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# **Cultural Capital and Attitudes toward Homosexuals: Exploring the Relation between Lifestyles and Homonegativity**

Koen Slootmaeckers and John Lievens

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**Slootmaeckers, K., & Lievens, J. (2014). Cultural capital and attitudes toward homosexuals: exploring the relation between lifestyles and homonegativity. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 61(7), 962–979. doi:10.1080/00918369.2014.870848**

**Keywords:** Homophobia; Homonegativity; Lifestyles; Leisure; Cultural Capital

## **Cultural Capital and Attitudes toward Homosexuals: Exploring the Relation between Lifestyles and Homonegativity**

### **Abstract**

This article explores the potential of cultural capital as explanatory factor in understanding homonegativity. Building on recent findings suggesting the need for a cultural component in understanding homonegativity, this article explores the relation between lifestyles (the measurable expression of cultural capital) and homonegativity. Using the “Social-Cultural changes in Flanders 2006” survey (a population-wide survey in Flanders, the northern part of Belgium), we observed that homonegativity is lowest in lifestyle clusters where cultural capital is higher. This effect, furthermore, is maintained even after controlling for other homonegativity correlates. These results suggest that cultural capital, expressed by lifestyles, is a valuable addition to the understanding of homonegativity.

**Keywords:** Homophobia; Homonegativity; Lifestyles; Leisure; Cultural Capital

## **Introduction**

Homonegativity is often explained by five different (socio-demographic) determinants, i.e. religion, education, gender, age, and contact with homosexuals (Herek, 2007). Some studies, however, suggest a cultural component in the understanding of attitudes toward lesbians, gays, bisexuals and transgendered (LGBT) people (see e.g. Ohlander, Batalova, & Treas, 2005; Osborne & Wagner, 2007). This proposed cultural component is of main interest in this paper. Using insights from cultural sociology, we argue that ‘Cultural Capital’, as described by Bourdieu (1984 [1979]), can contribute to the understanding of homonegativity. Hence, the main aim of this paper is to explore the relation between cultural capital, expressed by the more measurable lifestyles, and the attitudes towards LGBTs, controlled for the standard model used for understanding homonegativity.

For this study we make use of a representative sample of the Flemish population (the northern part of Belgium). By doing so we address an important lacuna in the literature. Although the literature on homonegativity is rather vast, there are only a few studies using a population-wide sample (see e.g. Andersen & Fetner, 2008). Even though these studies provide us with interesting insights, they are insufficient to fully grasp what makes some people more and others less homonegative.

By introducing insights from cultural sociology into the understanding of homonegativity, this study is in line with Houtman’s (2009) call to use culture (and insights from cultural sociology) as an independent variable, instead of a mere construct of ‘something economic’.

## **Homonegativity**

The concept 'homophobia', first used by Weinberg in his 1972 book *Society and the healthy homosexual*, is described as an antagonism directed toward LGBTs leading to a distain or mistreatment of those people (Herek, 2004). In the literature a distinction is made between homophobia and homonegativism (Parrott, Adams, & Zeichner, 2002). Whereas homophobia is used to describe several emotional responses people experience when having contact with LGBTs, homonegativity is used to term anti-gay attitudes, beliefs, and judgments (Hudson & Ricketts, 1980 cited in: Parrott et al., 2002). In order to avoid concept unclarity and based on our main interest in attitudes towards LGBTs, the term homonegativity (or homonegativism) will be used in this paper.

In sociological studies, homonegativity (and/or homophobia) is frequently explained by five factors: religion, gender, age, education, and contact with LGBTs (Finlay & Walther, 2003; Herek, 2007; Sears, 1997), which we will refer to as the standard model of homonegativity. In addition, there are studies suggesting a cultural component of homonegativity (see e.g. Ohlander et al., 2005; Osborne & Wagner, 2007).

### **On the standard model of homonegativity**

Several studies found religion to have an effect on homonegativity (e.g. Adamczyk & Pitt, 2009; Marsh & Brown, 2009; Olson, Cadge, & Harrison, 2006; Štulhofer & Rimac, 2009). Three different ways in which religion can influence homonegativity are commonly described. First, there is the effect of the meaning given to religion. People for whom religion is intrinsic are generally more homonegative than those for whom it is something offering security, comfort, and status (i.e. extrinsic religion) (Besen & Zicklin, 2007; Mak & Tsang, 2008). Secondly, religious affiliation is related with homonegativism (Besen & Zicklin, 2007;

Finlay & Walther, 2003). For example, Protestants have been shown to be more homonegative than Catholics (Finlay & Walther, 2003). Finally, the frequency of attendance at religious services is positively correlated with homonegativity (Besen & Zicklin, 2007; Olson et al., 2006).

Concerning gender, men are generally more homonegative than women (Herek, 1988; Marsh & Brown, 2009; Schulte & Battle, 2004). This effect, however, has been contested. It has been argued that the effect is not of gender *per se*, but of gender role attitudes, whereby people with a less traditional/stereotypical view on masculinity and femininity tend to have more positive attitudes toward LGBTs (Detenber et al., 2007; Overby & Barth, 2002).

Although most studies (e.g. Adamczyk & Pitt, 2009; Andersen & Fetner, 2008; Overby & Barth, 2002) show that older people are in general more homonegative than their younger counterparts, there are some (e.g. Besen & Zicklin, 2007; Detenber et al., 2007) that do not find a significant effect of age.

There is a high degree of consensus about the effect of education. More educated people tend to be more open-minded than the less educated (Elchardus & Spruyt, 2009; Lubbers, Jaspers, & Ultee, 2009; Ohlander et al., 2005; Spruyt, 2009). In the literature different views on the influence of education on attitudes are found (Ohlander et al., 2005). The first is based on the enlightenment ideal, i.e. more knowledge leads to more tolerant attitudes (Elchardus, 2009a). This view states that education is an experience by which pupils learn the skills to interpret their surrounding environment and respond appropriately to it, and thus refers to the cognitive function of education (Elchardus & Spruyt, 2009; Ohlander et al., 2005). The second point of view is based on the normative function of education, by which educational institutes are able to 'convince' people of democratic attitudes and values, tolerance included (Elchardus, 2009a; Ohlander et al., 2005).

Last but not least, there is contact with LGBTs, the lack of which is often seen as the most important explanation of homonegativity (Besen & Zicklin, 2007; Finlay & Walther, 2003; Herek, 1991, 2007; Herek & Glunt, 1993; Lemm, 2006; Overby & Barth, 2002). Deriving from Gordon Allport's (1979 [1954]) contact hypothesis, it is found that contact with LGBTs is negatively correlated with homonegativity. Although contact is considered as one of the most important explanatory factors of homonegativity, its causality is questioned. It has been argued that it is not contact with LGBTs that cause people to be less homonegative (the classical contact hypothesis), but rather that it is the other way around: less homonegative people are more likely to have contact with LGBTs (Besen & Zicklin, 2007). Although the causality of the contact hypothesis has been confirmed for ethnic minorities and racism (Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006), this may not be the case for homonegativity, as homosexuality is a rather invisible trait (Finlay & Walther, 2003). Next to the 'invisibility' of being homosexual, 'outing' is a factor that needs consideration. It might well be that LGBTs are more likely to 'out' themselves to a less homonegative individual, thereby reducing the probability of being confronted with (homo)negative reactions (Finlay & Walther, 2003). To date, there is thus no certainty about the causality of the effect of contact with LGBTs.

### **On the relationship of cultural capital and homonegativity**

Recently, it has been shown that a relationship exists between (mass) media use and attitudes (Elchardus & Siongers, 2007, 2009a; Gilliam Jr, 2002; Romer, Jamieson, & Aday, 2003). In this regard, it has been argued that it is not the explicit content of a media message that might influence attitudes, but rather the emotions, style, structure and 'hidden' messages in the symbolic system (Elchardus & Siongers, 2009a). Furthermore, the influence of culture does not stop with (mass) media; it can be expanded to one's general (cultural) taste scheme (Elchardus & Siongers, 2007, 2009a). Studies looking at this more general taste scheme found

a relationship between cultural capital and general openness (see e.g. Bryson, 1996; Elchardus & Siongers, 2003, 2007, 2009b; van Eijck & Lievens, 2008).

Regarding attitudes toward LGBTs, some studies (see e.g. Elchardus, Kavadias, & Siongers, 1999; Ohlander et al., 2005; Osborne & Wagner, 2007) already integrated cultural features into their analyses. For example, the study of Osborne and Wagner (2007) shows that students choosing sports as an extracurricular activity are in general more homonegative than those choosing the arts. To date, however, there are no studies that looked at the relation of one's general taste scheme and homonegativity.

The findings of the above-cited studies suggest that a cultural component has the potential of being a valuable addition to the understanding of homonegativity. Moreover, this cultural component should be broader than mere media use, as the studies on, for example, general taste and attitudes show that media use as sole indicator of a cultural component is not appropriate (see e.g. Bryson, 1996; Elchardus & Siongers, 2003, 2007, 2009b; van Eijck & Lievens, 2008). We, therefore, suggest adding the broader concept of cultural capital, expressed by leisure consumption, to the model of homonegativity. Leisure consumption, although a result of personal and individualistic choices, is patterned by something collective, i.e. *lifestyles*<sup>1 2</sup> (Caen, 2009; Kelly & Freysinger, 2000).

'Lifestyle' is not a new concept in sociology – it was first used by Veblen (1992 [1899]), Simmel (1978 [1907]) and Weber (2003 [1922]), and later reintroduced by Bourdieu (1984 [1979]). For Bourdieu (1984 [1979]), lifestyle is related to social class by means of

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<sup>1</sup> Because in comparison with other segments of life, individual freedom of choice is the greatest in the leisure time, studies on lifestyles often focus on leisure time (Miles, Meethan, & Anderson, 2002, pp. 124-125; Otte, 2004). Lifestyle is often described as "*a distinctive, hence recognizable mode of living*" (Sobel, 1981, p. 28) or "*a lifestyle consists of the bundles of activities and object that make up our lives. Those bundles have a kind of shape that distinguish our lives from others and yet may be similar to some others [...] In the journey of our lives; there is both stability and change. We call the elements that tend to characterize how we generally construct our live **lifestyles***" (Kelly & Freysinger, 2000, pp. 68-69, original emphasis).

<sup>2</sup> Lifestyle in this study does not refer to the way of living of a sub-group/cub-culture of society. It is by no means a reference to the pejorative way of describing the way of living of a certain group, like for example 'gay lifestyle'. Lifestyle in this study refers to a pattern of cultural consumption found in the general population.

one's (class-specific) habitus<sup>3</sup>. This relationship may have become looser with the occurrence of detraditionalization and individualization.

Detraditionalization involves a shift of 'authority from without' to 'authority from within' (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 1996; Heelas, 1996; Heelas, Lash, & Morris, 1996). Behavior, attitudes and values are no longer enforced from the 'outside' but are becoming more and more internally controlled.

Individualization entails that identity becomes the result of individual choices. People have, in an individualized society, "[...] the ability to 'shop around' in the supermarket of identities, the [...] freedom to select one's identity" (Bauman, 2000, p. 83). Individuals can 'choose' an identity with relative ease, but preserving that identity becomes simultaneously more complex (Bauman, 1996, 2000, 2008).

The occurrence of both processes, i.e. the decline of the beliefs in the pre-given or natural order of things and the increasing importance of individuals' choices for identity construction, give rise to the expectation that social class, gender and other collective identities lose their power to explain human behavior (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 1996). If this is true, how then can something collective as lifestyles explain one's attitudes or behavior? First, neither theory rejects the social; both acknowledge socialization, but consider it to be a complex and unstable product of the interaction between the individual's longing for personal freedom in the creation of the 'self' and the longing for security (Bauman, 2008). Socialization, thus, is both a bottom-up and a top-down process. Secondly and more importantly, testing both theories, Elchardus (2009b; Elchardus & Glorieux, 2002) did not find empirical evidence that confirms that society is fully detraditionalized and individualized. He did, however, find indications of a partial manifestation of both processes.

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<sup>3</sup> The habitus is "both the generative principle of objectively classifiable judgments and the system of classification" (Bourdieu, 1984 [1979], p. 170),

These findings in mind, Elchardus (2009b; Elchardus & Glorieux, 2002) postulated the ‘Symbolic Society’ thesis. This theory states that in spite of the expanding freedom of choice, subtle societal controls still exist and shifted from controlling the outcome choices to influencing the process behind them. This societal control – targeting the internal factors (e.g. taste, opinions, motivations, information and knowledge) steering the process of making choices – is mainly exerted through symbols (Elchardus, 2009b; Elchardus & Glorieux, 2002).

These symbols – and in consumption goods conveyed meanings alike –, then, steer consumption choices, which (in an environment of extreme consumption) are part of personal development (Laermans, 2002). Hence, consumption becomes something focused on the purchase of interpretations and self-images rather than on the satisfactions of needs (Laermans, 2002). Consumption, in this regard, can be understood as an expression of people’s ability of interpreting symbols and grasping conveyed meanings, i.e. cultural capital. The latter can be seen as the ability to interpret more complex symbols (high cultural capital), or the inability to interpret complex symbols (low cultural capital). As general openness is related to cultural capital (Bryson, 1996; Elchardus & Siongers, 2003, 2007, 2009b; van Eijck & Lievens, 2008), we hypothesize that more cultural capital will be related with less homonegativity.

