



Marriage Equality: On the Books and on the Ground? An Experimental Audit Study of Beliefs and Behavior towards Same-Sex and Interracial Couples in the Wedding Industry

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In the United States, same-sex and interracial couples benefit from federal court decisions recognizing and protecting their marital unions. Despite these legal protections, prejudiced beliefs and subtly-biased behavior toward these groups may still be socially normative. The present studies surveyed Americans' beliefs about the acceptability of prejudice toward same-sex, interracial, and white heterosexual couples and then examined actual behavior among wedding venue professionals towards them. In Study 1, Americans felt it more socially normative to express prejudice toward same-sex couples than toward interracial couples and heterosexual couples; they also forecasted that same-sex couples would experience more discrimination by wedding industry professionals than interracial couples. Study 2 used experimental audit methods to examine whether the actual behavior of wedding venue professionals aligned with Americans' social norm beliefs. Results revealed that same-sex couples and, to a lesser extent, interracial couples experienced more discrimination by wedding industry professionals than did white heterosexual couples.

In the *Obergefell v. Hodges* (2015) majority decision, the Supreme Court required all U.S. States to recognize the marital unions of same-sex couples. The court's decision superseded discriminatory laws limiting marriage in 13 States (e.g., Karimi & Pearson, 2013), deeming them unconstitutional (Liptak, 2015). In so doing, marriage equality for same-sex couples became a long fought, nationwide reality. In the wake of this court ruling, it is an especially interesting and informative moment in our nation's history to empirically examine Americans' social norm beliefs about discrimination toward same-sex couples as well as the actual rates of discrimination against them as they seek wedding related services. Across two studies, we directly compare the treatment of same-sex couples to other historically stigmatized couples (i.e., interracial-heterosexual couples,¹ whose unions were legalized nationwide over 50 years ago; *Loving v. Virginia*, 1967), and non-stigmatized couples (i.e., white-heterosexual couples, a group that has, in fact, has enjoyed a historically privileged status as the "normative" couple type; e.g., Defense of Marriage Act, 1996). Specifically, we examined the extent to which Americans expected—and wedding venue employees actually displayed—*blatant* and *subtle* discriminatory behaviors toward couples who inquired about wedding services.

Why study social norm beliefs and its link to discrimination in the wedding industry context? Little is known about how same-sex couples and interracial couples (relative to white-heterosexual couples) are actually treated on the ground by wedding professionals when, ostensibly, no one is watching. Wedding industry workers are on the frontlines of the marriage-equality fight and act as gatekeepers.

¹ Interracial-heterosexual couples will henceforth be referred to simply as "interracial couples." Likewise, white-same-sex couples will be referred to as "same-sex couples." This is to improve manuscript clarity and flow. We recognize, however, that not all interracial couples are heterosexual pairs and not all same-sex couples are share a racial background.

Interactions with wedding industry workers can have long lasting cognitive, affective, and interpersonal effects on the couples seeking wedding services. Given recent high-profile incidents of anti-gay discrimination perpetrated by individuals in positions to provide wedding-related services (e.g., Cohn, 2015; *Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission*, 2018; Von Drehle, 2015), we determined that the wedding industry was a particularly relevant context to examine.

Theoretical Links among Institutional Actions, Social Norm Beliefs, and Prejudice Expression

As legal scholars and social scientists have theorized (e.g., Allport, 1954; Lerner, 1967; Tankard & Paluck, 2016) and empirically demonstrated (e.g., Mondak, 1994; Tankard & Paluck, 2017), institutional actions, like court rulings and civil rights legislation, can shift *social norm beliefs*. Put differently, people's views about which behaviors are typical and acceptable in a given context—as well as which ones are *atypical* and *unacceptable*—are responsive to institutional cues (e.g., Tankard & