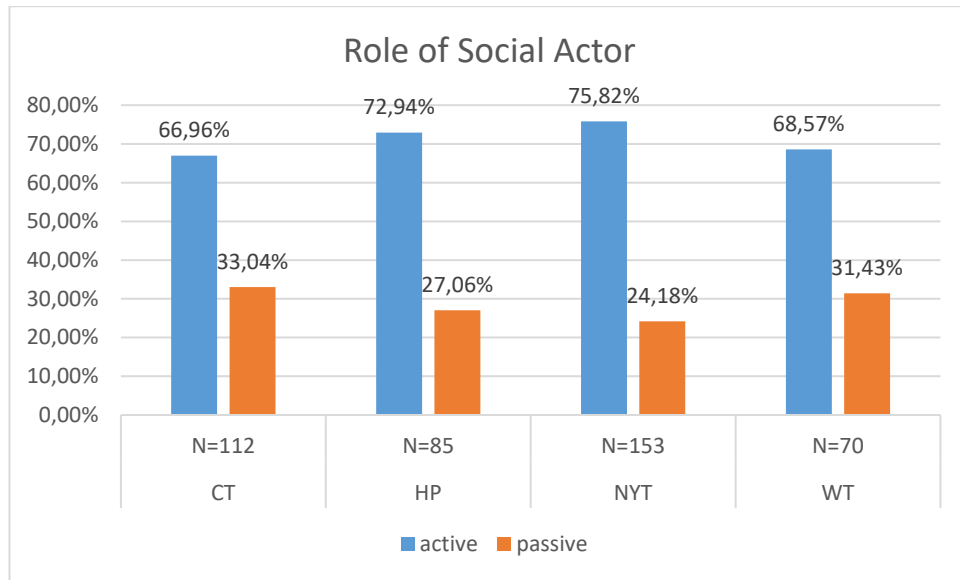


Figure 6 Roles of social actors in each news outlet, all actors considered.

Figure 6 looks at the role given to the social actors (active or passive). Percentages are calculated out of all identified social actors (N). The figures for each news outlet are fairly similar as all of them included more active than passive actors. Sections 6.1.1 – 6.1.4 discuss more closely who the activated and passivated actors were in each news outlet.

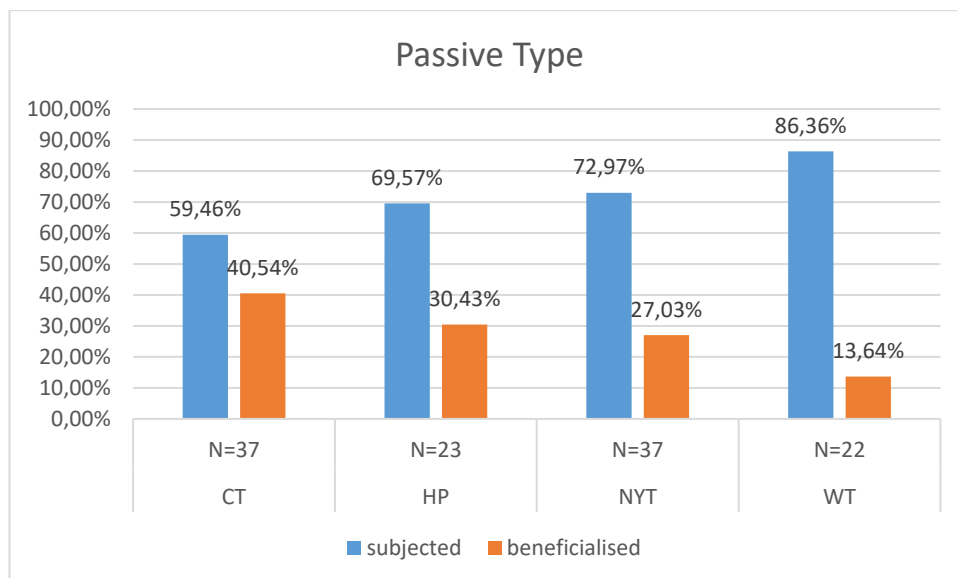


Figure 7 Passive types in each news outlet, only passive actors considered.

Figure 7 shows the ratio between subjected and beneficialised actors. The results in figure 7 include only passive actors (N) and they show that most passive actors were subjected. Looking at percentages, we can see that the CT had more beneficialised actors than the others whereas the WT had the least and therefore subjected most of its passive social actors.

Having now briefly presented and discussed the overarching results, I will move onto discussing the results from each article more closely.

6.1.1 The Chicago Tribune

112 actors were identified in the CT article. Of these, 86 represented a human actor and 26 an organisation. The article included somewhat more personal human actors, 50, compared to institutional human actors, which accounted for 36 tokens in the data. Governmental organisations were in the majority with 19 tokens while 7 represented other organisations. Half of the actors were referred to with a common noun, 56, and most actors, 75, were represented in an active role. In terms of percentages, the CT had less human actors in comparison to organisation actors than the other news outlets.

Personal humans

In the CT data, 50 personal human actors were identified. Out of these, 33 were referred to with a common noun, 7 with a proper noun and 10 with a pronoun. Two

thirds of personal humans, then, were not specified as individuals but were featured as a part of a larger group or as Van Leeuwen would have it, assimilated. These included the following examples:

- (1) **Same-sex couples** won the right to marry nationwide on Friday [...].
- (2) “If you are among **the many Americans** [...]”.
- (3) [...] which included a smattering of **same-sex marriage opponents**.

Even though there is variety among the category of common human actors, most of these instances refer either to “same-sex couples”, “two people of the same sex”, “gay and lesbian couples” or “gay and lesbian Americans”, but also to Americans more generally. Most often personal human actors that are referred to with common nouns are LGBTQ individuals. Personal human actors that are introduced with their proper names include for instance the following:

- (4) In Dallas, **Kenneth Denson** said he and **Gabriel Mendez** had been legally married 2013 in California [...].

These individuals are among the few who are given proper names, the rest of the personal proper human actors refer to the lead plaintiff in the Supreme Court fight, James Obergefell, or his late spouse, John Arthur. It is interesting that only these individuals are referred to with proper names and also the fact that no other actors are included in the story in a similar position.

22 personal human actors were given an active role in the article and 28 a passive role, out of which half were subjected and half beneficialised. Those who were presented as active actors include:

- (5) **Same-sex couples** won the right to marry nationwide Friday as a divided Supreme Court handed a crowning victory to the gay rights movement [...].

Personal human actors with a passive role include:

- (6) [...] the immediate issuance of marriage licences to **same-sex couples** in at least eight states.
- (7) [...] laws that prohibited **gay and lesbian couples** from marrying.

The actors in example (6) benefit from the action whereas the actors in example (7) are presented in a subjected position. The beneficiaries in the article are mainly same-sex couples, but also all Americans whereby LGBTQ individuals are equated with the general American public marking the issue as one that is not only a gay issue but a larger equality issue, as quoted by President Obama. All in all, the category of subjected actors entailed somewhat more intra-categorical diversity than the category of beneficialised actors.

Institutional humans

Out of 86 human actors, 36 institutional human actors were identified in the CT data. Over half, 21, were referred to with a proper noun while 7 and 8 were referred to with common nouns and pronouns, respectively. Most institutional humans assumed an active role as actors, namely 32 whereas only 4 had a passive role (all of them subjected). This result is somewhat expected in an article where a governmental branch has influenced a cause, positioning them often in an active grammatical role as either actor, behavior, senser, sayor or assigner (introduced briefly in 2.1 as transitivity structures that activate social actors). Most institutional humans are the Supreme Court justices or occasionally President Obama. They are also the only ones referred to with proper names, exemplified by (8) below.

(8) “When Americans are all treated as equal, we are more free,” **President Barack Obama** declared [...].

Common name references included the justices but also for instance the other clerks, as in example (9) below.

(9) But **county clerks** in Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, Ohio, North Dakota, South Dakota, Tennessee and Texan began issuing licences to same-sex couples within hours of the decision.

Those who were assigned an active role are all either the Supreme Court justices or President Obama and in one case, other government officials, as in example (9). In the CT article, there are four instances of passivated actors, either referring to the justices or once to reporters. Active human actors were more often institutional actors than personal LGBTQ individuals. Looking at passive human actors, LGBTQ individuals were a very slight majority, 18 vs. 14 out of 32 passive humans. Even though there is some diversity in the voices present, active human actors were often not LGBTQ

individuals but rather institutional or in some cases, other actors. Some institutional actors might, however, identify as LGBTQ. In terms of percentages, human actors were given slightly less space in the CT article than in the other articles, but on the other hand, the CT engaged more often personal voices than the other articles.

Governmental organisations

Most organisations referred to in the CT article were governmental organisations, more specifically 19 of them. 12 were referred to with a common noun, 6 with a proper name and 1 with a pronoun. Most of them, 15, were presented in an active role and only few, four instances, in a passive role.

- (10) **The Supreme Court** declared June 26, 2015 that same-sex couples have a right to marry anywhere in the United States.
- (11) **The Obama administration** backed the right of same-sex couples to marry.
- (12) **The states** affected by Friday's ruling are [...].

Examples (10) and (11) find a governmental organisation in an active position and (12) the states in a passive, subjected position. Nearly all of the passivated governmental organisation refer to states affected by the decision. In the CT articles, as in the other articles too, the Supreme Court is often deemed the active “doer” in a process and its (and the justices’) role and perspective in the communicative context is therefore highlighted.

Other organisations

The CT article included more mentions of other organisations than the other articles, altogether 7. Four were referred to with a proper name and three with a common noun. One was assigned passive role and six were given an active role. Other organisational actors include:

- (13) [...] a divided Supreme Court handed a crowning victory to **the gay rights movement** [...].
- (14) **Several religious organizations** criticized the decision.
- (15) **The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops** said it was “profoundly immoral and unjust for the government to declare that two people of the same sex can constitute a marriage.”

In the other articles, dissenting voices can mainly be attributed to those of the Supreme Court justices, but in the CT article, other dissenting voices are also brought into the conversation as active actors, as in examples (14) and (15). The authorial voice in the article therefore also engages in religious discourses on the matter, thus drawing from and operating in a wider social framework of religion, a typical framework in the US media when discussing same-sex marriage. Example (13) presents the gay rights movement in a passive, but in a beneficialised position.

6.1.2 The Huffington Post

In the HP article, 85 actors were identified, out of which 73 were human actors and 12 organisations. Out of the human actors, 33 were coded as personal whereas institutional humans were a slight majority with 40 tokens. Out of 12 organisations, 11 were governmental organisations and only one was labelled as other type of organisation. Most actors, 42, were referred to with a common noun and most actors, 62, assumed an active role.

Personal humans

A majority of the 33 personal human actors, 24, were referred to with a common noun. This is a common trend with all the articles, human actors representing a personal perspective on the legalisation of same-sex marriage are featured in the article, but they are introduced collectively rather than as individual voices. Of all personal humans, 5 were referred to with a proper name and 4 with a pronoun.

- (16) The decision is a historic victory for **gay rights activists** who have fought for years in the lower courts.
- (17) The lead plaintiff in Obergefell v. Hodges is Ohio resident **Jim Obergefell** [...].
- (18) “Just get in your car and come on down the highway. **You**’ll be embraced here.”

Example (16) refers to gay rights activists collectively whereas example (17) individualises an LGBTQ person, Jim Obergefell, with a proper noun. All four instances of personal humans referred to with a proper name refer either to Obergefell or his late spouse John Arthur. Example (18) includes an example of pronoun use for personal humans. Most of them refer to LGBTQ people, as in (18) where Gerard

Rickhoff, a clerk who oversees marriage licences in Texas, is quoted speaking directly to LGBTQ individuals who might experience discrimination elsewhere in the state.

Common noun references to personal humans entail variation, although most personal common human references are to LGBTQ people with e.g. “same-sex couples”, “several dozen other gay plaintiffs”, “gay Americans” or “gay couples” but the article also refers to “all Americans”, “the people”, “families”, “children”, “new generations” and “some conservatives”.

Out of all 33 personal humans, 15 were in active role and 18 in a passive role. Out of the passive participants, 11 were subjected and 7 beneficialised. Examples include:

- (19) In 2013, **Obergefell** married his partner of two decades, John Arthur, who suffered from ALS.
- (20) In 2013, the Supreme Court began chipping away at the country’s legacy of discrimination against **same-sex couples** when it struck down part of the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act [...].
- (21) The country’s views of same-sex marriage have transformed since 2004, when Massachusetts became the first state to allow **gay couples** to wed.

In (19), Obergefell is presented as an active personal actor. Examples (20) and (21) have “same-sex couples” and “gay couples” in a passive position with the social actors in (20) presented in a subjected position and in (21) in a beneficialised position. Out of the 15 active personal humans, 7 referred to LGBTQ individuals and 8 to other people. The LGBTQ references mostly referred to either Obergefell or his spouse and one active reference was to “several dozen other gay plaintiffs”. Subjected personal humans include mostly gay individuals, but also “the people”, “the nearest hippie” and “new generations” are mentioned. Save for three instances, “all Americans”, “families” and “other married couples”, beneficialised personal humans referred to LGBTQ individuals. All in all, gay individuals are somewhat more often recipients of an action than active participants who are quoted in the story. The two individualised gay people, James Obergefell and John Arthur, did feature in an active position, but otherwise gay individuals featured in a passive position. In a story about a legal process concerning same-sex couples it is perhaps somewhat expected that they would feature as subjects or beneficiaries rather than as active doers.

Institutional humans

The HP data included 40 references to institutional humans. Compared to personal humans, institutional humans were more often referred to with a proper noun as 21 references used a proper name, 14 a common noun and 5 a pronoun. Institutional humans were given an active role more often than personal humans. Example (22) entails three examples of institutional humans that are referred to with a proper noun in an active position.

- (22) In his dissent, **Chief Justice John Roberts**, joined by **Justices Antonin Scalia** and **Clarence Thomas**, argued that same-sex marriage is not endorsed by the Constitution.

