

Faculté de philosophie, arts et lettres

The media coverage of SCOTUS' LGBTQ+ cases

A study of ideologically opposed newspapers and the influence of the Presidential climate

Auteur : Emilie Degraux
Promoteur(s) : Katherine Opello
Année académique 2020-2021
Master en Communication multilingue à finalité langue des affaires

Faculty of Philosophy, Arts and Letters

The media coverage of SCOTUS' LGBTQ+ cases

A study of ideologically opposed newspapers and the influence of the Presidential climate

Author : Emilie Degraux
Supervisor : Katherine Opello
Academic year 2020-2021
Master's in Multilingual business communication

Acknowledgments

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my supervisor, Ms. Opello. Thank you for your invaluable help, I have managed to produce a thesis of which I can be proud.

I would also like to give a thought to my family members for their support during all these years, which finally led me to the end of this Master's

– We are almost there guys.

Table of contents

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	4
TABLE OF CONTENTS	5
INTRODUCTION	11
1. OBJECTIVES	11
2. FOCUS	12
ABBREVIATIONS AND CONVENTIONS	13
SECTION 1: CONTEXT AND METHODOLOGY	14
CHAPTER 1: METHODOLOGY	14
1. CHOICE OF SUBJECT	14
2. CHOICE OF MEDIA	15
2.1. <i>Why newspapers</i>	15
2.2. <i>Why those newspapers</i>	16
3. AVOIDANCE OF BIAS	17
4. REFINING THE BODY OF RESEARCH	17
5. TYPES OF ANALYSES	21
CHAPTER 2: THE DIFFERENT ACTORS INVOLVED	23
1. THE AMERICAN LEGAL SYSTEM	23
1.1. <i>Local and regional courts</i>	23
1.2. <i>The U.S. Supreme Court</i>	24
2. CONTEXT OF THE CASES	25
2.1. <i>EEOC</i>	25
2.2. <i>Pro and anti LGBTQ+ legislation through the years</i>	26
3. POLITICS	28
3.1. <i>Democratic Party</i>	28
3.1.1. <i>Barack Obama</i>	28
3.2. <i>Republican Party</i>	30
3.2.1. <i>George W. Bush</i>	30

3.2.2. Donald Trump	31
3.3. <i>Comparison of the two national parties' stance on LGBTQ+ matters</i>	33
4. MEDIA	34
4.1. <i>The Washington Post</i>	34
4.2. <i>The Washington Times</i>	35
4.3. <i>Comparison of the two newspapers</i>	36
CONCLUSION	38
SECTION 2 : THEORETICAL OVERVIEW	39
1. THEORY N°1: AGENDA-SETTING THEORY	39
2. THEORY N°2: POLLYANNA PRINCIPLE	43
3. THEORY N°3: NARRATIVE PARADIGM	44
INTRODUCTION	46
CHAPTER 3: LAWRENCE V. TEXAS	47
1. CASE HISTORY	47
2. SOCIO-POLITICAL BACKGROUND	48
2.1. <i>Political environment</i>	50
2.2. <i>Social environment</i>	51
3. MEDIA COVERAGE	52
SECTION 4: CIVIL RIGHTS	53
INTRODUCTION	53
CHAPTER 4: OBERGEFELL V. HODGES	54
1. CASE HISTORY	54
2. SOCIO-POLITICAL BACKGROUND	55
2.1. <i>Political environment</i>	55
2.2. <i>Social environment</i>	56
3. MEDIA COVERAGE	57
CHAPTER 5: EEOC V. G.R. & R.G. HARRIS FUNERAL HOMES INC.	59
1. CASE HISTORY	59
2. SOCIO-POLITICAL BACKGROUND	60
2.1. <i>Political environment</i>	60

2.2. Social environment	61
3. MEDIA COVERAGE	61
SECTION 5: ANALYSIS OF RESULTS	63
CHAPTER 6: MEDIA COVERAGE ACCORDING TO POLITICAL AFFILIATION	63
1. QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS	63
1.1. Analysis of the number of articles	63
1.2. Analysis of the length of the articles	67
1.3. Conclusion	71
2. QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS	72
2.1. Analysis of the “terms to use” and “terms to avoid”	72
2.2. Conclusion	78
CHAPTER 7: INFLUENCE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL CLIMATE ON THE CASE	80
1. ANALYSIS	81
2. AGENDA-SETTING THEORY	82
3. CONCLUSION	85
CHAPTER 8: CONVERGENCE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL CLIMATE AND THE POLITICAL AFFILIATION OF THE MEDIA ON THE COVERAGE OF EVENTS	86
CONCLUSION	88
1. SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH QUESTION AND THE HYPOTHESES	88
2. WAYS TO IMPROVE THIS STUDY IN THE FUTURE	89
BIBLIOGRAPHY	91
1. RESEARCH MATERIAL	91
1.1. THE WASHINGTON POST	91
1.1.1. Digital articles	91
1.1.2. Printed newspapers	95
1.2. THE WASHINGTON TIMES	96
2. GENERIC SOURCES	103
2.1. NEWSPAPERS ARTICLES	103
2.2 MONOGRAPHS	109

2.3. REVUE ARTICLES _____	111
2.4. INTERNET WEBSITES _____	114
2.5. OTHERS _____	120

EXTERNAL APPENDICES _____

APPENDIX 1 : JUSTIFICATION OF KEY WORDS _____

APPENDIX 2: EEOC _____

APPENDIX 3: KEY CONCEPTS _____

APPENDIX 4: U.S. SUPREME COURT’S COMPOSITION _____

APPENDIX 5: TABLES READING KEY _____

APPENDIX 6: BODY OF RESEARCH _____

6.1. *Approved articles for Lawrence v. Texas in the Washington Post* _____

6.2. *Approved articles for Obergefell v. Hodges in the Washington Post* _____

6.3. *Articles accepted for EEOC v. G.R. & R.G. Harris Funeral Homes Inc. in the Washington Post* _____

6.4. *Approved articles for Lawrence v. Texas in the Washington Times* _____

6.5. *Approved articles for Obergefell v. Hodges in the Washington Times* _____

6.6. *Articles accepted for EEOC v. G.R. & R.G. Harris Funeral Homes Inc. in the Washington Times* _____

List of tables

TABLE 1: ABBREVIATIONS AND CONVENTIONS	13
TABLE 2: ELECTED KEY WORDS TO REFINE THE BODY OF RESEARCH.....	20
TABLE 3: LEGISLATION CONCERNING LGBTQ+ PEOPLE	27
TABLE 4: NUMBER OF MENTIONS OF KEY WORDS IN PARTY PLATFORM FOLLOWING THE POLITICAL AFFILIATION	34
TABLE 5: ENDORSEMENT OF CANDIDATES FOR PRESIDENTIAL ELECTIONS THROUGH THE YEARS BY NEWSPAPER	36
TABLE 6: BODY OF RESEARCH DATA FOR THE WASHINGTON POST	52
TABLE 7: BODY OF RESEARCH DATA FOR THE WASHINGTON TIMES	52
TABLE 8: BODY OF RESEARCH DATA FOR THE WASHINGTON POST	57
TABLE 9: BODY OF RESEARCH DATA FOR THE WASHINGTON TIMES	57
TABLE 10: BODY OF RESEARCH DATA FOR THE WASHINGTON POST	62
TABLE 11: BODY OF RESEARCH DATA FOR THE WASHINGTON TIMES	62
TABLE 12: EMERGENCE OF THE BODY OF RESEARCH THROUGH THE MEDIA	65
TABLE 13: COLLUSION OF MEDIA AND CASES FOR THE WASHINGTON POST.....	69
TABLE 14: COLLUSION OF MEDIA AND CASES FOR THE WASHINGTON TIMES.....	70
TABLE 15: RATIO OF THE NUMBER OF PAGES BY THE NUMBER OF ARTICLES, FOR EACH CASE AND BY NEWSPAPER	71
TABLE 16: NUMBER OF OCCURRENCES OF APPARITION OF “TERMS TO USE” WHILE REFERRING TO GAY, LESBIAN AND BI PEOPLE BY THE TWO NEWSPAPERS FOR EACH CASE	73
TABLE 17: NUMBER OF OCCURRENCES OF APPARITION OF “TERMS TO AVOID” WHILE REFERRING TO GAY, LESBIAN AND BI PEOPLE BY THE TWO NEWSPAPERS FOR EACH CASE..	74
TABLE 18: NUMBER OF OCCURRENCES OF APPARITION OF “TERMS TO USE” WHILE REFERRING TO TRANSGENDER PEOPLE BY THE TWO NEWSPAPERS FOR EACH CASE	75
TABLE 19: NUMBER OF OCCURRENCES OF APPARITIONS OF “TERMS TO AVOID” WHILE REFERRING TO TRANSGENDER PEOPLE BY THE TWO NEWSPAPERS FOR EACH CASE	76
TABLE 20: SUMMARY OF THE TERMS "TO USE" AND "TO AVOID" BY NEWSPAPER FOR EACH CASE STUDIED	77
TABLE 21: RATIO OF "TERMS TO USE" AND "TERMS TO AVOID" WITH THE NUMBER OF ARTICLES, BY CASE AND BY NEWSPAPER	77
TABLE 22: ANALYSE OF THE PRESIDENTIAL CLIMATE'S INFLUENCE ON THE STUDIED CASES.....	81

List of figures

FIGURE 1: THREE MAIN COMPONENTS OF THE AGENDA-SETTING PROCESS: MEDIA AGENDA, PUBLIC AGENDA, AND POLICY AGENDA _____	41
FIGURE 2: DEARING'S AGENDA-SETTING THEORY GRAPHIC APPLIED TO THE PRESENT STUDY _	42
FIGURE 3: THREE MAIN COMPONENTS OF THE AGENDA-SETTING PROCESS: MEDIA AGENDA, PUBLIC AGENDA, AND POLICY AGENDA _____	49
FIGURE 4: THREE MAIN COMPONENTS OF THE AGENDA-SETTING PROCESS: MEDIA AGENDA, PUBLIC AGENDA, AND POLICY AGENDA _____	83
FIGURE 5: DEARING'S AGENDA-SETTING THEORY GRAPHIC APPLIED TO THE PRESENT STUDY _	84

Introduction

The following thesis is about three cases of the Supreme Court of the United States that took place between 2003 and 2020. In the next pages, I will explain these cases, one relating to the protection of the right to privacy and the privacy of same-sex sexual conduct, while the other two relate to the protection of the civil rights with the right to marry whomever we choose to – as it happened, a marriage between people of the same sex – and the right to do our job without risking being fired for who we are – as it happened, a transgender woman.

Through these cases, I will try to understand if the political climate – being the President in office, his party's stance on LGBTQ+ matters, his own stance, and the composition of the U.S. Supreme Court at the time – has an impact on the way the media reports on this type of subjects.

1. Objectives

In the academic and scientific fields, researches have often covered the way media can influence the definition of the presidential agenda. Through this thesis, I will scrutinize media coverage in the United States the other way round.

Per se, the aim of this thesis is to get an extensive overview of the way newspapers cover culturally sensitive¹ or controversial topics, in the present case topics related to the LGBTQ+ community, and the propensity to which their political affiliation, from a Democratic versus Republican point of view, has an impact on their way to do it. Hence, the main question that this study will try to answer is as follows:

Does the political affiliation of newspapers change their way of covering culturally sensitive or controversial topics such as Supreme Court cases related to the LGBTQ+ community. Moreover, does either the passage of time (from 2003 to 2020) or the president in office at the time of a case influence the way they cover it?

¹ See as defined in Section 1: Situation and methodology, Chapter 1: Methodology, 1. Choice of subject.

2. Focus

In the following study, I will try to understand if the political affiliation of a newspaper has an effect on the way it reports on subjects that are known to be dealt with differently by Democrats and Republicans. To determine the possible influence of the political affiliation and try to answer the defined research question, I have selected multiple variables on which I will base my analysis. I will thus analyze the newspapers' self-defined political association, the president in office at the time of each case and his personal stance on LGBTQ+ matters, the stance of each political party on LGBTQ+ matters, the social, political, and legal contexts surrounding each case, and, finally, the passage of time on these different variables.

I will start my thesis by explaining the methodology I chose to use and the reasons behind this choice. I will also dress the inventory of the different actors involved in the different cases, meaning the different levels of the legal system, the politics, and the media. This will lead me to formulate three different hypotheses that will help me answer my research question.

Then, in Section 2, I will investigate different theories that can be related to the study. I will explain theories such as the agenda-setting theory, the Pollyanna principle, and the narrative paradigm.

Next, in Sections 3 and 4, I will define the different cases on which I based my thesis: *Lawrence v. Texas* (2003), *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015), and *EEOC v. G.R. & R.G. Harris Funeral Homes Inc.* (2019). At the same time, I will explore both the socio-political background of the cases and the coverage done by the media.

Finally, I will further scrutinize the results emerged from Sections 3 and 4. This will then lead me to consider the correlation between the presidential climate and the political affiliation of the media, with the way the media reported on the cases. With these results in hand, I will ultimately be able to either reject or confirm my hypotheses² and, by extension, to answer my research question.

² As defined throughout Section 1.

Abbreviations and conventions

The following acronyms, abbreviations and conventions have been ranked by alphabetical order.

Abbreviations	Meaning	Refers to
EEOC	Equal Employment Opportunity Commission	Commission taking cases in front of courts for discriminated plaintiffs ³
GOP	Grand Old Party	Republican Party
HHS	U.S. Department of Health and Human Services	U.S. government's department for the protection of health
LGBT	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender	Original acronym of the queer movement, used since the end of the 20 th century
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer (or questioning), and else	Variant of the abbreviation can be LGBT, LGBT+, LGBTQ, LGBTQI, LGBTQI+, etc.
N/A	Not applicable	Results could not be retrieved because they either do not exist or they are not available
POTUS	President of the United States	President in office
SCOTUS	Supreme Court of the United States	Highest court in the judicial system of the United States

Table 1: Abbreviations and conventions

³ People bringing a case before the courts.

Section 1: Context and methodology

Chapter 1: Methodology

1. Choice of subject

The first step to define the spectrum of this study was to select a culturally sensitive or controversial subject, as a non-sensitive subject would probably be covered the same way through all newspapers. In this case, “sensitive” was defined through the following definition:

“A sensitive subject, situation, etc. needs to be dealt with carefully in order to avoid upsetting people. [E.g.:] Sex education and birth control are sensitive issues.”⁴

Taking this into consideration, topics related to the LGBTQ+ community can be perceived as a historically “sensitive” topic.

The choice of Supreme Court’s LGBTQ+ related cases was mainly motivated by the context in which the study started: the multi-media coverage of *EEOC v. G.R. & R.G. Harris Funeral Homes Inc.* This case sparked my interest as it questioned the extent of the Title VII⁵. Indeed, this case was about whether or not transgender people are protected under the Civil Rights Act of 1964⁶. This was questioned because courts had never considered the Act with regards to transgender people until then. The uniqueness dimension of this case was therefore really appealing to me.

The three cases I will scrutinize hereafter are thus: *Lawrence v. Texas* (2003), *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015), and *EEOC v. G.R. & R.G. Harris Funeral Homes Inc.* (2019). The first case relates to the privacy right. Indeed, it is question of the criminalization of same-sex sexual conduct, within the privacy of one’s home. *Lawrence v. Texas* is directly linked to the sodomy laws, which were instituted in 1830 to criminalize sodomy.

⁴ Cambridge Dictionary. (2020). Sensitive. *Cambridge Dictionary*. Retrieved from <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/sensitive>. [Accessed on October 10, 2020].

⁵ Title of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, protecting people from discrimination on the work place.

⁶ Act prohibiting, among others, discrimination based on sexual orientation.

The two next cases relate to the civil rights, on two different levels.

The 2015 case relates to the full legalization of same-sex marriage with no limits concerning either state borders, nor the access to benefits, which was an actual problem until then.

The latter case questioned the legality of firing an employee for the sole reason of them being transgender and, by extension, the protection of transgender people by the Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

2. Choice of media

2.1. Why newspapers

Firstly, I have chosen newspapers over other types of media because of their ease of access. Finding archives is obviously not always the quickest thing to do, but, ultimately, many articles of newspapers have been digitalized and are now accessible through the Internet. For the larger newspapers, many of their articles are also available in national libraries. The main challenge was thus to find newspapers with enough digitalized information or important enough to be conserved in libraries to be able to get a clear idea of their coverage of the topic.

Secondly, I have selected newspapers over television because, while many archives of news reports made by big channels can be easily found on the Internet, the workload required by a study of this type based on television reports is way heavier than the one required by a study based on newspaper articles. To be able to work on the television broadcasts the best way possible, it would have required me to transcribe each report individually, which would lead to hundreds of hours dedicated only to this task, an impossible feat given the time frame for completing this thesis. Considering that the period under scrutiny depends on a dozen of months scattered through a period of more than fifteen years, the transcription of hundreds of televised news reports by one individual on a significantly short period of time would not have been sustainable. Taking all of this into account, I thus made the choice of giving up on reporting on television in favor of newspapers.

Finally, I have chosen to work on newspapers because it is possible to do key word searches via the Internet. Nevertheless, key word searches rely heavily on the way the websites are conceived. This means that, from one newspaper to the other, changes had to be

made in order to access the needed content equally: some key words were inaccessible through the search-bar on some websites. Specifically, some words were too generic and they did not get any results or, if they did, those were not actually related to the cases. I thus had to do some of the research manually through printed newspapers for those key words. It was nonetheless still possible to narrow the research to relevant articles only.

Hence, the choice of newspapers was thus mainly motivated by the perceived easy accessibility of the resources needed through either the Internet or printed newspapers.

2.2. Why those newspapers

After some consideration given to the question of “which newspapers” to select to pursue this study, the choice came down to the *Washington Post* to represent the Democratic Party affiliation, and to the *Washington Times* to represent the Republican one. Hence, I thus made the choice to favor two newspapers within close proximity from one another over choosing two newspapers with an equivalent rate of distribution. By selecting two newspapers located in the same city, the choice should ensure that the same topics should, more or less, be covered at the same level⁷. Still, the quantity and the quality of the coverage may vary from newspaper to newspaper. By all means, this would have been a similar problem no matter what other newspapers I could have chosen. Moreover, it is one of the basis of this analysis to study whether or not the political affiliation of a newspaper is a criteria that changes its way of covering events.

If I chose Washington’s newspapers over any other city’s newspapers, it was mainly due to the easy access of both the *Washington Post* and the *Washington Times* articles, through the Internet or in Belgian public libraries. Nevertheless, my selection of these two papers was partly justified by the fact that both of them were ranked by the 2018 Simmons Research top ten news media index as being the most trusted by consumers⁸ (all types of news media combined) – respectively 8th for the *Washington Post* with trust from 53.6% of Americans, and 10th for the *Washington Times* with trust from 50.0% of Americans.

⁷ We could indeed suppose that a news related to one state could have a better coverage in this said state than in others. Therefore, choosing two newspapers from the same state should ensure the same dedication to the reporting of the cases.

⁸ Simmons Research. (October 3, 2018). Simmons Research Releases News Media Trust Index. *Simmons Research*. Retrieved from <https://www.mrisimmons.com/press/simmons-research-releases-news-media-trust-index/>. [Accessed on November 6, 2020].

Finally, as it cannot be forgotten that Washington is the capital of the United States, the choice of newspapers emanating from this city instead of any other is thus also a strategic choice. What city could have more politically involved newspapers than the one in which the political powers of the country – the President, the Congress, and the U.S. Supreme Court – are located?

3. Avoidance of bias

I have thought and written this thesis in order to prevent any bias as much as possible. Indeed, the present subject under discussion rising topics that are renown for being heavily and loudly discussed in the news, and with many confronting opinions on them – being linked to the political affiliation or the mere existence of the LGBTQ+ community – it was important to avoid any bias and maintain the impartiality of the work.

Regarding the political sphere in this study, I did not consider third parties and only focused on a Democratic versus Republican point of view as, historically speaking, third and independent parties have had less impact on the political American life compared to the two other parties. Furthermore, third party candidates usually only gain a handful of votes in presidential races, in comparison to the Democratic or the Republican candidates, as they gather only a small part of the American population support. Considering their low records in presidential elections and on the American political scene in general, it is fair to assume that third parties would also have less of an impact on the media.

4. Refining the body of research

In regards to the body of research (see Appendix 6: Body of research) and its selection, and given the fact that a case can be the subject of several dozens of newspaper articles, spread over a period of several years, I have decided that the period of study for each one of the cases should be defined as follows: starting three days before the date of the hearing⁹ and stopping three days after the ruling of the case¹⁰. By doing so, I could gather a maximum of information on the subject matters without being lost in the amount of articles.

⁹ The passage in front of the Supreme Court.

¹⁰ When the Supreme Court announces its verdict.

This choice of three days – instead of two, or four, etc. – was determined by the fact that as more time passes over an event, the less relevant it becomes to a journalist to report on it. All of the cases were also decided in June, furthermore two of them at the end of the month, and June being considered as “Pride month”¹¹ by many people related or not to the LGBTQ+ community, reporting on those cases at that time could therefore be even more motivated. In other words, Pride month could make newspapers more likely to cover more extensively or in more occasions any topic related to the LGBTQ+ community, for instance through summary articles of LGBTQ+ events that have taken place since the last Pride month. Hence, choosing the time frame of three days after a case allows it to stay in the prime of its coverage. By extension, I have decided to apply the same time frame of three days to the starting date for the covering period of the cases.

All of the articles, even those with direct mentions of any of the cases, prior or post the defined period of study, were not analyzed with the others and instead helped build the different cases’ background. This means that the final period of study for each case is as follows:

- *EEOC v. G.R. & R.G Harris Funeral Homes Inc.*: October 5th, 2019 – June 18th, 2020
- *Obergefell v. Hodges*: April 25th, 2015– June 29th, 2015
- *Lawrence v. Texas*: March 23rd, 2003 – June 29th, 2003

It is important to note that the *Washington Times*’ website only gives access to ten pages of ten articles, even to subscribed readers – thus 100 in total – so in order to be as equal as possible, I reviewed the same number of articles in the *Washington Post*. Hence, for a quota of ten articles per page on the *Washington Times*’ website, up to 100 articles were skimmed on the *Washington Post*’s website, when as many were available.

When articles matched the key words (see hereafter) and the time frame of the study, I added them to the provisional body of research. If an article was found through several key words, it was still taken into account only once. I did this in order to avoid counting the same article multiple times and wrongfully increase the final results.

¹¹ June has been named “Pride month” in order to celebrate the LGBTQ+ community around the world. This month in particular was chosen because of the Stonewall riots that started on June 28th, 1969, in Greenwich Village, New York.

In the website searches, articles were ranked by relevance rather than by date in order to prioritize those matching the key words best. In order to access articles from the time frame, I added the year of the case to the key word when it was possible. If the website did not take the year in the key word into account, I would manually go around the defined time frame and start my search from there.

I have chosen this choice of methodology over simply searching for the cases' names and dates as the newspapers' websites are not built the same. Therefore, if this was actually a possibility for one website, the *Washington Times*', it was not for the other one because the *Washington Post*'s did not take the dates into account for a search via key word.

In the printed newspaper search, the newspapers were gathered following the defined time frame. Hence, newspapers from the studied time frame were skimmed and each relevant article was counted.

