

Conflict between Personal Beliefs and Religious Orientation in Young Adults

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Definitions

Cognitive Dissonance

A state in which an individual holds two or more contradictory beliefs, values, or social roles, or behaves in a way that is contradictory to those beliefs, values, or social roles.
(Festinger 2009)

Heterosexual/Straight

A person who is exclusively attracted to those of the opposite gender.

Queer

I will use this term as an identifier for individuals who identify as non-heterosexual and/or non-cisgender.

Asexual

A person who who does not experience sexual attraction, and has a low to no interest in sexual activity.

Bisexual

A person who is attracted to both men and women.

Transgender

A person whose gender identity does not align with their sex assigned at birth.

Homosexual

A person who is exclusively attracted to those of their own gender.

Relevant Literature

● Woodford et al. (2013)

- Similar survey with a Catholic population
- 52% reported their personal beliefs did not align

● Eliason et al. (2011)

- Non-het consistently engage in more high-risk behavior
- Also experience higher rates of depression
- These are intensified when they are religious

● Levefor et al. (2019)

- LDS who were non-het felt a pressure to either give up religious identity or sexual identity
- These individuals reported overall less well-being

Why?



RQ: What degree of harmony and/or dissonance exists between personal attitudes towards queer sexual orientation and the perceived belief of their religious institution?



Methods


- Currently enrolled USU students.
- Stratified random sample of 3500 students.

- Personal Beliefs
- Perception of Religious Institutions Beliefs
- Level of Agreement with Religious Institution

- Delete duplicates
- Delete <60% complete if they did not answer personal belief questions

- Personal belief vs institution belief for each religious group
- Dissonance scores per religious group