As exemplified by (22), most proper noun references to institutional humans are to the Supreme Court justices but there are also references to other government officials, e.g. to Senator Ted Cruz and Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker. Common noun references to institutional humans are also most often to the justices, exceptions including “the first sitting president” in reference to Obama and “its [The Republican Party’s] slate of 2016 presidential aspirants”. The other common institutional humans are introduced in relation to support (or lack thereof) of same-sex marriage and the implementation of the SCOTUS ruling to legalise same-sex marriage. All except two institutional humans were assigned an active role in the article. The two passive institutional humans were in a subjected position. In practice all the institutional humans (the justices, President Obama or other government officials) who were engaged in the story were presented in an active role. The only two passive institutional humans were Confucius and Cicero, who were introduced to gain further support for the decision. As they were engaged more or less as reference points, they cannot be considered as voices in the story per se. If LGBTQ individuals were often passivated (many however as beneficiaries), then institutional individuals were often activated.

Governmental organisations

The HP article included 12 mentions of organisational actors, 11 of which were governmental. Seven of them were referred to with a proper noun and 4 with a common noun. Governmental organisation references using a proper noun referred either to the Supreme Court to US states or to political parties, as in example (23). All common noun references referred to the states in connection to how they are either affected by

the decision or where they stand in relation to same-sex marriage laws. The governmental organisations were mostly presented in an active role. Two references had a governmental organisation in a passive subjected role.

- (23) [...] the same year that **the Democratic Party** made it part of its platform for the first time.

Other organisations

Only one organisation other than a governmental one was identified in the HP article, found in example (24) below. This organisation, the news website itself, was featured in a passive subjected position.

- (24) However, officials in red states told **The Huffington Post** recently that they are prepared to implement the decision [...].

The HP article had the least mentions of other organisations (although these very a clear minority in every article), relying clearly more on institutional governmental actors.

6.1.3 The New York Times

In the NYT article, altogether 153 actors were identified, the most compared to the other articles. Of these, 142 were human actors and 11 organisations. In terms of percentages, the NYT article used the most human actors in their story. The NYT featured more personal human actors, 84, in comparison to institutional human actors, who accounted for 58 tokens in the data. The organisations referred to in the articles were mostly governmental. Out of all the actors, 62 were referred to with a proper name or noun, 70 with a common noun and 21 with a pronoun. Most actors, 116, took an active role in the article.

Personal humans

Altogether 84 social actors were labelled as personal in the NYT article. Most of them (48) were referred to with common nouns whereas 28 were featured with their proper names and 8 with pronouns. This means that most personal humans were featured in the data not as specific individuals but as part of a bigger group of people. It should be noted that most proper noun references to personal human actors did not actually occur in the story itself, but in the accompanying captions given in conjunction with the

story. Examples of common personal actors include the following, all of them presented in an active role:

- (25) It [the decision] came against a backdrop of fast-moving changes in public opinion, with polls indicating that **most Americans** now approve of the unions.
- (26) **Gay rights advocates** had constructed a careful litigation and public relations strategy to build momentum and bring the issue to the Supreme Court when it appeared ready to rule in their favor.
- (27) Chief Justice responded that “**people of faith** can take no comfort in the treatment they receive from the majority today.”

The category of personal humans featured a good deal of intra-categorical diversity in terms of who the actors actually were, as can be seen from the examples above. Personal actors include LGBTQ individuals, supporters of same-sex marriage and religious individuals as well as people such as “African-Americans”, “women” and “the children of same-sex couples”. As mentioned above, very few individuals are given unique identities or quoted directly in the story but instead they feature prominently in the captions with their names. The captions do not, however, include quotes from them and they cannot therefore be considered as strong voices in the story. The tone of the article is pro-same-sex marriage and the NYT has previously declared a supporter of same-sex marriage, but few LGBTQ individuals are actually given space in the text to voice their opinions. Most of them are referred to in the story assimilated as part of a larger group such as “same-sex couples”. In addition to the pictures and captions, there is an accompanying video in the communicative context personalising the story of a gay couple, but the text itself does not really personalise the issue from a queer perspective even though advocates of gay rights and same-sex marriage are credited as forces in the legalisation process more than in the other articles. Video or picture material was not included in the analysis, but as a side note it can be added that both the video and the pictures add a human interest angle and a pro-same-sex marriage tone to the story. In contrast to the other articles, the lead plaintiff James Obergefell is not quoted directly in the story. Example (28) introduces a personal human actor that is featured with his proper name.

- (28) **Vin Testa** celebrated Friday after the Supreme Court ruled in favor of same-sex marriage.

52 personal humans were presented in an active role and 32 in a passive role, out of which 24 were subjected and 8 beneficialised. Examples (25), (26) and (27) above exemplify active personal humans. Active personal actors ranged from very generic categories of “millions of Americans”, “every person alive” and “people of faith” to the more specific categories of “supporters of same-sex marriage” and “gay rights advocates”. LGBTQ individuals (or allies of LGBTQ individuals) found themselves in an active role as well. Example (29) includes same-sex couples who are beneficiaries of a positive action in a passive position whereas example (30) has the children of same-sex couples in a passive, subjected position.

(29) “The Constitution”, he [Justice Kennedy] wrote, “grants **them** [same-sex couples] that right.”

(30) The marriage laws at issue here thus harm and humiliate **the children of same-sex couples**.

Institutional humans

58 references to institutional humans were identified in the data, referring either to the Supreme Court justices, to other government officials or authorities or to President Obama. By far most mentions of institutional humans refer to the justices, their verdict or opinions on the topic of same-sex marriage, as in example (31).

(31) In dissent, **Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr.** said the Constitution had nothing to say on the subject of same-sex marriage.

Over half, 31 tokens, of the instances of institutional humans referred to them with proper names. Common nouns accounted for 15 tokens and pronouns for 12 tokens in the data. Institutional human actors also found themselves most often in an active role, since all of them save for two were in an active role. Even though the article contained a fairly equal distribution of personal and institutional voices, institutional voices clearly represent a majority when it came to an active role in the discourse context. Institutional voices were often credited to a specific individual and included more direct quotes than personal voices had in the article. Given that the topic was the legalisation of same-sex marriage, it is perhaps understandable that those who ultimately made it possible would feature the most in the article even though this can also be seen as downplaying the role of LGBTQ activists in the process.

Governmental organisations

The NYT article included 11 references to organisations, out of which 9 were labelled as governmental and 2 as other. Out of the governmental organisations, 3 were referred to with a proper name, 5 with common nouns and one with a pronoun. All of the governmental organisations but one took an active role in the article. All of the governmental organisations were either court or state references and were connected to the legalisation process of same-sex marriage. Example (32) exemplifies a governmental organisation in an active role, referred to with a proper noun.

- (32) In a long-sought victory for the gay rights movement, **the Supreme Court** ruled by a 5-to-4 vote on Friday that the Constitution guarantees a right to same-sex marriage.

Other organisations

Other organisations were a small minority in the NYT article, as there were only two references to these. Religious aspects were not featured much in the article, but one mention of religious organisations was included, exemplified by (33) below. Given that religion has been a dominant framework in the same-sex marriage debate in the US, it is perhaps a bit surprising that they did not feature more prominently in the data. Both references were featured in a passive role and in a beneficialised position, i.e. both recipients in a material process.

- (33) Justice Kennedy said the First Amendment ensures that **religious organizations** and persons are given proper protection [...].

6.1.4 The Washington Times

In the WT article, 70 participants were identified, out of which 58 were human actors and 12 organisations, the second highest percentage after the CT article. The distribution between human and institutional voices was fairly equal, 31 and 27 tokens, respectively. Most actors were referred to with a proper noun whereas in the other articles most common references were common nouns. In a similar fashion to the other articles, most social actors assumed an active role.

Personal humans

The WT article included 31 references to personal humans, out of which somewhat more than half, 18, were referred to with a common noun, 7 with a proper name and 6 with a pronoun. Interestingly, in terms of percentages, the WT article used the most proper nouns when referring to personal humans whereas the NYT used the least. There were also less references to personal humans with a common noun compared to other articles. Example (34) refers to personal human actors with a common noun whereas example (35) refers to personal human actors with proper nouns.

- (34) “Today is a significant setback for **all Americans who believe in the Constitution, rule of law, democratic self-government**, and marriage as a union of **one man** and **one woman**,” said Mr. Anderson.
- (35) In Travis County, Texas, **Gena Dawson** and **Charlotte Rutherford** were the first same-sex couple in the state to receive a marriage license, within two hours of the ruling.

As can be expected, common noun references to LGBTQ individuals occur throughout the article, with expressions such as “several gay couples”, “people of same sex” and “gay-rights victors”. Some of the other common noun references set the social actors as somehow victims in the context, as in example (34). Justice Scalia is also quoted saying how such a constitutional revision robs “the People [...] the freedom to govern themselves”, building a divide between the ruling and “the public”. The “one man, one woman” framing also occurs in the article as exemplified by example (34). Compared to some of the other articles, the WT article does however individualise LGBTQ actors in the story somewhat more than the others, mentioning two different gay couples by name, one couple mentioned in example (35), as well as James Obergefell and his late husband. Direct voice is still most often given to other people than LGBTQ individuals, who are featured and individualised in the article but rarely quoted directly.

When looking at the role given to personal human actors, 16 were in an active role and 15 in passive role. Active and passive roles were thus assigned fairly equally between personal humans. Fewer personal humans were given an active role than institutional humans, since out 41 active human participants 25 institutional humans were activated.

- (36) [...] the incredible lawyers, **advocates** and **fellow plaintiffs** who made this landmark day possible [...].

(37) “Though expected, today’s decision is completely illegitimate. **We** reject it and so will **the American people**,” he said.

In example (36), advocates and fellow plaintiffs are activated and credited for making a nationwide same-sex marriage a possibility in a quote by Obergefell. This example shows that also LGTBQ individuals and supporters are given an active role in enabling the decision. Another perspective is brought in by example (37) where Brian Brown from the National Organization for Marriage brands the decision as illegitimate and declares how both he his colleagues would do “all they can to reserve the ruling” and how they and the American people will reject it. Brian Brown and his colleagues are thus given an active role in trying to reverse the ruling. This is also the final sentence in the article, leaving the reader to consider between the two different takes on the ruling.

Out of 17 passivated human actors, 15 personal humans were passivated in comparison to institutional humans, who were passivated only twice. Out of these 15, 12 were subjected and 3 beneficialised. Of the 15 passivated personal humans, 8 were LGTBQ persons. The three beneficialised personal humans were LGTBQ individuals who benefited from the decision by receiving marriage licences, as in example (38).

(38) **Several gay couples** have received marriage licenses in Atlanta since the decision came out.

All in all, LGTBQ people featured in positive connections although the article did not emphasise their perspective by bringing in direct quotations. The dissenting voices in the article were fairly strong and they were often framed as either victims or opponents of the ruling.

Institutional humans

27 references to institutional humans were identified in the WT article, accounting for somewhat less than half of the human social actors. The WT had the clearest tendency to refer to institutional humans with a proper name compared to other articles, as 20 were referred to with a proper noun, 4 with a common noun and 3 with a pronoun. Examples of institutional humans in the WT data include:

(39) Today’s ruling makes perfectly clear that there is no legal or moral justification for standing in the path of marriage equality [...] said **Chad Griffin**, president of the Human Rights Campaign.

- (40) **Ryan Anderson**, senior research fellow at the Heritage Foundation, lamented the ruling.
- (41) **Brian Brown** of the National Organization for Marriage said **he** and his allies would do all they can to reverse the ruling.

Most references are to the Supreme Court justices, since they are the clearest active “doers” in the context. There are also other institutional voices as exemplified by (39), (40) and (41). The other articles mainly relied on the justices when it came to institutional voices, but the WT article made also use of other institutional participants, a pro-same-sex marriage voice in example (39) and anti-same-sex marriage voices in examples (40) and (41). Unlike the other articles, the WT article did not include President Obama as an institutional voice. As in the other articles, institutional humans were most often assigned an active role as in examples (39) – (41) above. Out of 27, 25 were activated whereas two institutional humans were passivated and presented in a subjected role. All in all, institutional humans represented active forces in the article and included more variation compared to the other articles in that the voice of an institutional supporter and two institutional opponents were also part of the communicative context.

Governmental organisations

In the WT article, 12 organisational voices were identified. Of these, 8 represented a governmental organisation and 4 other organisations. The governmental organisations were most often referred to with a common noun. Looking at the roles given to them, 6 were activated and 2 passivated and in a subjected position. All of the references were either to the Supreme Court or to the states and were related to same-sex marriage and the decision to legalise it nationwide, as in example (42) that has two organisational actors in an active role.

- (42) As well, a same-sex marriage license has been issued in Arkansas, **another state** that banned gay marriage until **the Supreme Court** weighed in.

Other organisations

Other organisations were a minority, but together with the CT article the WT article had the most mentions of other organisations. The authors of the two articles thus brought the most diverse range of both institutional and organisational voices into the story and did not rely solely on the Supreme Court justices, other lawyers or President

Obama. These other organisations included also dissenting voices from religious organisations and organisations that advocate a traditional view of marriage. All of the other organisations in the WT article were referred to with a proper name, one was activated and three were passivated in a subjected position. The subjected mentions were connected to an active human actor but still considered subordinate to the social actor and were hence coded as subjected.

The Human Rights Campaign, mentioned in example (39), is the largest LGBTQ civil rights organisation in the US and the quote represents a rare occasion of an institutional (but granted, also personal) voice of an LGBTQ individual in the data. Both CT and WT also cited UCLA's Williams Institute, a public policy research institute that focuses on sexual orientation and gender identity issues, as a source for figures. With a reputation as a somewhat conservative publication, it is perhaps not surprising that The Washington Times would also engage the Heritage Foundation, introduced in example (40), in the story, a conservative public policy think tank that exerts major influence on policy-making. Example (41) includes a quote from Brian Brown, President of the National Organization Marriage, a non-profit political organisation that promotes the idea of a marriage between one man and one woman.

In conclusion, the WT featured a number of voices and perspectives, both personal and institutional and for and against same-sex marriage, but looking at the article as a whole, more direct voices in the form of quotes were given to same-sex marriage opponents. That being said, the article did also include quotes from same-sex supporters, namely from lead plaintiff James Obergefell and from President of the Human Rights Campaign, Chad Griffin.

When looking at the articles comparatively, we can see that there are some differences in who the authors engaged and how, but also many notable similarities. Summarising the most important similarities, can see that all of the articles entailed mostly human actors. The ratio between personal and institutional human actors was fairly balanced in each article. Most institutional actors were coded as governmental thus emphasising a governmental perspective on the topic. Most articles referred to the social actors with common nouns with only the WT being an exception, using more proper than common noun or pronoun references. Most actors in all of the articles assumed an active rather than a passive role, but this was also dependant on who the actor in question was.