I thus refined the different newspapers' websites through multiple key words in order to have a body of research as extensive as possible. Indeed, the more information I am able to gather to analyze, the more precise and relevant the results of the study will be. A hypothetical body of research based on 1,000 examples of events will logically be more precise than one based on only 100 examples.

The only exception for the key word searches through the Internet was for *Lawrence v. Texas* for the *Washington Post*, only available in printed newspapers as the website only gives access to articles up to 2005.

The key words I chose for the different cases were as follows:

Key word	Case related	Explanation
Lawrence 2003	<i>Lawrence v. Texas</i>	Plaintiff's name and year of the case
Homosexual 2003	<i>Lawrence v. Texas</i>	Old terminology now discouraged ¹²
Sodomy law	<i>Lawrence v. Texas</i>	Name of the laws criminalizing sodomy from the 1830
Gay marriage 2015	<i>Obergefell v. Hodges</i>	Core question and year of the case
LGBT 2015	<i>Obergefell v. Hodges</i>	Generic term relating to LGBTQ+ people and year of the case
Obergefell	<i>Obergefell v. Hodges</i>	Plaintiff's name
Transgender 2019	<i>EEOC v. G.R. & R.G. Harris Funeral Homes Inc.</i>	Aspect of the Title VII under discussion and year of the beginning of the case
Aimee Stephens	<i>EEOC v. G.R. & R.G. Harris Funeral Homes Inc.</i>	Plaintiff's name
Transgender 2020	<i>EEOC v. G.R. & R.G. Harris Funeral Homes Inc.</i>	Aspect of the Title VII under discussion and year of the ruling of the case

Table 2: Elected key words to refine the body of research

Five of the nine key words were thus associated with the year in which the cases took place to ensure the most correct possible search results.¹³

As previously established, it must be taken into consideration that the *Washington Post*'s and the *Washington Times*' websites are modelled differently. With the search option, the *Washington Times* sometimes takes the year of the writing of the articles into consideration when a year is specified, whereas the *Washington Post*'s website does not. In such cases, I thus had to manually go to the pages corresponding to the time period – the

¹² GLAAD, & MAP (2012). *An Ally's Guide To Terminology: Talking About LGBT People And Equality*. Issued by GLAAD & MAP.

¹³ I associated each key word with a succinct description in the body of the thesis. An extensive justification of the key words is available through the appendices (see Appendix 1: Justification of key words).

articles being ranked by relevance, there was thus no bias for a newspaper or for the other as the order of appearance of articles was still randomized.

Some of the key words were chosen early in the research while others appeared necessary after a first round of searches was made. They were consequently adapted in order to obtain this list through trial-and-error searches to see which ones worked the best to have as many results as possible, and for those results to be the most relevant possible. The final choice of key words was also made in order for each case to have three key words relating to it. I checked the whole selection of articles again once the final list of key words was validated in order to prevent any error and to make sure that all the possible articles relating to the key words were indeed in the body of research.

5. Types of analyses

In order to investigate my research hypotheses, I have conducted two types of quantitative research: regarding the quantity of the coverage on the one hand, and concerning the positivity of the terms used in the articles on the other hand.

Regarding the measurement of the quantity of the coverage, I have decided to base my analysis on three elements.

Firstly, I will analyze the total number of articles that can be found while using the key words defined in the previous section, that are linked to the subject, and that have been published within the time frame. For this, I will take all types of articles into account, no matter whether they come from the news section, the blog one, or even the opinions one. This data will be put in perspective with the number of articles found through a key word and matching the time frame, but that are not actually being included in the body of research as they are not linked to the subject.

Secondly, I will focus on the total number of pages in those articles that can be counted. To ensure reliable counting, I have saved all articles as PDF files. All pages having words of the body of the text of the article can be counted, either as a full page or as half a page depending on their length. In order to compare the printed newspapers and the digital ones, I have rewritten the content of the printed newspapers on Word documents.

As the *Washington Times*' articles were written in a much bigger font than those from the *Washington Post*, I calculated the ratio of how much more words does a *Washington Post*'s article comprise in comparison to one from the *Washington Times*. I then applied this given ratio to the *Washington Post*'s articles so that one page of this newspaper would actually have the same value as one page of the *Washington Times*. By doing so, I was able to compare the two sources of articles on the same basis.

Finally, I will focus on the given ratio of those two factors combined. Indeed, a larger number of articles found on a subject can lead to the conclusion that it means a better coverage of this topic. Nevertheless, shorter articles are usually less information-filled. Therefore, creating a ratio between the two variables could help to get a clearer idea of the actual situation: is one newspaper covering quantitatively more the subject than the other, and if so, is it valid for one or for more of the cases.

In order to measure the qualitative aspect of the articles, I have decided to base my analysis on three other elements, as follows:

Firstly, the type of the coverage: The type of coverage is meant to represent the words used in the entire articles: Are the words more positive or negative? Is there any bias pro or against the LGBTQ+ matters? Are words misused (i.e. using transgender as a name instead of an adjective)? For this part, GLAAD's guide "*An Ally's Guide To Terminology: Talking About LGBT People And Equality*"¹⁴ was used in order to determine if more "terms to use" (positive terms) or more "terms to avoid" (negative words) were chosen.

Secondly, the political impartiality of the coverage: Does the newspaper's political affiliation affect the way it covers LGBTQ+ issues?

And finally, the convergence of the results: How did each newspapers do in terms of results?

Once those two steps have been completed, I will then be able to put the results in perspective to the presidential climate at the time of each of the cases. This combination of data will thus allow me to reject or confirm my research hypotheses.

¹⁴ GLAAD, & MAP (2012).

Chapter 2: The different actors involved

Even if the main object of this research is the media coverage of the U.S. Supreme Court cases, understanding what this media coverage is about is needed. Through this chapter, I will therefore introduce the different actors involved with the cases, starting with the American legal system. I will then explicit the positions and the roles of both the politics and the media involved in the cases.

1. The American Legal System

According to Friedman and Hayden (2017), a legal system, whose main function would be social control, is composed of several elements:

“The structure of a legal system consists of elements of this kind: the number and size of courts, their jurisdiction (that is, what kind of cases they hear, and how, and why), and modes of appeal from one court to another. Structure also means how the legislature is organized, how many members sit on the Federal Trade Commission, what a president can (legally) do or not do, what procedures the police department follows, and so on. [...] Another aspect of the legal system is its substance. By this is meant the actual rules, norms, and behavior patterns of people inside the system. [...] The third component of a legal system, which is, in some ways, the least obvious: the legal culture. By this we mean people’s attitudes toward law and the legal system – their beliefs, values, ideas, and expectations.”¹⁵

In the two following points focusing respectively on local and regional courts, and the U.S. Supreme Court, I have thus the intention to explain summarily what are the *structure* and the *substance* of those courts.¹⁶

1.1. Local and regional courts

As explained by Friedman and Hayden (2017) : “The American court system is complex. Each state runs its own separate system of courts; no two state systems are exactly alike.”¹⁷ Still, the court systems have a certain logic that can be found in every state.

¹⁵ Friedman, L., & Hayden, G. (2017). *American law: an introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p.5.

¹⁶ The *legal culture* linked to how people perceive those courts having less importance for this study, it will thus not be mentioned.

¹⁷ Friedman, L., & Hayden, G. (2017), p.55.

The court systems can be seen as a hierarchical system. First, there is the lower court system that deals with the least serious cases, i.e. traffic courts, municipal courts, or police courts. Secondly, the district courts deal with more serious civil cases, i.e. manslaughter and murder. Next, the appeal courts deal with the loser of a case in another court contesting the deciding of the said case. Then, the U.S. Courts of Appeal bring the appeal on a federal level. Finally, the U.S. Supreme Court is the highest and last power in place. Its decisions have an effect on a national level.

For a case to end up in front of the U.S. Supreme Court, it first has to go through the legal components of the state it originated from. If no solution can be found in a case on its state level, the representative of the case can ask for it to be heard by the U.S. Supreme Court.

1.2. The U.S. Supreme Court

Established in the late eighteenth century, the Supreme Court of the United States is made up of nine justices appointed by presidents, and their tenure is based on a lifelong appointment. Presidents usually appoint justices from or linked to their own political party to try to have the majority on the court. This can help them promote their political party on a legislative and nationwide scene.

Among the justices, there is one Chief Justice and eight associate justices. Even though every vote has the same value, they share different roles. The Chief Justice leads the sessions and is responsible for the oath ceremony appointing new associate justices. In comparison, the associate justice having been appointed the longest inside the court will be the one responsible for the oath ceremony appointing the new Chief Justice. While there are no official defined requirements to be able to become a justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, the Senate is still responsible to confirm the presidential appointment. Thus, the Senate investigates the background and the experience of the candidate. While there is no official regulation in this regard, there are conventions in place.

To be heard by the U.S. Supreme Court, a case must have been through all the levels of state and district courts. If after its hearing by the District Court, a plaintiff is still not satisfied with its verdict, they can ask to be heard by the U.S. Supreme Court. After hearing the plaintiff's demands, the justices will decide whether or not they accept to officially hear

the case. Being heard by the U.S. Supreme Court means that the case takes on a constitutional issue.

A verdict by the U.S. Supreme Court is thus a long way to go, but the repercussions of a decision are nationwide. Whatever ruling the Court makes, this judgment becomes law. Consequently, any decision made by the Court has the power to affect every citizen of the country.

A ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court is definitive and only another ruling by this Court can overrule it.

2. Context of the cases

The three cases I based my thesis on are: *Lawrence v. Texas* (2003), *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015), and *EEOC v. G.R. & R.G. Harris Funeral Homes Inc.* (2019).

The first case relates to the privacy right. Indeed, it is question of the criminalization of same-sex sexual conduct, within the privacy of one's home. *Lawrence v. Texas* is directly linked to the sodomy laws, which were instituted in 1830 to criminalize sodomy.

The two next cases relate to the civil rights, on two different levels. The 2015 case relates to the full legalization of same-sex marriage with no limits concerning either state borders, nor the access to benefits, which was an actual problem until then. The latter case questioned the legal quality of firing an employee for the sole reason of them being transgender and, by extension, the protection of transgender people by the Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

2.1. EEOC

Representing the plaintiff Aimee Stephens against the R.G. & G.R. Harris Funeral Homes Inc. in the 2019 and 2020 U.S. Supreme Court case, the Equal Employment Opportunity (EEOC) is “an agency of the federal government, created by the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Title VII). The purpose of the EEOC is to interpret and enforce federal laws prohibiting discrimination”¹⁸ (see Appendix 2: EEOC).

¹⁸ Guerin, L. (2020). What Is The EEOC?. *NOLO*. Retrieved from <https://www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/what-is-the-eeoc.html>. [Accessed on November 6, 2020].

2.2. Pro and anti LGBTQ+ legislation through the years

The following segment is a non-exhaustive list of legislation that has had an impact on the LGBTQ+ community through the years. Still, I only explained those with direct causality to the present study. Therefore, legislation like the Immigration Act of 1917 which “used to exclude homosexuals from immigration to U.S. based on their status as ‘*persons of constitutional psychopathic inferiority*’ ”¹⁹ or the Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell policy²⁰, no matter their impact on the LGBTQ+ community at the time of their action, will not be considered.

Legislation	Year	Definition
Sodomy laws	1830	The U.S. House passed the sodomy law for the District of Columbia. This law was then adopted in other states as well. At first intended for anyone practicing either anal or non-consensual sex, the laws evolved to be used against gay people.
Equality Act of 1964	1964	The 93 rd U.S. Congress approved the act prohibiting, among others, discrimination based on sexual orientation. The Title VII of the Equality Act of 1964 protects people from discrimination in the workplace.
<i>Baker v. Nelson</i>	1971	The Minnesota Supreme Court ruled that it was constitutional to not allow marriage licenses for same-sex couples.
<i>Bowers v. Hardwick</i>	1986	The U.S. Supreme Court voted to uphold the sodomy laws.
Amendment 2	1992	The Colorado voters passed a ballot initiative prohibiting “the state from enacting antidiscrimination protections for gays, lesbians, and bisexuals.” ²¹

¹⁹ UC San Diego. (2020). LGBTQ History in Government Documents: Timeline of Documents. *UC San Diego*. Retrieved from <https://ucsd.libguides.com/lgbtdocs/timeline>. [Accessed on January 18, 2021].

²⁰ Policy enacted by Bill Clinton to allow gay people to serve in the military, as long as no one knew that they were gay.

²¹ Colorado Encyclopedia. (2021). Amendment 2. *Colorado Encyclopedia*. Retrieved from <https://coloradoencyclopedia.org/article/amendment-2>. [Accessed on January 18, 2021].

Legislation	Year	Definition
Defense of Marriage Act	1996	By defining the marriage as between a man and a woman, the public law made it possible for states to not recognize same-sex marriages declared in other states, and stripped down the same-sex couples that got married of any federal marriage benefits. ²²
<i>Romer v. Evans</i>	1996	The U.S. Supreme Court revoked the Colorado Amendment 2 passed in 1992 by declaring it unconstitutional.
<i>Lawrence v. Texas</i>	2003	The U.S. Supreme Court struck down the sodomy laws.
<i>United States v. Windsor</i>	2013	The U.S. Supreme Court struck down the Defense of Marriage Act's definition of a marriage as being only possible between a man and a woman.
<i>EEOC v. R.G. & G.R. Harris Funeral Homes Inc., & others</i>	2014	The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission launched lawsuits linked to the Equality Act of 1964 and its Title VII on behalf of transgender employees.
<i>Obergefell Et Al. v. Hodges</i>	2015	The U.S. Supreme Court made same-sex marriage legal.
Presidential Memorandum for the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Homeland Security	2015	The Trump administration passed a memorandum to prohibit “ <i>transgender individuals from serving in the military</i> ” ²³ . This was followed by a clarification stating that in-duty transgender personnel could continue serving while a study and implementation plan were under development.
<i>EEOC v. G.R. & R.G. Harris Funeral Homes Inc.</i>	2020	The U.S. Supreme Court stated in favor of the plaintiff represented by the EEOC, considering that people cannot get fired because they are transgender.

Table 3: Legislation concerning LGBTQ+ people

²² History.com editors. (June 2, 2020). Gay Marriage. History. Retrieved from <https://www.history.com/topics/gay-rights/gay-marriage>. [Accessed on May 9, 2021].

²³ UC San Diego. (2020).

Through this table, we can clearly observe a shift in the use of legislation towards the LGBTQ+ community through the years. Where legislation was mostly used as an impediment for LGBTQ+ people during the 20th century, with the exceptions of *Romer v. Evans* and the Equality Act of 1964, the 21st century legislation brings forwards more protection and support for the community.

Considering the way the legislation has changed through time and is still changing nowadays, I can advance a first hypothesis from such considerations:

As legislation changes through time to usually become more supportive of LGBTQ+ people, the way newspapers cover LGBTQ+ related topics also becomes more supportive by being more important than it used to be. The importance of the coverage would manifest itself through more articles or longer articles being written on the subject.

3. Politics

In the following segment, I will consider the different presidents that have been in office during the studied time period. By extension, their party and some of their vice-presidents will be under scrutiny too, as they also have influence on what is promoted by the president in office. The aim of this part is to determine the stance each presidential administration has had in regards to LGBTQ+ matters and, if it is applicable, the way it has changed through time.

3.1. Democratic Party

3.1.1. Barack Obama

Barack Obama was the 44th U.S. President for two terms between 2009 and 2017. He was the first person of color ever elected to such position. His terms were marked by the legalization of same-sex marriage in 2015.

Regarding this subject, he is actually considered to have done an about-face on the question of gay marriage.²⁴ Indeed, after staying pretty vague on his stance regarding LGBTQ+ matters

²⁴ Alberta, T. (2019). *American carnage: On the front lines of the republican civil war and the rise of president Trump*. New York: Harpers Collins Publishers, p.128.

since 1998 and then opposing gay marriage (in contrast to a civil union – which he supported) as a U.S. Senator in Illinois, he announced his support for same-sex marriage in May 2012. His declaration made him the first president to publicly support marriage equality. As Joe Biden, his vice-president at the time, had publicly announced his own support for the matter earlier on, Barack Obama had actually no real choice but to do the same. Nonetheless, his pro same-sex marriage position was reaffirmed when he endorsed the decision made by the U.S. Supreme Court in favor of Jim Obergefell during the *Obergefell v. Hodges* trial in 2015.²⁵ Before the U.S. Supreme Court's decision legalizing same-sex marriage, Barack Obama had still already advocated for LGBTQ+ people's rights. For example, in December 2010, he signed the repeal of the Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy established in 1993 by then President Bill Clinton.

Going further than the simple implementation or repeal of laws and decisions having an effect on the LGBTQ+ community, in 2016, Barack Obama designated the Stonewall National Monument where the Stonewall riots started in 1969 in New York City²⁶. This was the first monument dedicated to LGBTQ+ rights.

Another way presidents can support the LGBTQ+ community is by appointing justices on the U.S. Supreme Court that are also in favor of supporting the issues related to the community. It is an actual duty of a president in office to appoint new justices to the U.S. Supreme Court if one of the previous justices either retires or dies. During his term, Obama appointed two new justices to the Court: Sonia Sotomayor from New York in June 2009, and Elena Kagan from Massachusetts in May 2010. Those justices took part in both *Obergefell v. Hodges* and *EEOC v. G.R. & R.G. Harris Funeral Homes Inc.* Both Sotomayor and Kagan each time supported the LGBTQ+ matters, which led to the winning of the case for the LGBTQ+ plaintiff.

²⁵ The White House: Office of the Press Secretary. (June 26, 2015). Remarks by the President on the Supreme Court Decision on Marriage Equality. *The White House*. Retrieved from <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2015/06/26/remarks-president-supreme-court-decision-marriage-equality>. [Accessed on January 18, 2021].

²⁶ The White House: Office of the Press Secretary. (June 24, 2016). Presidential Proclamation – Establishment of the Stonewall National Monument. *The White House*. Retrieved from <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2016/06/24/presidential-proclamation-establishment-stonewall-national-monument>. [Accessed on January 18, 2021].

Throughout Barack Obama's two terms, Joe Biden thus served as vice-president before becoming himself president in 2021. Biden's history with LGBTQ+ rights tends to be more tumultuous than was Obama's, as he started his political career as soon as 1972 when same-sex relationships were still criminalized.

First calling gay people "*security risks*" in 1973 in an interview for *The Morning News*²⁷, Joe Biden voted multiple times for amendments against gay rights in the 1990s. Among those votes, those cast in favor of the Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy and in favor of the Defense of Marriage Act can be noted, given the deep influence they had on the LGBTQ+ community for years. Deep into the 2000s, Joe Biden still proclaimed his detachment from the same-sex cause, notably by not giving support for marriage equality.

Even if he voted against those multiple amendments, Joe Biden still defended several bills against discrimination and hate crime through the years. Amongst the bills he championed was the "Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr., hate crimes prevention act". Biden officially changed his stance on LGBTQ+ matters from the early 2010s. As a matter of fact, he announced his support for gay marriage a few days prior to Obama's own declaration on the subject in May 2012, triggering the then president's own reaction on the subject.

3.2. Republican Party

3.2.1. George W. Bush

George W. Bush was the 43rd President of the United States. He served two terms back to back and was in office from 2001 to 2009. He is most remembered as a president for being in office when the 9/11 happened and for the capture of Sadaam Hussein in late 2003, linked to the Iraq War, which he approved the start of in 2002.

Regarding Bush's stance on gay rights, it is worth mentioning that, in 2004, he "endorsed civil unions for same-sex couples [...]" He did so in defiance of his party, which

²⁷ Cutler, H. (September 25, 1973). Gay activist gets Biden's 'gay reaction'. *The Morning News*. Retrieved from https://freebeacon.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/The_Morning_News_Tue_Sep_25_1973_.pdf. [Accessed on May 8, 2021].

opposed civil unions in its platform.”²⁸ Still, the same year he voted in favor of the amendment prohibiting same-sex marriage, and ten years earlier while campaigning to become the 46th Governor of Texas, he backed the sodomy laws. Moreover, Bush decided to not act against the Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell policy during his terms. Overall, George W. Bush did not express his opinion much on the topic, but his actions were generally in opposition to LGBTQ+ rights.

Concerning George W. Bush’s job as a president, he appointed two justices to the U.S. Supreme Court during his time in the oval office: John Roberts from Maryland in September 2005, and Samuel Alito from New Jersey in November 2005. Both participated in *Obergefell v. Hodges* and *EEOC v. G.R. & R.G. Harris Funeral Homes Inc.* While Alito decided against the plaintiff both times, Roberts was part of the winning majority in the latter case, in favor of the LGBTQ+ plaintiff.

3.2.2. Donald Trump

Before becoming the 45th President of the United States, Donald Trump was already a recognized figure in the country. The billionaire businessman was indeed already known for the Trump Organization with the Trump Tower located on the Fifth Avenue, but also for his producing of, and appearances in, the then-successful reality-show *The Apprentice*. Politically speaking, the real estate mogul is considered by some to be a “cosmopolitan moderate on social matters [possessing] an innate understanding of the cultural disquiet gripping middle America and proved remarkably effective at exploiting it.”²⁹ Before announcing his run for the presidency in 2015, Donald Trump had no real prior experience in politics nor in the military, except for his attendance at a military school in his youth.

²⁸ Franke-Ruta, G. (July 8, 2013). George W. Bush’s Forgotten Gay-Rights History. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2013/07/george-w-bushs-forgotten-gay-rights-history/277567/>. [Accessed on May 8, 2021].

²⁹ Alberta, T. (2019), p.214.

Before his campaign and the start of his political career, Trump's stance on LGBTQ+ rights was somewhat ambiguous as he would tend to deflect questions on the subject with generic answers.³⁰

The launch of his campaign did not change Trump's stance. As a recognized Putin-friend, he defended the Russian President of the Kremlin's reputation of brutal behavior on MSNBC's *Morning Joe* in December 2015³¹. As a matter of fact, the Russian regime is known to be quite unsafe for, amongst others, journalists and LGBTQ+ people. For Donald Trump, this kind of behavior did not seem to be a problem. Nevertheless, when asked more direct questions about gay rights, Trump would still tend to keep his old habit to give more ambiguous answers to not appear more on one side than on the other.

However, in January 2017 after Donald Trump's inauguration, all content linked to the LGBTQ+ community was removed from the websites of the White House, State Department and Department of Labor.³² The Lesbian and Bisexual Health Fact Sheet was removed from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) website as well. His administration led to multiple policies against the LGBTQ+ community, such as "a law that undercut Obama's anti-discriminatory protections for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer contractors"³³, or a ban on transgender people in the military. During Trump's term, many questions surrounding "bathroom bills" or the inclusion of transgender athletes in sports also became the centers of public attention, questioning the rights of transgender people.

As required among his duties as president, Trump appointed three justices to the U.S. Supreme Court: Neil Gorsuch from Colorado in February 2017, Brett Kavanaugh from Maryland in July 2018, and Amy Coney Barret from Indiana in September 2020. While Coney Barret did not take part in any of the cases under scrutiny here, both Gorsuch and Kavanaugh decided in the *EEOC v. G.R. & R.G. Harris Funeral Homes Inc.* case. Kavanaugh ruled against the plaintiff, but Gorsuch ruled in her favor and thus in favor of LGBTQ+ rights.