As it has been shown that the freedom of choice is greatest in leisure time (Miles et al., 2002, pp. 124-125; Otte, 2004), we argue that lifestyles, i.e. the collective pattern of leisure consumption, are a valuable expression of cultural capital, which is not otherwise measurable, and thus can be used for understanding homonegativity. Furthermore, taking leisure into consideration, builds upon the findings of Osborne and Wagner (2007) indicating a relation between extracurricular activities and homonegativity. Adding lifestyles, as expression of cultural capital, to the standard model of homonegativity also responds to

Houtman's (2009) call to use culture (and insights from cultural sociology) as an independent variable, rather than studying culture as a mere construct of 'something economic'.

## **Data and methods**

To explore the relation between lifestyles, on the one hand, and homonegativity on the other, we make use of the survey "Social-cultural changes in Flanders 2006" (SCV06) conducted by the Research Centre of the Flemish Government (Carton, Vander Molen, & Pickery, 2007; van der Waal & Houtman, 2011). This face-to-face computer-assisted survey has a realized sample of 1540 Dutch-speaking Belgians living in Flanders (the northern, Dutch speaking part of Belgium) or Brussels (the capital region of Belgium) (response rate 66,3%) (Carton et al., 2007). Of this annual survey the 2006 data has been chosen, as it is the most recent survey containing a measurement of homonegativity. The data are weighted by gender, age and educational level in order to make it representative for the population of Flemish living in Flanders or Brussels, aged 18-85.

For our analyses, we use Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression analysis. By controlling for the standard model of homonegativity, in a second model, we estimate the net effects of lifestyles, and test whether the standard model holds up in a population-wide study.

### **Homonegativity scale**

The homonegativity scale, as defined in the SCV06 survey, is based on questionnaires from Dutch and Australian surveys<sup>4</sup> (Carton et al., 2007). The respondents had to answer on a

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<sup>4</sup> "Cultural Changes in the Netherlands Survey" [Culturele Veranderingen in Nederland] ([http://www.scp.nl/english/Research\\_and\\_Data/Main\\_focus\\_of\\_research](http://www.scp.nl/english/Research_and_Data/Main_focus_of_research)) and "Australian Survey of Social Attitudes" (<http://aussa.anu.edu.au/>) respectively.

5-point Likert scale, ranging from ‘completely agree’ to ‘completely disagree’, on 13 items<sup>5</sup> (see table 1). Given the high factor loadings (see table 1) and the high reliability (Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .909$ ), this scale is considered one-dimensional, and is recoded with a range of ‘0’ to ‘10’, with ‘0’ meaning ‘totally not homonegative’ and ‘10’ ‘extremely homonegative’. The mean homonegativity in our sample is 4.227 with a standard deviation of 1.884 ( $n = 1486$ ).

[Table 1 about here]

## **Independent variables**

### **Operationalizing cultural capital: Lifestyles.**

In line with Otte’s (2004) definition, we operationalize lifestyles as the pattern of leisure consumption and behavioral attitudes (such as. preferences). For the indicators of leisure consumption we include following indicators: consumption, indicators of participation in music concerts and/or festivals, cinema, performing arts, cultural heritage, sports, and membership of associations. For the attitudinal indicator, however, there is only one indicator present: ‘preference of TV channel’<sup>6</sup>. Table 2 provides an overview of all the included indicators used to classify lifestyles.

[Table 2 about here]

To identify different lifestyles we use Latent Class Analysis (LCA). This technique, comparable to factor analysis, identifies mutually exclusive latent classes that account for the

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<sup>5</sup> Because the original survey was in Dutch, we have translated the items; therefore there might be some differences in nuances.

<sup>6</sup> Although limited in scope, it has been shown that this is an important indicator for studying attitudes (Elchardus & Siongers, 2003, 2009b).

distribution of cases within the crosstabs of the (lifestyle) indicators (McCutcheon, 1987). In short, this technique searches for a parsimonious model of latent classes, wherein the external heterogeneity (between classes) and internal homogeneity (within classes) is as high as possible (Smits, Lievens, & Scheerder, 2011). The LCA analysis showed that the best-suited solution is a four-cluster solution with following profiles<sup>7</sup> (frequencies see table 3):

- Cluster 1: ‘Eclectic participant’

This lifestyle cluster is characterized by a higher probability to prefer the public and other channels combined with a lower probability to prefer the most watched commercial channels (VTM). Respondents in this lifestyle pattern tend to watch TV for less than four hours a week, and have higher probabilities to participate in all other leisure domains.

This diverse pattern of leisure consumption and this tendency to prefer non-commercial channels, which all are seen as more highbrow cultural activities, can be considered as an expression of more cultural capital (Elchardus & Siongers, 2007, 2009a).

- Cluster 2: ‘TV viewers’

The respondents in this cluster have a higher probability to not-participate (and a lower probability to participate) in any leisure activity, except watching TV. People with this lifestyle pattern tend to watch television for more than four hours and they have a higher probability to prefer VTM, whilst the probability to prefer any of the other channels is lower. As the respondents do not participate in any leisure domain and prefer the more lowbrow most popular commercial TV channel, this lifestyle is considered to be an expression of less cultural capital.

- Cluster 3: ‘Cinema and Library’

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<sup>7</sup> Tables of this analysis are available from the author upon request.

This cluster is characterized by higher probabilities for going to the cinema and the library. These respondents are less likely to prefer public channels; and more likely to prefer the commercial (not VTM) and other channels. Furthermore, members of this cluster have lower probabilities to attend concerts, performing arts, and visit cultural heritage. Their participation in sports and associations does not differ from the general pattern found in the total survey. Given that this pattern of leisure consumption and preference of TV channel are perceived as more lowbrow leisure domains, this cluster is considered to reflect less cultural capital.

- Cluster 4: ‘Performing arts and cultural heritage’

Respondents in this cluster are more likely to prefer popular TV channels (both public and commercial), to watch television for more than four hours a week, and to participate in the domains of performing arts and cultural heritage. They are also more likely to be a member of an association. Their pattern of doing sports does not differ from the general pattern found in the total sample. As going to the performing arts and visiting cultural heritage are both considered being more highbrow leisure domains, this lifestyle pattern is considered to reflect more cultural capital.

Ordering these clusters based on their expression of cultural capital, we get the following result: clusters one and four are expressions of high cultural capital and clusters two and three of low cultural capital. Based upon the finding that more cultural capital is related with general openness (cf. *supra*), we hypothesize that people with a lifestyle characterized by cluster two (TV viewers) or cluster three (Cinema and Library) are in general more homonegative than those from cluster one (eclectic participant) (the reference category in our analyses).

### **Operationalizing the standard model.**

Due to data limitations, i.e. there is no information about the meaning of religion; only religious affiliation and attendance at services can be included in the analyses. As Belgium is mostly a secularized Catholic country, our main affiliation categories are ‘Non-religious/No affiliation’, ‘Free-thinking’<sup>8</sup>, ‘Christian, non-Catholic’ (i.e. raised according to Catholic-Christian tradition, but do not feel Catholic themselves), ‘Catholic’ and ‘Other’. The ‘Other’ category comprises Muslims, Protestants and Jewish people, as they are only a minority in Belgian society (combined in one group these affiliation account for only 3.8% of the sample; see table 3)<sup>9</sup>. For attendance we make the distinction between regularly going to services (i.e. at least once a month) and non-regular attendance (i.e. never, only a few times or only on religious holidays)<sup>10</sup>. Combining both results in the religion variable as shown in table 3. The category ‘Catholic, no regular attendance of services’ is used as reference.

Gender is included as a dichotomous variable with ‘Men’ as reference category.

Because we found a non-linear effect of age on homonegativity<sup>11</sup>, we opt to recode age in 3 categories: ‘18-50’ (the reference category), ‘51-65’ and ‘65+’. As the levels of homonegativity remain fairly constant for between people aged 18 until 50, we choose this coding to keep the final model parsimonious.

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<sup>8</sup> Free-thinking refers to the historical movement which situates itself in the secular humanism.

<sup>9</sup> Although Protestants technically belong to the group ‘Christians, not Catholic’, we did not include them in this category, because in the survey this group was meant for those raised according to Catholic-Christian tradition, but do not feel Catholic themselves.

<sup>10</sup> This distinction, however, will only be made for Catholics, because there are not enough respondents to make that distinction for other affiliations.

<sup>11</sup> Explorative analyses have shown a curvilinear relationship between age and homonegativity, whereby there is no effect for people below the age of 48. As including seven categories of age (‘18-25’; ‘26-35’; ‘36-45’; ‘46-55’; ‘56-65’; ‘66-75’; and ‘75+’) gives the same results, we choose to group the respondents aged 50 or less together to keep the model parsimonious.

For education, measured as highest diploma obtained, three categories are distinguished, i.e. 'No or primary education', 'Secondary education' (reference group), and 'higher education'<sup>12</sup>.

Regarding contact with LGBTs, we computed, based on the question 'do you know someone who is LGBT' in different segments of social life, a dichotomous variable distinguishing between 'having no or involuntary contact' (reference category) and 'having LGBT friends' (Table 3).

[Table 3 about here]

## Results

Table 4 shows the results of the OLS regressions. We see that lifestyles are indeed related with homonegativity. When entering the lifestyle cluster in the model (table 4, model 1), we find statistical significant effects for all lifestyles. The biggest and strongest effect is found for Cluster 2 'TV viewers' ( $b = 1.042$ ). From the first model we could conclude that people with a lifestyle of cluster 2, 'TV viewers', cluster 3 'Cinema and Library', and cluster 4 'Performing Arts and Cultural Heritage' are in general more homonegative than people with an 'Eclectic participant' (cluster 1) lifestyle. However, do these effects hold after controlling for the standard model of homonegativity?

After controlling for the variables of the standard model (model 2, Table 4), we see a drastic reduction of the effect of cluster 2, it remains, however, statistically significant. In model two, people with a 'TV viewers' lifestyle (cluster 2) tend to be more homonegative than the 'Eclectic participant' (cluster 1; the reference group) ( $b = 0.334$ ). The same is found

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<sup>12</sup> At first four categories were distinguished, but in exploratory analyses the difference in attitudes towards LGBTs between 'lower secondary education' and 'higher secondary education' was neglectable, we opted to group these respondents together,

for cluster 3 ‘Cinema and library’, respondents from this cluster are in general more homonegative than the reference category. Across the two models the coefficients for cluster three remain approximately equal ( $b = 0.383$  in model 1 and  $b = 0.339$  in model 2). Cluster 4 ‘Performing arts and cultural heritage’, on the contrary, is no longer significantly different from the ‘Eclectic participant’, meaning that the standard model of homonegativity fully account for the initially found effect of cluster 4 (and not at all for cluster 3).

Regarding the standard model of homonegativity, our results are consistent with the literature. Non-religious/not-affiliated and the Freethinking are in general more positive towards LGBTs than ‘Catholics, no regular attendance at services’ (the reference category), as they score lower on the homonegativity scale ( $b$  coefficients are respectively  $-0.456$  and  $-0.766$ ). Catholics attending services and people with an affiliation of the ‘other’ category are in general more homonegative than the reference group, with the largest effect for ‘others’, i.e. Protestants, Muslims and others ( $b = 1.335$ ). For Christians (non-Catholics) no effect has been found. The analysis further shows that women are less homonegative than men ( $b = -0.704$ ). Contact with LGBTs is negatively correlated with homonegativity, as the results show that people befriended with LGBTs are less homonegative than those with no or involuntary contact ( $b = -0.662$ ). Our results also confirm that contact is the best ‘predictor’ of homonegativity, as the standardized coefficient of contact with LGBT is the largest one in the model ( $\beta = -0.161$ ). People with a higher educational degree are generally less homonegative than those with secondary school as highest obtained diploma ( $b = -0.314$ ). The lower educated, on the contrary, do not differ from those with a secondary education degree. Finally, older people are found to be more homonegative compared to the reference group (18-50 years old). The group aged ‘51 to 60’ scores in general 0.765 higher on the homonegativity scale than the reference group; for the ‘65+’ aged group this effect is even bigger ( $b = 1.262$ ).

[Table 4 about here]

## Conclusion

Departing from the recently shown relationship between media use, general taste scheme, and cultural capital on the one hand and attitudes on the other (Bryson, 1996; Elchardus & Siongers, 2003, 2007, 2009a, 2009b; Gilliam Jr, 2002; Romer et al., 2003; van Eijck & Lievens, 2008), and the findings of some studies suggesting a cultural component of homonegativity (e.g. Osborne & Wagner, 2007), this paper has as its main goal to explore the relationship between cultural capital, expressed by lifestyles, and homonegativity, controlled for the standard model of homonegativity. To analyze this, a population sample is used. This paper then does not only contribute to the literature on homonegativity by introducing an additional, complementary concept (i.e. cultural capital) to the understanding of homonegativity, but it also provides a test of the standard explanatory model of homonegativity in a population-wide sample, which has hardly been done.

Our results show that there is a relation between lifestyles and homonegativity. Whereas we initially found an effect of all lifestyle clusters, we did not find an effect of cluster 4 after controlling for the standard model. This implies, as could be expected from studies showing a relation between lifestyles and socio-demographic variables (especially education and age) (e.g. Caen, 2009; Sullivan & Katz-Gerro, 2007), that the effects of lifestyles are partly redundant to the standard model of homonegativity. However, as both clusters 1 and 4 are lifestyles reflecting high cultural capital, our analysis clearly shows an effect of cultural capital on homonegativity. People with more cultural capital are in general less homonegative than those with less cultural capital. This can be interpreted as a

confirmation of Elchardus' (2009b) Symbolic Society thesis which says that societal influence is mainly exerted through symbols. People with more cultural capital, i.e. more able to interpret these symbols, are thus more socialized by society leading, in the case of this study, to less homonegative attitudes.