Personal humans, who were often LGBTQ individuals, tended to assume a passive role and were most often referred to collectively with a common noun, exceptions being e.g. the lead plaintiff James Obergefell and couples who had recently married. The NYT was an exception in that it introduced many personal human actors with their proper names, albeit in the captions and not in the story itself. Institutional human references referred mostly to the Supreme Court justices who tended to assume an active role in the discourse context. Each article subjected more than beneficialised its passive social actors.

6.2 Appraisal analysis

The appraisal analysis includes all instances grouped under the domain of engagement. It aims to assess the authors' possible evaluation of the topic of same-sex marriage and its legalisation in the US by looking at the heteroglossic expressions found in the articles. As mentioned in 5.1, some of the articles had more than one contributor and HP also used Associated Press source material. The analysis cannot therefore necessarily uncover the stand of a single author. For the purposes of simplification, even though more than author may have contributed to an article, the term author is used in the analysis, referring to the *authorial voice* of the article. A second point is that news writing usually aims to be objective. Individual authorial stands might thus be hard to uncover owing to these genre conventions as most reporting will most likely be done in a factual "reporter voice". It is nonetheless interesting to look into media discourse and news reporting with a framework such as appraisal theory and assess its suitability to news writing research. In the following, I will present the results of the appraisal analysis article by article. Figure 8 shows the overall ratio between contractive and expansive utterances in each news outlet, including all the identified heteroglossic utterances. Altogether 102 heteroglossic expressions were identified in the data.

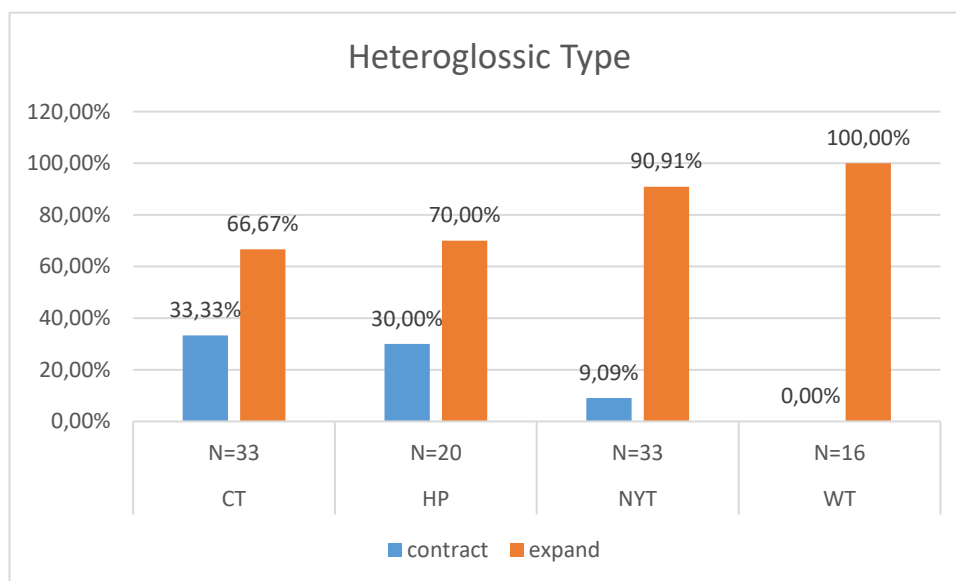


Figure 8 Types of heteroglossic utterances in each news outlet.

As can be seen from figure 8, most utterances in each article expanded the dialogistic space rather than contracted it. In the WT data, all the heteroglossic utterances were expansive. The NYT had the most expansive utterances and the least contractive utterances.

6.2.1 The Chicago Tribune

In the CT article, 33 instances of heteroglossic utterances were found. Somewhat over third, 11 utterances, contracted the dialogistic space while 22 expanded it. Out of the instances that contracted the dialogistic space, 10 were grouped under *disclaim* while 1 was grouped under *proclaim*. Under *disclaim*, 5 instances of *deny* and 5 instances of *counter* were identified.

(43) Four of the court's justices **weren't** cheering.

(44) The vote was narrow – 5-4 – **but** Kennedy's major opinion was clear and firm [...].

Example (43) is an example of *deny*, where the author brings in the dissenting voices of the Supreme Court justices by employing negation, though this cannot be understood as directly evaluating the topic. Example (44) was coded as an instance of *counter*, where the vote is presented as narrow, but the major opinion is presented as

clear and firm, making the decision seem like a clear case (at least from Justice Kennedy's point of view).

Proclamation occurs once; no instances of concurrence or endorsement occurred, but one instance of *pronounce*, exemplified by (45), was discovered.

(45) The Justice Department's decision to stop defending the federal anti-marriage law in 2011 **was** an important moment for gay rights [...].

In example (45), stress is arguably placed on 'was', as the author acknowledges the fact that a previous SCOTUS decision was indeed important for gay rights, highlighting the role the Supreme Court has over rights of different minority groups.

Most instances of heteroglossic expressions were those that expanded the dialogistic space. The author was, therefore, willing to bring in different voices to engage with. However, no instances of *entertain* occurred, which means that the author did not really entertain multiple possible scenarios or possibilities. This was somewhat given, as the article was from a broadsheet focusing on hard news writing. The author did not distance themselves from the voices either, as all instances under *expand* were coded as instances of *acknowledge*. Reported speech was then often attributed to some external source. Most instances of *acknowledge* featured with the neutral reporting verb *said*, as in example (46) below.

(46) "No longer may with liberty be denied", **said** Justice Anthony Kennedy.

Most of the instances of *acknowledge* did indeed occur with rather neutral verbs (e.g. *said*, *wrote*, *termed*). In a further example of *acknowledge* in (47) below, an evaluation of the topic is attributed to President Obama, who is given as endorsing the decision, but as the responsibility of this is attributed to him, it does not become clear whether the author shares the same view or not.

(47) [...] Obama **praised** the decision as an affirmation of the principle that "all Americans are created equal".

The author does not seem to overtly evaluate the topic of same-sex marriage nor its legalisation and is willing to acknowledge the diversity of viewpoints by offering opinions for and against the decision, even though most engaged external sources in the article represent "high status" sources who thus offer high level of credibility (e.g. the Supreme Court justices, President Obama). Some LGBTQ individuals, for instance

the lead plaintiff James Obergefell and a Texan couple, are introduced and their point of view included (e.g. a quote from Obergefell saying how the ruling establishes that the love between him and his late spouse is equal). However, the author also mentions how several religious organisations have criticised the decision and includes a quote from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops saying it was "profoundly immoral and unjust for the government to declare that two people of the same sex can constitute a marriage" thus advancing a dissenting value position and at least partially inviting the reader, if not to align with, then at least to consider this point of view, too.

6.2.2 The Huffington Post

In the HP article, 20 heteroglossic utterances were discovered. Out of these, 6 utterances contracted the dialogistic space and 14 expanded it. Of the contractive utterances, disclamation occurs four times and proclamation twice. All the utterances under disclamation were categorised as values of *counter*, as in examples (48) and (49) below.

- (48) The remaining 13 states ban these unions, **even as** public support has reached record levels nationwide.
- (49) Some conservatives have advocated for a civil disobedience effort against a Supreme Court decision in favor of same-sex marriage. **However**, officials in red states told The Huffington Post recently that they are prepared to implement the decision.

In example (48), the authorial voice contrasts public support of same-sex marriage with the number of states that still ban same-sex marriage, marking it somehow surprising that the 13 states still continued to ban the union despite the public support, and inviting the addressee to do the same. In example (49), 'however' replaces an expectation that conservatives would not be willing to implement the decision. Dissenting conservative voices are engaged, but the second sentence alleviates their stance on the matter.

Under proclamation, two instances of endorsement were discovered, exemplified by (50) and (51).

- (50) The justices **found** that, under the 14th Amendment, states must issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples and recognize same-sex unions that have been legally performed in other states.

- (51) The majority **concluded** that the right for same-sex couples to marry is protected under the 14th Amendment, citing the clauses that guarantee equal protection and due process.

In examples (50) and (51), the authorial voice endorses the justices' ruling by including a verb like *find* and *conclude*. The chosen reporting verbs are neutral in tone and the action in the sentence is attributed to the justices and to the majority, but both examples could be interpreted as the authorial voice agreeing with the decision. A similar effect would have been achieved with verbs like *point out* or *show*.

Utterances categorised as expansive displayed a similar trend as in the CT article. There were no occurrences of *entertain* but all the 14 identified expansive utterances were identified as instances of *acknowledge*. Most utterances included neutral reporting verbs like *say*, *write* and *note*, as in example (52) below.

- (52) They [the justices] also **said** gay Americans have a right to “intimate association” beyond merely freedom from laws that ban homosexuality.

One occurrence of *acknowledge* deviates perhaps slightly, namely in its use of *argue* in example (53).

- (53) In his dissent, Chief Justice John Roberts, joined by Justices Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas, **argued** that same-sex marriage is not endorsed by the Constitution.

Even though a verb such as *argue* does not overtly distance the authorial voice from the external source, it is still, I would argue, somewhat closer to distancing verb such as *claim* compared to verbs such as *say*, *write* or *note*. Taking distance from dissenting opinions would also fit the stand of The Huffington Post, which has previously endorsed same-sex marriage.

Even though the HP article is largely written in an objective report voice fashion, the authorial voice is perhaps more inclined to align with pro-same-sex marriage voices, giving the examples of endorsement and attribution with verb choices like *find*, *conclude* and *note* connected to pro-same-sex marriage voices and verbs like *argue* and *complain* in connection with anti-same-sex marriage voices. The differences are not overt, but arguably still detectable. Despite this, viewpoints from both sides of the argument are recognised in the article. Those in favour of same-sex marriage include the Supreme Court justices in favour of the ruling, lead plaintiff James Obergefell,

“several dozen other gay plaintiffs” and “gay Americans” and those against same-sex marriage include Supreme Court justices against the ruling, “some conservatives”, Senator Ted Cruz and Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker. As far the diversity of viewpoints is considered, pro-same-sex voices still feature more prominently. Religious organisations, which often are at the forefront of the same-sex marriage debate, do not feature in the HP article.

6.2.3 The New York Times

In the NYT article, 33 heteroglossic instances were identified. Of these, 3 contracted the dialogistic space and 30 expanded it. In terms of percentages, the NYT had the most expansive engagement strategies compared to the other articles. One occurrence of *disclaim*, coded as *counter* and exemplified by (54) and 2 occurrences of *proclaim*, both coded as *pronounce* and exemplified by (55) were found under contracting expressions.

- (54) In his own dissent, Justice Scalia took a similar view, saying that the majority’s assertiveness represented a “threat to American democracy.” **But** Justice Kennedy rejected that idea.
- (55) The decision, which **was** the culmination of decades of litigation and activism, set off jubilation and tearful embraces across the country [...].

Example (54) introduces a discord between the Supreme Court justices with Justice Scalia considering the ruling a threat to American democracy and Justice Kennedy countering this. ‘But’ supplants the initial proposition of a threat and therefore contracts the dialogistic space. All other contractive expressions were instances of *proclaim*, grouped under *pronounce*. One example is (55), where the authorial voice considers litigation and activism to be important factors behind the decision to legalise same-sex marriage thus crediting also LGBTQ individuals and other individuals who have lobbied for a nationwide legal recognition of same-sex unions and therefore aligning with this line of thought, inviting the reader to do the same.

When looking at expressions that expanded the dialogistic space in the NYT article, two of them were instances of *entertain*, exemplified by (56) and (57) below, and all the other instances of *attribute*. Values of *acknowledge* represent the overall majority of all the heteroglossic expressions found in the NYT article with 28 occurrences. No distancing expressions were discovered.

- (56) Gay rights advocates had constructed a careful litigation and public relations strategy to build momentum and bring the issue to the Supreme Court when it **appeared** ready to rule in their favor.
- (57) It came against the backdrop of fast-moving changes in public opinion, with polls **indicating** that most Americans now approve of the unions.

Unlike the other articles, the NYT article did entail two expressions that suggested at the existence of other possible scenarios, as can be seen in examples (56) and (57). In example (56), the Supreme Court support for same-sex marriage is not given as a certainty, but rather as a likelihood. In a similar fashion, in example (57) the authorial voice does not take it for granted that most Americans would approve of same-sex unions, but rather refers to polls that merely *indicate* it. These expressions are signs of the fact that same-sex marriage is still a contested issue in the US and that it is possible for authors to entertain with the idea of different scenarios.

Most instances of *acknowledge* used verbs such as *say*, *write* or *add* as can be expected in news discourse. The author attributes most comments regarding the topic to external sources such as the justices and refrains from overtly commenting or evaluating the issue. Two cases, examples (58) and (59), indicate that the justices do evaluate the matter. Justice Scalia appraises negatively the language use of Justice Kennedy in example (58) while Justice Kennedy endorses a certain take on the Constitution in example (59), one that significantly differs from the one held by some of his colleagues.

- (58) In a second dissent, Justice Antonin Scalia **mocked** the soaring language of Justice Kennedy [...].
- (59) In all of those decisions, Justice Kennedy **embraced** a vision of a living Constitution, one that evolves with societal changes.

The NYT article thus makes very little overt evaluations of the legalisation of same-sex marriage, although certain authorial stands could be identified. The author acknowledges that there are different opinions on the matter, citing mainly pro and against opinions of the Supreme Court justices. The fact that several pro and against stands are introduced tells, however, that the author is willing to acknowledge the diversity of viewpoints. Few direct LGBTQ perspectives are offered in the story (excluding the accompanying video), but the fact that the article starts with a phrase like “in a long-sought victory for the gay rights movement” and includes emotive

pictures showing same-sex couples indicates that the author still positively evaluates the decision and credits the gay rights movement for the societal change, too. The effect of the decision on religious liberty is also a theme that comes up with the justices taking opposite views on the matter. The concluding viewpoint is that the Constitution does indeed protect the right of same-sex couples to marry, possibly inviting the reader to do the same.

6.2.4 The Washington Times

The WT article was the simplest in its engagement strategies, contained the fewest heteroglossic expressions (altogether 16) but was also the shortest. All the identified expressions were coded as instances of *acknowledge* under *attribute*. Therefore all the expressions expanded the dialogistic space and none aimed to contract it. Examples of *acknowledge* include:

- (60) The stories of the people asking for the right to marry “reveal that they seek not to denigrate marriage but rather to live their lives, or honor their spouses’ memory, joined by its bond,” Kennedy **continued**.
- (61) **According to** UCLA’s Williams Institute, there are an estimated 390,000 married same-sex couples in the United States.
- (62) Ryan Anderson, senior research fellow at the Heritage Foundation, **lamented** the ruling.

Most external voices are brought into the communicative context with such verbs as *say*, *add*, *write* and *continue* as in example (60) and with expressions such as *according to* as in example (61), i.e. with verbs that do not indicate where the authorial voice stands with regard to the external voices present. Example (62) includes an anti-same sex marriage position by a person lamenting the ruling. The verb choices come as no surprise, and indeed, the WT article is perhaps the most matter-of-fact in tone compared to all the other articles. While there might have been mentions of love, the needs of children living in same-sex parent families or victories for the gay rights movement and LGBTQ advocates in the other articles, virtually none of that can be found in the WT article. The WT has a reputation of being a conservative publication, but whether a lack of clearer support for the decision depends on this or not remains a speculation.

The article is also the only one which includes a dissenting opinion already in the headline where Scalia is said to seethe. One quote has Scalia distancing himself clearly from the majority opinion with his reference to the court's *claimed power* to create liberties. The article is also the only one not including a quote from President Obama who endorsed the decision. This being said, the article does include an array of viewpoints for and against same-sex marriage. The WT article also refers to two different gay couples who have obtained marriage licenses, though includes no quotes from them. The lead plaintiff in the case, James Obergefell is, however, quoted in the article, bringing in an LGBTQ perspective on the decision together with a quote from Chad Griffin, President of the Human Right Campaign.

While the other articles mainly feature individuals at the centre of the decision (e.g. the lead plaintiff, the justices), the WT article also brings viewpoints from the President of the Human Rights Campaign, America's largest LGBTQ equality organisation, and from the Heritage Foundation and the National Organization for Marriage, the two latter organisations being against legalising same-sex marriage. While there are no overt evaluations of the topic, what is not discussed can also be a sign of authorial stand on a particular topic. The article also ends in an anti-same-sex marriage quote where the decision is branded as completely illegitimate and one that the American people will reject. This is not an evaluation of the author of the article per se, but including it as a final note on the story might tell something about the choices made by the author, the material that the article was based on and invite the reader to further consider the legitimacy of the decision.

In sum, all the articles displayed fairly similar tendencies in their use of engagement strategies. All of the articles relied mainly on expansive engagement strategies. All of the other articles made use of some contractive strategies as well but the WT was the only one to use only expansive strategies. Owing perhaps to genre conventions, authors did not often clearly evaluate the topic of same-sex marriage nor its legalisation since most voices were engaged with neutral reporting verbs. However, by including both pro- and anti-views on same-sex marriage, the authors advanced both takes on the matter to varying degrees.

7 Discussion

This study set out to examine the engaged social actors and the authorial use of engagement strategies in a range of articles about the nationwide legalisation of same-sex marriage in the US. The previous chapter presented the findings of the analysis and in this chapter I will discuss the data and the results, interpret them in relation to the wider discursive and social contexts that they are embedded in and compare them to previous research discussed in the theoretical section. The results not only tell of genre conventions and discursive practices within media discourse but can also be signs of larger social practices and changes operating in society and within language. In the previous section the results were presented in a method-driven manner whereas in this section I aim to discuss them in a result-driven manner, highlighting the most important findings. The results will also be discussed from a queer theoretical point of view. I will consider whether queerness and/or same-sex unions are represented from their own perspective or if they are represented as they appear to an outsider. In other words, I will ponder whether the same-sex marriage might have already acquired a meaning of its own as a queer institution or whether it is mainly set against and reported in relation to the parameters of heterosexual marriage.

This study posed the following research questions:

Which social actors and voices are engaged in the articles?

What is the role given to these voices?

Which engagement strategies does the authorial voice of the article employ?

When looking at the overall tendencies in the results of the social actor analysis, we can see that all the four articles employed mostly human actors. Organisations with a human actor behind them were identified in all of the articles, but they were a minority, ranging between approximately 7 and 23 per cent of all the social actors. All of the articles had a fairly good balance of both institutional and personal voices engaged. Institutional voices, however, took an active role in the discourse and were referred to with a proper name or noun more often than personal voices in most cases. Most institutional voices referred either to the SCOTUS justices or President Obama and were therefore governmental voices. The justices tended to be the active doers in the

discourse and were most often credited with enabling societal change in the meaning of marriage to happen. Even though the gay rights movement or gay rights activists or advocates were mentioned or credited in *The Chicago Tribune*, *The Huffington Post* and *The New York Times*, I argue that the role of the gay rights movement in same-sex marriage legalisation was still somewhat downplayed.

Personal voices were often passivated (either subjected or beneficialised) and assimilated, i.e. referred to with a common noun, and tended to be queer individuals. Each article entailed queer (or ally) actors with a unique identity (e.g. the lead plaintiff James Obergefell, couples who had gotten marriage licences and same-sex marriage supporters), but most queer people were seen in terms of their collective identities. The NYT introduced more queer actors by name than the other news outlets, but did this in the captions rather than in the story. LGBTQ individuals featured in positive connections, even though their perspective was not often emphasised by bringing in direct quotations or presenting them as active doers or catalysts in societal change.

The stories referred to gay and lesbian (and supposedly mostly to cisgender) individuals and there were no references to for instance transgender people. The HP was the only news outlet to refer to gender orientation in addition to sexual orientation, which is perhaps understandable as the topic was more directly related to sexual rather than gender identity. However, referring only to gay and lesbian identities arguably leaves out a range of other, often more marginalised, queer perspectives on the issue. As an example, legal same-sex marriage is also a transgender issue in a situation where either one of the spouses in a heterosexual marriage comes out as transgender. Following the ruling, coming out as transgender in a heterosexual marriage does not necessarily have to mean a change in the legal status of the marriage. Depending on state-level laws that affect transgender individuals, the marriage can then continue as a same-sex marriage if the couple chooses to stay married. Even though the articles discussed a queer issue, the term queer was not employed, signalling perhaps of the fact that the term queer might not be a widely used term in broadsheet news writing on the LGBTQ community.

The articles were mainly pro-same-sex marriage in tone, but all of them included also dissenting voices. *The Chicago Tribune* and *The Washington Times* entailed a more diverse range of dissenting voices than *The Huffington Post* or *The New York Times*.

The CT and the WT have a reputation of being slightly more conservative in their views, which could explain this. The Huffington Post and The New York Times relied mainly on the dissenting Supreme Court justices when it came to anti-same-sex marriage views. The Chicago Tribune and The Washington Times included more dissenting voices from religious points of view than The Huffington Post or The New York Times and operated therefore more in religious frameworks. Whereas the NYT emphasised the themes of love, equality and family in their article, the WT article was more matter-of-fact in tone and also ended in a dissenting note. On the other hand, the WT also individualised its queer actors more than the others in the story and included also an institutional queer voice from the President of the Human Right Campaign. The NYT individualised a number of queer actors as well but more so in the story's captions than in the story itself.

The results from the appraisal analysis tell perhaps more of genre conventions within media discourse than of individual authorial styles. As news discourse tends or aims to be presented from a seemingly neutral point of view, the viewpoints included in the articles were mostly attributed to other people and the most common engagement strategy was acknowledgement whereby dialogistic voices were engaged in the discourse with neutral verbs that do not indicate where the authorial voice stands with regard to the other voices present in the discourse. All of the articles expanded more than contracted the dialogistic space, which means that the authorial voice in each article was willing to include other voices in the story. The ratio between contractive and expansive strategies was the most equal in The Chicago Tribune whereas The Washington Times used only expansive strategies. The articles included no overt negative portrayals of LGBTQ individuals, but by engaging dissenting, religious voices the authors, especially in the WT, advanced also anti-same-sex marriage viewpoints.

In conclusion, the appraisal analysis showed that while it was difficult to detect specific authorial evaluations, all the articles did include both pro- and anti-same-sex marriage voices, even though there were slight differences in whose viewpoints were advanced. The results indicate that the HP and the NYT tended to offer slightly more pro-same-sex marriage viewpoints and downplay e.g. religious aspects whereas these featured somewhat more clearly in the CT and the WT. Given that the HP and the NYT have a reputation of being liberal publications, this result was somewhat expected. In

this regard, the results from the appraisal analysis are in line with the results from the social actor analysis. I contend that the appraisal framework is suited to examining news discourse, but is perhaps more fruitfully employed when studying argumentative and more overtly evaluative texts. The results show, however, that also news writing can be interpreted as attitudinal or stanced even though the author would not indicate this overtly.

Comparing my results to those of Pan, Meng, and Zhou (2010), who investigated the CT's and the NYT's approach to same-sex marriage by looking into the presence of morality and equality frames, there are notable similarities. They discovered more topics about equal rights in the NYT and that the paper used more official sources after the 2003 legitimisation of same-sex marriage Massachusetts. This is largely in line also with my results with the NYT approaching the issue from an equality perspective, but engaging also official sources. Their results also indicated that the CT used more moral angles in their stories. While there is a human interest and equality angle present in the CT article, it also included a quote from the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops branding the decision as immoral. The differences between the CT and the NYT in Pan's, Meng's and Zhou's data might be explained by their longitudinal perspective and a wider range of articles whereas my study was focused on articles of one specific topic, which might explain some of the notable similarities between the articles.

The main theoretical frameworks in the present study were the representation of social actors and sexual identities in media discourse and the understanding of discourse as social interaction where meanings are negotiated with multiple voices and engagement strategies at play. A further thread is a queer theoretical reading of media discourse. As is evident from the brief history of LGBTQ media representation in 2.2.1, the representation of queer individuals has varied extensively in the media. In my data, the LGBTQ community was represented in mostly positive light, which show how much LGBTQ media representation has changed. While Bartley's and Benitez-Castro's (2016) results indicated a marked preference for negative portrayal of the LGBTQ community in Irish media, a similar negative tendency could not be discovered in my data. A different methodological take, the number and scope of analysed articles and a different societal context (including the prevalence of Catholicism in Ireland) might explain the differences. In my data, homosexuality is treated more as a social identity

than a behavioural pattern or practice. I echo Hart-Brinson (2016) in his view that a link can be drawn between how homosexuality is understood a social identity and how supported same-sex marriage is. I argue that the tendency towards seeing same-sex marriage as an equal rights issue and homosexuality as a social identity can be seen in my data where the issue is mainly presented from a point of view of the rights of the individual citizen.

In relation to a framework of how homosexuality and homosexual relations are understood, a major framework the authors operate in is the meaning of the institution of marriage and extending this meaning to encompass same-sex couples. By reporting on the legalisation of same-sex marriage, the authors engage in a larger discussion of what marriage means today, especially from a legal perspective. It is noteworthy that the articles employ consistently the term *marriage* as this was the first occasion all legalised same-sex partnerships could be called marriages in the US, which created a new social reality for LGBTQ individuals. The legalisation of same-sex marriage and the discourse surrounding it e.g. in the media all contribute to changes in sociocultural practices in society and the way language use reflects these changes. One of the research results of Franz (2006) was a clear relationship between identity construction in his chosen articles and sociocultural practice at the publication time of the article. The sociocultural changes in the institution of marriage mean that LGBTQ individuals are now able to construct their identities as individuals who can enter a sphere previously not available to all of them, i.e. marriage.

In the theoretical section, I argued that defining societal phenomena through discourse affects the schemata we build of the world. If we think of the related sociocultural practices the authors operate in and follow from Fairclough's line of thought presented in 3.1, we can deduce that the institutional framework the authors operate is the process of legalisation, which forms an important backbone in the stories. Then again, thinking of the wider societal matrix the discourse occurs in, we can think of the reporting being part of a wider discussion of redefining marriage, the role of equality in the marriage debate, assessing society's role in regulating human relationships and ultimately how human relationships should and can be conceptualised in the 21st century, and who gets to be part of this discussion. While queer individuals were entitled to be part of the discussion and occasionally presented as catalysts in the change, institutional

voices were most often the ones setting the bar and therefore assuming a more powerful position by being able to define the limits of normativity.

This in its turn relates to Fairclough's idea of discourse as socially shaping, meaning that it maintains social identities, relations and systems. Legalising same-sex marriage and engaging institutional and personal queer voices not only maintains the identities of those involved but also their relations and the system they are part of. If and when our mental representation of queer individuals changes, we are able to redefine the value we place on their relationships. In the end, this leads to a question of who has the power to define and control human relationships and access to the *public sphere*, a concept by Jürgen Habermas to denote a public space or an arena for societal communication. Based on my results, high-status institutional voices that hold more power are more likely to have access to a public sphere in the media than private queer individuals offering their perspective on the issue, even though every article did entail examples of this, too. This is also what Ragusa (2003) found out, when analysing social change in the NYT between 1970 and 2000. The situation has arguably changed with the emergence of new forms of media, but her conclusion of how not all social actors have access to the media to employ it for their purposes still holds often true and can be seen in who the most active doers in my data were.

While one can discuss the legalisation of same-sex marriage from an inclusive, equality point of view, it is also worthwhile to examine the results from a queer theoretical point of view. On the one hand, extending the meaning of marriage to same-sex couples declares that they should be treated the same way in eyes of the law as heterosexual couples with equal rights and obligations, but on the other hand, it arguably also assimilates queer individuals into a previously heteronormative institution. This begs the question of whether same-sex marriage is presented from a queer point of view or mainly compared to a heteronormative marriage. As discussed, queer individuals feature in the stories mainly in positive connections and many voices engaged in the articles welcome the decision. Treating LGBTQ individuals the same way as other US citizens arguably empowers them and it is clear that marriage can no longer be thought of as a heterosexual institution. However, in one sense marriage still remains partially heteronormative in its standards when ideals of traditional opposite-sex marriages are applied to LGBTQ couples.

Gay rights activists are occasionally mentioned but not often credited as active doers in the process and much of what is said about the decision or the issue of same-sex marriage in general is said by official, institutional voices, mainly by the SCOTUS justices. This somewhat echoes the key finding from Liebler, Schwartz, and Harper (2009) that while pro-same-sex marriage frames were prominent in their data, anti- or traditional-marriage frames set the debate's parameters. I would not say traditional marriage frames completely set the parameters in my data, but it is evident that while the meaning of marriage is in flux, same-sex marriages are and will be compared to opposite-sex marriages. Some might consider same-sex marriage as a form of *homonormativity*, i.e. not questioning the heteronormative status quo, but adopting its values into the queer community. As LGBTQ individuals were assimilated to the institution of marriage and often represented as recipients in the process, it can perhaps be concluded that the legalisation of same-sex marriage was not reported entirely from a queer point of view. It might thus take time still until same-sex marriage evolves into an inherently queer institution, if it ever does – and if it should is another discussion.