³⁰ NBCNews. (July 8, 2015). Trump in 1999: 'I am Very Pro-Choice'. *NBCNews*. Retrieved from <https://www.nbcnews.com/meet-the-press/video/trump-in-1999-i-am-very-pro-choice-480297539914>. [Accessed on May 9, 2021].

³¹ MSNBC. (December 18, 2015). Trump: Putin is a leader, unlike our president. *MSNBC*. Retrieved from <https://www.msnbc.com/morning-joe/watch/trump--putin-is-a-leader--unlike-our-president-588186691983>. [Accessed on May 9, 2021].

³² UC San Diego. (2020).

³³ Kessler, G. (August 24, 2020). The absurd claim that Trump is the 'most pro-gay president in American history'. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2020/08/24/absurb-claim-that-trump-is-most-pro-gay-president-american-history/>. [Accessed on May 9, 2021].

Neil Gorsuch and John Roberts were the only two justices appointed by Republican presidents to vote in favor of Aimee Stephens.

3.3. Comparison of the two national parties' stance on LGBTQ+ matters

To understand where parties politically place themselves, it is useful to look at their party platform. As described by the Constitutional Rights Foundation, “A party platform is a set of principles, goals, and strategies designed to address pressing political issues.”³⁴ In other words, by knowing what is on the party platform, I will be able to understand what matters to the party and what does not, depending on what is put forward and what is not addressed in it.³⁵

Consequently, I consulted the party platforms available on the official websites, thus the “2020 Democratic Party Platform”³⁶, which was 92 pages long, and the “Republican Platform 2016”³⁷, which was 67 pages long. Even though I consulted both platforms a few days prior to the 2020 election, only the 2016 Republican Platform was available on the Republican Party’s website. As a matter of fact, the Republican Party decided to adjourn adopting a new platform until the 2024 Republican National Convention and the election of a new Republican candidate for the presidency.

I compared the two platforms with the following question in mind: How much does each party get involved with the LGBTQ+ community on its official platform?

I reviewed the parties’ documents through electronic skimming in order to avoid missing any information. The skimming was made by searching for the following key words: “LGBT” (the shorter and broader version of the acronym, which would capture more references than if other more precise acronyms had been used), “gay”, and “transgender”. Those key words allowed me to cover the three different cases that are the subject of this research: two

³⁴ Constitutional Rights Foundation (2020). Political Parties Platforms. Retrieved from <https://www.crf-usa.org/election-central/political-parties-platforms.html>. [Accessed on October 31, 2020].

³⁵ In an attempt to be the fairest possible, I have read through both political websites the same way and during the same day. The read-day having taken place a few days before the deadline for Americans to vote in the 2020 election (read-day being October 31st, 2020), the official websites of both parties should, this way, have been the most complete possible.

³⁶ Democratic National Convention. (August 18, 2020). *2020 Democratic Party Platform*. Issued by the Democratic Platform Committee.

³⁷ Republican National Convention. (2016). *Republican Platform 2016*. Issued by the Republican National Committee.

involving gay men and one involving a transgender woman, all falling into the LGBTQ+ umbrella. My review of the documents revealed the following information:

Political Party Key word	Democratic Party	Republican Party
LGBT	32 mentions	No mention
Gay	3 mentions	No mention
Transgender	15 mentions	No mention

Table 4: Number of mentions of key words in Party Platform following the political affiliation

Through Table 4, we can see on the one hand that multiple occurrences of the key words were found within the Democratic Party’s platform. On the other hand, not a single mention of any of the key words was found within the Republican Party’s platform.

Considering these results, I can advance that LGBTQ+ related issues are, at least somewhat, important for the Democratic Party while they are not a priority for the Republican Party.

Based on this comparison of the two parties’ politics, I have formulated the following hypothesis:

Given that the Republican Party is less openly supportive of the LGBTQ+ community, I hypothesize that the Washington Times, the Republican affiliated newspaper, will have less favorable coverage of the U.S. Supreme Court’s LGBTQ+ related cases than the Washington Post, the Democratic affiliated newspaper. This “less favorable coverage” would manifest itself through the use of more negative or misused words than positive words.

4. Media

4.1. The Washington Post

Founded in 1877 by Stilson Hutchins, an American reporter, the *Washington Post* was originally aimed to promote the values and ideas of the Democratic Party. In 1933, the

newspaper was bought by Republican Eugene Meyer and turned around so that it would “tell all the truth so far as it can learn it”.³⁸ With runs based on a daily basis, the newspaper is nowadays available in print version and in digital version through either its website or its app. It is also present on social media platforms such as YouTube and Facebook.

The *Washington Post* is renowned for having made public multiple stories and documents linked to war or to the government. The most two famous occasions for this were its participation in the outing of the Pentagon Papers³⁹ in 1971, and the breaking out of the Watergate scandal⁴⁰ the next year.

Nowadays, the newspaper is mostly known for its reporting being perceived as reliable. Indeed, in a survey conducted by the Gallup/Knight Foundation and reported by the *Business Insider* in 2018, Americans were questioned on their views of the accuracy and the bias of the media, from press to television. Through this survey, the *Washington Post* was characterized as a newspaper that “shares the quality of being perceived as trustworthy by Democrats and untrustworthy by Republicans.”⁴¹

4.2. The *Washington Times*

The *Washington Times* was established in 1982 by Sun Myung Moon and the News World Communications, an international media conglomerate, linked to Moon’s Unification Church. Conceived as a daily local or a national weekly, the newspaper is available in print as well as online, and is also present on social media as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram. Since 2010, the *Washington Times* is owned by Operations Holdings Inc., along with The New Yorker Hotel, the U.S. Marine Corporation and the Manhattan Center.

³⁸ Graham, K. (1998). *Personal history*. New York: Vintage, p.63.

³⁹ U.S. top secret study about the participation of the American army in the Vietnam war. Daniel Ellsberg, an American military analyst, send a copy of the study to the *New York Times*. When the *New York Times* was hindered from publishing, the *Washington Post* still went on with the story and published it anyway.

⁴⁰ After some men were found breaking into the Democratic Party’s headquarters in the Watergate hotel, searching through files and trying to plant microphones, there were suspicions that high ranked members of the Republican Party were involved. Six members of the Party were convicted of obstruction of justice. Richard Nixon, Republican President in office at the time, was also suspected. It was found that he used to record conversations in the oval office without people knowing about it. As a consequence, Nixon was the first U.S. president to ever resigned. He was afterwards also impeached. Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein, two *Washington Post*’s journalists, were behind the investigation.

⁴¹ Ralph, P., & Relman, E. (September 2, 2018). These are the most and least biased news outlets in the US, according to Americans. *Business Insider*. Retrieved from <https://www.businessinsider.com/most-biased-news-outlets-in-america-cnn-fox-nytimes-2018-8>. [Accessed on October 21, 2020].

The *Washington Times* is a right-wing newspaper, but it is considered that “they report straight news with a much lower bias”⁴², which could lead them to actually be considered as more centered-right than pure-right in terms of news coverage. Still, it seems that they have “numerous failed fact checks, poor sourcing, [and a] lack of transparency”⁴³.

However, if we consider the paper’s slogan “The Right Opinion”, there is little doubt about the paper’s political affiliation.

4.3. Comparison of the two newspapers

To understand the two newspapers’ links to the presidents, and by extension, to the presidential climate, we need to consider their respective political endorsements over the years. Hence, through this following segment, I will analyze three types of endorsements:

Firstly, a simple and usual endorsement in favor of a certain candidate.

Secondly, no endorsement at all. This scenario is pretty rare for politically inclined newspapers.

Thirdly, an anti-endorsement of a candidate, generally the one of the opposite party supported by the newspaper.

The following table summarizes the newspapers’ endorsements between 2000 and 2020.

Newspaper Election of	<i>The Washington Post</i>	<i>The Washington Times</i>
2000	Al Gore (Democrat)	George W. Bush (Republican)
2004	John Kerry (Democrat)	George W. Bush (Republican)
2008	Barack Obama (Democrat)	John McCain (Republican)
2012	Barack Obama (Democrat)	Mitt Romney (Republican)
2016	Hillary Clinton (Democrat)	No one
2020	Joe Biden (Democrat)	Donald Trump (Republican)

Table 5: Endorsement of candidates for Presidential elections through the years by newspaper

⁴² Media Bias/Fact Check. (2020). *Washington Times*. [Retrieved from <https://mediabiasfactcheck.com/washington-times/>]. Accessed on November 6, 2020.

⁴³ Id.

For the 2016 election, not only did the *Washington Post* endorse Hillary Clinton, its editorial also wrote an anti-endorsement⁴⁴ for Donald Trump.

That year, contrary to all the previous studied presidential endorsements periods, the *Washington Times* refrained from endorsing anyone.

In 2020, in terms of the *Washington Times*, clear and strong endorsement was made for Donald Trump. Per se, for the 2020 election campaign, the Republican newspaper published an editorial called “*The eight reasons we enthusiastically endorse Trump for reelection*”⁴⁵. By doing so, and even though the newspaper actually refused to endorse anyone in 2016, for Donald Trump’s first race, their stance on this matter thus changed.

Considering every presidential election that took place during the relevant time period, from 2003 to 2020, it is clear that, as expected, the *Washington Post* has a strong affiliation with the Democratic Party, while the *Washington Times* more closely identifies with the Republicans.

The comparison of the different newspapers’ positions considering their political affiliation and their endorsements of candidates for the presidential races has led me to the formulation of a third and last hypothesis:

The president of the United States who is in office when an important LGBTQ+ case comes before the U.S. Supreme Court has an influence on its media coverage.

⁴⁴ Editorial Board. (July 22, 2016). Donald Trump is a unique threat to American democracy. *The Washington Post*. [Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/donald-trump-is-a-unique-threat-to-american-democracy/2016/07/22/a6d823cc-4f4f-11e6-aa14-e0c1087f7583_story.html]. [Accessed on May 9, 2021].

⁴⁵ Editorial. (October 26, 2020). The eight reasons we enthusiastically endorse Trump for reelection. *The Washington Times*. [Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2020/oct/26/editorial-donald-trump-for-reelection/>]. Accessed on November 6, 2020.

Conclusion

Through this first section, I was able to review the American legal system and the different legislation that directly affected the LGBTQ+ community through the years, the political sphere and present and former elected officials' stances on LGBTQ+ matters, and, finally, the media and their political affiliations. Thanks to this research, I was able to formulate different hypotheses, as follows.

Firstly, I hypothesize that, *as legislation changes through time to usually become more supportive of LGBTQ+ people, the way newspapers cover LGBTQ+ related topics also becomes more supportive by being more important than it used to be. The importance of the coverage would manifest itself through more articles or longer articles being written on the subject.*

Secondly, *given that the Republican Party is less openly supportive of the LGBTQ+ community, I hypothesize that the Washington Times, the Republican affiliated newspaper, will have less favorable coverage of the U.S. Supreme Court's LGBTQ+ related cases than the Washington Post, the Democratic affiliated newspaper. This "less favorable coverage" would manifest itself through the use of more negative or misused words than positive words.*

Lastly, I hypothesize that *the president of the United States who is in office when an important LGBTQ+ case comes before the U.S. Supreme Court has an influence on its media coverage.*

Those different hypotheses have for function to lead the conduct of this thesis' research part in order to, at the end, be able to elucidate whether or not there is a correlation between the presidential climate and the political affiliation of the media with the coverage of LGBTQ+ related events. In other words, through these hypotheses, I will be able to answer the defined research question for this study, which is:

Does the political affiliation of newspapers change their way of covering culturally sensitive or controversial topics such as U.S. Supreme Court cases related to the LGBTQ+ community. Moreover, does either the passage of time (from 2003 to 2020) or the president in office at the time of a case influence the way they cover it?

Section 2 : Theoretical overview

In the following segment, I will analyze and explain some key concepts linked to this study. I will put those in perspective to the present study later in the research. A summarize of the key concept raised hereafter can be found in the appendices (see Appendix 3: Key concepts).

1. Theory n°1: Agenda-setting theory

Maxwell McCombs and Donald L. Shaw (1972)'s agenda-setting theory is a communication theory. It can be used for mass communication as well as for political communication.

McCombs and Shaw based their theory on Lippmann (1922)'s idea that public media make a link between the outside world and our own mental pictures of how the world is and should be. Following this hypothesis, our mental pictures are actually more a reflection of the portrayal of the world by the media than they are of the actual world. Therefore, Lippmann's work emphasizes the importance of the media. For McCombs and Shaw, the media thus tells us what to think about by focusing our attention on certain topics, which lead to the emergence of the agenda-setting theory.

In the conclusion of their joint article studying the relations between voters and the media, McCombs and Shaw state that:

“Mass media influence seems more plausible than alternative explanations. Any argument that the correlations between media and voter emphasis are spurious – that they are simply responding to the same events and not influencing each other one way or the other – assumes that voters have alternative means of observing the day-to-day changes in the political arena. This assumption is not plausible [...]”⁴⁶

Indeed, for them the media had set an agenda by talking about the candidates and showing the public how to position itself.

⁴⁶ M. E. McCombs, & D. L. Shaw. (1972). The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media. *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 36 (2): 185.

We can apply this reasoning beyond the voter's perspective. Assuredly, people observing U.S. Supreme Court cases through the media are no more actually involved in the Court's decision-making process than people voting in presidential elections are involved personally with the candidates. The media talking about the U.S. Supreme Court's business and positioning itself in favor or against it would thus also show people how to act through this agenda.

McCombs and Shaw derived the agenda-setting theory from this concept of agenda. The agenda-setting is based firstly on priming – the more the news gives time to a certain topic the more it will seem important to the viewers – and secondly on framing. Entman (1993) has defined this framing as “to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communication text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem definition, casual interpretation, moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation for the item described”⁴⁷.

This theory is largely linked to Kurt Zadek Lewin's principle of gatekeepers. According to this concept, a person or group of people decides what should be put forward by the media and what should not, depending on their agenda and their beliefs.

⁴⁷ Entman, R. M. (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of Communication*, 43(4): 52

A few years after the publication of McCombs and Shaw's article, James Dearing adapted the agenda-setting theory. Dearing (1988)⁴⁸ visualized his new approach to the theory and its different components in the following graph:

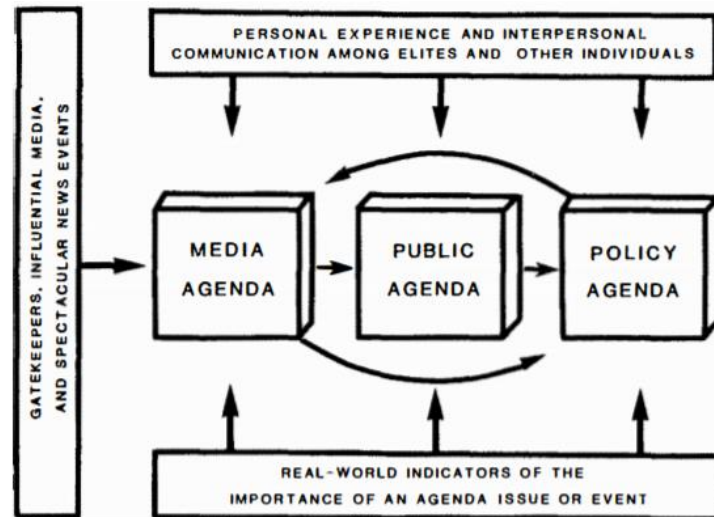


Figure 1: Three main components of the agenda-setting process: media agenda, public agenda, and policy agenda⁴⁹

The core of this theory is at the center of Dearing's graph with the media agenda, the public agenda and the policy agenda, and their interrelations. The media agenda refers to the content the media promotes and puts forward through its channels. The public agenda refers to what the public finds important. And the policy agenda refers to what is put forward by the governmental authorities. These three components tend to influence each other.

Each main component of the graph has a type of agenda-setting research associated with it (for media agenda, there is a media agenda-setting research, and so on.). Dearing therefore diverges from McCombs and Shaw as he defines the agenda-setting process as “an ongoing competition among the proponents of a set of issues to gain the attention of media professionals, the public, and policy elites.”⁵⁰

Surrounding the key components of Dearing's graph, we find the “personal experience and interpersonal communication among elites and other individuals” and “real-world

⁴⁸ Dearing, J. (1988). Agenda-Setting Research: Where Has It Been, Where Is It Going?. *Communication Yearbook* 11: 555-594.

⁴⁹ Dearing, J. (1988), p.557.

⁵⁰ Dearing, J., & Rogers, E. (1992). *Communication Concepts 6: Agenda-Setting*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, p.6.

indicators of the importance of an agenda, issue or event”. Those two elements have an influence on the media, public and policy agendas.

Finally, we can also find the “gatekeepers, influential media, and spectacular news, events” element that directly calls back to Lewin’s principle of gatekeepers. As we can see through Dearing’s graph, these gatekeepers’ influence is limited to the media agenda.

Applied to this study, I hypothesize that the elements I will find to correspond to Dearing’s view of the agenda-setting theory would be as follows:

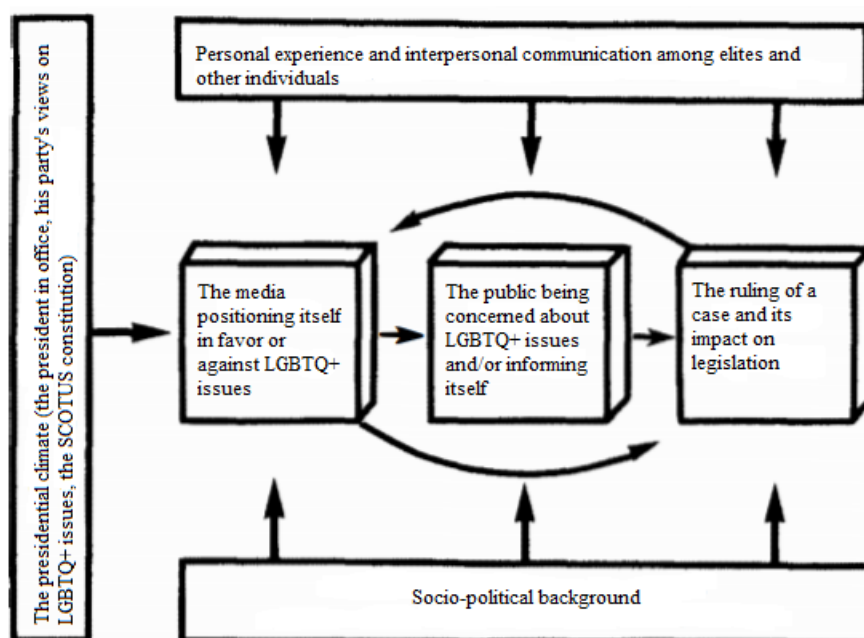


Figure 2: Dearing's agenda-setting theory graphic applied to the present study

Through my study, I will analyze both the media agenda and the policy agenda.⁵¹ By doing so, I will also try to know whether or not the graph as applied to this study here above was correct.

In other words, through this thesis, I will try to determine whether or not, the presidential climate – that is the president’s stance on LGBTQ+ matters and the composition of the U.S. Supreme Court – has an influence on the reporting of newspapers. If I can prove the influence

⁵¹ As this study does not consider the implication of the public, I will not concentrate on the public agenda any more than the strict necessary.

of the presidential climate on media coverage, I will also be able to confirmed that this presidential climate acts as a gatekeeper for the media and, therefore, also confirm the graph of the Dearing's theory applied to the present study.

2. Theory n°2: Pollyanna principle

Pollyannaish (or pollyannish) people in politics refer to people who are overly optimistic, even when there is no basis for optimism. The Pollyanna principle is based on a corresponding idea: people tend to focus and remember positive inputs more easily than negative ones. This principle, also referred to as the positivity bias, should be common in most people, no matter their gender, culture or upbringing, the only exception being people suffering from depression or being inherently pessimistic.

In a research studying the Pollyanna principle's validity in business writing, Hildebrandt and Snyder (1977) came to the conclusion that the positivity bias is not limited to daily conversations. Their research demonstrated that the Pollyanna principle can be found in business related communication.⁵²

Considering that we can find the effects of the Pollyanna principle outside daily interactions and in the business world, we could suppose that this principle could also be found in other types of communications and, as the purpose of this thesis, in newspaper communications.

This hypothesis was tested by Dodds et al. (2015) through an extensive study based on 100,000 words across 24 bodies of research in ten different languages. Among these corpora, collections of texts for language research⁵³, was featured the *New York Times*. Native speakers evaluated the body of research in their mother tongue and evaluated the words on a scale from most negative to most positive. This study showed that having a positive bias is the norm, even though slight variances may appear while considering the languages.

For the *New York Times* in particular, an English-speaking newspaper, Dodds et al. noted a positivity bias and that “in terms of emotional variance, all four English corpora are among

⁵² Hildebrandt, H. W., & Snyder, R. D. (1977). *The Pollyanna Hypothesis in Business Writing: Initial Results, Suggestions for Research*. The University of Michigan. Michigan.

⁵³ Kilgariff, A.. (March 12, 2014). Corpora in English language teaching. British Council. Retrieved from <https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/corpora-english-language-teaching>. [Accessed on May 12, 2021].

the highest”.⁵⁴ As a matter of fact, the English language was ranked third amongst the languages with the highest positivity ratios, only behind Spanish and Portuguese.

Hence, applied to the present study, the Pollyanna principle should mean that newspapers, and their journalists, should tend to use more words with a positive connotation than a negative one. In the present case, “words with a positive connotation” would refer to pro-LGBTQ+ words while negative ones would mean misused or culturally ill-intentioned words. Per se, I have used GLAAD’s guide “*An Ally’s Guide To Terminology: Talking About LGBT People and Equality*”⁵⁵ to define what the positive and negative words would be. Hence, a positively connoted word would be “sexual orientation” in opposition to the negatively connoted word “sexual preference”⁵⁶.

3. Theory n°3: Narrative paradigm

Conceptualized by Walter Fisher, the narrative paradigm bases itself on story telling. According to Fisher, all communication that has been thought through is story telling as our background, choices, and experiences define who we are, and thus how we behave and what we need in a communication. In other words, our narrative – which is verbal as much as nonverbal – upholds meaning. At the same time, all types of communications are based on who we are and what we have been through.

This theory is based on two principles.⁵⁷

Firstly, as listeners to a story and thus receptors of the communication, we need to find coherence in what we are told. To achieve coherence, the narrator must create a narrative with structure, credible characters, and a resemblance to other stories.

Secondly, as listeners we need to find fidelity, and thus credibility, in what we are told in order to be open to receive it. To achieve this fidelity, the listeners judge the story through a line of questions:

⁵⁴ Dodds, P.S., et al. (2015). Human language reveals a universal positivity bias. *PNAS* 112 (8): 2389-2394.

⁵⁵ GLAAD, & MAP (2012).

⁵⁶ The use of “sexual preference” implies that people choose their sexuality following a preference. Conversely, the use of “sexual orientation” means that people simply have the sexuality that they have.

⁵⁷ Communication Thoery. (2021). The Narrative Paradigm. *Communication Theory*. Retrieved from <https://www.communicationtheory.org/the-narrative-paradigm/>. [Accessed on May 3, 2021].

- “Are the events described really factual?
- [Have] the facts been distorted while narrating?
- [Did] the reasoning patterns followed while narrating?
- How does the argument in the story effect the decision making of a listener?
- [How important is the story?]”⁵⁸

I can easily use the narrative paradigm in my thesis as the body of research is composed of newspaper articles. Indeed, Kovach and Rosenstiel (2001) have described journalism as “storytelling with a purpose. [For them, this] purpose is to provide people with information they need to understand the world.”⁵⁹ This, in itself, thus confirms the validity of the narrative paradigm for newspapers.

By all means, it would thus be interesting to go even further than simply confirm that Fisher’s theory is applicable in the present context by putting it in perspective with the Pollyanna principle.

Indeed, while the Pollyanna principle is based on positivity, it has been proven that journalism tends to focus more on negativity and bad news than it does on positivity and good news. In his article “*Naturalizing negativity*”, Parks (2019) underlines that “For nearly 100 years, conflict, and the destruction it often engenders, has been a go-to news value in assessing a story’s worth and which aspects of the story to emphasize.”⁶⁰ At the same time, it has also been proven that people tend to remember bad memories better than others (Vohs, 2001). Therefore, we could wonder if there would actually be a greater deal of negative information in the articles composing the body of the research than there would be of positive information. In other words, through this study, I will try to determine if, in the context of journalism, the Pollyanna principle and the narrative paradigm can coexist, or if the confirmation/rejection of one automatically means the rejection/confirmation of the other.

⁵⁸ Communication Thoery. (2021). The Narrative Paradigm. *Communication Theory*. Retrieved from <https://www.communicationtheory.org/the-narrative-paradigm/>. [Accessed on May 3, 2021].

⁵⁹ Kovach, B., & Rosenstiel, T. (2014). *The Elements of Journalism*. New York, p.214.

⁶⁰ Parks, P. (2019). Naturalizing negativity: how journalism textbooks justify crime, conflict, and “bad” news. *Critical studies in media communication* 36(1):75

Section 3: Right to privacy

Introduction

According to Nolo's Law Dictionary, the right to privacy is "the right not to have one's personal matters disclosed or publicized; the right to be left alone."⁶¹ In the following section, I will thus concentrate on the 2003 *Lawrence v. Texas* case. The foundation of this case was the judgment of the sexual conduct of two people of the same sex within the privacy of one of the plaintiffs' home. This was a direct consequence of the sodomy laws. Instituted in 1830, these laws criminalized sodomy and non-consensual sexual conduct at first, but they were later diverted to only concern same-sex couples. *Lawrence v. Texas* was a direct call-back to the 1986 case of *Bowers v. Hardwick* that confirmed the legitimacy of the said sodomy laws.

⁶¹ NOLO. (2021). Right To Privacy. *NOLO*. Retrieved from <https://www.nolo.com/dictionary/right-to-privacy-term.html>. [Accessed on May 6, 2021].

Chapter 3: Lawrence v. Texas

1. Case history

Emerging during the nineteenth century, sodomy laws were not made with the intent to cause prejudice to people practicing same-sex sexual conduct, but to “prosecute nonconsensual activity and [...] consenting adults who engaged in sodomy within their homes were considered immune from prosecution.”⁶² It was only from the mid-1950s that they began to be used against, mostly, men having sex with other men. In the 1970s, some states purposefully decriminalized opposite-sex consensual sodomy, leaving same-sex consensual sodomy a crime. In 1986, the U.S. Supreme Court’s ruling in *Bowers v. Hardwick* marked the legitimacy of sodomy laws on a national level. Thus, the criminalization of same-sex sexual conduct (i.e. between men), was considered legal. More than two decades later, the sodomy laws were once again brought in front of the U.S. Supreme Court with the case of *Lawrence v. Texas*.

The *Lawrence v. Texas* case was brought in front of the U.S. Supreme Court by Lawrence’s lawyers. Indeed, after being arrested in his home with Tyron Garner for allegedly having prohibited sexual relationships together – meaning sodomy – Lawrence first brought the case in front of his state’s jurisdiction and then to the U.S. Supreme Court. At the time, this kind of sexual conduct was still legally forbidden due to the sodomy laws, implemented in 1830.

Regarding the prosecution of Lawrence and Garner, the plaintiffs in the U.S. Supreme Court case, and the reason it all came to be, it was said at the time of the arrest that:

“On the night of September 17, 1998, someone called the police to report that a man was going crazy with a gun inside a Houston apartment. When Harris County sheriff’s deputies entered the apartment they found no person with a gun but did witness John

⁶² Weinmeyer, D. (2014). The Decriminalization of Sodomy in the United States. *Journal of Ethics*. Retrieved from <https://journalofethics.ama-assn.org/article/decriminalization-sodomy-united-states/2014-11>. [Accessed on October 29, 2020].

Lawrence and Tyron Garner having anal sex. This violated the Texas Homosexual Conduct law⁶³, and the deputies hauled them off to jail for the night.”⁶⁴

The U.S. Supreme Court decided in favor of John Lawrence and ruled that the criminalization of sexual conduct between same-sex partners – and opposite sex partners by extension – was illegal. The ruling thus officially decriminalized sexual conduct between same-sex partners and sodomy, rescinding the *Bowers v. Hardwick*’s ruling.

“The Court, in striking down Texas’s sodomy statute, concluded that lesbians and gay men, like all individuals, have liberty interests in the privacy of their homes, in making decisions regarding sexual conduct, in their personal relationships, and in having the state respect their dignity and their lives.”⁶⁵

2. Socio-political background

The definition of the socio-political background around this case, and around the two other cases in their own sections, is an important factor. Indeed, through this, we can see the different variables that could have had an impact either on why the case was brought before the courts, on the decision of the case, or on the media’s reporting of the case.

The following subsections are important because they also help us understand Dearing’s view on the agenda-setting theory applied to this present study. Indeed, as Dearing put it in his graph, the external factors influencing the different types of agenda can be divided in three categories. Firstly, “gatekeepers, influential media, and spectacular news events”. Secondly, “personal experience and interpersonal communication among elites and other individuals”. And thirdly, “real-world indicators of the importance of an agenda issue or event”⁶⁶.

⁶³ TEX. PENAL CODE ANN. § 21.06(a) (Vernon 2003).

⁶⁴ Carpenter, D. (2004). The Unknown Past of Lawrence v. Texas. *Michigan Law Review* 102: 1465.

⁶⁵ Bal, A. C. (2004). The Positivity in the Fundamental Right to Marry: Same-Sex Marriage in the Aftermath of Lawrence v. Texas. *Minnesota Law Review* 88: 1208-1209.

⁶⁶ Dearing, J. (1988), p.557.

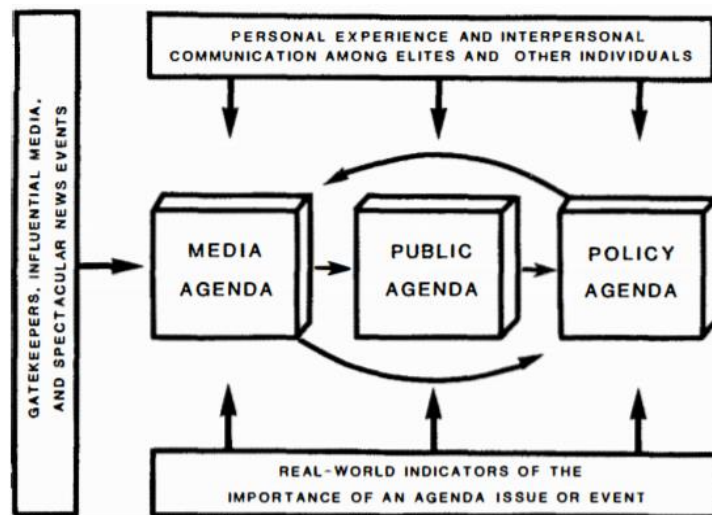


Figure 3: Three main components of the agenda-setting process: media agenda, public agenda, and policy agenda⁶⁷

While it is not possible in this present thesis to study the “personal experience and interpersonal communication among elites and other individuals” as it is not among the information that I was able to gather given the focus of my thesis, we can still define the two other types of influence.

In the following points, and the corresponding points for the other two cases, I will thus define the “gatekeepers, influential media, and spectacular news events” that can be correlated to the study under “Political environment”. I will go through the president and his affiliates’ stance on LGBTQ+ matters and the composition of the U.S. Supreme Court at the time. I will also correlate the political environment to any “spectacular events” that may have occurred. This section thus goes deeper than a simple consideration of which president was in office at the time of a case.

In the social background, I will explicit the “real-world indicators of the importance of an agenda, issue or event”. This means that I will put forward elements that are linked to the way people perceived the LGBTQ+ community at a given time in history, and things that may have influenced either the way the case was ruled by the U.S. Supreme Court, or the way it was reported by the media.

⁶⁷ Dearing, J. (1988), p.557.

Finally, I will explain in a larger measure the “media” part. Indeed, through the exposition of the data raised from the body of research (see Appendix 6 : Body of research), I will begin defining the media agenda that, for Dearing, influences the public agenda and the policy agenda, while being influenced by the said policy agenda.

2.1. Political environment

The first U.S. presidential election of the 21st century was quite different from all the others. With a lead difference of only 537 votes out of the nearly 6 million votes cast in the most southeastern state of the United States, the 25 electoral votes of Florida went to Georges W. Bush, the Republican candidate, giving him the win of the election. The difference was so slight that a recount was required by the state law. The results were even more contested since the national popular vote had been won by Al Gore, the Democratic candidate, by half a million of votes in total. A recount asked by the Supreme Court of Florida was appealed by Bush, leading the case to end up in front of the national Supreme Court. With a 5-4 in favor of the Republican Party, Georges W. Bush took on the position of president, succeeding the Democrat Bill Clinton. In an interview conducted by the website History, historian Andrew E. Busch explained that, after that widely disputed election, “Democrats saw Bush as a president who snuck in by the good graces of the Supreme Court [...]”⁶⁸. This demonstrates how important the U.S. Supreme Court is in the country, but also that its political composition seems to be a determining factor when it is voting, in the eye of the public.

Regarding the composition of the said U.S. Supreme Court at the time, six out of the nine justices had been appointed by Republican presidents (see Appendix 4: U.S. Supreme Court’s composition). Still, with a 6-3 majority in *Lawrence v. Texas*, the U.S. Supreme Court voted in favor to overrule *Bowers v. Hardwick* as unconstitutional, which led to the decriminalization of sodomy between consenting adults, no matter their sexual orientation.

⁶⁸ Kennedy, L. (2020). How the 2000 Election Came Down to a Supreme Court Decision. *History*. Retrieved from <https://www.history.com/news/2000-election-bush-gore-votes-supreme-court>. [Accessed on May 2, 2021].

2.2. Social environment

While the website “LGBTQ History” calls the years 1975 to 2000 “The Conservative Resurgence”⁶⁹ against LGBTQ+ people and movements, notably because of events such as “Save Our Children”⁷⁰, the assassination of Harvey Milk⁷¹, the Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell policy, or the murder of Matthew Shepard⁷², the early 2000s and the following years seem to mark a new era when it came to gay rights in the United States. With an increasing number of legal decisions helping LGBTQ+ people or striking down out-of-date discriminatory laws, a transformation seems to be happening. Still, during the early years of the 21st century, the changes were still mostly hesitant, but they do seem to have paved a way.

Nonetheless, with the AIDS epidemic peaking in 1995 in the United States⁷³, many LGBTQ+ people still had it pretty hard and only a few actually seemed to come out of the closet in all aspects of their lives during the years right before and after 2000. The fear of being targeted was still lingering with laws like the sodomy laws still being in place up to that point. Indeed, “The loss before the Supreme Court in *Bowers v. Hardwick* dealt a devastating blow to the gay community in the US.”⁷⁴ While critics might presume that it was more dramatization than the actual reality, researchers like Carpenter (2004) have demonstrated the insidiousness of such laws: “The Texas law, like other sodomy laws around the country, initially applied to certain acts, regardless of the sex of the people involved in the act. It was only through a process of specification (Hunter, N. 1992) that it came to be aimed at certain people engaged in certain acts.”⁷⁵

⁶⁹ LGBTQ History. (2021).

⁷⁰ A 1977 coalition, led by American singer Anita Bryant, against a county decision to ban discrimination based on sexual orientation. Bryant complained that the non-discrimination ordinance was against her right to educate her children in accordance to Christian morality. The ordinance was repealed by popular vote the same year before being put back in 1998.

⁷¹ Milk was assassinated in 1978 by Dan White. Milk was the first major to be elected while being known as being gay, many believe that his sexual orientation was linked to his assassination.

⁷² Matthew Shepard was a 21 years old Wyoming student. His murder in 1998 is known as one of the most brutal and worst murder based on sexual orientation in the United States. His murder alongside to James Byrd, Jr.’s murder based on racism, led to “The Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr., hate crimes prevention act of 2009”.

⁷³ Osmond, D. H. (March, 2003). Epidemiology of HIV/AIDS in the United States. HIV InSite. Retrieved from <http://hivinsite.ucsf.edu/InSite?page=kb-01-03#:~:text=Since%20the%20incubation%20period%20of,rapid%20increase%20in%20AIDS%20diagnoses..>

[Accessed on May 13, 2021].

⁷⁴ Weinmeyer, D. (2014).

⁷⁵ Carpenter, D. (2004), p.1468.

3. Media coverage

For this case, the search for articles was focused on the key words “Sodomy law”, “Homosexual 2003”, and “Lawrence 2003”.

The data emerging from the body of research corresponding to the *Washington Post* is as follows:

Number of approved articles	Number of pages as in the newspaper	Number of pages after weighting ⁷⁶	Number of occurrences of “terms to use”	Number of occurrence of “terms to avoid”
5	11.5	23	4	6

Table 6: Body of research data for the *Washington Post*

The data emerging from the body of research corresponding to the *Washington Times* is as follows:

Number of approved articles	Number of pages as in the newspaper	Number of pages after weighting	Number of occurrences of “terms to use”	Number of occurrence of “terms to avoid”
5	12.5	12.5	1	2

Table 7: Body of research data for the *Washington Times*

By putting the two tables in comparison, we can see that for the same number of articles approved for the two newspapers, the weighted number of pages is more important for the *Washington Post* than for the *Washington Times*. Nonetheless, there also is a higher propensity to use “terms to avoid” as well as “terms to use” for the former newspaper in comparison to the latter.

⁷⁶ The number of pages of the articles confirmed were weighted in order to have a relevant comparison. Indeed, as the *Washington Times* uses a larger font, it needs fewer words in order to fill a page. A comparison without weighting the results would thus be pointless as the two newspapers do not need to write as much to fill a page.

Section 4: Civil rights

Introduction

As defined by NOLO's law dictionary, the civil rights are:

“Rights guaranteed by the Bill of Rights, the 13th and the 14th, 15th and 19th Amendments to the Constitution. Civil rights include civil liberties (such as the freedom of speech, press, assembly, and religion), as well as due process, the right to vote, equal and fair treatment by law enforcement and the courts, and the opportunity to enjoy the benefits of a democratic society, such as equal access to public schools, recreation, transportation, public facilities, and housing.”⁷⁷

In this section, I will explore how the civil rights of the LGBTQ+ community were attacked twice, and thus how the cases concerning these rights were brought before the U.S. Supreme Court. In the present case, on the one hand it is a question of freedom to marry for all, and on the other hand it is about protection against discrimination in a professional context.

⁷⁷ NOLO. (2021). Civil Rights. *NOLO*. Retrieved from <https://www.nolo.com/dictionary/civil-rights-term.html>. [Accessed on May 8, 2021].

Chapter 4: Obergefell v. Hodges

1. Case history

The legal fight for same-sex marriage in the United States emerged for the first time in 1970 when Richard Baker and his partner James McConnell, from Minnesota, tried to get a marriage license. In the wake of their request being denied, they took the problem to their state's Supreme Court. After losing their case, they tried to go in front of the U.S. Supreme Court, but were denied the hearing.⁷⁸ This kind of story repeated itself through the years and throughout the country.

When it became possible to get married in some states for people of the same sex, other problems arose. Indeed, in 1996, Bill Clinton passed the Defense of Marriage Act. This act, by defining the marriage as between a man and a woman, made it possible for states to not recognize same-sex marriages declared in other states and denied married same-sex couples any federal benefits.⁷⁹

This definition of a marriage as being between a man and a woman was struck down by the U.S. Supreme Court's *United States v. Windsor* case. This case was brought by Edith Windsor. As it happened, she and her wife, Thea Spyer, had gotten married in Canada in 2007. Following the death of Spyer in 2009, Windsor could not recover the estate her wife had left her without having to pay a huge inheritance tax because the United States did not recognize their union on the sole basis that they were two women.

Regarding the *Obergefell v. Hodges* case, the question was thus not about the marriage in itself as this had already been settled down in *United States v. Windsor* in 2012. Indeed, it was question of the recognition of marriage having been performed in other states, in the present case a marriage having taken place in Maryland while the couple lived in Ohio. Indeed, after 20 years together, Jim Obergefell and his partner, John Arthur, got married in July 2013 in Maryland. John Arthur died of ALS⁸⁰, a progressive disease of the nervous system, three months after their marriage. A problem arose when Obergefell wanted to write

⁷⁸ History.com editors. (June 2, 2020). Gay Marriage. History. Retrieved from <https://www.history.com/topics/gay-rights/gay-marriage>. [Accessed on May 9, 2021].

⁷⁹ Id.

⁸⁰ Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis

his name on his husband's death certificate as the surviving spouse. Their home state, the state of Ohio, did not recognize same-sex unions and, therefore, did not allow the addition to the death certificate.⁸¹

2. Socio-political background

2.1. Political environment

In early 2011, Barack Obama and his administration announced that they would no longer support the Defense of Marriage Act. As a matter of fact, Robert Gibbs, his then-press secretary explained that: "The president believes [...] that this is a law that should not exist and should be repealed."⁸² The next year, Obama officially announced his support for same-sex marriage in an interview with ABCNews.⁸³

In 2012 again, the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the portion of this Act defining marriage as being solely between a man and a woman. Still, if same-sex marriages were to be performed outside a state border, the said state could choose to not recognize the union.

These events are the proof that some advancements were made regarding LGBTQ+ rights and their perception throughout the years, but those were still not enough to reach the same level of rights heterosexual people benefited.

Among the things that shaped the Americans' perspective that led to the passage of the same-sex marriage act, the history of the U.S. Supreme Court cases cannot be ignored. Indeed, without *Bowers v. Hardwick*, and later *Lawrence v. Texas* that overruled the former, a positive outcome for *Obergefell v. Hodges* would most certainly have never been possible. As Ball (2004) wrote:

"*Lawrence* is helpful to those who argue that the right to marry, as protected by the Due Process Clause, includes within its ambit couples of the same gender because the

⁸¹ Rosenwald, M. S. (April 6, 2015). How Jim Obergefell became the face of the Supreme Court gay marriage case. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/how-jim-obergefell-became-the-face-of-the-supreme-court-gay-marriage-case/2015/04/06/3740433c-d958-11e4-b3f2-607bd612aeac_story.html. [Accessed on May 9, 2021].

⁸² Office of the Press Secretary. (January 18, 2011). Press Briefing by Press Secretary Robert Gibbs, 1/18/2011. *Obama White House Archives*. Retrieved from <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/01/18/press-briefing-press-secretary-robert-gibbs-1182011>. [Accessed on May 9, 2021].

⁸³ ABCNews. (May 9, 2012). Archival video: President Obama Announces His Support for Same Sex Marriage in 2012. ABCNews. Retrieved from <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/video/archival-video-president-obama-announces-support-sex-marriage-44652180>. [Accessed on May 9, 2021].

opinion removes an important obstacle that has stood in the way of that argument, namely, that as long as the state was free to criminalize same-gender sexual conduct under *Bowers v. Hardwick*, it was also free to refuse to recognize the personal relationships that often accompany the underlying criminal acts.”⁸⁴

In other words, once same-sex sexual relationships were legally recognized the same way as opposite-sex sexual relationships, making a difference between committed opposite-sex relationships that qualify as marital and committed same-sex relationships that cannot, constitutes discrimination (Koppelman, 1994).⁸⁵ Therefore, there cannot be any recognition of same-sex marriage if there is no recognition of same-sex sexual relationships.

Considering the impact of the previous U.S. Supreme Court cases, we can bring forward the importance of said Court and of its composition again. With a 5-4 majority, the 2015 U.S. Supreme Court ruled in favor of the legalization of marriage for people of the same sex (see Appendix 4: U.S. Supreme Court’s composition).

At the time of the decision, justices appointed by Republican presidents were in majority (five out of the nine), yet the majority of the Court still decided in favor of legalizing gay marriage. Furthermore, we can observe that, for the justices who took part in both the *Lawrence v. Texas* and *Obergefell v. Hodges* rulings, their decisions were the same in both cases. In other words, justices Antonin Scalia and Clarence Thomas ruled twice against the pro-LGBTQ+ legislation, while justice Anthony Kennedy ruled twice in favor, yet all three of them were appointed by Republican presidents.

2.2. Social environment

The importance of a president in office supporting something such as gay marriage cannot be diminished. It is indeed a proof of a change of social customs and it can be a way to influence people by putting something forward on his agenda. These variables can thus have an influence on the public and its way of thinking. For instance, “in 2004, 60 percent of Americans opposed same-sex marriage, with just 31 percent approving, according to Pew. By

⁸⁴ Ball. A. C. (2004), p.1185.

⁸⁵ Koppelman, A. (1994). Why Discrimination Against Lesbians and Gay Men is Sex Discrimination. New York University Law Review 69 (2): 197-287.

2014, the numbers were 52 percent approving and 40 percent opposed [...]”.⁸⁶ Through the years, there has thus been a clear social tendency to see LGBTQ+ matters as more acceptable than they used to be, and the president in office can be one of the factors leading to this change.

3. Media coverage

For this case, the search for articles was focused on the key words “LGBT 2015”, “Gay marriage 2015”, and “Obergefell”.

The data emerging from the body of research corresponding to the *Washington Post* is as follows:

Number of approved articles	Number of pages as in the newspaper	Number of pages after ponderation	Number of occurrences of “terms to use”	Number of occurrence of “terms to avoid”
11	40.5	81	23	8

Table 8: Body of research data for the *Washington Post*

The data emerging from the body of research corresponding to the *Washington Times* is as follows:

Number of approved articles	Number of pages as in the newspaper	Number of pages after ponderation	Number of occurrences of “terms to use”	Number of occurrence of “terms to avoid”
31	96.5	96.5	36	11

Table 9: Body of research data for the *Washington Times*

By putting these two tables in comparison, we can see that the number of articles approved for the *Washington Times* is three times more important than the one for the *Washington Post*, the difference is smaller in the number of pages after weighting. For a number of pages more or less comparable between the two newspapers, we can see that the *Washington Times* actually has a higher propensity to use “terms to use” than the *Washington Post*.

⁸⁶ Alberta, T. (2019), p.230.

The difference of “terms to avoid” being way closer, interpreting it would depend more on conjuncture than on a proper basis analysis.

Chapter 5: EEOC v. G.R. & R.G. Harris Funeral Homes Inc.

1. Case history

First coming out of the closet as a transgender woman in her private life in her late forties, Aimee Stephens decided to come out in her professional life too, a few years later. She indeed had tried to separate both worlds, but could not go on with it as it revealed itself an unsustainable situation for her.⁸⁷ In an open letter, Stephens expressed the despair she felt back then and how her coming out at her job was the best thing to do:

*“Several years ago, I stood in my yard with a gun in my hand pointed at myself, pondering my options. I then chose to recognize who I really was. I chose life. And for me, choosing life meant choosing my family, my friends, my work. Ultimately it meant choosing to be a part of the fight for basic rights. I have come to believe that one of the biggest gifts we can give to ourselves and others is to live as our true selves.”*⁸⁸

In 2013, after coming out to her employer, Thomas Rost, in a letter stating her wish to continue working for him⁸⁹, Stephens received “a separation agreement and an offer of a severance package contingent on Stephens agreeing to stay quiet.”⁹⁰ She refused the offer and took the case to the courts. The first court she turned to, the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan, decided in favor of Rost, so she appealed. When she won on appeal, Rost appealed in turn. The case ended up before the U.S. Supreme Court in October 2019. Although Aimee Stephens passed away in May 2020, the case was settled in her favor the following month.

⁸⁷ Gessen, M. (May 20, 2020). Remembering Aimee Stephens, who lost and found her purpose. *The New Yorker*. Retrieved from <https://www.newyorker.com/news/postscript/remembering-aimee-stephens-who-lost-and-found-her-purpose>. [Accessed on May 9, 2021].

⁸⁸ Stephens, A. (March 30, 2020). Transgender Americans Belong: An Open Letter to America’s Employers. *Out&Equal Workplace Advocates*. Retrieved from <https://outandequal.org/aimee-stephens-letter-to-employers/>. [Accessed on May 9, 2021].

⁸⁹ *Equal Emp’t Opportunity Comm’n v. R.G. & G.R. Harris Funeral Homes, Inc.*, 201 F. Supp. 3d 837 (E.D. Mich. 2016)

⁹⁰ Gessen, M. (May 20, 2020). Remembering Aimee Stephens, who lost and found her purpose. *The New Yorker*. Retrieved from <https://www.newyorker.com/news/postscript/remembering-aimee-stephens-who-lost-and-found-her-purpose>. [Accessed on May 9, 2021].

2. Socio-political background

2.1. Political environment

“[Republicans] having only just lost the battle over same-sex marriage, merely their latest defeat in the broader culture war, they were fighting on new terrain: Transgenderism [...]”.⁹¹ Following the decision of *Obergefell v. Hodges* in June 2015, the attention soon shifted to transgender issues. The topic was indeed considered as more and more “trendy” on the political platforms and on the media, ever growing in importance since the mid-2010s and onwards, notably with the media coverage of the bathroom bills.

June 2015 also happened to be the month during which Donald Trump launched his campaign for the 2016 election. After claiming his support for transgender people during his campaign⁹², in January 2017, just after his inauguration as the 45th President of the United States, Donald Trump “rescinded Obama’s protections for transgender students to use preferred bathrooms in public schools.”⁹³

In regards to the case, the U.S. Supreme Court voted in favor of the recognition of the protection of transgender people under the Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 with a 6-3 majority (see Appendix 4: U.S. Supreme Court’s composition).

Justices Clarence Thomas and Samuel Alito, who had also participated in the *Obergefell v. Hodges* case, maintained their position against legislation pro-LGBTQ+ people.

Regarding the justices appointed by Donald Trump during his mandate, we can note that one of them, Brett Kavanaugh, ruled against the measure while the other, Neil Gorsuch, decided in favor. Concerning the justices appointed by Democratic presidents, all of them voted in favor of the EEOC to confirm that the Title VII indeed protects transgender people.

⁹¹ Alberta, T. (2019), p.214.

⁹² Gass, N. (April 21, 2016). Trump: Transgender people can use whatever bathroom they want. *Politico*. Retrieved from <https://www.politico.com/blogs/2016-gop-primary-live-updates-and-results/2016/04/trump-transgender-bathrooms-222257>. [Accessed on May 9, 2021].

⁹³ Alberta, T. (2019), p.431.

2.2. Social environment

If most people outside the LGBTQ+ community were not familiar, or on only to a certain extent, with the issues related to transgender people before the mid-2010s, more and more people were made aware of the issue after the coming out of Caitlyn Jenner as a transgender woman was on all front pages in June 2015 following her cover of *Vanity Fair*. Her transition as the “latest sensation” in the United States inevitably shed light on what it meant to be transgender in the United States – this reality being obviously circumscribed to an opulent lifestyle that only a few actually have access to. The rise of, among others, the actress Laverne Cox on the popular Netflix’s show *Orange is the new Black* also helped bringing more visibility to transgender people.

Nevertheless, outside of Hollywood, transgender people tend to still have it harder in life than other people. In a study led and published by Ipsos in 2018 was stated that:

“Among western countries, the United States is most likely to believe that transgender people have a mental illness (32%) and the most likely out of all countries surveyed to believe that transgendered people are committing a sin (32%). Americans are the most likely to say that society has gone too far in allowing people to dress and live as one sex even though they were born another (36%).”⁹⁴

Moreover, it has been proved that transgender people are less protected by legislation and health care, and are at higher risks of poverty, discrimination and violence.⁹⁵

3. Media coverage

For this case, the search for articles was focused on the key words “Transgender 2019”, “Transgender 2020”, and “Aimee Stephens”.

⁹⁴ IPSOS. (January 29, 2018). Global Attitudes Toward Transgender People. *IPSOS*. Retrieved from <https://www.ipsos.com/en-us/news-polls/global-attitudes-toward-transgender-people>. [Accessed on May 9, 2021].

⁹⁵ Human Rights Campaign. (2021). Understanding the Transgender Community. *HRC*. Retrieved from <https://www.hrc.org/resources/understanding-the-transgender-community>. [Accessed on May 9, 2021].

The data emerging from the body of research corresponding to the *Washington Post* is as follows:

Number of approved articles	Number of pages as in the newspaper	Number of pages after ponderation	Number of occurrences of “terms to use”	Number of occurrence of “terms to avoid”
14	32	64	63	5

Table 10: Body of research data for the *Washington Post*

The data emerging from the body of research corresponding to the *Washington Times* is as follows:

Number of approved articles	Number of pages as in the newspaper	Number of pages after ponderation	Number of occurrences of “terms to use”	Number of occurrence of “terms to avoid”
7	26.5	26.5	27	1

Table 11: Body of research data for the *Washington Times*

Through the comparison of these tables we can see that every value from the *Washington Post* is, more or less, the double amount of the values from the *Washington Times*, with the exception of “terms to avoid” that are five times higher in the *Washington Post*.

From this data we can conclude that, for an equal number of articles between the two newspapers, there would also be the same number of pages and of “terms to use”. The media coverage of this case thus seems identical between the two papers. The only difference to be raised between the *Washington Post* and the *Washington Times* in this case is thus that the former tends to use more “terms to avoid” in comparison to the latter.

Section 5: Analysis of results

Chapter 6: Media coverage according to political affiliation

In this section, I will try to determine if the coverage of the cases mentioned in the previous sections was different between the *Washington Post* and the *Washington Times*, and if so, how, by using statistical methods.

At first, I will concentrate on the differences in the quantity of the coverage: Are there more articles in one newspaper than in the other? Are the articles in one newspaper longer than in the other?

It will then be useful to look for changes in terms of coverage over time, from early 2003 to mid-2020: Are there more newspaper articles concerning our subject now than there were 17 years ago?

1. Quantitative analysis

Through the first step of the quantitative analysis, I will focus on the number of articles composing the body of research and on the length of these articles. This should allow us to answer the first hypothesis that is:

As legislation changes through time to usually become more supportive of LGBTQ+ people, the way newspapers cover LGBTQ+ related topics also becomes more supportive by being more important than it used to be. The importance of the coverage would manifest itself through more articles or longer articles being written on the subject.

1.1. Analysis of the number of articles

To be part of the body of research and thus to be approved in the following table, a simple mention of the case is not enough. As a matter of fact, I only approved articles that focused in totality or on an extensive basis on one of the cases. Indeed, a simple mention or the presentation of a similar situation, but outside of the United States, with thus no direct correlation with the case, are not enough to be able to judge whether the position of the newspaper is positive or negative.

A good example to explain this choice is the article “*Canadian jeweler makes rings for gay wedding, still threatened for traditional marriage views*” from the *Washington Times*⁹⁶. Indeed, this article did fit the time frame of the *Obergefell v. Hodges*’s case as it was written on May 23, 2015. It also contained multiple instances of key words with the words “gay”, “marriage”, “LGBT”, and “2015”. Still, the article did in fact not mention the U.S. Supreme Court case at all as it was referring to a situation happening in Canada. In fine, this article was thus left out of the final body of research and was not part of the articles approved.

⁹⁶ Howell, K. (May 23, 2015). Canadian jeweler makes rings for gay wedding, still threatened for traditional marriage views. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/may/23/canadian-jeweler-makes-rings-for-gay-wedding-still/>. [Accessed on January 20, 2021].

This first table is a compilation of the different results that I gathered throughout Section 3 and Section 4.

Categories Newspapers	Political affiliation	Key words	Method of research	Articles found via the newspaper's website	Articles corresponding to the time frame	Articles approved
The Washington Post	Left - Democratic	LGBT 2015	Printed	N/A	3	3
		Gay marriage 2015	Printed	N/A	11	11
		Homosexual 2003	Printed	N/A	5	5
		Sodomy law	Printed	N/A	5	4
		Transgender 2019	Digital	642	15	6
		Transgender 2020	Digital	630	11	9
		Lawrence 2003	Printed	N/A	5	5
		Obergefell	Digital	87	19	10
		Aimee Stephens	Digital	527	24	11
The Washington Times	Right - Republican	LGBT 2015	Digital	1,700	14	5
		Gay marriage 2015	Digital	2,740	43	30
		Homosexual 2003	Digital	626	16	4
		Sodomy law	Digital	461	6	5
		Transgender 2019	Digital	8,430	18	7
		Transgender 2020	Digital	9,000	54	4
		Lawrence 2003	Digital	402	19	1
		Obergefell	Digital	32	16	12
		Aimee Stephens	Digital	72	12	7

Table 12: Emergence of the body of research through the media⁹⁷

⁹⁷ See Appendix 5: Tables' reading key

Through this first table, I can draw a few conclusions.

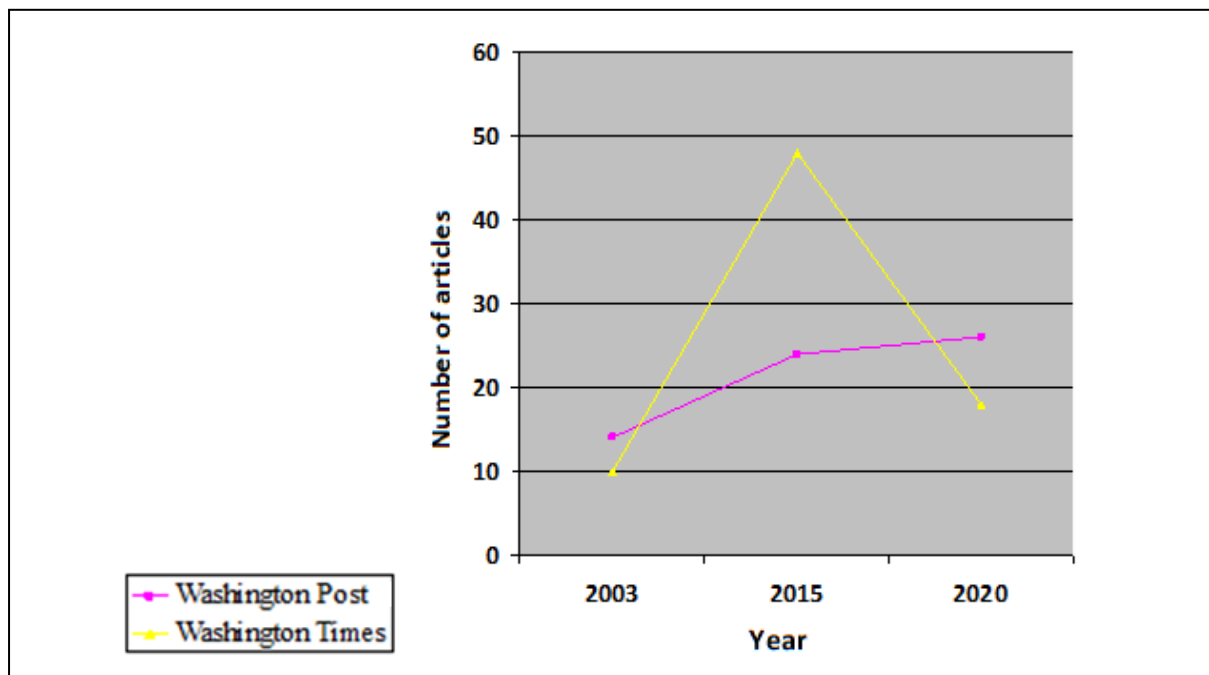
Firstly, I considered the total number of articles found by the websites that were correlated to the cases, so the articles included within the “Articles approved” column. Even though a part of the *Washington Post* key words did not produce results in this category, we can see that the *Washington Times* tends to provide more articles than the *Washington Post*. In other words, we can extrapolate that the *Washington Post* only publishes the articles written by its own journalists or others associated with the paper, while the *Washington Times* also provides access to articles written by others.

By taking a closer look to the table, we can see that the highest difference between the number of articles corresponding to the time frame and the articles approved is for the *Washington Times* and the key word “Transgender 2020”. This takes us back to the explanation of the social background in Section 4. Indeed, if there were so many articles matching the key word and matching the time frame for *the EEOC v. G.R. & R.G. Harris Funeral Homes Inc.*’s case, while not actually being in relation to the case because an important number of the articles were actually referring to the polemic of transgender athletes participating in sports. In the beginning and throughout the year 2020, the inclusion of transgender athletes among cisgender athletes was indeed a recurring topic.

Secondly, still looking at the number of articles approved, we can see that the lowest number of articles approved is 1 and the highest number is 31. With this data, we can calculate that the average number is 7.78, this shows us that the body of research is mostly homogeneous – with the exception of the value 31. Indeed, with the average number of articles for *the Washington Post* being 7.11, and the one for the *Washington Times* being 8.44, the values are close enough to say that, overall, the media coverage is quantitatively the same, at least synchronously⁹⁸ speaking.

⁹⁸ Considering the coverage without taking time into account.

To know if the media coverage is also the same diachronically⁹⁹ speaking, I will use the following graph:



Graph 1: Volume of the media coverage by newspaper through the years

With this graph, we can see that the *Washington Post* tends to gradually increase its coverage of LGBTQ+ cases through the years.

Regarding the *Washington Times*, we have seen that the paper has one of its values at a much higher level than all the other values. This can also be seen in the graph as there is a peak for the coverage in 2015. Even without taking 2015 into account, we can still note that there is an increase in the newspaper's coverage as well.

In this graph, we can also see that, except for 2015, the *Washington Post* tends to write more articles related to LGBTQ+ U.S. Supreme Court cases than the *Washington Times*.

1.2. Analysis of the length of the articles

The number of pages of the articles confirmed were weighted in order to have a relevant comparison. Indeed, as the *Washington Times* uses a larger font, it needs far fewer

⁹⁹ Considering the coverage while taking time into account.

words in order to fill a page. A comparison without weighting the results would thus be pointless as the two newspapers do not need to write as much to fill a page.

To calculate the ratio of the weighting, I made a comparison based a full page of text from each newspaper – those were based on the PDF form of the articles. The number of words in it was then calculated. I made sure to use pages of text within which there was no title, space, image, or description of another article of the newspaper.

Firstly, for the *Washington Post*'s digital articles, I chose the page 2 of the “*Supreme Court rules gay couples nationwide have a right to marry*”¹⁰⁰ article. The number of words in it was 506.

Secondly, for the *Washington Times*, I chose the page 3 of the “*Gay marriage advocates expect Supreme Court to rule in their favor*”¹⁰¹ article. The number of words for in was 263.

Thirdly, for the articles from printed newspapers of the *Washington Post*, I chose to rewrite them on Word documents. To do the comparison, I then took the first page of rewriting of the “*High court to hear Texas gay rights case*”¹⁰² article. The number of words in it was 523.

Considering these values, I fixed the value of the weighting for the number of words per page at $\frac{1}{2}$ in favor of the *Washington Post*'s articles¹⁰³. This means that for two hypothetical articles of 100 words for the *Washington Time* and the *Washington Post*, the article weights double in the balance for the latter, its number of pages will thus be doubled in the tables.

¹⁰⁰ Barnes, R. (June 26, 2015). Supreme Court rules gay couples nationwide have a right to marry. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/gay-marriage-and-other-major-rulings-at-the-supreme-court/2015/06/25/ef75a120-1b6d-11e5-bd7f-4611a60dd8e5_story.html. [Accessed on January 21, 2021].

¹⁰¹ Richardson, V., & Wetzstein, C. (April 26, 2015). Gay marriage advocates expect Supreme Court to rule in their favor. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from [Gay marriage advocates expect Supreme Court to rule in their favor - Washington Times](#). [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

¹⁰² Lane, C. (March 24, 2003). *High court to hear Texas gay rights case*. The Washington Post: Washington.

¹⁰³ The math was: $506/263 = 1.92$ and $523/263 = 1.98$. This was thus rounded to 2, so a ratio of 1 to 2.

This first table shows us the relevant data for the *Washington Post* as follows:

Categories Case	Key words associated	Articles approved	Total articles before confrontation	Total articles after confrontation	Total pages as in the paper	Total pages after weighting
Lawrence v. Texas	Homosexual 2003	5	14	5	11.5	23
	Sodomy law	4				
	John Lawrence 2003	5				
Obergefell v. Hodges	LGBT 2015	3	24	11	40.5	81
	Gay marriage 2015	11				
	Jim Obergefell	10				
EEOC v. G.R. & R.G. Harris Funeral Homes Inc.	Transgender 2019	6	26	14	32	64
	Transgender 2020	9				
	Aimee Stephens	11				

Table 13: Collusion of media and cases for the *Washington Post*¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁴ See Appendix 5: Tables' reading key

This second table shows us the relevant data for the *Washington Times* as follows:

Categories Case	Key words associated	Articles approved	Total articles before confrontation	Total articles after confrontation	Total pages as in the paper	Total pages after weighting
Lawrence v. Texas	Homosexual 2003	4	10	5	12.5	12.5
	Sodomy law	5				
	John Lawrence 2003	1				
Obergefell v. Hodges	LGBT 2015	5	48	31	96.5	96.5
	Gay marriage 2015	30				
	Jim Obergefell	12				
EEOC v. G.R. & R.G. Harris Funeral Homes Inc.	Transgender 2019	7	18	7	26.5	26.5
	Transgender 2020	4				
	Aimee Stephens	7				

Table 14: Collusion of media and cases for the *Washington Times*¹⁰⁵

These two tables put forward the number of articles focusing on each of the U.S. Supreme Court cases as well as the length this coverage actually represented. With this, we can finally calculate which newspaper actually has more coverage than the other.

¹⁰⁵ See Appendix 5: Tables' reading key

Indeed, by considering the ratio of the number of pages – after weighting – in relation to the number of articles confirmed, we obtain our results. In other words, the results below indicate the average number of pages per article written.

Case \ Newspapers	The Washington Post	The Washington Times
<i>Lawrence v. Texas</i>	4.6	2.5
<i>Obergefell v. Hodges</i>	7.36	3.11
<i>EEOC v. G.R. & R.G. Harris Funeral Homes Inc.</i>	4,57	3.79

Table 15: Ratio of the number of pages by the number of articles, for each case and by newspaper

This last table of the section shows us that there is a tangible increase in the *Washington Times* in terms of the length of their articles. This increase is also chronological as I have ordered the cases from the oldest (2003) to the newest (2020).

Concerning the *Washington Post*, the values are more scattered. We can see an increase with the *Obergefell v. Hodges* case, but it is important to note that one of the articles studied from this part of the body of research was actually significantly longer than the others – 13 pages long. I can thus extrapolate that this is the reason behind this outstanding value.

1.3. Conclusion

With all this information, we can finally answer the first hypothesis that is:

As legislation changes through time to usually become more supportive of LGBTQ+ people, the way newspapers cover LGBTQ+ related topics also becomes more supportive by being more important than it used to be. The importance of the coverage would manifest itself through more articles or longer articles being written on the subject.

This hypothesis is mostly confirmed. Indeed, on the one hand, we have been able to prove that for one of the newspapers, the *Washington Times*, this hypothesis is true both in terms of number of articles and in terms of the length of these articles through time. On the other hand, we have seen that the number of articles written about LGBTQ+ U.S. Supreme

Court cases increased over time for the *Washington Post*, but it was not possible to draw a significant conclusion regarding the length of the articles.

2. Qualitative analysis

Through the second step of the quantitative analysis, I will focus on the number of “terms to use” and “terms to avoid” in the articles composing the body of research. This should allow us to answer the second hypothesis that is:

Given that the Republican Party is less openly supportive of the LGBTQ+ community, I hypothesize that the Washington Times, the Republican affiliated newspaper, will have less favorable coverage of the U.S. Supreme Court’s LGBTQ+ related cases than the Washington Post, the Democratic affiliated newspaper. This “less favorable coverage” would manifest itself through the use of more negative or misused words than positive words.

2.1. Analysis of the “terms to use” and “terms to avoid”

As previously explained¹⁰⁶, the following “terms to use” and “terms to avoid” have been determined according to GLAAD’s guide “*An Ally’s Guide To Terminology: Talking About LGBT People And Equality*”¹⁰⁷. As a recognized non-governmental American organization fighting against the use of derogatory terms against LGBTQ+ people in the media, it can be considered as a legitimate source to base the following categories on.

For the following tables, I will analyze the content written by the journalists. This means that if a witness interviewed by a journalist uses some of the researched words – either they be positive or negative – and the journalist decided to quote them, those words will not be taken into account. Indeed, as quotes, they cannot be taken as reflecting the position of the newspaper on the matter.

In the following tables, the numbers represented correspond to the number of articles in which the different terms were present (see Appendix 6: Body of research).

¹⁰⁶ See Section 1, Chapter 1, Point 5: Types of analyses, p.17.

¹⁰⁷ GLAAD, & MAP (2012).

As I processed a lot of information through the tables, I decided to divided them in four separate sections.

Firstly, we have the “terms to use” related to gay people and, more broadly speaking, the LGBTQ+ community.

Terms to use Sources		Gay, Lesbian, Bi or Bisexual (as adjectives)	Being gay	Orientation or Sexual orientation	Gay and transgender, or Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender	Total
<i>Lawrence v. Texas</i>	The Washington Post	4	0	0	0	4
	The Washington Times	1	0	0	0	1
<i>Obergefell v. Hodges</i>	The Washington Post	11	1	5	2	19
	The Washington Times	30	0	1	1	32
<i>EEOC v. G.R. & R.G. Harris Funeral Homes Inc.</i>	The Washington Post	12	8	11	8	39
	The Washington Times	4	2	6	1	13

Table 16: Number of occurrences of apparition of “Terms to use” while referring to gay, lesbian and bi people by the two newspapers for each case

We can see above that there is a general increase in the number of “terms to use” through the cases. It is important to note that the biggest number of articles – 30 for the *Obergefell v. Hodges*’ case of the *Washington Times* – is a one-off event raising the number of the “term to use” that is “Gay, lesbian, bi or bisexual (as adjectives)”.