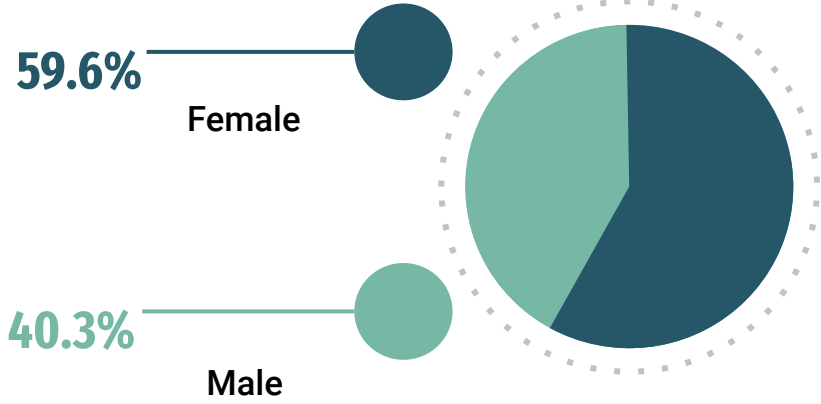




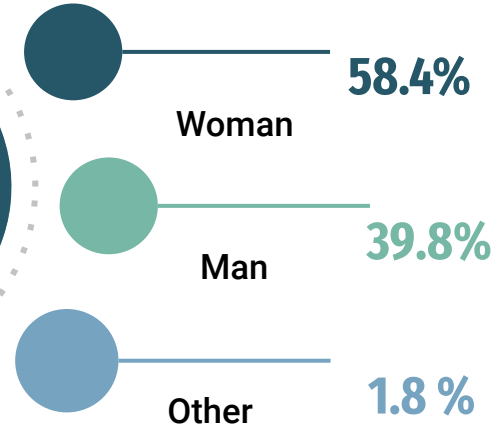
Response Demographics

RESPONSE RATE:
26.5%

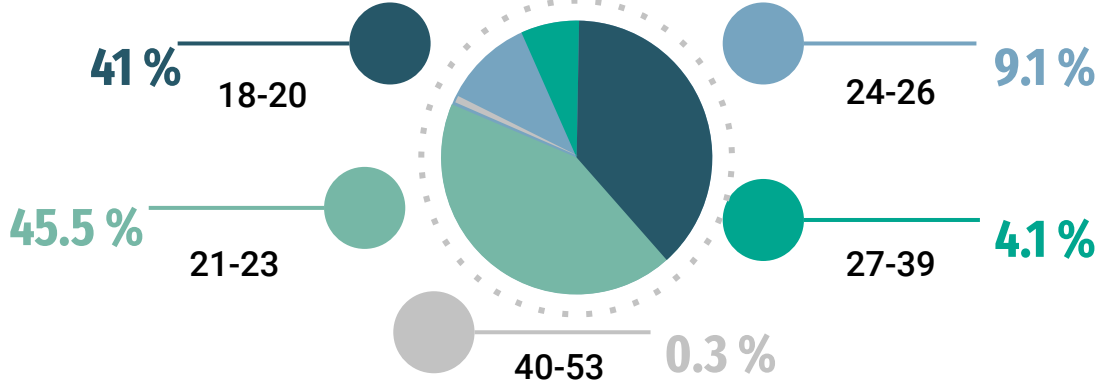
SEX



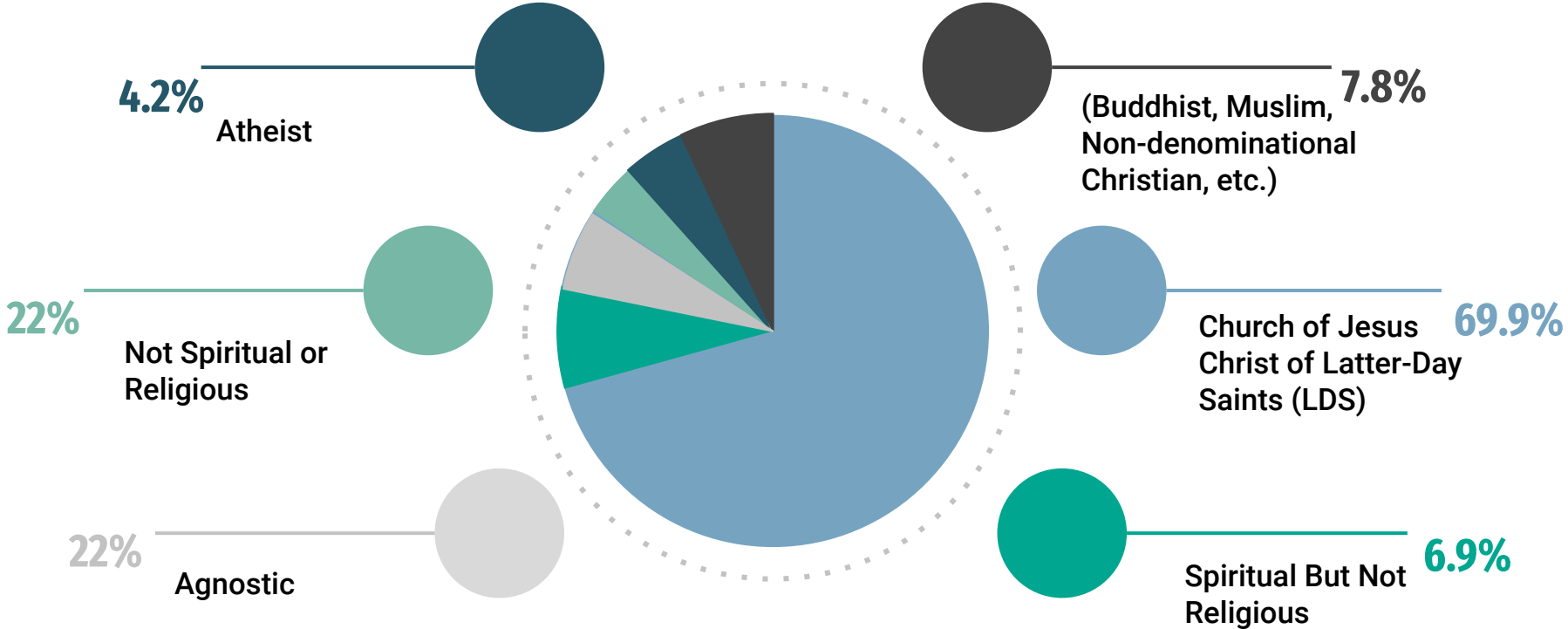
GENDER



AGE



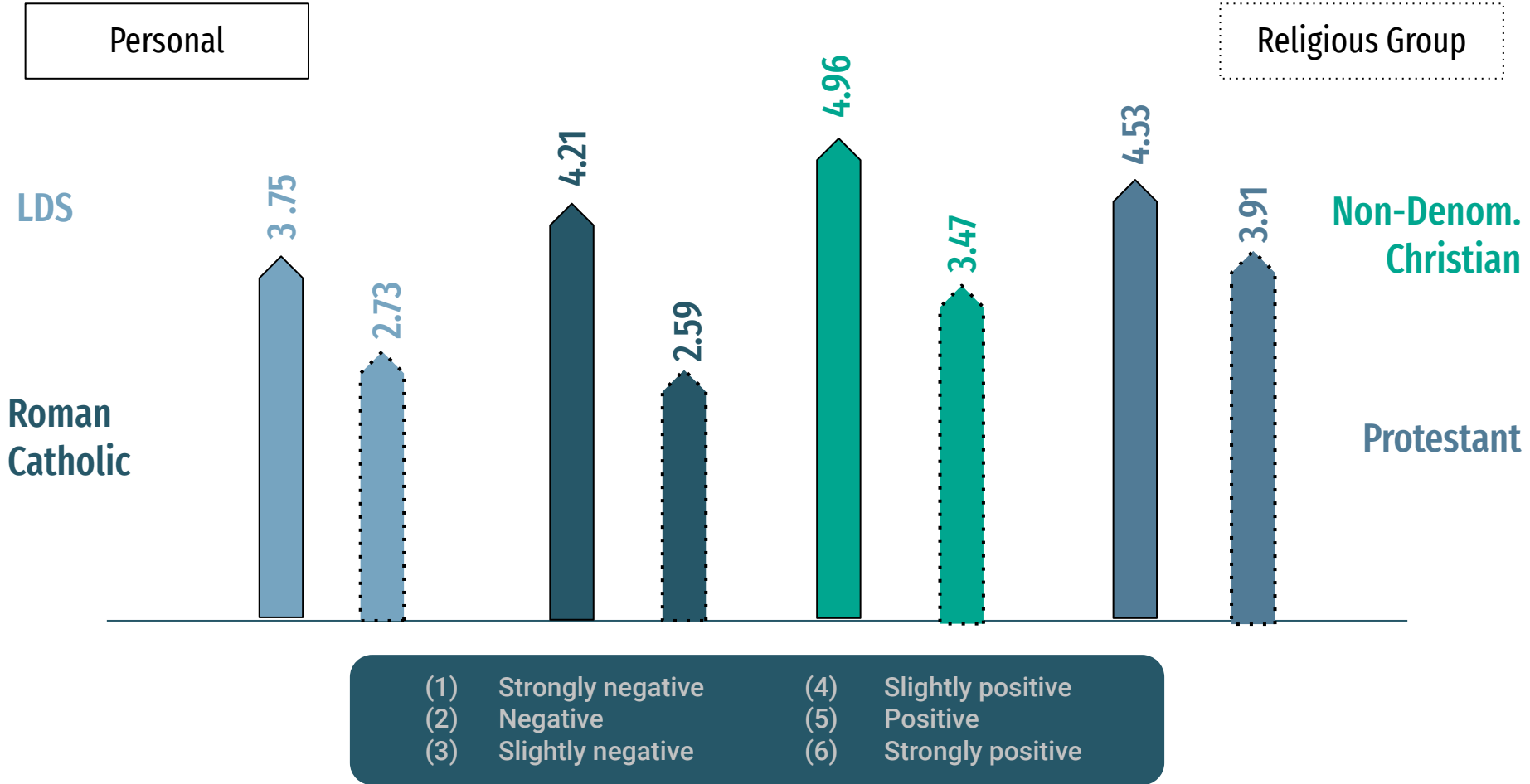
Religion





Analysis

Feelings About Queer Sexuality



Personal

Religious Group

LDS

Non-Denom.
Christian

Roman
Catholic

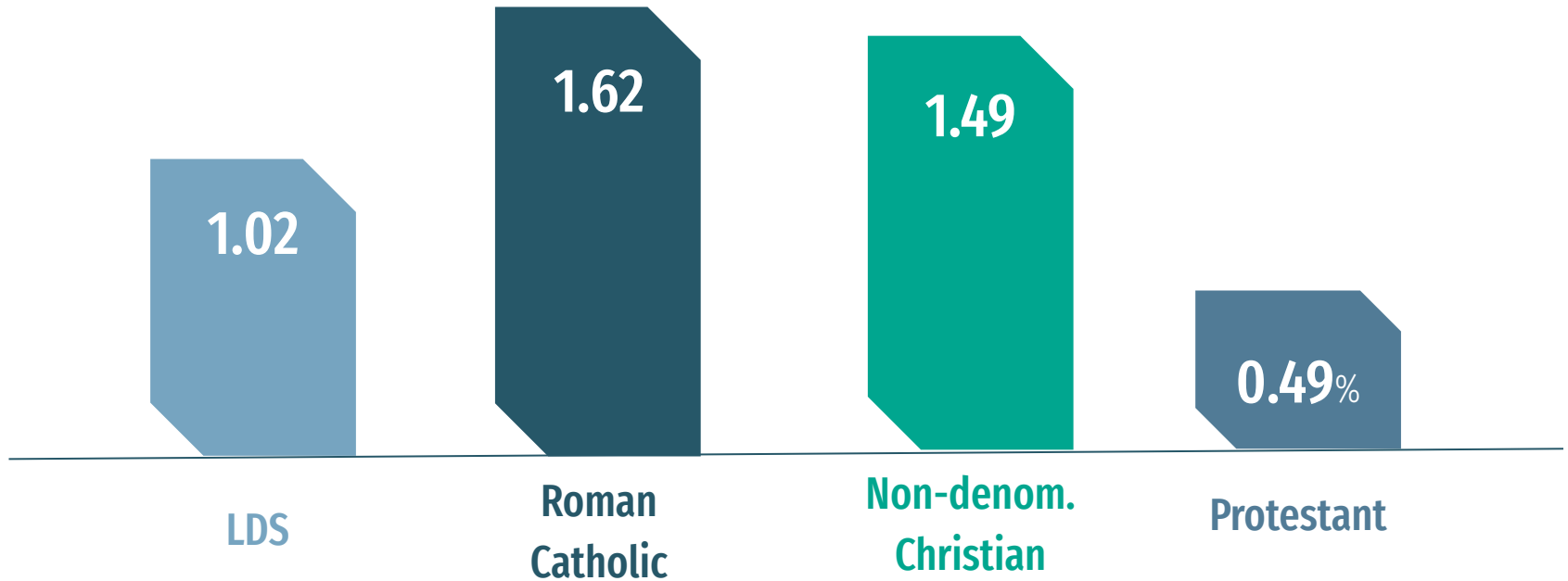
Protestant

- (1) Strongly negative
- (2) Negative
- (3) Slightly negative