The results and the preceding discussion give an indication of how gay and lesbian individuals are treated, represented and seen in the media during the time of the nationwide legalisation of same-sex marriage in the US – largely members of the society who are entitled to be part of the institution of marriage, thereby gaining recognition for their identities and relationships. This being said, individual differences are likely to persist as dissenting voices and religion will probably remain a thread in the discussion in the future as well. While gay rights and same-sex marriage have previously been strongly debated in the US and the discussion has been polarised, the results suggest that in the future, same-sex marriage might become a less polarised issue in the US if marriage equality is seen exactly like that, as an equality issue and a right irrespective of sexual or gender orientation.

8 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to find out, which social actors were engaged in four news articles that reported on the ruling to legalise same-sex marriage nationwide in the US as well as to determine, which roles were assigned to these actors. The study also set out to study the engagement strategies used by the authorial voice of the

articles to find out if the author seemed to advance or deny a particular viewpoint by appraising the ruling, the engaged social actors or same-sex marriage.

It was discovered that all of the articles engaged both institutional and personal voices. Institutional voices were individualised and activated more often than personal voices, referring most often to the Supreme Court justices who were also credited most often as catalysts in extending the meaning of marriage. Personal voices were often assimilated and passivated, most often referring to queer individuals. Queer individuals were also activated as well as given voice and unique identities but often seen as recipients in an action.

The most common engagement strategy was acknowledgement, whereby the authors engaged dialogistic voices with e.g. verb choices that did not indicate overtly where they stood with regard to the subject matter. While all the articles featured pro- and anti-same-sex marriage stands, The Huffington Post and The New York Times seemed to include more pro-same sex marriage views than The Chicago Tribune or The Washington Post. In comparison, the CT and the WT included somewhat more anti-same-sex marriage and religious perspectives than the HP or the NYT. The articles adhered by and large to genre conventions of broadsheet news writing by not offering overt evaluations of the subject matter made by the author.

A queer reading of the results suggests that same-sex marriage was not seen as a fully-fledged queer institution. Same-sex marriage was seen more as part of the debate to redefine marriage from a heterosexual point of view and therefore mainly set against heterosexual parameters of marriage ideals. Pro-same-sex marriage stands rooted the ruling in equal rights whereas anti-same-sex marriage voices questioned both the role of the Constitution in the legalisation process and the idea that the meaning of marriage may be extended.

While these results give valuable insights into the contemporary frameworks in which marriage equality and LGBTQ relationships were understood upon the legalisation of nationwide same-sex marriage in the US, the data set in the study was rather small and the topic of the articles very specific. It is therefore difficult to make generalisations about how same-sex marriage and queer relations are understood in the US. A different type of data might have yielded different results. Further research is therefore required to understand the different aspects of marriage equality, queer relationships and queer

media representation and how changing discourse reflects these. Research is also needed to find out how the appraisal framework and other socially oriented linguistic approaches may be further applied to address some of these issues.

Will we eventually stop talking about same-sex marriage and simply talk about marriage and commitment between individuals? What is the role of normativity and who gets to define or break these norms? Still a divisive issue in the LGBTQ community, should same-sex marriage be seen as a queer institution or rather as a form of assimilation or homonormativity? Are some members of the LGBTQ community treated differently or given more space by the media than others? How have legal and cultural changes further affected queer media representation and queer identities? These are some of the questions future discussion and research may hope to address and answer.

While many questions remain to be posed, it is safe to say that the topic and the results of the present study reflect ongoing cultural and social changes both in the LGBTQ community and in society at large. Looking back at the history of queer media representation, we can see how far we have come as discourse has arguably become more inclusive of identities that have been marginalised in the past. At the same time, we should keep in mind that the fight towards equality and representation that reflects the diversity of the LGBTQ community does not and should not cease.

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Appendix 1: Tables of overall values of social actors and engagement strategies in the data

Table 1 Overall semantic types, forms and roles of social actors across all data.

SOCIAL ACTORS	CT		HP		NYT		WT	
Feature	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
SEMANTIC TYPE	N=112		N=85		N=153		N=70	
human	86	76.79%	73	85.88%	142	92.81%	58	82.86%
organisation	26	23.21%	12	14.12%	11	7.19%	12	17.14%
HUMAN TYPE	N=112		N=85		N=153		N=70	
personal	50	44.64%	33	38.82%	84	54.90%	31	44.29%
institutional	36	32.14%	40	47.06%	58	37.91%	27	38.57%
ORGANISATION TYPE	N=112		N=85		N=153		N=70	
government	19	16.96%	11	12.94%	9	5.88%	8	11.43%
other	7	6.25%	1	1.18%	2	1.31%	4	5.71%
FORM	N=112		N=85		N=153		N=70	
proper name/noun	37	33.04%	34	40.00%	62	40.52%	33	47.14%
common noun	56	49.11%	42	49.41%	70	45.75%	27	38.57%
pronoun	19	16.96%	9	10.59%	21	13.73%	10	14.29%
ROLE	N=112		N=85		N=153		N=70	
active	75	66.96%	62	72.94%	116	75.82%	48	68.57%
passive	37	33.04%	23	27.06%	37	24.18%	22	31.43%
PASSIVE TYPE	N=112		N=85		N=153		N=70	
subjected	22	19.64%	16	18.82%	27	17.65%	19	27.14%
beneficialised	15	13.39%	7	8.24%	10	6.54%	3	4.29%

Table 2 Overall values of engagement across all data.

ENGAGEMENT ANALYSIS	CT		HP		NYT		WT	
Feature	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
HETERO GLOSSIC TYPE	N=33		N=20		N=33		N=16	
contract	11	33.33%	6	30.00%	3	9.09%	0	0.00%
expand	22	66.67%	14	70.00%	30	90.91%	16	100.00%
CONTRACT TYPE	N=33		N=20		N=33		N=16	
disclaim	10	30.30%	4	20.00%	1	3.03%	0	0.00%
proclaim	1	3.03%	2	10.00%	2	6.06%	0	0.00%
DISCLAIM TYPE	N=33		N=20		N=33		N=16	
deny	5	15.15%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
counter	5	15.15%	4	20.00%	1	3.03%	0	0.00%

PROCLAIM TYPE	N=33		N=20		N=33		N=16	
concur	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
pronounce	1	3.03%	0	0.00%	2	6.06%	0	0.00%
endorse	0	0.00%	2	10.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
CONCUR TYPE	N=33		N=20		N=33		N=16	
affirm	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
concede	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
EXPAND TYPE	N=33		N=20		N=33		N=16	
entertain	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	2	6.06%	0	0.00%
attribute	22	66.67%	14	70.00%	28	84.85%	16	100.00%
ATTRIBUTE TYPE	N=33		N=20		N=33		N=16	
acknowledge	22	66.67%	14	70.00%	28	84.85%	16	100.00%
distance	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%

Appendix 2: Sample analyses

Sample analysis 1: An example of social actor (i.e. participant) analysis on The New York Times article, taken from UAMCorpusTool3.

participant analysis for: Texts/NYT.txt

Coding View Edit Options Help << < > >> Delete

The implications of this analogy will be exploited by those who are determined to stamp out every vestige of dissent." Gay rights advocates had constructed a careful litigation and public relations strategy to build momentum and bring the issue to the Supreme Court when it appeared ready to rule in their favor. As in earlier civil rights cases, the court had responded cautiously and methodically, laying judicial groundwork for a transformative decision. It waited for scores of lower courts to strike down bans on same-sex marriages before addressing the issue, and Justice Kennedy took the unusual step of listing those decisions in an appendix to his opinion. Chief Justice Roberts said that only 11 states and the District of Columbia had embraced the right to same-sex marriage democratically, at voting booths and in legislatures. The rest of the 37 states that allow such unions did so because of court rulings. Gay rights advocates, the chief justice wrote, would have been better off with a victory achieved through the political process, particularly "when the winds of change were freshening at their backs." In his own dissent, Justice Scalia took a similar view, saying that the majority's assertiveness represented a "threat to American democracy."

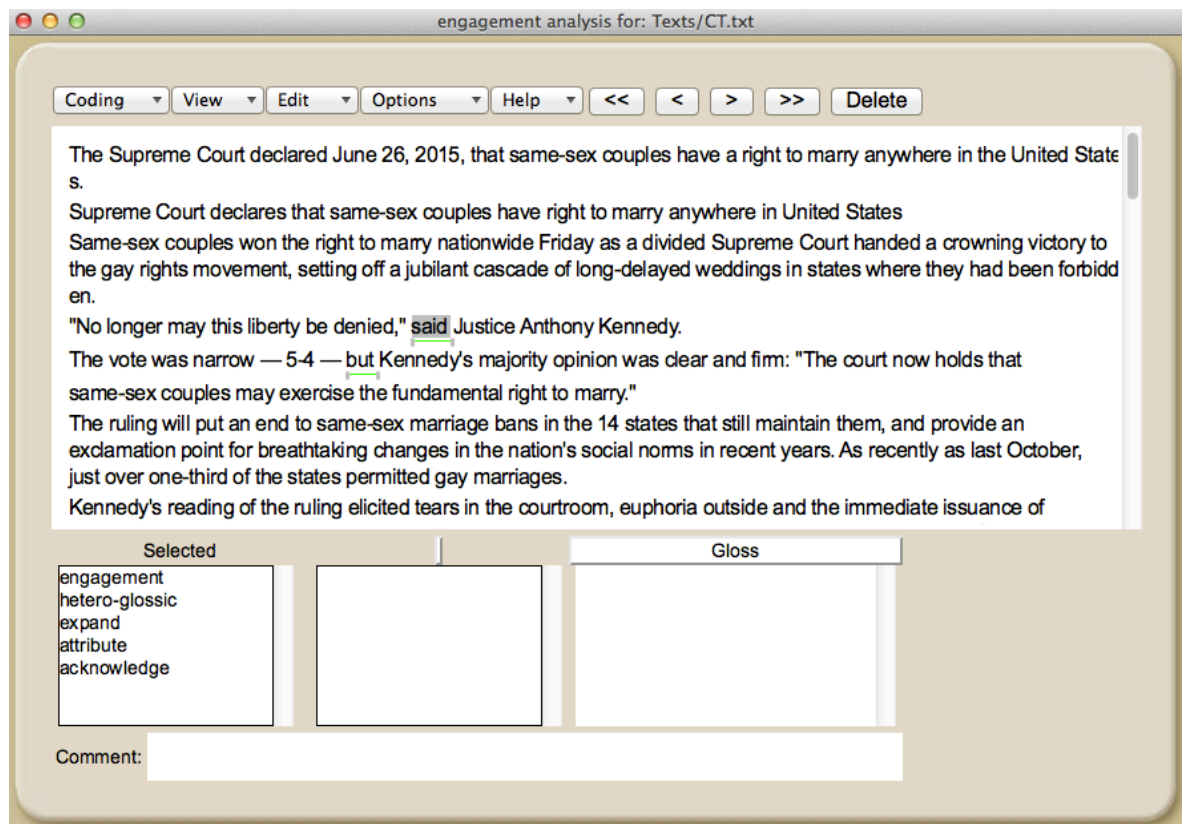
Selected

- participant
- human
- personal
- common
- active

Gloss

Comment:

Sample analysis 2: An example of appraisal analysis on The Chicago Tribune article, taken from UAMCorpusTool3.



Appendix 3: News articles used as data

Supreme Court extends gay marriage nationwide (The Chicago Tribune)

The Supreme Court declared June 26, 2015, that same-sex couples have a right to marry anywhere in the United States.

Supreme Court declares that same-sex couples have right to marry anywhere in United States

Same-sex couples won the right to marry nationwide Friday as a divided Supreme Court handed a crowning victory to the gay rights movement, setting off a jubilant cascade of long-delayed weddings in states where they had been forbidden.

"No longer may this liberty be denied," said Justice Anthony Kennedy.

The vote was narrow — 5-4 — but Kennedy's majority opinion was clear and firm: "The court now holds that same-sex couples may exercise the fundamental right to marry."

The ruling will put an end to same-sex marriage bans in the 14 states that still maintain them, and provide an exclamation point for breathtaking changes in the nation's social

norms in recent years. As recently as last October, just over one-third of the states permitted gay marriages.

Kennedy's reading of the ruling elicited tears in the courtroom, euphoria outside and the immediate issuance of marriage licenses to same-sex couples in at least eight states. In Dallas, Kenneth Denson said he and Gabriel Mendez had been legally married in 2013 in California but "we're Texans; we want to get married in Texas."

In praise of the decision, President Barack Obama called it "justice that arrives like a thunderbolt."

Four of the court's justices weren't cheering. The dissenters accused their colleagues of usurping power that belongs to the states and to voters, and short-circuiting a national debate about same-sex marriage.

"When Americans are all treated as equal, we are more free," President Barack Obama declared in a speech given at the White House after the Supreme Court extended gay marriage nationwide.

"This court is not a legislature. Whether same-sex marriage is a good idea should be of no concern to us," Chief Justice John Roberts wrote in dissent. Roberts read a summary of his dissent from the bench, the first time he has done so in nearly 10 years as chief justice.

"If you are among the many Americans — of whatever sexual orientation — who favor expanding same-sex marriage, by all means celebrate today's decision," Roberts said. "But do not celebrate the Constitution. It had nothing to do with it."

Justice Antonin Scalia said he was not concerned so much about same-sex marriage as "this court's threat to American democracy." He termed the decision a "judicial putsch." Justices Samuel Alito and Clarence Thomas also dissented.

Several religious organizations criticized the decision.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops said it was "profoundly immoral and unjust for the government to declare that two people of the same sex can constitute a marriage."

Kennedy said nothing in the court's ruling would force religions to condone, much less perform, weddings to which they object. And he said the couples seeking the right to marry should not have to wait for the political branches of government to act.

The 14th Amendment to the Constitution requires states to allow same-sex couples to marry on the same basis as heterosexuals, he said.

"The dynamic of our constitutional system is that individuals need not await legislative action before asserting a fundamental right. The nation's courts are open to injured individuals who come to them to vindicate their own direct, personal stake in our basic charter," Kennedy wrote in his fourth major opinion in support of gay rights since 1996. It came on the anniversary of two of those earlier decisions.