Secondly, we have the “terms to avoid” related to gay people and, more broadly speaking, the LGBTQ+ community.

Terms to avoid Sources		Homosexual or Gay (as nouns)	Homosexuality, Lesbianism or That’s so gay	Sexual preference, Gay lifestyle, Homosexual Lifestyle, Same-sex attractions or Sexual identity	Admitted he was gay	Total
<i>Lawrence v. Texas</i>	The Washington Post	4	1	1	0	6
	The Washington Times	1	1	0	0	2
<i>Obergefell v. Hodges</i>	The Washington Post	7	1	0	0	8
	The Washington Times	8	2	1	0	11
<i>EEOC v. G.R. & R.G. Harris Funeral Homes Inc.</i>	The Washington Post	2	1	1	1	5
	The Washington Times	0	0	1	0	1

Table 17: Number of occurrences of apparition of “Terms to avoid” while referring to gay, lesbian and bi people by the two newspapers for each case¹⁰⁸

This table shows us that there is typically a greater number of “terms to avoid” for the cases with more articles. This would mean that the use of negative terms does not tend to increase over time. On the contrary, as there are fewer articles comprising the body of research of *Lawrence v. Texas* than the one of *EEOC v. G.R. & R.G. Harris Funeral Homes Inc.*, but there are almost as many occurrences for the two cases, it would mean that there is a trend to decrease the use of “terms to avoid” over time.

¹⁰⁸ The term “LGBT” was also proposed by GLAAD and MAP as a term to avoid “when talking with those who are unfamiliar with the issues or not yet supportive” (GLAAD, & MAP (2012)). In the context as the one in scrutiny here, this term was not taken into account as it is not possible to make a distinction between people familiar with the LGBTQ+ matters and those are not.

Thirdly, we have the “terms to use” related to transgender people.

Terms to use Sources		Transgender (as an adjective)	Gender identity of Gender expression	Transition Gay and transgender, or Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender	Total
<i>Lawrence v. Texas</i>	The <i>Washington Post</i>	0	0	0	0
	The <i>Washington Times</i>	0	0	0	0
<i>Obergefell v. Hodges</i>	The <i>Washington Post</i>	3	1	0	4
	The <i>Washington Times</i>	1	2	1	4
<i>EEOC v. G.R. & R.G. Harris Funeral Homes Inc.</i>	The <i>Washington Post</i>	14	7	3	24
	The <i>Washington Times</i>	7	6	1	14

Table 18: Number of occurrences of apparition of “Terms to use” while referring to transgender people by the two newspapers for each case

This table shows a clear increase in the number of occurrences of “terms to use” relating to transgender people. Considering this, I will make a comparison between the different types of “terms to use” and “terms to avoid” in order to produce conclusions which could be extrapolated to other situations.

Finally, we have the “terms to avoid” related to transgender people.

Terms to avoid Sources		Transgendered, Transvestite or Tranny	Transgender or Transgenders (as nouns)	Sexual identity or Transgender identity	Sex change, Sex-change operation, Pre-operative/post-operative or Pre-op/post-op	Total
<i>Lawrence v. Texas</i>	The Washington Post	0	0	0	0	0
	The Washington Times	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Obergefell v. Hodges</i>	The Washington Post	0	0	0	0	0
	The Washington Times	0	0	0	0	0
<i>EEOC v. G.R. & R.G. Harris Funeral Homes Inc.</i>	The Washington Post	0	0	0	0	0
	The Washington Times	0	0	0	0	0

Table 19: Number of occurrences of apparitions of “Terms to avoid” while referring to transgender people by the two newspapers for each case

It seems important to raise an observation from the table above as the results are atypical. Indeed, throughout all the articles that compose the body of research, I did not encounter a single occurrence that could be categorized under the “terms to avoid” relating to transgender people.

By putting all the information raised in the four previous tables together, I can synthesize the amounts of terms “to use” and “to avoid” that were actually used throughout the different cases.

Studied variables Case	The Washington Post		The Washington Times	
	Terms to use	Terms to avoid	Terms to use	Terms to avoid
<i>Lawrence v. Texas</i>	4	6	1	2
<i>Obergefell v. Hodges</i>	23	8	36	11
<i>EEOC v. G.R. & R.G. Harris Funeral Homes Inc</i>	63	5	27	1

Table 20: Summary of the terms "to use" and "to avoid" by newspaper for each case studied

In this table, we can see that there is a clear increase in the use of “terms to use” through the years in the *Washington Post*’s articles. Nonetheless, the other values in their current state do not allow us to draw any further conclusions. Indeed, the other values are too scattered to see any clear pattern through them.

With the information of Table 20, we are thus now capable of creating the ratios of the number of terms “to use” or “to avoid” in relation to the number of articles. This will make it clearer to see if there is any trend in the use of certain types of words.

Studied variables Case	The Washington Post		The Washington Times	
	Terms to use	Terms to avoid	Terms to use	Terms to avoid
<i>Lawrence v. Texas</i>	0.8	1.2	0.2	0.4
<i>Obergefell v. Hodges</i>	2.09	0.73	1.17	0.35
<i>EEOC v. G.R. & R.G. Harris Funeral Homes Inc</i>	4.5	0.35	3.86	0.14

Table 21: Ratio of "terms to use" and "terms to avoid" with the number of articles, by case and by newspaper

With this section, we learned that between 2003 and 2020, the *Washington Times* had a propensity to use fewer “terms to avoid” and, on a much greater scale, nowadays uses “terms to use” at a greater rate than it used to. The *Washington Post* follows the same trend. It is important to also note that, even though the difference is slight, the *Washington Post* tends to use the two different types of terms more often than the *Washington Times*. This is true for the “terms to use”, but also for the “terms to avoid”.

This information seems to support the Pollyanna principle raised by Hildebrandt and Snyder in 1977. Indeed, as Dodds et al. (2015) were already able to put forward, English-speaking newspapers have a tendency to have a positivity bias. This means that English-speaking newspapers will usually use more positively connoted words than negatively connoted one.

I was able to reach the same results through my quantitative analysis. This is particularly easy to see in Table 21 as the values have been switched to ratios. Through my analysis, I am thus able to now say there is a clear tendency for English-speaking newspapers to use more positively connoted words than negatively connoted ones. Moreover, this tendency has grown through the years, if we consider a time line from 2003 to 2020. Finally, newspapers affiliated to the Democratic Party tend to use more positively connoted words than Republican ones when considering LGBTQ+ matters. Nonetheless, Democratic newspapers also use more negatively connoted words.

2.2. Conclusion

In conclusion, I can reject my second hypothesis that was formulated in Section 1 as follows:

Given that the Republican Party is less openly supportive of the LGBTQ+ community, I hypothesize that the Washington Times, the Republican affiliated newspaper, will have less favorable coverage of the U.S. Supreme Court’s LGBTQ+ related cases than the Washington Post, the Democratic affiliated newspaper. This “less favorable coverage” would manifest itself through the use of more negative or misused words than positive words.

After an extensive study of the “terms to use” and “terms to avoid”, I can reject this hypothesis. Indeed, the *Washington Times* actually tends to use fewer “terms to avoid” than the *Washington Post*. The *Washington Times* tends to use fewer positively or negatively perceived words altogether.

As we can see through all the data, the *Washington Times* has a tendency to use fewer positively or negatively perceived words. We can also observe the fact that there actually were more “terms to avoid” used in the *Obergefell v. Hodges* case, while Barack Obama, a Democratic President, was in office, even though the Democratic Party was shown to be more supportive of LGBTQ+ matters than the Republican Party. We are thus now able to reject the third hypothesis that is:

The President of the United States in office at the time of an important LGBTQ+ related U.S. Supreme Court case has an influence on the media coverage.

Indeed, the political agenda of the President in office’s party at the time of a case seems to not have any major influence, especially in terms of the type of coverage they do – being more positive or negative. I can thus now extrapolate that the president in office has only limited influence on the media coverage of a case and, therefore, deny this hypothesis.

Finally, as I was able to prove the presence of a positivity bias within the newspapers, I can now put this information in relation to the narrative paradigm. Indeed, it seems that, in the present case, the confirmation of the Pollyanna principle would necessitate a rejection of the hypothesis that there would be a greater deal of negative information in the newspapers as this kind of medium tends to focus on negative events.

Nonetheless, it would be interesting to develop further studies to see if this correlation is always true, or if there is a way to prove both theories at the same time for newspapers.

Chapter 7: Influence of the presidential climate on the case

In this chapter, I will focus on the relations between, on the one side, the presidential climate with the composition of the U.S. Supreme Court and the political parties' stances on LGBTQ+ matters and, on the other side, the ruling of the cases. This will allow us to further consider the implication of our rejection of the third hypothesis by taking into account the extensive presidential climate on the way newspapers cover LGBTQ+ news.

In this section, I will thus consider whether or not the composition of the U.S. Supreme Court, and by extension the presidential influence, at the time of a case, may have had an impact on the coverage of the said case. To do this, I will make a comparison and see if there is a correlation between the composition of the U.S. Supreme Court, the political affiliation of the judges, the president in office as well as his political stance on LGBTQ+ questions, and the result of the case.

Through this chapter, I will also be able to again use the agenda-setting that was presented in Section 2.

1. Analysis

The following table presents the different sources of political and legislative power in the United States at the time of each case.

Studied variables Case	Composition of the SCOTUS, by the political affiliation of the appointing President	President in office and his political affiliation	Overall stance of the President on LGBTQ+ matters	Stance of the President's party on LGBTQ+ matters	Ruling of the case
<i>Lawrence v. Texas</i>	7 Republicans and 2 Democrats	George W. Bush: Republican	In opposition	In opposition	6-3 in favor of Lawrence
<i>Obergefell v. Hodges</i>	5 Republicans and 4 Democrats	Barack Obama: Democrat	In favor	In favor	5-4 in favor of Obergefell
<i>EEOC v. G.R. & R.G. Harris Funeral Homes Inc</i>	5 Republicans and 4 Democrats	Donald Trump: Republican	In opposition	In opposition	6-3 in favor of the EEOC

Table 22: Analyse of the Presidential climate's influence on the studied cases

In regards to the information provided in Table 22, we can see that no matter the president in office or the fact that there was a majority of justices appointed by Republican presidents at the time of a case, the ruling of each case was in favor of the LGBTQ+ plaintiff. This leads us to further reject the third hypothesis by demonstrating that the power of the presidential climate is actually limited.

This rejection is supported by the work of Jeffrey A. Segal and Albert D. Cover in 1989 on the influence of the Court justices' ideological values on their votes. Indeed, the authors made the following conclusion:

“The correlation between ideological values of the justices and their votes in civil liberty cases is .80. [...] Given the limits on the relationship between attitudes and values, and the fact that our correlation is attenuated by the measurement error that no doubt exists in the independent variable, the results provide exceptional support for the attitudinal model as applied to civil liberties cases. For the first time support is from measures of values independent of the votes of the justices.”¹⁰⁹

This means that for every justice hearing one of the cases, no matter if they had been appointed by a Democrat president or a Republican one, the impact of their ideological values on their decision in a case should be minimal. Considering this, I can advance that, more than private ideological values, what influences justices in their ruling would be the customs in place at the time in the society.

2. Agenda-setting theory

By comparing the analysis above with the socio-political background defined for each case throughout Sections 3 and 4, I am now able to interpret Dearing's view on the agenda-setting theory.

¹⁰⁹ Segal, J.A., & Cover, A. D. (1989). Ideological Values and the Votes of U.S. Supreme Court Justices. *The American Political Sciences Review* 83 (2): 562-563.

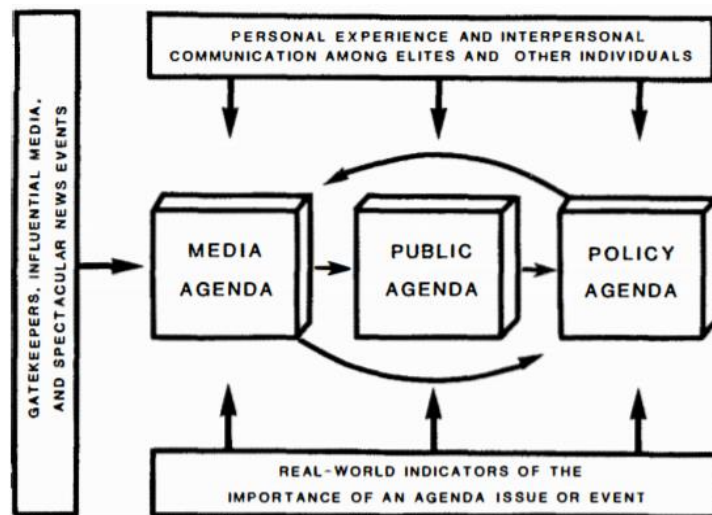


Figure 4: Three main components of the agenda-setting process: media agenda, public agenda, and policy agenda¹¹⁰

Indeed, each of the following components of Dearing's graph can now be replaced by a component raised in this thesis.¹¹¹

After this whole analysis, I am thus now able to correct how I had envisaged the Dearing's graph applied to this study in Section 2.

¹¹⁰ Dearing, J. (1988), p.557.

¹¹¹ Still, at the present time, it seems important to reiterate that the element "personal experience and interpersonal communication among elites and other individuals" was the only component that was not researched in this thesis as it requires a more in depth analysis of people than what I was able to achieve through this study.

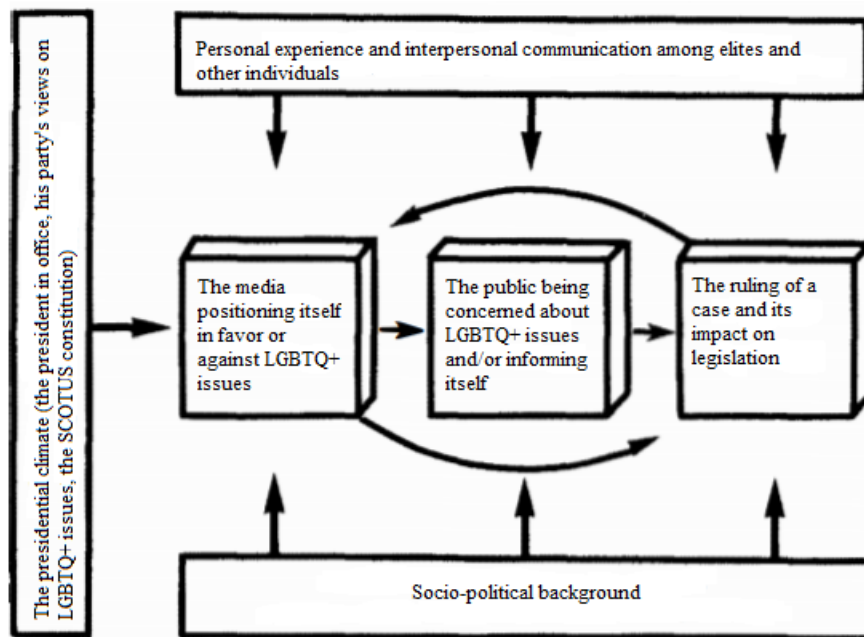


Figure 5: Dearing's agenda-setting theory graphic applied to the present study

The media agenda was predicted to be the media self-positioning in favor or against LGBTQ+ issues. In the present case, I found out that the media tends more to use “terms to use” than “terms to avoid” in its articles. I can thus extrapolate that the media agenda would actually promote LGBTQ+ issues rather than position itself against them.

Next, there is the public agenda, that was defined as “the public being concerned about LGBTQ+ issues and/or informing itself”. This aspect was not studied on a comparable level to the other components. But based on my data, I would say that this component stayed true.

Then the definition of the policy agenda as “the ruling of a case and its impact on legislation” stayed true, too. Indeed, we have seen that no political program is put forward in the U.S. Supreme Court. The independence of the justices thus makes it possible for the Court to stay focus on the ruling of the cases.

The socio-political background was defined in the section related to each of the cases. It followed the concept that Dearing advanced from the start. Thus, no change occurred in this part of the chart.

Finally, I had expected that the presidential climate would serve as the gatekeeper of the media agenda. Through the analysis, the influence of the presidential climate was actually proven to be minimal.

3. Conclusion

Through this analysis of the presidential influence on the cases, I was able to determine that the President of the United States in office at the time of an important LGBTQ+ related U.S. Supreme Court case has only a limited influence on the media coverage.

Given that Dearing's approach on the agenda-setting theory shows that the policy agenda influences the media agenda, by saying that the presidential climate has only limited effect on the policy agenda, this means that it also have only limited effect on the media agenda and, by extension, on the media coverage.

As it happens, as justices tend to not take political ideologies into account while deciding cases, the president in office's ability to influence the outcome of ruling is concentrated within his ability to appoint justices. Indeed, it is thus in the interest of the president in office to appoint justices with whom he shares values in order to have better chances of seeing a ruling that favors his own thinking and, therefore, seeing his values reflected on the media coverage.

Chapter 8: Convergence of the presidential climate and the political affiliation of the media on the coverage of events

I will now take into account all the previous highlighted information in order to confirm or deny the correlation between the presidential climate, the political affiliation of a newspaper, and the coverage of LGBTQ+ events. In other words, in the following section, I will try to answer the research question:

Does the political affiliation of newspapers change their way of covering culturally sensitive or controversial topics such as U.S. Supreme Court cases related to the LGBTQ+ community? Moreover, does either the passage of time (from 2003 to 2020) or the president in office at the time of a case influence the way they cover it?

Throughout the study, we have seen that the legislation tends to become more supportive through the years and that the political influence of the appointing presidents on justices of the U.S. Supreme Court is actually limited. We have also seen that a Republican affiliation for a newspaper does not mean that this newspaper will speak with more negatively connoted words than a Democratic affiliated newspaper.

With all of this information, I am finally able to answer my research question by saying that the political affiliation of newspapers has only limited effect on their way of covering culturally sensitive or controversial topics such as U.S. Supreme Court cases related to the LGBTQ+ community.

If I still had to put forward a difference between the newspapers in correlation to their political affiliation, I would point out the fact that, overall, Democratic newspapers tend to use more positively and negatively perceived words.

Nonetheless, the passage of time (from 2003 to 2020) does change the way newspapers cover their story. This change is linked to a more general change in customs of

American society towards a more positive outlook on LGBTQ+ issues that can be seen in legislation for instance.

This means that, throughout the years, we were able to see that more articles were written about the subject and, in the case of the *Washington Times*, the articles also tended to become longer.

Finally, the president in office at the time of a case only has a limited influence on the way newspapers report on cases. Indeed, given that Dearing's approach on the agenda-setting theory showed that the policy agenda influences the media agenda, and the fact that we proved that the presidential climate has only limited effect on the policy agenda, all of this means that it also have only limited effect on the media agenda and, by extension, on the media coverage.

Conclusion

1. Summary of the research question and the hypotheses

Through this study of the connection between political climate, LGBTQ+ matters, and media coverage, I raised the question of:

Does the political affiliation of newspapers change their way of covering culturally sensitive or controversial topics such as U.S. Supreme Court cases related to the LGBTQ+ community. Moreover, does either the passage of time (from 2003 to 2020) or the president in office at the time of a case influence the way they cover it?

To try to guide my thesis in a way that would allow me to answer this question, I formulated the following three hypotheses:

Firstly, I hypothesized that, *as legislation changes through time to usually become more supportive of LGBTQ+ people, the way newspapers cover LGBTQ+ related topics also becomes more supportive by being more important than it used to be. The importance of the coverage would manifest itself through more articles or longer articles being written on the subject.* Through the analysis of articles, I was able mostly confirm this hypothesis.

Secondly, *given that the Republican Party is less openly supportive of the LGBTQ+ community, I hypothesized that the Washington Times, the Republican affiliated newspaper, have less favorable coverage of the U.S. Supreme Court's LGBTQ+ related cases than the Washington Post, the Democratic affiliated newspaper. This "less favorable coverage" would manifest itself through the use of more negative or misused words than positive words.* Through the analysis of the content of articles, I was able to reject this hypothesis. Indeed, the *Washington Times* proved to be using less connoted words. This means less positive words, but also less negatively connoted words, which was under scrutiny in the present case.

Finally, I hypothesized that *the president of the United States in office at the time of an important LGBTQ+ related U.S. Supreme Court case has an influence on the media*

coverage. Nonetheless, we have seen that the president in office actually has only limited influence on the media coverage of a case, which led us to reject this hypothesis.

Through my work, I was able to mostly confirm the first hypothesis, but had to reject the second and the third. This led to a multi-layered answer for my research question. Thus, it seems that the political affiliation of newspapers has only limited effect on their way of covering culturally sensitive or controversial topics such as U.S. Supreme Court cases related to the LGBTQ+ community. This limited effect is dependent on the choices the presidents make while appointing new justices to the U.S. Supreme Court.

2. Ways to improve this study in the future

Criticism could be raised up from the body of research of the study. The choice to have limited it to three cases from the same two newspapers each time, and with a time frame starting three days before the hearing and ending three days after the deciding of the case, could be seen as limiting the results and not giving an actual representation of how it would be if there were more data. Thus, I suggest that future researchers conduct a broader study of the subject based on more newspapers, even while keeping the same cases and time frame. To have a clearer view of the situation, I also think that further research could try to expand the number of cases studied, and, more importantly, try to get a more diverse set of cases so that there could be various Democratic presidents and various Republican presidents in order to make a comparison with a stronger basis.

In addition, as both of the newspapers' websites were made differently, it was difficult to start on the same basis regarding the body of research. Considering this, I suggest that future researches find a way to base their study on either only printed newspapers or on similarly built newspaper's websites in order to have the different parts composing the body of research based on the exact same criteria, which would lead to more precise results.

Regarding the different theories applied throughout this study, I was able to prove the presence of a positivity bias within the newspapers. When it came down to the narrative paradigm, it seemed that this study's confirmation of the Pollyanna principle correlated with

the denial of the hypothesis that there would be a greater deal of negative information in the newspapers as this kind of medium tends to focus on negative events. Nonetheless, it would be interesting to develop further studies to see if this correlation is always true, or if there is a way to prove both theories at the same time for newspapers.

If pursued, these avenues of research will shed even more light on how the U.S. Supreme Court cases are covered by American newspapers and provide even greater insight into the relation between the Pollyanna principle and the narrative paradigm.

Bibliography

1. Research material

1.1. The Washington Post

1.1.1. Digital articles

Associated Press. (May 13, 2020). National Digest: Woman dies awaiting ruling from U.S. Supreme Court on transgender rights. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/national-digest-woman-dies-awaiting-ruling-from-us-supreme-court-on-transgender-rights/2020/05/12/a55413f0-919d-11ea-9e23-6914ee410a5f_story.html. [Accessed on January 21, 2021].

Barbash, F., Berman, M., & Somashekhar, S. (April 28, 2015). Supreme Court hears same-sex marriage case: Who said what (with audio). *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-nation/wp/2015/04/28/supreme-court-hears-arguments-in-same-sex-marriage-case-obergefell-v-hodges-today/>. [Accessed on January 21, 2021].