- (4) Slightly positive
- (5) Positive
- (6) Strongly positive

Mean Dissonance Gaps for Queer Orientations

Personal - Religious = Dissonance Gap



LDS Feelings About Each Sexuality

Personal

Religious Group

Heterosexual

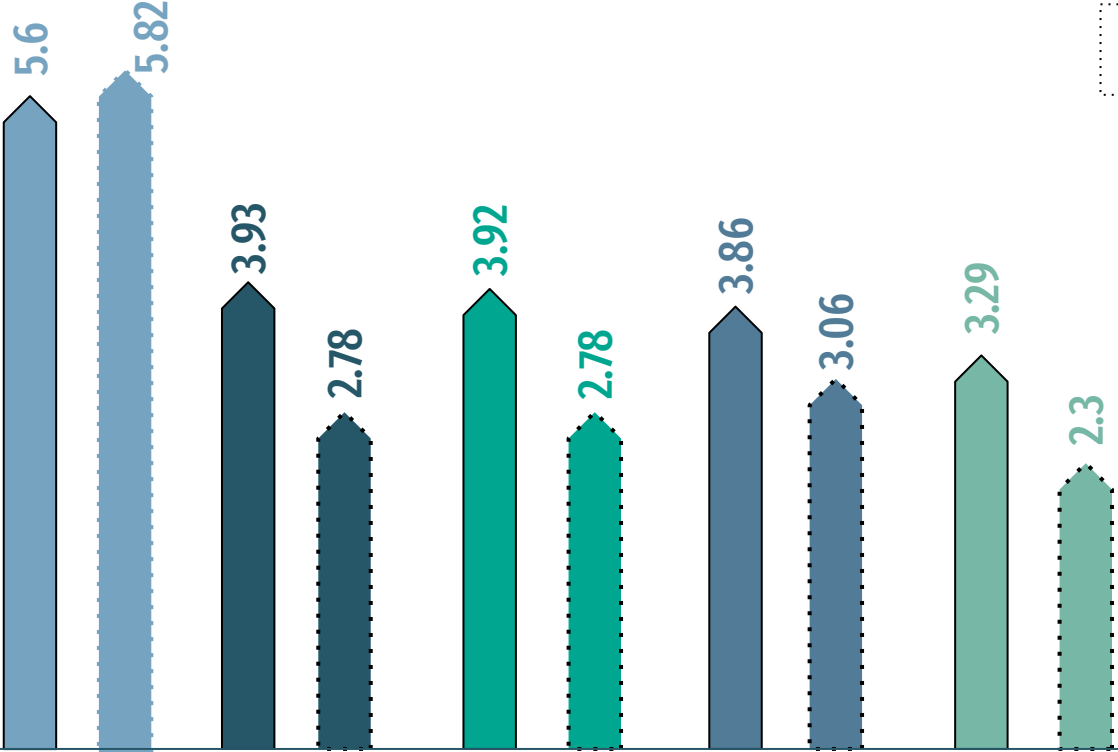
Homosexual

Bisexual

Asexual

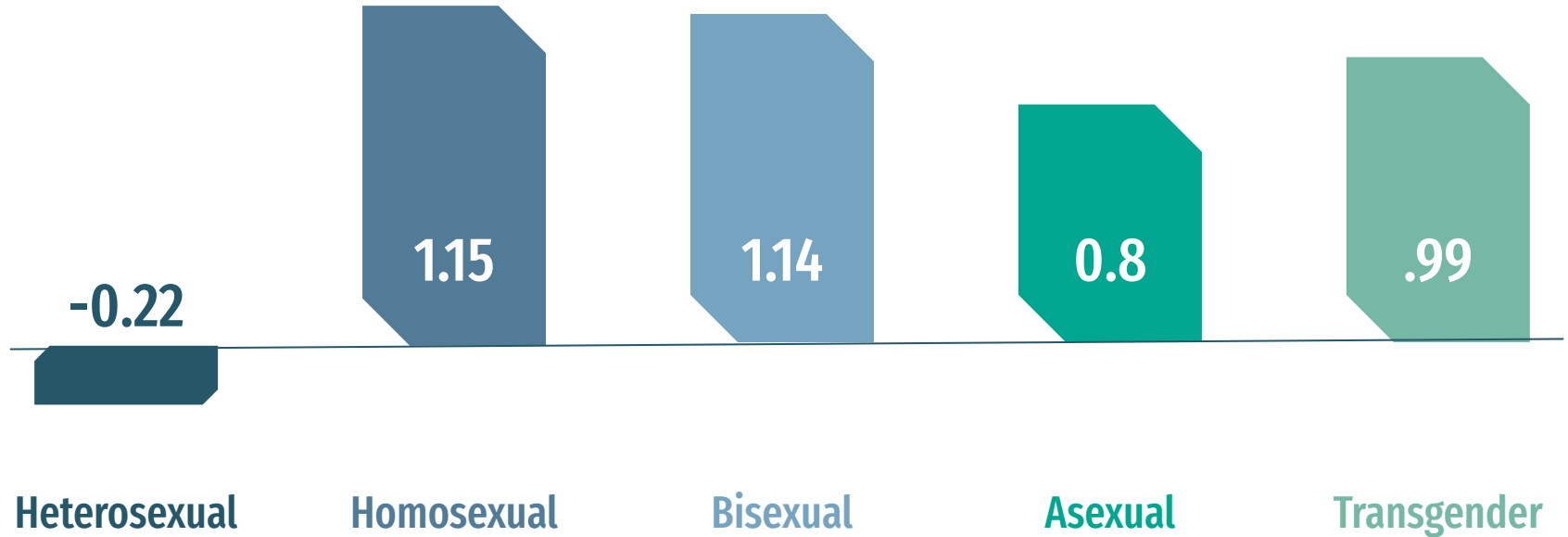
Transgender

- (1) Strongly negative
- (2) Negative
- (3) Slightly negative
- (4) Slightly positive
- (5) Positive
- (6) Strongly positive



LDS Dissonance Gaps

Personal - Religious = Dissonance Gap



Conclusions

And goals for future analysis

Let's take it back to our research question;

“What degree of harmony and/or dissonance exists between personal attitudes towards queer sexual orientation and the perceived belief of their religious institution?”

Future Goals for Analysis

- The interaction of demographics and Dissonance Gaps
- Analysis of post-LDS individuals
- Self-recognised dissonance
- Comment box content analysis
- Multivariate Analysis

As I said, we only just completed the data collection, so there is still a lot more analysis to do, and more variables to work around with. But we see a lot of potential in our data set.

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Citations

Woodford, Michael R., Denise Levy, and N. E. Walls. 2013. "Sexual Prejudice among Christian College Students, Denominational Teachings, and Personal Religious Beliefs." *Review of Religious Research* 55(1):105-130. doi:10.1007/s13644-012-0067-0.

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