"No union is more profound than marriage," Kennedy wrote, joined by the court's four more liberal justices.

The stories of the people asking for the right to marry "reveal that they seek not to denigrate marriage but rather to live their lives, or honor their spouses' memory, joined by its bond," Kennedy said.

As he read his opinion, spectators in the courtroom wiped away tears when the import of the decision became clear. One of those in the audience was James Obergefell, the lead plaintiff in the Supreme Court fight.

Outside, Obergefell held up a photo of his late spouse, John Arthur, and said the ruling establishes that "our love is equal." He added, "This is for you, John."

Obama placed a congratulatory phone call to Obergefell, which he took amid a throng of reporters outside the courthouse.

Speaking a few minutes later at the White House, Obama praised the decision as an affirmation of the principle that "all Americans are created equal."

The crowd in front of the courthouse at the top of Capitol Hill grew in the minutes following the ruling. The Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, D.C., sang the "Star-Spangled Banner." Motorists honked their horns in support as they passed by the crowd, which included a smattering of same-sex marriage opponents.

The ruling will not take effect immediately because the court gives the losing side roughly three weeks to ask for reconsideration. But county clerks in Alabama, Georgia, Mississippi, Ohio, North Dakota, South Dakota, Tennessee and Texas began issuing licenses to same-sex couples within hours of the decision.

The cases before the court involved laws from Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio and Tennessee that define marriage as the union of a man and a woman. Those states have not allowed same-sex couples to marry within their borders, and they also have refused to recognize valid marriages from elsewhere.

Just two years ago, the Supreme Court struck down part of the federal anti-gay marriage law that denied a range of government benefits to legally married same-sex couples.

Justices Stephen Breyer, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Elena Kagan and Sonia Sotomayor formed the majority with Kennedy on Friday, the same lineup as two years ago.

The earlier decision in *United States v. Windsor* did not address the validity of state marriage bans, but courts across the country, with few exceptions, said its logic compelled them to invalidate state laws that prohibited gay and lesbian couples from marrying.

There are an estimated 390,000 married same-sex couples in the United States, according to UCLA's Williams Institute, which tracks the demographics of gay and lesbian Americans. Another 70,000 couples living in states that do not currently permit

them to wed would get married in the next three years, the institute says. Roughly 1 million same-sex couples, married and unmarried, live together in the United States, the institute says.

The Obama administration backed the right of same-sex couples to marry. The Justice Department's decision to stop defending the federal anti-marriage law in 2011 was an important moment for gay rights, and Obama declared his support for same-sex marriage in 2012.

The states affected by Friday's ruling are Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Mississippi, most of Missouri, Nebraska, North Dakota, Ohio, South Dakota, Tennessee and Texas.

Supreme Court Legalizes Gay Marriage Nationwide (The Huffington Post)

WASHINGTON — The U.S. Supreme Court ruled 5-4 on Friday that it is legal for all Americans, no matter their gender or sexual orientation, to marry the people they love.

The decision is a historic victory for gay rights activists who have fought for years in the lower courts. Thirty-seven states and the District of Columbia already recognize marriage equality. The remaining 13 states ban these unions, even as public support has reached record levels nationwide.

The justices found that, under the 14th Amendment, states must issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples and recognize same-sex unions that have been legally performed in other states. Justice Anthony Kennedy delivered the majority opinion and was joined by Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Elena Kagan, Stephen Breyer and Sonia Sotomayor. In a rare move, the four dissenting justices each wrote an opinion.

The lead plaintiff in *Obergefell v. Hodges* is Ohio resident Jim Obergefell, who wanted to be listed as the surviving spouse on his husband's death certificate. In 2013, Obergefell married his partner of two decades, John Arthur, who suffered from ALS. Arthur passed away in October of that year, three months after the couple filed their lawsuit.

Obergefell was joined by several dozen other gay plaintiffs from Kentucky, Michigan, Ohio and Tennessee who were fighting to be able to marry and to have their marriage recognized in every state in the country.

In the majority opinion, the justices outlined several reasons same-sex marriage should be allowed. They wrote that the right to marriage is an inherent aspect of individual autonomy, since "decisions about marriage are among the most intimate that an individual can make." They also said gay Americans have a right to "intimate association" beyond merely freedom from laws that ban homosexuality.

Supreme Court Justices Sonia Sotomayor, Elena Kagan, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Stephen Breyer and Anthony Kennedy. These five justices were in the majority in favor of legalizing same-sex marriage nationwide.

Extending the right to marry protects families and “without the recognition, stability, and predictability marriage offers, children suffer the stigma of knowing their families are somehow lesser,” the justices wrote.

The majority concluded that the right for same-sex couples to marry is protected under the 14th Amendment, citing the clauses that guarantee equal protection and due process.

In his dissent, Chief Justice John Roberts, joined by Justices Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas, argued that same-sex marriage is not endorsed by the Constitution. “Celebrate the opportunity for a new expression of commitment to a partner. Celebrate the availability of new benefits,” they wrote. “But do not celebrate the Constitution.”

Scalia, in his own scathing dissent, complained that the majority opinion lacked “even a thin veneer of law.” He quipped, “Who ever thought that intimacy and spirituality [whatever that means] were freedoms? And if intimacy is, one would think Freedom of Intimacy is abridged rather than expanded by marriage. Ask the nearest hippie.”

The country’s views of same-sex marriage have transformed since 2004, when Massachusetts became the first state to allow gay couples to wed. In 2013, the Supreme Court began chipping away at the country’s legacy of discrimination against same-sex couples when it struck down part of the 1996 Defense of Marriage Act, which prevented same-sex couples whose marriages were recognized by their home state from receiving the hundreds of benefits available to other married couples under federal law.

In its opinion, the majority recognized the profound cultural shifts in marriage views, citing both the Chinese educator Confucius and the Roman philosopher Cicero. The justices noted how marriage has been transformed from a union arranged by a couple’s parents for financial reasons to a voluntary contract, and from a male-dominated relationship to an agreement where women have “equal dignity.” These changes, the majority wrote, have strengthened the institution of marriage.

“Changed understandings of marriage are characteristic of a Nation where new dimensions of freedom become apparent to new generations,” the majority wrote.

President Barack Obama became the first sitting president to support marriage equality when he came out in favor of it in 2012, the same year that the Democratic Party made it part of its platform for the first time. On Friday, Obama called the ruling “a victory for America.”

The Republican Party and its slate of 2016 presidential aspirants, however, remain opposed to same-sex marriage. Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas) and Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker (R) support a constitutional amendment protecting states that want to ban marriage equality.

Some conservatives have advocated for a civil disobedience effort against a Supreme Court decision in favor of same-sex marriage. However, officials in red states told The Huffington Post recently that they are prepared to implement the decision, going so far as to ready gender-neutral marriage licenses and set later office hours. Gerard

Rickhoff, who oversees marriage licenses in Bexar County, Texas, said that if same-sex couples are discriminated against elsewhere in the state, “Just get in your car and come on down the highway. You’ll be embraced here.”

As the majority wrote in its opinion, the petitioners’ “hope is not to be condemned to live in loneliness, excluded from one of civilization’s oldest institutions. They ask for equal dignity in the eyes of the law. The Constitution grants them that right.”

Supreme Court Ruling Makes Same-sex Marriage a Right Nationwide (The New York Times)

Pooja Mandagere, left, and Natalie Thompson outside the Supreme Court on Friday after it ruled in favor of same-sex marriage.

Alejo Jumar, left, and his husband, Christian Crowley, after the court’s ruling was announced. The couple live in Washington and had biked to the Supreme Court.

Supporters of same-sex marriage cheered the ruling outside the Supreme Court.

Jim Obergefell, the lead plaintiff in the case held a photo of his husband, John Arthur, who died in 2013.

Lena Williams and Crystal Zimmer were married Friday at the Hamilton County Courthouse in Cincinnati.

After 54 years together, George Harris, 82, left, and Jack Evans, 85, were married in Dallas on Friday.

Julie Fey and Dottie Pippin of Semmes, Ala., received their marriage license Friday at the Mobile County Probate Court in Mobile, Ala.

Kate Ellis-Henderson, 6, at celebrations outside the Stonewall Inn in Greenwich Village.

Carlotta Gurl, left, kissed Tree, a longtime bartender at the Stonewall Inn, as people celebrated the Supreme Court’s decision outside of the bar.

Stacey Allen, left, and Sean Allen kissed at the end of their wedding ceremony in Cincinnati, Ohio, on Friday.

John Lewis, left, and Stuart Gaffney celebrate outside of San Francisco’s City Hall on Friday.

Mayor Annise Parker of Houston, right, and her wife Kathy Hubbard attended a rally on Friday.

Anthony Tielemans, 17, and Paul Chavez, 27, were among hundreds gathered for a rally for same-sex marriage in Los Angeles.

Rainbow-colored lights illuminated the White House in honor of the same-sex marriage ruling in Washington D.C. on Friday.

WASHINGTON — In a long-sought victory for the gay rights movement, the Supreme Court ruled by a 5-to-4 vote on Friday that the Constitution guarantees a right to same-sex marriage.

“No longer may this liberty be denied,” Justice Anthony M. Kennedy wrote for the majority in the historic decision. “No union is more profound than marriage, for it embodies the highest ideals of love, fidelity, devotion, sacrifice and family. In forming a marital union, two people become something greater than once they were.”

Marriage is a “keystone of our social order,” Justice Kennedy said, adding that the plaintiffs in the case were seeking “equal dignity in the eyes of the law.”

The decision, which was the culmination of decades of litigation and activism, set off jubilation and tearful embraces across the country, the first same-sex marriages in several states, and resistance — or at least stalling — in others. It came against the backdrop of fast-moving changes in public opinion, with polls indicating that most Americans now approve of the unions.

The court’s four more liberal justices joined Justice Kennedy’s majority opinion. Each member of the court’s conservative wing filed a separate dissent, in tones ranging from resigned dismay to bitter scorn.

In dissent, Chief Justice John G. Roberts Jr. said the Constitution had nothing to say on the subject of same-sex marriage.

Vin Testa celebrated Friday after the Supreme Court ruled in favor of same-sex marriage. “Love has won,” the crowd chanted as courtroom witnesses raised their arms in victory.

“If you are among the many Americans — of whatever sexual orientation — who favor expanding same-sex marriage, by all means celebrate today’s decision,” Chief Justice Roberts wrote. “Celebrate the achievement of a desired goal. Celebrate the opportunity for a new expression of commitment to a partner. Celebrate the availability of new benefits. But do not celebrate the Constitution. It had nothing to do with it.”

In a second dissent, Justice Antonin Scalia mocked the soaring language of Justice Kennedy, who has become the nation’s most important judicial champion of gay rights.

“The opinion is couched in a style that is as pretentious as its content is egotistic,” Justice Scalia wrote of his colleague’s work. “Of course the opinion’s showy profundities are often profoundly incoherent.”

As Justice Kennedy finished announcing his opinion from the bench on Friday, several lawyers seated in the bar section of the court’s gallery wiped away tears, while others grinned and exchanged embraces.

Justice John Paul Stevens, who retired in 2010, was on hand for the decision, and many of the justices’ clerks took seats in the chamber, which was nearly full as the ruling was announced. The decision made same-sex marriage a reality in the 13 states that had continued to ban it.

Outside the Supreme Court, the police allowed hundreds of people waving rainbow flags and holding signs to advance onto the court plaza as those present for the decision

streamed down the steps. “Love has won,” the crowd chanted as courtroom witnesses threw up their arms in victory.

In remarks in the Rose Garden, President Obama welcomed the decision, saying it “affirms what millions of Americans already believe in their hearts.”

A Cincinnati real estate agent, his deceased husband's aunt and their funeral director found themselves at the center of *Obergefell vs. Hodges*, the biggest Supreme Court same-sex marriage case in U.S. history.

“Today,” he said, “we can say, in no uncertain terms, that we have made our union a little more perfect.”

Justice Kennedy was the author of all three of the Supreme Court’s previous gay rights landmarks. The latest decision came exactly two years after his majority opinion in *United States v. Windsor*, which struck down a federal law denying benefits to married same-sex couples, and exactly 12 years after his majority opinion in *Lawrence v. Texas*, which struck down laws making gay sex a crime.

In all of those decisions, Justice Kennedy embraced a vision of a living Constitution, one that evolves with societal changes.

“The nature of injustice is that we may not always see it in our own times,” he wrote on Friday. “The generations that wrote and ratified the Bill of Rights and the Fourteenth Amendment did not presume to know the extent of freedom in all of its dimensions, and so they entrusted to future generations a charter protecting the right of all persons to enjoy liberty as we learn its meaning.”

This drew a withering response from Justice Scalia, a proponent of reading the Constitution according to the original understanding of those who adopted it. His dissent was joined by Justice Clarence Thomas.

“They have discovered in the Fourteenth Amendment,” Justice Scalia wrote of the majority, “a ‘fundamental right’ overlooked by every person alive at the time of ratification, and almost everyone else in the time since.”

“These justices know,” Justice Scalia said, “that limiting marriage to one man and one woman is contrary to reason; they know that an institution as old as government itself, and accepted by every nation in history until 15 years ago, cannot possibly be supported by anything other than ignorance or bigotry.”

Supporters of same-sex marriage gathered outside the Supreme Court on Friday.

Justice Kennedy rooted the ruling in a fundamental right to marriage. Of special importance to couples, he said, is raising children.

“Without the recognition, stability and predictability marriage offers,” he wrote, “their children suffer the stigma of knowing their families are somehow lesser. They also suffer the significant material costs of being raised by unmarried parents, relegated

through no fault of their own to a more difficult and uncertain family life. The marriage laws at issue here thus harm and humiliate the children of same-sex couples.”

Justices Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Stephen G. Breyer, Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan joined the majority opinion.

In dissent, Chief Justice Roberts said the majority opinion was “an act of will, not legal judgment.”

“The court invalidates the marriage laws of more than half the states and orders the transformation of a social institution that has formed the basis of human society for millennia, for the Kalahari Bushmen and the Han Chinese, the Carthaginians and the Aztecs,” he wrote. “Just who do we think we are?”

The majority and dissenting opinions took differing views about whether the decision would harm religious liberty. Justice Kennedy said the First Amendment “ensures that religious organizations and persons are given proper protection as they seek to teach the principles that are so fulfilling and so central to their lives and faiths.” He said both sides should engage in “an open and searching debate.”