Barnes, R. (June 26, 2015). Kennedy emerges as judicial champion of gay rights. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/courts_law/kennedy-emerges-as-judicial-champion-of-gay-rights/2015/06/26/b295eb60-1c22-11e5-ab92-c75ae6ab94b5_story.html. [Accessed on January 21, 2021].

Barnes, R. (June 26, 2015). Supreme Court rules gay couples nationwide have a right to marry. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/gay-marriage-and-other-major-rulings-at-the-supreme-court/2015/06/25/ef75a120-1b6d-11e5-bd7f-4611a60dd8e5_story.html. [Accessed on January 21, 2021].

Barnes, R. (June 17, 2020). Neil Gorsuch? The surprise behind the Supreme Court's surprising LGBTQ decision. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from

https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/courts_law/neil-gorsuch-gay-transgender-rights-supreme-court/2020/06/16/112f903c-afe3-11ea-8f56-63f38c990077_story.html. [Accessed on January 21, 2021].

Barnes, R. (June 16, 2020). Supreme Court says gay, transgender workers protected by federal law forbidding discrimination. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/courts_law/supreme-court-says-gay-transgender-workers-are-protected-by-federal-law-forbidding-discrimination-on-the-basis-of-sex/2020/06/15/2211d5a4-655b-11ea-acca-80c22bbee96f_story.html. [Accessed on January 21, 2021].

Barnes, R., & Marimow, A. E. (October 9, 2019). Trump nominees could play pivotal role as Supreme Court decides on protections for gay, transgender workers. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/courts_law/supreme-court-will-consider-whether-gay-transgender-workers-are-protected-by-federal-law/2019/10/07/b0c4b198-e966-11e9-85c0-85a098e47b37_story.html. [Accessed on January 21, 2021].

Editorial Board. (June 26, 2015). The Supreme Court officially catches up with America on gay marriage. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/supreme-court-embraces-equality/2015/06/26/1efbd34a-1a2b-11e5-bd7f-4611a60dd8e5_story.html. [Accessed on January 21, 2021].

Editorial Board. (October 8, 2019). The Supreme Court case on LGBT discrimination shouldn't be a close call. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-supreme-courts-case-on-lgbt-discrimination-shouldnt-be-a-close-call/2019/10/07/8a3aa382-e936-11e9-9c6d-436a0df4f31d_story.html. [Accessed on January 21, 2021].

Flynn, M. (May 13, 2021). Aimee Stephens, the center of landmark transgender rights Supreme Court case, dies before the ruling. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/nation/2020/05/13/aimee-stephens-transgender-rights-supreme-court/>. [Accessed on January 21, 2021].

Hesse, M. (June 16, 2020). The law redeemed Aimee Stephens as a plaintiff but failed her as an individual. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/the-law-redeemed-aimee-stephens-as-a-plaintiff-but-failed-her-as-a-human/2020/06/16/99086bb2-af36-11ea-8f56-63f38c990077_story.html. [Accessed on January 21, 2021].

Hohmann, J. (June 15, 2020). The Daily 202: Two conservatives join liberals in Supreme Court ruling to protect LGBTQ workers. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/powerpost/paloma/daily-202/2020/06/15/daily-202-two-conservatives-join-liberals-in-supreme-court-ruling-to-protect-lgbtq-workers/5ee700d888e0fa32f823a498/>. [Accessed on January 21, 2021].

Hohmann, J., & Viebeck, E. (June 22, 2015). The Daily 202: Gay marriage decision will become 2016 GOP litmus test. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/powerpost/wp/2015/06/22/the-daily-202-gay-marriage-decision-will-become-2016-gop-litmus-test/>. [Accessed on January 21, 2021].

Kunkle, F. (June 26, 2015). Older LGBT people say Supreme Court decision on gay marriage long overdue. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/social-issues/older-lgbt-people-say-supreme-court-decision-on-gay-marriage-long-overdue/2015/06/26/50cfbbd8-1c4d-11e5-bd7f-4611a60dd8e5_story.html. [Accessed on January 21, 2021].

Milbank, D. (October 9, 2019). Will Gorsuch abandon his judicial philosophy to get what he wants?. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/will-gorsuch-abandon-his-judicial-philosophy-to-get-what-he-wants/2019/10/08/d38b3df4-ea0c-11e9-9c6d-436a0df4f31d_story.html. [Accessed on January 21, 2021].

Mats, J., & Kaplan, R. (June 16, 2020). The Supreme Court's ruling on LGBTQ protections is a triumph for textualism – and dignity. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/the-supreme-courts-ruling-on-lgbtq-protections-is-a-triumph-for-textualism--and-dignity/2020/06/15/4c8268ca-af4e-11ea-856d-5054296735e5_story.html. [Accessed on January 21, 2021].

Nakamura, D. (June 26, 2015). Obama on same-sex marriage ruling: 'We have made our union a little more perfect'. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2015/06/26/obama-on-same-sex-marriage-ruling-we-have-made-our-union-a-little-more-perfect/>. [Accessed on January 21, 2021].

Noack, R. (October 8, 2019). U.S. Supreme Court arguments on gay, transgender rights coincide with widening culture wars overseas. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2019/10/08/us-supreme-court-arguments-gay-transgender-rights-coincide-with-widening-culture-wars-overseas/>. [Accessed on January 21, 2021].

Petrow, S., & Obergefell, J. (June 29, 2015). Civilities: Marriage equality for all, and comments from Jim Obergefell, lead plaintiff in the landmark Supreme Court ruling (06 29 15). *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://live.washingtonpost.com/civilities-with-steven-petrow-20150629.html>. [Accessed on January 21, 2021].

Rosenwald, M. S. (June 26, 2015). From real estate agent to civil rights icon: Jim Obergefell's crazy day. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/local/wp/2015/06/26/from-real-estate-broker-to-civil-rights-icon-jim-obergefells-crazy-day/>. [Accessed on January 21, 2021].

Rosenwald, M. S. (June 29, 2015). A day in court for Jim Obergefell, the face of the historic gay marriage case. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from: https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/a-day-in-court-for-jim-obergefell-the-face-of-the-historic-gay-marriage-case/2015/04/28/99a00bdc-eda5-11e4-8666-a1d756d0218e_story.html. [Accessed on January 21, 2021].

Schrer, M. (June 16, 2020). Trump's effort to resist gay rights runs into his Supreme Court pick. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trumps-effort-to-resist-gay-rights-runs-into-his-supreme-court-pick/2020/06/15/604039c4-af20-11ea-8f56-63f38c990077_story.html. [Accessed on January 21, 2021].

Signorile, M. (May 7, 2015). The Supreme Court might legalize gay marriage. But that won't stop opponents from pushing anti-gay laws. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/posteverything/wp/2015/05/07/the-supreme-court-might-legalize-gay-marriage-but-that-wont-stop-opponents-from-pushing-anti-gay-laws/>. [Accessed on January 21, 2021].

Sonmez, F. (June 16, 2020). Susan Collins faces criticism for Kavanaugh vote after his dissent in Supreme Court ruling protecting gay, transgender workers. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/sen-susan-collins-faces-criticism-for-kavanaugh-vote-after-supreme-court-ruling-protecting-gay-transgender-workers/2020/06/15/687cdda6-af4b-11ea-856d-5054296735e5_story.html. [Accessed on January 21, 2021].

Strangio, C. (October 6, 2019). I'm a transgender attorney fighting for my community. Will that make a difference to the Supreme Court?. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2019/10/06/im-transgender-attorney-fighting-my-community-will-that-make-difference-supreme-court/>. [Accessed on January 21, 2021].

1.1.2. Printed newspapers

Lane, C. (March 24, 2003). *High court to hear Texas gay rights case*. The Washington Post: Washington.

Lane, C. (June 27, 2003). *Justices overturn Texas sodomy ban*. The Washington Post: Washington.

Lane, C. (June 27, 2003). *Ruling may spur battle over gay marriages*. The Washington Post: Washington.

Von Drehle, D. (June 27, 2003). *A debate on marriage, and more, now looms*. The Washington Post: Washington.

Walsh, E. (March 27, 2003). *Justices hear challenge to Texas sodomy law*. The Washington Post: Washington.

1.2. The Washington Times

Associated Press. (April 28, 2015). What they said: Supreme Court quotes on gay marriage. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/apr/28/what-they-said-supreme-court-quotes-on-gay-marriage/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

Associated Press. (May 11, 2020). Transgender woman in hospice while awaiting court ruling. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2020/may/11/transgender-woman-in-hospice-while-awaiting-court/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

Associated Press. (June 22, 2015). News briefs from around Tennessee at 1:58 a.m. EDT. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/jun/22/news-briefs-from-around-tennessee-at-158-am-edt/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

Boyer, D. (June 26, 2015). Zeal of a convert: Obama hails gay marriage ruling as a ‘victory for America’. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/jun/26/obama-hails-supreme-court-gay-marriage-ruling-vict/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

Boyer, D., & Wetzstein, C. (June 28, 2015). Religious leaders reject gay marriage ruling as legal battles loom. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/jun/28/gay-marriage-religious-leaders-reject-ruling-as-le/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

Bruce, T. (April 29, 2015). Courting gay marriage. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/apr/29/tammy-bruce-courting-gay-marriage/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

Bynum, R., & Kastanis, A. (October 15, 2019). AP analysis: Most states lack laws protecting LGBT workers. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from [AP analysis: Most states lack laws protecting LGBT workers - Washington Times](#). [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

Chasmar, J. (April 30, 2015). GOP Rep. Bill Flores ties Baltimore riots to gay marriage, ‘breakdown of the family’. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/apr/30/bill-flores-gop-lawmaker-ties-baltimore-riots-to-g/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

Curl, J. (June 28, 2015). An embarrassing day for GOP presidential candidates. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/jun/28/joseph-curl-gop-presidential-candidates-response-t/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

Diaz, M. (May 19, 2015). Partial to gay marriage. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/may/19/mario-diaz-justice-ruth-bader-ginsburg-partial-gay/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

Eggert, D. (June 15, 2020). Activists weigh LGBT ballot drive after Supreme Court ruling. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2020/jun/15/activists-weigh-lgbt-ballot-drive-after-supreme-co/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

Gilbert, D. (April 25, 2015). Gay 'marriage' affects others, too. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/jun/21/letter-to-the-editor-gay-marriage-affects-others-t/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

Howell, K. (May 25, 2015). Young conservatives push GOP Tolerance of gay marriage, other social issues. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/may/25/young-conservatives-push-republican-tolerance-on-g/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

Howell Jr., T. (June 28, 2015). GOP presidential candidate Mike Huckabee: Same-sex marriage ruling hurts pastors, businesses. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/jun/28/mike-huckabee-gop-presidential-candidate-hits-supr/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

Howell Jr., T. (June 28, 2015). States grapple with groundbreaking Supreme Court rulings on Obamacare, gay marriage. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/jun/28/obamacare-gay-marriage-supreme-court-rulings-force/>. [Accessed on January 21, 2021].

Istook, E. (April 29, 2015). Supreme Court to decide for believers what marriage is. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/apr/29/ernest-istook-supreme-court-to-decide-for-believer/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

Knight, R. (May 3, 2015). Civil rights and wrongs. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/may/3/robert-knight-forcing-gay-marriage-on-americans-wo/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

Lampo, D. (April 24, 2003). Santorum distorts Constitution. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2003/apr/24/20030424-100021-9008r/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

Limbaugh, D. (June 29, 2003). Moral relativism erodes freedom. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2003/jun/29/20030629-103826-3440r/>. [Accessed on January 21, 2021].

Madden, N. (April 28, 2015). Colorful crowds gather as Supreme Court weighs gay marriage. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/apr/28/colorful-crowds-gather-supreme-court-weighs-gay-ma/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

McLaughlin, S. (June 26, 2015). Jeb Bush: Same-sex marriage should have been decided by states. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/jun/26/jeb-bush-states-should-decide-same-sex-marriage/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

McLaughlin, S. (June 26, 2015). Scott Walker: High court's gay marriage ruling a 'grave mistake', calls for constitutional amendment. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/jun/26/walker-court-gay-marriage-ruling-grave-mistake/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

Richardson, V. (June 27, 2015). Mike Huckabee: Conservatives can ignore gay marriage ruling like Lincoln ignored Dred Scott. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/jun/27/mike-huckabee-conservatives-can-ignore-gay-marriage/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2015].

Richardson, V. (June 27, 2015). Rick Santorum blasts Supreme Court's gay marriage ruling as 'based on a lie'. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/jun/27/rick-santorum-blasts-supreme-courts-gay-marriage-r/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

Richardson, V. (June 28, 2015). Log Cabin Republicans hail Supreme Court ruling on same-sex marriage at conservative conference. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/jun/28/log-cabin-republicans-hail-supreme-court-ruling-on/>. [Accessed on January 21, 2021].

Richardson, V., & Wetzstein, C. (April 26, 2015). Gay marriage advocates expect Supreme Court to rule in their favor. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from [Gay marriage advocates expect Supreme Court to rule in their favor - Washington Times](#). [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

Sherfinski, D. (June 26, 2015). Obama phones Jim Obergefell, plaintiff in gay marriage case. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/jun/26/obama-phones-gay-marriage-plaintiff-jim-obergefell/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2015].

Sherman, M. (June 9, 2015). Court ruling against gay marriage could cause legal ‘chaos’. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/jun/9/high-court-ruling-against-gay-marriage-would-produce-chaos/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

Sherman, M., & Barakat, M. (October 8, 2019). Divided Supreme Court weighs LGBT people’s rights. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2019/oct/8/supreme-court-takes-up-cases-over-lgbt-rights/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

Swoyer, A. (June 15, 2020). Supreme Court rules LGBT employees can sue employer for discrimination. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2020/jun/15/supreme-court-rules-lgbt-employees-can-sue-employer/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

The Associated Press. (June 27, 2015). Historic gay marriage ruling stirs emotion across US. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/jun/27/historic-gay-marriage-ruling-stirs-emotion-across-us/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

The Associated Press. (October 5, 2019). Top cases for the Supreme Court’s new term. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2019/oct/5/top-cases-for-the-supreme-courts-new-term/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

The Washington Times. (June 26, 2003). Privacy amok. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2003/jun/26/20030626-084554-9878r/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

The Washington Times. (June 26, 2003). The Weekly Dish. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2003/jun/26/20030626-084558-8816r/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

The Washington Times. (June 26, 2003). Sodomy decision triggers emotional reactions. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2003/jun/26/20030626-110210-5920r/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

Thomas, C. (June 29, 2015). Same-sex marriage is only the beginning. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/jun/29/cal-thomas-same-sex-marriage-is-only-the-beginning/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

Wetzstein, C. (April 25, 2015). March for Marriage attracts thousands to Capitol Hill. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/apr/25/march-marriage-expected-bring-thousands-capitol-hi/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

Wetzstein, C. (April 26, 2015). Supreme Court gay marriage cases: What to expect. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/apr/26/the-supreme-court-is-scheduled-to-hold-oral-argume/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

Wetzstein, C. (April 28, 2015). Supreme Court asks why it should redefine marriage to include gays. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/apr/28/supreme-court-to-hear-historic-same-sex-marriage-a/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

Wetzstein, C. (April 29, 2015). Supreme Court questions offer cautious encouragement to both sides of gay marriage debate. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/apr/29/supreme-court-gay-marriage-arguments-questions-giv/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

Wetzstein, C. (June 3, 2015). Religious educators seek protection from government if gay marriage legalized. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/jun/3/religious-educators-seek-protection-from-governmen/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

Wetzstein, C. (June 26, 2015). Gay marriage legalized nationwide in 5-4 Supreme Court vote, Scalia seethes. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2015/jun/26/supreme-court-legalizes-gay-marriage-all-50-states/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

White, E. (May 12, 2020). Michigan woman at center of transgender rights case dies. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2020/may/12/michigan-woman-at-center-of-transgender-rights-cas/>. [Accessed on January 22, 2021].

2. Generic sources

2.1. Newspapers articles

Barbash, F. (July 27, 2017). Trump administration, intervening in major LGBT case, says job bias law does not cover sexual orientation. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/morning-mix/wp/2017/07/27/trump-administration-intervening-in-major-lgbt-case-says-job-bias-law-does-not-cover-sexual-orientation/>. [Accessed on May 7, 2020].

Barnes, R. (September 29, 2018). Partisan politics and Kavanaugh's defiant words put Supreme Court in unwelcome spotlight. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/courts_law/partisan-politics-and-kavanaughs-defiant-words-put-supreme-court-in-unwelcome-spotlight/2018/09/29/577657e4-c375-11e8-97a5-ab1e46bb3bc7_story.html. [Accessed on May 6, 2020].

Barnes, R. (April 21, 2019). Differences between Trump, Obama administrations at heart of Supreme Court cases. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/courts_law/differences-between-trump-obama-administrations-at-heart-of-supreme-court-cases/2019/08/20/faf4860e-c372-11e9-b72f-b31dfaa77212_story.html. [Accessed on May 6, 2020].

Barnes, R. (May 29, 2019). Supreme Court leaves in place Pennsylvania policy supporting transgender students. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/courts_law/supreme-court-leaves-in-place-pennsylvania-policy-supporting-transgender-students/2019/05/28/8f77e7ea-815a-11e9-933d-7501070ee669_story.html. [Accessed on May 6, 2020].

Barnes, R. (October 4, 2019). Supreme Court term to begin with blockbuster question: Is it legal to fire someone for being gay or transgender?. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/courts_law/supreme-court-term-to-begin-with-blockbuster-question-is-it-legal-to-fire-someone-for-being-gay-or-

[transgender/2019/10/03/b3b08a46-e15d-11e9-b199-f638bf2c340f_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/transgender/2019/10/03/b3b08a46-e15d-11e9-b199-f638bf2c340f_story.html). [Accessed on May 6, 2020].

Berger, M. (December 15, 2019). A guide to how gender-neutral language is developing around the world. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2019/12/15/guide-how-gender-neutral-language-is-developing-around-world/>. [Accessed on May 6, 2020].

Brockell, G. (June 8, 2019). How the homophobic media covered the 1969 Stonewall uprising. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/history/2019/06/08/how-homophobic-media-covered-stonewall-uprising/>. [Accessed on May 6, 2020].

Burns, K. (May 29, 2019). This is the cruelest thing the Trump administration has done to trans people yet. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2019/05/29/this-is-cruelest-thing-trump-administration-has-done-trans-people-yet/>. [Accessed on May 6, 2020].

Capehart, J. (August 1, 2018). Thank you, Justice Kennedy. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/post-partisan/wp/2018/07/31/thank-you-justice-kennedy/>. [Accessed on May 6, 2020].

Capehart, J. (June 28, 2019). From Stonewall to Mayor Pete: How far LGBTQ rights have come since 1969. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2019/06/28/stonewall-mayor-pete-how-far-lgbtq-rights-have-come-since/>. [Accessed on May 6, 2020].

Editorial. (October 26, 2020). The eight reasons we enthusiastically endorse Trump for reelection. *The Washington Times*. [Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2020/oct/26/editorial-donald-trump-for-reelection/>]. Accessed on November 6, 2020.

Editorial Board. (July 22, 2016). Donald Trump is a unique threat to American democracy. *The Washington Post*. [Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/donald-trump-is-a-unique-threat-to-american-democracy/2016/07/22/a6d823cc-4f4f-11e6-aa14-e0c1087f7583_story.html. [Accessed on May 9, 2021].

Eilperin, J. (November 10, 2015). Obama is named OUT magazine's 'Ally of the Year'. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2015/11/10/obama-is-named-out-magazines-ally-of-the-year/>. [Accessed on May 8, 2020].

Faupel, A., Scheuerman, H. L., Parris, C. L., & Werum, R. (August 13, 2019). Hate crimes are on the rise. What does it take to get state governments to respond?. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/08/13/hate-crimes-are-rise-what-does-it-take-get-state-governments-respond/>. [Accessed on May 6, 2020].

Frank, N., & Baker, K. (December 19, 2019). Anti-LGBT discrimination has a huge human toll. Research proves it. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2019/12/19/anti-lgbt-discrimination-has-huge-human-toll-research-proves-it/>. [Accessed on May 6, 2020].

Fredericks, B. (May 24, 2019). Trump administration wants to reverse Obama-era LGBT protections. *The New York Post*. Retrieved from <https://nypost.com/2019/05/24/trump-administration-wants-to-reverse-obama-era-lgbt-protections/>. [Accessed on March 31, 2020].

Gessen, M. (May 20, 2020). Remembering Aimee Stephens, who lost and found her purpose. *The New Yorker*. Retrieved from <https://www.newyorker.com/news/postscript/remembering-aimee-stephens-who-lost-and-found-her-purpose>. [Accessed on May 9, 2021].

Griffin, C. (April 10, 2019). The Trump administration's silence on LGBTQ rights in unconscionable. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2019/04/10/trump-administrations-silence-lgbtq-rights-is-unconscionable/>. [Accessed on May 6, 2020].

Hewitt, H. (October 19, 2019). The people know what laws mean. The Supreme Court shouldn't try to rewrite them. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2019/10/19/people-know-what-laws-mean-supreme-court-shouldnt-try-rewrite-them/>. [Accessed on May 6, 2020].

Kessler, G. (August 24, 2020). The absurd claim that Trump is the 'most pro-gay president in American history'. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2020/08/24/absurb-claim-that-trump-is-most-pro-gay-president-american-history/>. [Accessed on May 9, 2021].

Kirchick, J. (March 2, 2020). The historic LGBTQ Trump appointment that got overshadowed. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2020/03/02/historic-lgbtq-trump-appointment-that-got-overshadowed/>. [Accessed on May 6, 2020].

Kohn, S. (April 1, 2016). Who leads constitutional change: Community advocates or the Supreme Court?. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://washingtonpost.com/opinions/who-leads-constitutional-change-community-advocates-or-the-supreme-court/2016/04/01/cef1fe62-eaca-11e5-a6f3-21ccdbc5f74e_story.html. [Accessed on May 8, 2020].

Litman, L. (October 12, 2019). The Supreme Court could get a lot more undemocratic. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2019/10/12/supreme-court-could-get-lot-more-undemocratic/>. [Accessed on May 6, 2020].

Marks, G. (October 5, 2017). The Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has been busier than ever. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/on-small-business/wp/2017/10/05/the-equal-employment-opportunity-commission-has-been-busier-than-ever/>. [Accessed on May 7, 2020].

Mullen, M. (March 18, 2019). I pushed to repeal ‘don’t ask, don’t tell’. The transgender ban defies our values. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/i-pushed-to-repeal-dont-ask-dont-tell-the-transgender-ban-defies-our-values/2019/03/18/a637d6e4-49af-11e9-b79a-961983b7e0cd_story.html. [Accessed on May 6, 2020].

Olorunnipa, T. (March 31, 2019). Trump, who cast himself as pro-LGBT, is now under fire from Democrats for rolling back protections. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/trump-who-cast-himself-as-pro-lgbt-now-under-fire-from-democrats-for-rolling-back-protections/2019/05/30/95c04e96-8306-11e9-95a9-e2c830afe24f_story.html. [Accessed on May 6, 2020].