To conclude we can thus state that cultural capital is indeed a valuable addition in the understanding of homonegativity. This observation, of course, does not undermine the value of the standard model of homonegativity, for which the expected effects were found, with the exception of age. For the latter, we found a rather unexpected curvilinear effect. Our analysis showed that levels of homonegativity are approximately equal for people aged 18 to 50. For people aged older than 50, the level of homonegativity first slightly increases (until approximately age 65) followed by a steep increase of homonegativity from the ages 65 onward. This non-linear effect might possibly explain the inconsistent findings in the literature concerning the effect of age, since in most studies the effect of age is modeled as a linear effect. Our results indicate the need to allow for non-linear age effects in future studies of homonegativity

Even though we could not include measures of gender role attitudes, and religious experience (i.e. intrinsic vs. extrinsic) and we had to use a rather rough operationalization of lifestyles (based on only behavioral indicators), our results show the importance of including a cultural component in understanding attitudes. At least, our findings demonstrate that cultural capital is a valuable addition to the understanding of homonegativity.

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**Table 1: One-dimensional factor analysis (PAF) on homonegativity items and sample mean for each item (min-max: 1-5) (N = 1486).**

| <b>Homonegativity items</b>                                                                                  | <b>Factor<sup>1</sup></b> | <b>Mean<sub>item</sub></b> |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| The struggle of LGBT people for equal rights is going too far                                                | .784                      | 2.71                       |
| All the attention for LGBTs is getting boring                                                                | .734                      | 3.09                       |
| LGBTs emphasize their sexuality too much                                                                     | .723                      | 3.05                       |
| LGBTs should not over exaggerate                                                                             | .690                      | 3.07                       |
| If LGBTs want to be treated as anybody else, they should not make such a fuss about their sexual orientation | .668                      | 3.22                       |
| In general, too much attention is given to homosexuality                                                     | .643                      | 2.94                       |
| It's not right when men have sex with men and women with women                                               | .606                      | 2.28                       |
| All the documentaries about LGBTs are not necessary                                                          | .596                      | 2.93                       |
| You would have a problem if your child would be taught by a LGBT teacher                                     | .510                      | 1.76                       |
| Male same sex couples should have the same adoption rights as heterosexuals couples                          | -.713                     | 3.04                       |
| It is good that same sex couples are allowed to marry                                                        | -.706                     | 3.63                       |
| Female same sex couples should have the same adoption rights as heterosexuals couples                        | -.698                     | 3.20                       |
| LGBTs should be able to live their life as they choose to                                                    | -.488                     | 4.18                       |

<sup>1</sup> explained variance = 44.05%

**Table 2: Overview of participation domains and the behavioral attitudes and their operationalization.**

| Lifestyle indicators                                                            | Operationalization                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Preference of TV channel</b>                                                 | één (primary public channel - general audience)<br>Canvas (secondary public channel - more cultural content)<br>VTM (most watched commercial channel)<br>VT4, 2BE and VijfTV (other commercial channels)<br>Others (regional, foreign, etc. Channels) |
| <b>Time spent on watching TV</b>                                                | Less than 4 hours a week<br>More than 4 hours a week                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| <b>Going to music concerts and/or festivals</b>                                 | Yes/No                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Attending the performing arts (e.g. theatre, opera, ballet) performances</b> | Yes/No                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Going to the cinema</b>                                                      | Yes/No                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Visiting cultural heritage</b>                                               | Yes/No                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Visiting the library</b>                                                     | Yes/No                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Member of an association</b>                                                 | Yes/No                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| <b>Doing Sports</b>                                                             | Yes/No                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |

**Table 3: Univariate statistics of religion, gender, education, contact, age, and lifestyle.****Bivariate statistics: Means of homonegativity for each category and significance level of F-Test.**

| Variable                                          | N <sup>a</sup> | Mean <sub>homonegativity</sub> |
|---------------------------------------------------|----------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Religion</b>                                   | 1485           | ***                            |
| Not religious - No affiliation                    | 16.6%          | 3.610                          |
| Freethinking                                      | 7.0%           | 3.304                          |
| Christian, non-Catholic                           | 21.3%          | 4.102                          |
| Catholic, no regular attendance at services       | 38.8%          | 4.339                          |
| Catholic, regular attendance at services          | 12.6%          | 5.029                          |
| Other                                             | 3.8%           | 5.506                          |
| <b>Gender</b>                                     | 1486           | ***                            |
| Men                                               | 48.5%          | 4.546                          |
| Women                                             | 51.5%          | 3.927                          |
| <b>Education</b>                                  | 1486           | ***                            |
| No diploma or primary school                      | 21.1%          | 4.858                          |
| Secondary school                                  | 43.4%          | 4.282                          |
| Higher education                                  | 35.5%          | 3.785                          |
| <b>Contact with LGBT</b>                          | 1438           | ***                            |
| No or involuntary contact                         | 42.7%          | 4.874                          |
| Contact with LGBT friends                         | 57.3%          | 3.668                          |
| <b>Age</b>                                        | 1486           | ***                            |
| 18-50                                             | 58.6%          | 3.679                          |
| 51-65                                             | 22.1%          | 4.674                          |
| 65+                                               | 19.0%          | 5.379                          |
| <b>Lifestyle</b>                                  | 1405           | ***                            |
| Cluster 1 - Eclectic Participant                  | 35.4%          | 3.730                          |
| Cluster 2 - TV viewers                            | 29.9%          | 4.765                          |
| Cluster 3 - Cinema and Library                    | 20.3%          | 4.064                          |
| Cluster 4 - Performing arts and cultural heritage | 14.4%          | 4.652                          |

\*\*\* p&lt; .001

<sup>a</sup> N without missing on homonegativity

**Table 4: Results of OLS regression analyses with dependent variable: homonegativity.**

**Statistics: unstandardized and standardized regression coefficients (respectively b and B); coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ); change in coefficient of determination ( $\Delta R^2$ ), and level of significance ( $n = 1362$ ).**

|                                                                   |                                                    | Model 1             | Model 2                 |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|
|                                                                   |                                                    | b<br>(B)            | b<br>(B)                |
| <b>Lifestyle clusters:</b>                                        |                                                    |                     |                         |
| Reference category: Cluster 1 'Eclectic participant'              |                                                    |                     |                         |
|                                                                   | Cluster 2: 'TV viewers'                            | 1.042***<br>(0.252) | 0.324*<br>(0.078)       |
|                                                                   | Cluster 3: 'Cinema and Library'                    | 0.383**<br>(0.082)  | 0.339**<br>(0.073)      |
|                                                                   | Cluster 4: 'Performing arts and cultural heritage' | 0.928***<br>(0.173) | 0.205<br>(0.038)        |
| <b>Religion:</b>                                                  |                                                    |                     |                         |
| Reference category: 'Catholic, no regular attendance at services' |                                                    |                     |                         |
|                                                                   | Non-religious/No affiliation                       |                     | - 0.453***<br>(- 0.089) |
|                                                                   | Freethinking                                       |                     | - 0.751***<br>(- 0.101) |
|                                                                   | Christian, non-Catholic                            |                     | - 0.166<br>(- 0.036)    |
|                                                                   | Catholic, regular attendance at services           |                     | 0.366*<br>(0.060)       |
|                                                                   | Other                                              |                     | 1.327***<br>(0.134)     |
| <b>Gender:</b>                                                    |                                                    |                     |                         |
| Reference category: 'Men'                                         |                                                    |                     |                         |
|                                                                   | Women                                              |                     | - 0.713***<br>(- 0.189) |
| <b>Age:</b>                                                       |                                                    |                     |                         |
| Reference category: '18-50'                                       |                                                    |                     |                         |
|                                                                   | 51-65                                              |                     | 0.772***<br>(0.169)     |
|                                                                   | 65+                                                |                     | 1.246***<br>(0.262)     |
| <b>Education:</b>                                                 |                                                    |                     |                         |
| Reference category: 'Secondary Education'                         |                                                    |                     |                         |
|                                                                   | No or primary education                            |                     | - 0.181<br>(- 0.040)    |
|                                                                   | Higher Education                                   |                     | - 0.225*<br>(- 0.057)   |
| <b>Contact with LGBT:</b>                                         |                                                    |                     |                         |
| Reference category: 'having no or involuntary contact'            |                                                    |                     |                         |
|                                                                   | Contact with LGBT friends                          |                     | - 0.618***<br>(- 0.161) |
|                                                                   | Constant                                           | 3.380***            | 4.497***                |
|                                                                   | $R^2$                                              | .058***             | .254***                 |
|                                                                   | $\Delta R^2$                                       |                     | .197***                 |

\*  $p < .05$  \*\*  $p < .01$  \*\*\*  $p < .001$