Chief Justice Roberts responded that “people of faith can take no comfort in the treatment they receive from the majority today.”

Justice Samuel A. Alito Jr., in his dissent, saw a broader threat from the majority opinion. “It will be used to vilify Americans who are unwilling to assent to the new orthodoxy,” Justice Alito wrote. “In the course of its opinion, the majority compares traditional marriage laws to laws that denied equal treatment for African-Americans and women. The implications of this analogy will be exploited by those who are determined to stamp out every vestige of dissent.”

Gay rights advocates had constructed a careful litigation and public relations strategy to build momentum and bring the issue to the Supreme Court when it appeared ready to rule in their favor. As in earlier civil rights cases, the court had responded cautiously and methodically, laying judicial groundwork for a transformative decision.

It waited for scores of lower courts to strike down bans on same-sex marriages before addressing the issue, and Justice Kennedy took the unusual step of listing those decisions in an appendix to his opinion.

Chief Justice Roberts said that only 11 states and the District of Columbia had embraced the right to same-sex marriage democratically, at voting booths and in legislatures. The rest of the 37 states that allow such unions did so because of court rulings. Gay rights advocates, the chief justice wrote, would have been better off with a victory achieved through the political process, particularly “when the winds of change were freshening at their backs.”

In his own dissent, Justice Scalia took a similar view, saying that the majority’s assertiveness represented a “threat to American democracy.”

But Justice Kennedy rejected that idea. “It is of no moment whether advocates of same-sex marriage now enjoy or lack momentum in the democratic process,” he wrote. “The issue before the court here is the legal question whether the Constitution protects the right of same-sex couples to marry.”

Later in the opinion, Justice Kennedy answered the question. “The Constitution,” he wrote, “grants them that right.”

Gay marriage legalized nationwide in 5-4 Supreme Court vote, Scalia seethes (The Washington Times)

Carlos McKnight of Washington, waves a flag in support of gay marriage outside of the Supreme Court in Washington, Friday June 26, 2015. A major opinion on gay marriage is among the remaining to be released before the term ends at the end of June.

By a 5-4 ruling, the Supreme Court Friday struck down four state marriage laws, paving the way for gay marriage to be legal in all 50 states.

The ruling in *Obergefell v. Hodges* said the 14th Amendment requires a state to license a marriage between people of same-sex, and also recognize same-sex marriages from out of state.

The 14th Amendment, with its equal protection and due process clauses, prohibit the “unjustified infringement of the fundamental right to marry,” said the majority opinion written by Justice Anthony Kennedy, joined by Justices Stephen Breyer, Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan.

“No union is more profound than marriage,” Justice Kennedy added.

The stories of the people asking for the right to marry “reveal that they seek not to denigrate marriage but rather to live their lives, or honor their spouses’ memory, joined by its bond,” Kennedy continued.

Chief Justice John Roberts read his dissent from the bench — a first according to a legal veteran with SCOTUSblog — and said that while gay-rights victors should celebrate the ruling, “do not celebrate the Constitution. It had nothing to do with it.”

“This court is not a legislature. Whether same-sex marriage is a good idea should be of no concern to us,” the chief justice wrote in opposition.

Justice Antonin Scalia, Clarence Thomas and Samuel Alito also dissented.

Justice Scalia seethed in his dissent:

“Today’s decree says that my Ruler, and the Ruler of 320 million Americans coast-to-coast, is a majority of the nine lawyers on the Supreme Court. The opinion in these cases is the furthest extension in fact — and the furthest extension one can even imagine — of the Court’s claimed power to create ‘liberties’ that the Constitution and its Amendments neglect to mention.

“This practice of constitutional revision by an unelected committee of nine, always accompanied (as it is today) by extravagant praise of liberty, robs the People of the most important liberty they asserted in the Declaration of Independence and won in the Revolution of 1776: the freedom to govern themselves,” Scalia wrote.

According to UCLA’s Williams Institute, there are an estimated 390,000 married same-sex couples in the United States.

Gay and lesbian couples already could marry in 36 states and the District of Columbia. The court’s 5-4 ruling means the remaining 14 states, in the South and Midwest, will have to stop enforcing their bans on same-sex marriage.

Gay marriages are already underway in states where they were banned until the Supreme Court ruling Friday.

Several gay couples have received marriage licenses in Atlanta since the decision came out. One of those couples, Petrina Bloodworth and Emma Foulkes, were wed in a morning ceremony and are the first same-sex couple to be married in Georgia’s Fulton County. So says court clerk James Brock.

In Travis County, Texas, Gena Dawson and Charlotte Rutherford were the first same-sex couple in the state to receive a marriage license, within two hours of the ruling.

As well, a same-sex marriage license has been issued in Arkansas, another state that banned gay marriage until the Supreme Court weighed in. This was in Faulkner County, almost immediately after the ruling came out.

“Today I could not be prouder of my country, more grateful for the memory of my late husband John, and more indebted to the incredible lawyers, advocates and fellow plaintiffs who made this landmark day possible,” said lead plaintiff James Obergefell, who sought to have his marriage recognized in Ohio.

Today’s ruling makes perfectly clear that there is no legal or moral justification for standing in the path of marriage equality. Couples from Mississippi to North Dakota to Texas shouldn’t have to wait even a moment longer to be treated equally under the law,” said Chad Griffin, president of the Human Rights Campaign.

Ryan Anderson, senior research fellow at the Heritage Foundation, lamented the ruling.

“Today is a significant setback for all Americans who believe in the Constitution, rule of law, democratic self-government, and marriage as a union of one man and one woman,” said Mr. Anderson. “The court got it wrong: it should have not mandated all 50 states to redefine marriage.”

Brian Brown of the National Organization for Marriage said he and his allies would do all they can to reverse the ruling.

“Though expected, today’s decision is completely illegitimate. We reject it and so will the American people,” he said.

Appendix 4: Finnish summary

Queer-ääniä?

Sosiaaliset toimijat ja sitoutumisstrategiat Yhdysvaltain mediassa sukupuolineutraalin avioliiton liittovaltiotasoisena laillistamisen yhteydessä

Tämä pro gradu –tutkielma käsittelee sukupuolineutraalia avioliittoa yhdysvaltalaisessa mediassa. Tutkielman tavoitteena on tarkastella sukupuolineutraalin avioliiton liittovaltiotasoisena laillistamisen yhteydessä esiintyneitä sosiaalisia toimijoita ja näkökulmia. Yhdysvaltojen korkein oikeus päätti 26. kesäkuuta 2015 (Obergefell vastaan Hodges), että samaa sukupuolta olevilla pareilla on oikeus avioitua kaikissa Yhdysvaltain osavaltioissa. Tutkielman aineistona on neljä eri uutisartikkelia, jotka raportoivat tästä päätöksestä. Valitut artikkelit on julkaistu The Chicago Tribunen, The Huffington Postin, The New York Timesin ja The Washington Timesin uutissivustoilla 26.6.2015. The Chicago Tribune, The Huffington Post ja The New York Times ovat päivittäin julkaisevia sanomalehtiä kun taas The Huffington Post on uutissivusto ja blogiyhteisö.

Yksi tutkielman lähtökohdista on se, että nyky-yhteiskunta on yhä moniarvoisempi ja medioituneempi tila, jossa ilmiöitä, identiteettejä ja yksilöitä hahmotetaan ja rakennetaan diskursiivisesti. Media ja mediadiskurssi vaikuttavat otaksuttavasti siihen, miten koemme ympäröivän maailman ja kanssaihmiset. Tällöin on tärkeää tutkia sitä, miten erilaiset yksiköt mediadiskurssissa esitetään ja millaisia identiteettejä heille luodaan. Vaikka seksuaalivähemmistöjen oikeudet ovat parantuneet viime vuosikymmenten aikana ja homoseksuaaliset suhteet ovat sosiaalisesti hyväksytympiä, eri sukupuolta olevat parit edustavat edelleen normia, johon samaa sukupuolta olevien parisuhteita ja liittoja usein verrataan. Tätä normittamista on mahdollista tutkia median käyttämän kielen kautta. Normien tutkiminen on tärkeää, sillä lopulta niissä on kyse vallankäytöstä yhteiskunnassa. Kenellä on valta määrittellä, mikä on normien mukaista ja hyväksyttävää elämää?

Analyysissä pyrin selvittämään sitä, millaisia sosiaalisia toimijoita aineistossa esiintyy, millainen rooli heille annetaan sekä sitä, millä tavalla uutisartikkelien

kirjoittajaäni suhtautuu raportoimaansa. Tutkielman tavoitteena on tarkastella laillistamisen yhteydessä esiintyviä ääniä ja näkökulmia sekä sitä, tuntuvatko kirjoittavaäänit arvioivan päätöstä, osallistettuja sosiaalisia toimijoita tai sukupuolineutraalia avioliittoa. Tutkimuskysymykseni ovat seuraavat:

Millaisia sosiaalisia toimijoita ja ääniä artikkeleissa osallistetaan?

Millainen rooli näille äänille annetaan?

Millaisia sitoutumisstrategioita artikkelin kirjoittajaäni hyödyntää?

Tutkimuskysymysten avulla pyrin selvittämään tarkemmin sitä, tuntuuko kirjoittajaäni edistävän tai väheksyvän tiettyjä näkökulmia tai ottavan kantaa aiheeseen. Tämä auttaa minua ymmärtämään, kenellä katsottiin olevan oikeus osallistua tasa-arvoiseen avioliittokeskusteluun kyseisenä ajankohtana sekä sitä, millaisesta näkökulmasta laillistaminen esitettiin. Analyysi hyödyntää kahden ensimmäisen kysymyksen osalta Van Leeuwenin sosiaalisten toimijoiden taksonomiaa (2008), jossa hahmotetaan sitä, millä tavalla toimijoita esitetään ja osallistetaan erilaisissa diskursseissa. Kolmas tutkimuskysymys pohjautuu Martinin ja Whiten suhtautumisen teorian (2005) sitoutumisen alajärjestelmään, joka tarkastelee sitä, millä tavalla kirjoittajat operoivat moniäänisissä kommunikaatioympäristöissä.

Olen sitä mieltä, että suhtautumisen teoria sopii sukupuolineutraalin avioliittodiskurssin tarkastelemiseen, sillä ilmiön ympärillä käyty keskustelua on usein leimannut kilpailevat äänenpainot sekä polarisoitunut kielenkäyttö, jolloin on mielekästä tarkastella aihetta moniäänisessä diskurssiympäristössä, jollaista myös mediatekstit edustavat. Seksuaalivähemmistöjen mediarepresentaatioita (mm. Frantz 2006 ja Ragusa 2003) sekä sukupuolineutraalin avioliiton mediakehyksiä (mm. Liebler, Schwartz ja Harper 2009, Li ja Liu 2010 sekä Pan, Meng ja Zhou 2010) on tutkittu kohtalaisen paljon, mutta tutkimuksia, jotka hyödyntäisivät oman tutkimukseni kaltaisia metodeja ja lähtökohtia löytyy varsin vähän. Avioliiton merkityksen laajentamista perustellaan usein tasa-arvon kannalta, mutta asia jakaa osittain myös queer-yhteisön jäseniä. Vaikka monet kannattavat käsitystä samaa sukupuolta olevien avioliitosta, osa on sitä mieltä, että laillistamisen myötä queer-ihmiset sulautetaan valtavirtaan ja instituution, joka perustuu heteronormatiivisille periaatteille ja arvoille. Tulokset tulkitaan myös niin sanotun queer-teoreettisen

näkökulman kautta. Tutkielmassa termi *queer* käsitetään sateenvarjoterminä sukupuoli- ja seksuaalivähemmistöille, joskaan kaikki queer-yhteisön jäsenet eivät välttämättä määritä itseään queer-sanalla tai jaa samanlaista ymmärrystä termin käytöstä.

Tutkielman pääasiallisina viitekehyksinä toimivat representaatioon ja diskurssiin liittyvät käsitteet, jotka muodostavat tutkielman kaksi päälukua. Representaatioteemaisessa pääluvussa käsittelen sitä, miten identiteettiä sekä sosiaalisia toimijoita rakennetaan ja esitetään diskursseissa. Kieli on yksi tärkeimmistä välineistä rakentaa ja viestiä identiteeteistä, sillä kielen avulla rakennamme diskursiivisesti jatkuvasti merkityksiä. Tällöin vertaamme usein itseämme ja toisiamme yhteiskunnan normeihin ja rakenteisiin sosiaalisissa konteksteissa. Van Leeuwen (2008) mieltää diskurssin tilaksi, jossa erilaisia sosiaalisia tapoja ja toimijoita muodostetaan ja esitetään. Erilaisten toimijoiden esittäminen on usein kulttuurisidonnaista sekä riippuvaista laajemmista sosiaalisista ja yhteiskunnallisista ulottuvuuksista. Diskurssianalyyssissä on täten tärkeää yhdistää tekstuaalisen mikrotason, diskursiivisen mesotason sekä sosiaalisen makrotason kontekstit (Koller 2010). Kuten Kollerkin huomauttaa, erilaisten sosiaalisten toimijoiden osallistaminen ja kielellisten valintojen tekeminen voi viestittää laajemmista sosiaalisista ja diskursiivisista viitekehyksistä, joissa kirjoittajat operoivat.

Sosiaalisia toimijoita voi joko sisällyttää esityksiin tai sulkea näistä ulos, jolloin kirjoittajat voivat tietoisesti ja tiedostamatta edistää tiettyjä intressejä ja tarkoitusperiä (Van Leeuwen 2008: 28). Toimijoille voidaan antaa diskurssissa joko aktiivinen tai passiivinen rooli, jonka avulla voidaan tarkastella sitä, ovatko toimijat aktiivisia tekijöitä vai toiminnan kohteita (Van Leeuwen 2008: 33). Passiiviset toimijat voivat esiintyä joko alisteisessa tai suotuisassa asemassa, jolloin he saattavat hyötyä asemastaan toiminnan kohteena (ibid.). Sosiaalisia toimijoita voidaan lisäksi yksilöidä tai sulauttaa osaksi suurempaa ryhmää riippuen siitä, millä tavoin heihin viitataan (Van Leeuwen 2008: 37). Van Leeuwen esittää myös tarkempia tapoja hahmottaa sosiaalisia toimijoita, mutta omassa analyysissäni hyödynnän luokittelua pääosin edellä mainituin osin.