Petrow, S. (October 27, 2016). LGBT and GOP? 12 percent of the community supports Trump. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/lgbt-and-gop-12-percent-of-the-queer-population-supports-donald-trump/2016/10/27/7b5e9d0a-9c72-11e6-a0ed-ab0774c1eaa5_story.html. [Accessed on May 8, 2020].

Phillip, A., Gibbons-Neff, T., & DeBonis, M. (July 26, 2017). Trump announces that he will ban transgender people from serving in the military. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/national-security/trump-announces-that-he-will-ban-transgender-people-from-serving-in-the-military/2017/07/26/6415371e-723a-11e7-803f-a6c989606ac7_story.html. [Accessed on May 7, 2020].

Rosenberg, A. (January 25, 2018). In Three years, LGBT Americans have gone from triumph to backlash. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/act-four/wp/2018/01/25/in-three-years-lgbt-americans-have-gone-from-triumph-to-backlash-blame-trump/>. [Accessed on May 7, 2020].

Rosenwald, M. S. (April 6, 2015). How Jim Obergefell became the face of the Supreme Court gay marriage case. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/how-jim-obergefell-became-the-face-of-the-supreme->

[court-gay-marriage-case/2015/04/06/3740433c-d958-11e4-b3f2-607bd612aeac_story.html](https://www.washingtonpost.com/archive/local/2015/04/06/3740433c-d958-11e4-b3f2-607bd612aeac_story.html).

[Accessed on May 9, 2021].

Samuels, R., & Johnson, J. (July 26, 2017). 'It's not my thing': A history of Trump's shifting relationship with the LGBT community. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/its-not-my-thing-a-history-of-trumps-shifting-relationship-with-the-lgbt-community/2017/07/26/92920302-7220-11e7-8f39-eeb7d3a2d304_story.html. [Accessed on May 7, 2020].

Schmidt, S. (June 8, 2019). Americans' views flipped on gay rights. How did minds change so quickly?. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/social-issues/americans-views-flipped-on-gay-rights-how-did-minds-change-so-quickly/2019/06/07/ae256016-8720-11e9-98c1-e945ae5db8fb_story.html. [Accessed on May 6, 2020].

Schmidt, S. (February 5, 2020). Decades after his arrest for having sex with men, a gay civil rights leader is pardoned. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/history/2020/02/05/bayard-rustin-newsom-pardon/>. [Accessed on May 6, 2020].

Scott, E. (September 7, 2018). In Kavanaugh's non-answer on same-sex marriage, many heard a troubling response. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2018/09/07/kavanaughs-non-answer-same-sex-marriage-many-heard-troubling-answer/>. [Accessed on May 6, 2020].

Scott, E. (June 3, 2019). Trump's recognition of LGBT Pride Month conflicts with his administration's policies. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/06/03/trumps-recognition-lgbt-pride-month-conflicts-with-his-administrations-policies/>. [Accessed on May 6, 2020].

Scott, E. (October 8, 2019). Why the Supreme Court case on LGBT worker protections will be pivotal. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/10/08/why-scotus-case-lgbt-worker-protections-will-be-pivotal/>. [Accessed on March 31, 2020].

Scott, E. (November 5, 2019). Once again in the Trump administration, religious freedom trumps LGBT rights. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2019/11/05/once-again-trump-administration-religious-freedom-trumps-lgbt-rights/>. [Accessed on March 31, 2020].

Signorile, M. (August 20, 2019). Trump has a devastating record on LGBTQ rights. Don't deny the truth. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/trump-may-want-you-to-think-hes-lgbtq-friendly-dont-be-fooled/2019/08/20/c2b7a7be-c36b-11e9-b72f-b31dfaa77212_story.html. [Accessed on May 6, 2020].

The Washington Times. (October 26, 2020). The eight reasons we enthusiastically endorse Trump for reelection. *The Washington Times*. Retrieved from <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2020/oct/26/editorial-donald-trump-for-reelection/>. [Accessed on November 6, 2020].

Usera, A. (October 8, 2019). Demonstrators gather outside Supreme Court over landmark gender discrimination case. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/video/national/demonstrators-gather-outside-supreme-court-over-landmark-gender-discrimination-case/2019/10/08/20e1fc9e-9d8d-4378-9d34-db0a27f5edc7_video.html. [Accessed on May 6, 2020].

Yi, J. S., Woodsome, K., & Kunitz, D. (June 4, 2019). Opinion: Trump says he supports LGBTQ Americans. His record says otherwise. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/video/editorial/opinion--president-trump-says-he-supports-lgbtq-americans-his-record-says-otherwise/2019/06/04/9138f73b-e66c-45fa-ac51-8e7fb2b39ad7_video.html. [Accessed on May 6, 2020].

2.2 Monographs

Alberta, T. (2019). *American carnage: On the front lines of the republican civil war and the rise of president Trump*. New York: Harpers Collins Publishers.

Ball, C. (2017). *The First Amendment and LGBT Equality: A Contentious History*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Days, M. (2016). *Obama's legacy: What he accomplished as President*. USA: Hachette.

Friedman, L., & Hayden, G. (2017). *American law: an introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Havens, T. (2011). *Understanding Media Industries*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Hildebrandt, H. W., & Snyder, R. D. (1977). *The Pollyanna Hypothesis in Business Writing: Initial Results, Suggestions for Research*. The University of Michigan. Michigan.

Kovach, B., & Rosenstiel, T. (2014). *The Elements of Journalism*. New York.

Mazzoleni, G. (ed.). (2016). *The International Encyclopedia of Political Communication*. Hoboken, New Jersey: Wiley.

McGann, A., & Smith, C. (2016). *Gerrymandering in America: The House of Representatives, the Supreme Court, and the Future of Popular Sovereignty*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

McQuail, D. (2010). *McQuail's Mass Communication Theory*. New Delhi: Sage Publications.

Peterson, D. & Panfil, V. R. (Eds.). (2014). *Handbook of LGBT Communities, Crime, and Justice*. New York: Springer.

Robson, R. (2016). *Justice Ginsburg's Obergefell v. Hodges*. New York: CUNY Academic Works.

Todd, M. (2017). *Pride: The story of the LGBTQ equality movement*. London: André Deutsch Limited.

2.3. Revue articles

Ball, A. C. (2004). The Positivity in the Fundamental Right to Marry: Same-Sex Marriage in the Aftermath of Lawrence v. Texas. *Minnesota Law Review* 88: 1184-1232.

Barnett, R. (2003). Justice Kennedy's Libertarian Revolution: Lawrence v. Texas. *Boston Univ. School of Law Working Paper* 3 (13): 21-41.

Benson, R. (2019). How media ownership matters in the US: Beyond the concentration debate. *Sociétés contemporaines* 113 (1): 71-83.

Boydston, A. E. (2014). Making the News: Politics, the Media, and Agenda Setting. *The Public Opinion Quarterly* 78 (3): 761-763.

Carpenter, D. (2004). The Unknown Past of Lawrence v. Texas. *Michigan Law Review* 102: 1464-1527.

Cook, F. L., Tyler, T.R., Goetz, E. G., et al. (1983) Media and agenda setting: Effects on the public, interest group leaders, policy makers, and policy. *Public opinion Quarterly* 47 (1): 16-35.

Edwards III, G., & Wood, B. (1999, June). Who influences Whom? The President, Congress, and the Media. *The American Political Science Review* 93 (2): 327-344.

Entman, R. M. (1993). Framing: Toward clarification of a fractured paradigm. *Journal of Communication*, 43(4): 51-58.

Epstein, L., & Martin, D. M. (2012). Does Public Opinion Influence the Supreme Court? Possibly Yes (But We're Not Sure Why). *University of Pennsylvania Journal of Constitutional Law* 13 (263): 263-281.

Eshbaugh-Soha, M., & Peake, J. (2004). Presidential influence over the systematic agenda. *Congress & the Presidency* 31 (2): 181-201.

D'Alessio, D., & Allen, M. (2006). Media Bias in Presidential Elections: A Meta-Analysis. *Journal of Communication* 50 (4): 133-156.

Dearing, J. (1988). Agenda-Setting Research: Where Has It Been, Where Is It Going?. *Communication Yearbook* 11: 555-594.

P. S. Dodds, et al. (2015). Human language reveals a universal positivity bias. *PNAS* 112 (8): 2389-2394.

Feldman, S. (2015). (Same) Sex, Lies, and Democracy: Tradition, Religion, and Substantive Due Process (with an Emphasis on Obergefell v Hodges). *William & Mary Bill or Rights Journal* 24 (2): 341-368.

Golan, G. J., & Wanta, W. (2001). Second-level agenda-setting in the New Hampshire primary: A comparison of coverage in three newspapers and public perceptions of candidates. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly* 78 (2): 247-259.

Goldstein, A. (1988). History, Homosexuality, and Political Values: Searching for the Hidden Determinants of Bowers v. Hardwick. *The Yale Law Journal* 97 (6): 1073-1103.

Graham, K. (1998). *Personal history*. New York: Vintage.

Hill, K. Q. (1998). The policy agendas of the president and the mass public: A research validation and extension. *American Journal of Political Science* 42 (4): 1328-1334.

Katz, R. (2015). The Role of Public Reason in Obergefell v. Hodges. *FIU Law Review* 11 (1): 177-188.

Kazyak, E. & Stange, M. (2018). Backlash or a Positive Response?: Public Opinion of LGB Issues After Obergefell v. Hodges. *Journal of Homosexuality* 65 (14): 2028-2052.

Koppelman, A. (1994). Why Discrimination Against Lesbians and Gay Men is Sex Discrimination. *New York University Law Review* 69 (2): 197-287.

Kosma, N. (1998, June). Measuring the Influence of Supreme Court Justices. *The Journal of Legal Studies* 27 (2): 333-372.

Mertus, J. (2007). The Rejection of Human Rights Framings: The Case of LGBT Advocacy in the US. *Human Rights Quarterly* 29 (4): 1036-1064.

Mccombs, M., & Shaw, L. D. (1972). The Agenda-Setting Function of Mass Media. *Public Opinion Quarterly* 36 (2): 176-187.

Mumford, M. D., & Owens, W. A. (1987) Methodology Review: Principles, Procedures, and Findings in the Application of Background Data Measures, *Applied Psychological Measurement* 11 (1): 1-31.

Parks, P. (2019). Naturalizing negativity: how journalism textbooks justify crime, conflict, and “bad” news. *Critical studies in media communication* 36(1):75-91.

Rogers, E. M., Dearing, J. W., & Chang, S. (1991) AIDS in the 1980s: The agenda-setting process for a public issue. *Journalism Monographs* 126: 1-82.

Segal, J.A., & Cover, A. D. (1989). Ideological Values and the Votes of U.S. Supreme Court Justices. *The American Political Sciences Review* 83 (2): 562-563.

Shaw, D. L., & McCombs, M. (1977). *The emergence of American political issues: The agenda-setting function of the press*. St. Paul, Minnesota: West.

Spindelman, M. (2004, June). Surviving Lawrence v. Texas. *Michigan Law Review* 102 (7): 1615-1667.

Tiemeyer, P. (2017). La lutte pour les droits des personnes LGBT et le parti républicain. *Politique américaine* 29 (1): 93-117.

Valelly, R. M. (2012). LGBT Politics and American Political Development. *Annual Review of Political Science* 15 (1): 313-332.

Vieira, N. (1988). Hardwick and the Right of Privacy. *The University of Chicago Law Review* 55 (4): 1181-1191.

Vohs, K. D. (2001). Bad Is Stronger Than Good. *Review of General Psychology* 5 (4): 323-370.

Walgrave, S., & Van Aelst, P. (2006). The contingency of the mass media's political agenda setting power: Towards a preliminary theory. *Journal of Communication* 56: 88-109.

Zhang, C. & Meadows III, C. (2012). International Coverage, Foreign Policy, and National Image: Exploring the Complexities of Media Coverage, Public Opinion, and Presidential Agenda. *International Journal of Communication* 6: 76-95.

2.4. Internet websites

ABCNews. (May 9, 2012). Archival video: President Obama Announces His Support for Same Sex Marriage in 2012. ABCNews. Retrieved from <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/video/archival-video-president-obama-announces-support-sex-marriage-44652180>. [Accessed on May 9, 2021].

Alisa Wiersema. (March 15, 2013). High-Profile Politicians Who Changed Their Positions on Gay Marriage. ABC News. Retrieved from: <https://abcnews.go.com/Politics/high-profile-politicians-changed-positions-gay-marriage/story?id=18740293>. [Accessed on January 18, 2021].

All Sides. (2020). Retrieved from <https://www.allsides.com/unbiased-balanced-news>. [Accessed on 2020, May 19].

Cambridge Dictionary. (2020). Sensitive. *Cambridge Dictionary*. Retrieved from <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/sensitive>. [Accessed on October 10, 2020].

Colorado Encyclopedia. (2021). Amendment 2. *Colorado Encyclopedia*. Retrieved from <https://coloradoencyclopedia.org/article/amendment-2>. [Accessed on January 18, 2021].

Communication Thoery. (2021). The Narrative Paradigm. *Communication Theory*. Retrieved from <https://www.communicationtheory.org/the-narrative-paradigm/>. [Accessed on May 3, 2021].

Constitutional Rights Foundation (2020). Political Parties Platforms. *Constitutional Rights Foundation*. Retrieved from <https://www.crf-usa.org/election-central/political-parties-platforms.html>. [Accessed on October 31, 2020].

Cox, D., Navarro-Rivera, J., & Jones, R. P. (2014, February 2) A Shifting Landscape: A Decade of Change in American Attitudes about Same-Sex Marriage and LGBT Issues. *PPRI*. Retrieved from <https://www.ppri.org/research/2014-lgbt-survey/>. [Accessed on 2020, April 10].

Cutler, H. (September 25, 1973). Gay activist gets Biden's 'gay reaction'. *The Morning News*. Retrieved from https://freebeacon.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/The_Morning_News_Tue_Sep_25_1973_.pdf. [Accessed on May 8, 2021].

Democratic Party. (2020). Retrieved from <https://democrats.org/>. [Accessed on April 17, 2020].

Donald J. Trump. (2020). Retrieved from <https://www.donaldjtrump.com/>. [Accessed on April 17, 2020].

Franke-Ruta, G. (July 8, 2013). George W. Bush's Forgotten Gay-Rights History. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2013/07/george-w-bushs-forgotten-gay-rights-history/277567/>. [Accessed on May 8, 2021].

Gass, N. (April 21, 2016). Trump: Transgender people can use whatever bathroom they want. *Politico*. Retrieved from <https://www.politico.com/blogs/2016-gop-primary-live-updates-and-results/2016/04/trump-transgender-bathrooms-222257>. [Accessed on May 9, 2021].

GLAAD. (October 2016). GLAAD Media Reference Guide 10th Edition. *GLAAD*. Retrieved from <https://www.glaad.org/reference>. [Accessed on January 20, 2021].

GLAAD. (2021). GLAAD Media Reference Guide – Terms To Avoid. *GLAAD*. Retrieved from <https://www.glaad.org/reference/offensive>. [Accessed on January 20, 2021].

GOP. (2020). Retrieved from <https://gop.com/>. [Accessed on April 17, 2020].

Guerin, L. (2020). What Is The EEOC?. *NOLO*. Retrieved from <https://www.nolo.com/legal-encyclopedia/what-is-the-eeoc.html>. [Accessed on November 6, 2020].

History.com editors. (June 2, 2020). Gay Marriage. *History*. Retrieved from <https://www.history.com/topics/gay-rights/gay-marriage>. [Accessed on May 9, 2021].

Human Rights Campaign. (2021). Understanding the Transgender Community. *HRC*. Retrieved from <https://www.hrc.org/resources/understanding-the-transgender-community>. [Accessed on May 9, 2021].

IPSOS. (January 29, 2018). Global Attitudes Toward Transgender People. *IPSOS*. Retrieved from <https://www.ipsos.com/en-us/news-polls/global-attitudes-toward-transgender-people>. [Accessed on May 9, 2021].

John Wiley & Sons (eds). (2008). The International Encyclopaedia of Communication. *Online Library Wiley*. Retrieved from

<https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/browse/book/10.1002/9781405186407/title>. [Accessed on May 3, 2020].

Kilgariff, A.. (March 12, 2014). Corpora in English language teaching. *British Council*. Retrieved from <https://www.britishcouncil.org/voices-magazine/corpora-english-language-teaching>. [Accessed on May 12, 2021].

Media Bias Fact Check. (2020). Retrieved from <https://mediabiasfactcheck.com/>. [Accessed on 2020, May 19].

MSNBC. (December 18, 2015). Trump: Putin is a leader, unlike our president. *MSNBC*. Retrieved from <https://www.msnbc.com/morning-joe/watch/trump--putin-is-a-leader--unlike-our-president-588186691983>. [Accessed on May 9, 2021].

National archives. (2020). Retrieved from <https://www.archives.gov/>. [Accessed on April 17, 2020].

NBCNews. (July 8, 2015). Trump in 1999: ‘I am Very Pro-Choice’. *NBCNews*. Retrieved from <https://www.nbcnews.com/meet-the-press/video/trump-in-1999-i-am-very-pro-choice-480297539914>. [Accessed on May 9, 2021].

NOLO. (2021). Civil Rights. *NOLO*. Retrieved from <https://www.nolo.com/dictionary/civil-rights-term.html>. [Accessed on May 8, 2021].

NOLO. (2021). Right To Privacy. *NOLO*. Retrieved from <https://www.nolo.com/dictionary/right-to-privacy-term.html>. [Accessed on May 6, 2021].

Office of George W. Bush. (2020). Retrieved from <https://www.georgewbush.com/>. [Accessed on April 17, 2020].

Office of the Press Secretary. (January 18, 2011). Press Briefing by Press Secretary Robert Gibbs, 1/18/2011. *Obama White House Archives*. Retrieved from

<https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/01/18/press-briefing-press-secretary-robert-gibbs-1182011>. [Accessed on May 9, 2021].

Osmond, D. H. (March, 2003). Epidemiology of HIV/AIDS in the United States. *HIV InSite*. Retrieved from <http://hivinsite.ucsf.edu/InSite?page=kb-01-03#:~:text=Since%20the%20incubation%20period%20of,rapid%20increase%20in%20AIDS%20diagnoses..> [Accessed on May 13, 2021].

Ralph, P., & Relman, E. (September 2, 2018). These are the most and least biased news outlets in the US, according to Americans. *Business Insider*. Retrieved from <https://www.businessinsider.com/most-biased-news-outlets-in-america-cnn-fox-nytimes-2018-8>. [Accessed on October 21, 2020].

Ronald Reagan Presidential Library & Museum. (2020). Retrieved from <https://www.reaganlibrary.gov/>. [Accessed on April 17, 2020].

Stephens, A. (March 30, 2020). Transgender Americans Belong: An Open Letter to America's Employers. *Out&Equal Workplace Advocates*. Retrieved from <https://outandequal.org/aimee-stephens-letter-to-employers/>. [Accessed on May 9, 2021].

The American Presidency Project. (2020). Retrieved from <https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/>. [Accessed on April 17, 2020].

The Office of Barack and Michelle Obama. (2020). Retrieved from <https://barackobama.com/>. [Accessed on April 17, 2020].

The Washington Post. (2020). Retrieved from <http://washingtonpost.com/>. [Accessed on April 17, 2020].

The Washington Times. (2020). Retrieved from <https://washingtontimes.com/>. [Accessed on April 17, 2020].

The White House. (2020). Retrieved from <https://www.whitehouse.gov/>. [Accessed on April 17, 2020].

The White House: Office of the Press Secretary. (June 24, 2016). Presidential Proclamation – Establishment of the Stonewall National Monument. *The White House*. Retrieved from: <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2016/06/24/presidential-proclamation-establishment-stonewall-national-monument>. [Accessed on January 18, 2021].

The White House: Office of the Press Secretary. (June 26, 2015). Remarks by the President on the Supreme Court Decision on Marriage Equality. *The White House*. Retrieved from: <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2015/06/26/remarks-president-supreme-court-decision-marriage-equality>. [Accessed on January 18, 2021].

University of Michigan Library. (2020, January 24). “Fake News,” Lies and Propaganda: How to Sort Fact from Fiction. *University of Michigan*. Retrieved from <https://guides.lib.umich.edu/fakenews>. [Accessed on May 19, 2020].

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. (2020). Retrieved from <https://www.eeoc.gov/>. [Accessed on April 17, 2020].

U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. (2020). Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. *EEOC*. Retrieved from <https://www.eeoc.gov/statutes/title-vii-civil-rights-act-1964>. [Accessed on November 6, 2020].

UC San Diego. (2020). LGBTQ History in Government Documents: Timeline of Documents. *UC San Diego*. Retrieved from <https://ucsd.libguides.com/lgbtdocs/timeline>. [Accessed on January 18, 2021].

Simmons Research. (October 3, 2018). Simmons Research Releases News Media Trust Index. *Simmons Research*. Retrieved from <https://www.mrisimmons.com/press/simmons-research-releases-news-media-trust-index/>. [Accessed on November 6, 2020].

Supreme Court of the United States. (2020). Retrieved from <https://www.supremecourt.gov/>. [Accessed on April 17, 2020].

Supreme Court of the United States. (2020) No. 18-107. *Supreme Court*. Retrieved from <https://www.supremecourt.gov/search.aspx?filename=/docket/docketfiles/html/public/18-107.html>. [Accessed on May 6, 2020].

Weinmeyer, D. (2014). The Decriminalization of Sodom in the United States. *Journal of Ethics*. Retrieved from <https://journalofethics.ama-assn.org/article/decriminalization-sodomy-united-states/2014-11>. [Accessed on October 29, 2020].

2.5. Others

Antoine, F. (2018). *Cours: Structures socio-économiques des médias*. Université catholique de Louvain.

Bowers, attorney general of Georgia v. Hardwick et al. 478 U.S. 186 (1986).

Democratic National Convention (August 18, 2020). *2020 Democratic Party Platform*. Issued by the Democratic Platform Committee.

Derèze, G. (2015). *Cours: Méthodes de recherche en communication : approches qualitatives*. Université catholique de Louvain.

Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Plaintiff-Appellant, Aimee Stephens, Intervenor, v. R.G. & G.R. Harris Funeral Homes, INC., Defendant-Appellee. 884 F.3d 560 (2018).

Equal Emp't Opportunity Comm'n v. R.G. & G.R. Harris Funeral Homes, Inc., 201 F. Supp. 3d 837 (E.D. Mich. 2016)

GLAAD, & MAP (2012). *An Ally's Guide To Terminology: Talking About LGBT People And Equality*. Issue by GLAAD & MAP.

Lawrence et al. V. Texas. 539 U.S. 558 (2003).

Republican National Convention (2016). *Republican Platform 2016*. Issued by the Republican National Committee.

Sépulchre, S., & Standaert, O. (2017). *Cours: Méthodes de recherche en communication : Approches quantitatives*. Université catholique de Louvain.

TEX. PENAL CODE ANN. § 21.06(a) (Vernon 2003).

UNIVERSITÉ CATHOLIQUE DE LOUVAIN
Faculté de philosophie, arts et lettres

Place Blaise Pascal, 1 bte L3.03.11, 1348 Louvain-la-Neuve, Belgique | www.uclouvain.be/fial