Tutkielmassa käsittelen myös lyhyesti sitä, miten seksuaalivähemmistöjä on esitetty mediassa 1800-luvun lopulta alkaen. Esitystapojen voidaan sanoa karkeasti muuttuneen käsityksestä homoseksuaalisuudesta käyttäytymismallina homoseksuaalisuuteen sosiaalisena identiteettinä (Hilton-Morrow ja Battles 2015: 37). Yhteiskunnan, kulttuurin ja median muutokset ovat vaikuttaneet siihen, miten seksuaalivähemmistöt on esitetty mediassa. Teorialuku sisältää myös tiivistelmän sukupuolineutraalin avioliiton historiasta Yhdysvalloissa, joka alkaa ensimmäistä liitoista 1970-luvulta päättyen kesäkuuhun 2015, jolloin sukupuolineutraali avioliitto laillistettiin jokaisessa Yhdysvaltain osavaltiossa. Massachusetts oli ensimmäinen osavaltio, joka laillisti samaa sukupuolta olevien avioliitot vuonna 2004, minkä lisäksi osavaltiotasolla säädettiin erilaisia lakeja ja liittomuotoja.

Diskurssiteemainen pääluku pohjaa sille ajatukselle, että kohtaamamme diskurssit muokkaavat käsitystämme maailmasta, yksilöistä sekä heidän välisistä suhteistaan. Diskurssi käsitetään luvussa sosiaalisen vuorovaikutuksen muotona, joka perustuu mm. Van Dijkin (1997) ja Faircloughin (1995) näkemyksiin. Nämä käsitykset pohjaavat taasen pitkälti Hallidayn (1978) systeemis-funktionaaliseen kielioppiin, jossa sosiaalisten kontekstien nähdään ohjaavan ja muokkaavan kielellisiä valintoja. Kieli sisältää siis aina ideationaalisia, interpersonaalisia ja tekstuaalisia metafunktioita, eli sen avulla hahmotetaan maailmaa, luodaan suhteita, vuorovaikutusta ja identiteettejä sekä rakennetaan tekstejä. Luvussa esitän ajatuksen, että kohtaamamme diskurssit yhtäältä muokkaavat meitä, mutta toisaalta me myös itse muokkaamme aktiivisesti näitä diskursseja, jotka myös vaikuttavat siihen, miten hahmotamme maailmaa. Kieli ja diskurssit ovat siis yhtäältä sosiaalisesta muokkautuneita ja toisaalta sosiaalisesti muokkaavia, kuten Fairclough (1995: 55) asian ilmaisee. Kielen avulla rakennamme näin ollen maailmankuvaamme ja jäsenämme omaa sekä kanssaihmissämme identiteettejä.

Diskursseja voi tarkastella myös kriittisen diskurssianalyysin avulla, joka perustuu mm. Norman Faircloughin ajatuksille. Kriittistä diskurssianalyysia ei mielletä niinkään koulukunnaksi, vaan kriittiseksi näkökulmaksi ja tavaksi tehdä tutkimusta (Van Dijk 2001: 96). Kriittistä diskurssianalyysiä hyödynnetään usein silloin, kun halutaan tehdä näkyväksi yhteiskunnan valtarakenteita ja voimasuhteita, jotka saattavat ilmetä kielenkäytön kautta (Wodak 1995: 204). Queer-tutkimus on 1990-

luvulla kehittynyt monitieteinen jälkistrukturalistinen kriittinen näkökulma, joka pyrkii kyseenalaistamaan ja dekonstruoimaan hegemonisia ja heteronormatiivisia käytänteitä ja arvoja tarjoamalla kriittisiä luentoja seksuaalisuudesta ja sukupuolesta, perustuen mm. Michel Foucault'n ja Judith Butlerin näkemyksille. Sullivan (2003: 1) on sitä mieltä, että seksuaalisuus on nimenomaan diskursiivisesti rakennettua sekä kulttuuri- ja historiaspesifisti koettua ja ymmärrettyä. Tämän vuoksi on tärkeä tutkia sitä, miten seksuaalivähemmistöjä esitetään diskursiivisesti sekä sitä, miten nämä tavat ovat muuttuneet, jotta ymmärrettäisiin esitystapojen yhteys vallitseviin, sosiokulttuurisesti määrittäytyneisiin käytäntöihin ja arvoihin. Näin ollen on luontevaa yhdistää kriittistä diskurssianalyysiä ja queer-tutkimusta, jotta tuloksia voidaan tarkastella ei vain kriittisesti, mutta myös queer-teoreettisesti.

Tutkielmassa käsittelen lyhyesti myös sitä, kuinka mediadiskurssi välittää tietoa todellisuudesta, toimii sosiokulttuurisen muutoksen katalysaattorina, käyttää tietynlaista voimaa sekä muokkaa käsitystämme ilmiöistä ja ihmisistä. Mediakielen ja uutisartikkelien temaattiset ja rakenteelliset elementit vaikuttavat tapaamme omaksua tietoa ja nähdä maailma, mutta tähän vaikuttavat niin ikään kirjoittajien kielelliset valinnat ja arvioinnit. Tämän ajatuksen ovat muotoilleet suhtautumisen teoriaksi² (*appraisal theory*) Martin ja White (2005). Teoria käsittelee sitä, miten kirjoittajat ja puhujat mm. hyväksyvät tai paheksuvat erilaisia diskursseja ja sitä, miten he asemoivat lukijansa ja kuulijansa tekemään samoin (Martin ja White 2005: 1). Suhtautumisen teorian avulla voidaan siis arvioida kirjoittajien ja puhujien suhtautumistapoja ympäröiviin diskursseihin. Suhtautumisen teoria käsittää kolme alajärjestelmää: asennetoimisen (*attitude*), sitoutumisen (*engagement*) ja asteittaisuuden³ (*graduation*), jolla ilmaistaan jonkin asian intensiteettiä. Työssäni hyödynnän nimenomaan sitoutumisen alajärjestelmää, sillä se soveltuu aineistooni ja tutkimusasetelmaani parhaiten.

Sitoutumisen alajärjestelmä käsittelee sitä, millä tavalla kielenkäyttäjät sitouttavat erilaisia ääniä moniäänisessä kommunikaatioympäristössä ja asettuvat näiden kannalle tai näitä vastaan. Sen avulla pyritään selvittämään, millaisia näkökulmia

² *Suhtautumisen teoria* on Katajamäen (2006) käänös.

³ *Asennoituminen, sitoutuminen ja asteittäisyys* ovat Juvosen (2007) käänöksiä.

kielenkäyttäjät tunnustavat tai jättävät huomiotta (White 2001). Martin ja White (2005: 92) näkevät suhtautumisen teorian osana tutkimusperinnettä, jossa kaikkia ilmaisuja voidaan pitää asenteellisina ja muihin diskursseihin liittyvinä. Sitoutumisen alajärjestelmä voidaan jakaa yksiiänisiin (*monoglossic*) ja moniäänisiin (*heteroglossic*) ilmaisuihin, joista moniääniset ilmaisut voivat olla joko dialogisesti laajentavia tai supistavia (Martin ja White 2005: 102). Dialogisesti supistavat ilmaisut ovat joko kieltäviä tai julistavia, kun taas laajentavat ilmaisut joko esittävät erilaisia mahdollisuuksia tai lukevat asian jonkun muun syyksi tai ansioksi (Martin ja White 2005: 97). Kieltävät ilmaisut jakautuvat edelleen kiistäviin ja korvaaviin tai syrjäyttäviin ilmaisuihin, kun taas julistavilla ilmaisuilla kielenkäyttäjä voi yhtyä johonkin mielipiteeseen (vahvistaa tämän tai myöntyä tähän vastahakoisesti), lausua mielipiteensä tai muulla tavoin ilmaista tukensa tai hyväksyntänsä jonkin asian puolesta (Martin and White 2005: 97-98). Jos kirjoittaja haluaa lukea jonkin asian toisen ihmisen syyksi tai ansioksi tai pitää tiettyä asiaa jonkin toisen ihmisen aiheuttamana tai tekemänä, hän voi joku tunnustaa jonkin näkökulman tai etäännyttää itsensä tästä (ibid.). Edellä mainittuja luokitteluja hyödynnettiin myös tutkielman analyysissä.

Tutkielman analyysissä on kaksi eri tasoa: sosiaalisten toimijoiden sekä sitoutumisstrategioiden analyysit. Analyysi toteutettiin korpustyökaluohjelma UAMCorpusTool3:lla, ja siinä yhdistyvät sekä määrälliset ja laadulliset menetelmät. Aineistoista identifioitiin sekä sosiaaliset toimijat (niin ihmiset kuin organisaatiot, joiden takana on ihmistoimija) sekä kirjoittajien käyttämät sitoutumisstrategiat moniäänisten lausumien osalta. Sosiaaliset toimijat analysoitiin niiden semanttisen tyyppin (*ihminen* tai *organisaatio*), muodon (*erisnimi*, *yleisnimi* tai *pronomini*) sekä roolin (*aktiivinen* tai *passiivinen*) perusteella. Ihmiset luokiteltiin lisäksi *institutionaaliksi* tai *omakohtaisiksi* toimijoiksi ja organisaatiot *valtionhallinnolliksi* ja *muiksi organisaatioiksi*. Passiiviset toimijat luokiteltiin *alisteisiksi* tai *hyötyneiksi*. Nämä luokittelut perustuvat osittain Van Leeuwenin luokittelumalleihin, ja osittain käsitykseen siitä, millaisia toimijoita aihepiirin teksteissä voi olettaa esiintyvän.

Tulokset osoittavat, että kaikki artikkelit hyödynsivät sekä institutionaalisia että omakohtaisia sosiaalisia toimijoita ja ääniä. Institutionaaliset toimijat yksilöitiin ja aktivoitiin useimmin kuin omakohtaiset toimijat, jotka olivat usein queer-yksilöitä.

Institutionaaliset toimijat olivat useimmiten korkeimman oikeuden tuomareita, jotka esitettiin usein sosiaalisen muutoksen ja avioliiton merkityksen muuttumisen edesauttajina.

Omaehtaiset toimijat passivoitiin ja sulautettiin osaksi suurempaa ryhmää useammin kuin institutionaaliset toimijat, eli heidän nähtiin usein kollektiivisesti ja toiminnan kohteena. Queer-ihmiset saivat kuitenkin paikoitellen aktiivisen roolin ja selkeän identiteetin, mukaan lukien käsittelyn pääkantaja James Obergefell sekä parit, jotka olivat menneen naimisiin. Useimmat artikkelit ottivat myös esiin homoaktivistien ja homo-oikeusliikkeen roolin laillistamisen mahdollistamisessa, mutta korkeimman oikeuden roolia sukupuolineutraalin avioliiton laillistamisessa tunnuttiin silti korostavan jokseenkin enemmän.

Useimmat kirjoittajaäänien käyttämisistä ilmaisuista olivat dialogisesti laajentavia, joka kertoo siitä, että kirjoittajat sitoutuivat muita ääniä ja näkökulmia keskusteluun. Kirjoittajaäänien useimmiten hyödyntämä sitoutumisstrategia oli *tunnustaminen*, jolloin arvioinnit esitettiin jonkin toisen toimijan tekeminä. Tämän myötä käytetyistä ilmaisuista ei usein voinut suoranaisesti päätellä, miten kirjoittajaääni suhtautui raportoimaansa. Täten tulokset kertovat enemmän uutiskielen genrekonventioista kuin yksittäisten kirjoittajien tyyleistä tai arvioista. Kaikissa artikkeleissa esiintyi näkökulmia sukupuolineutraalin avioliiton puolesta ja sitä vastaan. The New York Times ja The Huffington Post vaikuttivat suosivan jokseenkin enemmän näkökulmia sukupuolineutraalin avioliiton puolesta, kun taas The Chicago Tribune ja The Washington Times sisällyttivät hieman enemmän sukupuolineutraalin avioliiton vastaisia ja uskonnollisia näkökulmia. Sukupuolineutraalin avioliiton puolestapuhujat korostivat usein tasa-arvon näkökulmaa, kun taas vastustajat kyseenalaisivat perustuslain roolin laillistamisprosessissa sekä mahdollisuuden laajentaa avioliiton merkitystä. Artikkelien välillä oli myös huomattavia samankaltaisuuksia sekä osallistettujen sosiaalisten toimijoiden että sitoutumisstrategioiden suhteen.

Tulosten queer-luenta viittaa siihen, että sukupuolineutraalia avioliittoa ei nähty queer-instituutiona vaan se nähtiin enemmän osana debattia, jossa avioliitto määriteltiin uudelleen heteronormatiivisista lähtökohdista. Vaikka homoseksuaalisia suhteita tunnuttiin vertaavan heteroseksuaalisiin ihanteisiin, osassa artikkeleista korostuivat

myös yleisinhimilliset rakkauden, tasa-arvon ja samaa sukupuolta olevien lasten hyvinvoinnin teemat, joiden kautta laillistamispäätöstä myös perusteltiin.

Tulokset viittaavat siihen, että päätöksen myötä seksuaalivähemmistöt on pitkälti hyväksytty osaksi avioliittoinstituutiota, jolloin myös heidän väliset suhteensa voidaan tunnustaa yhteiskunnassa yhdenvertaisina heterosuhteiden kanssa. Tästä huolimatta aineistossakin esiintyvät eriävät mielipiteet ja uskonnolliset näkökannat tulevat todennäköisesti olemaan osa keskustelua myös tulevaisuudessa. Tulokset kertovat siitä, miten sukupuolineutraalia avioliittoa ja seksuaalivähemmistöjä esitetään mediassa (erityisesti laillistamisen yhteydessä), mutta aineiston rajallisen luonteen pohjalta on vaikea tehdä yleistyksiä siitä, millä tavalla seksuaalivähemmistöihin ja heidän välisiin suhteisiin Yhdysvalloissa laajemmin suhtaudutaan. Lisää tutkimusta tarvitaan siis siitä, miten avioliiton merkitys on muuttunut, miten seksuaalivähemmistöyhteisöä ja sen moninaisuutta esitetään mediassa sekä siitä, millä tavalla kieli heijastaa näitä muutoksia. Tulokset kertovat joka tapauksessa yhteiskunnan ja seksuaalivähemmistöyhteisön sosiaalisista ja kulttuurisista muutoksista, ja kutsuvat edelleen pohtimaan kielen merkitystä näissä yhteyksissä.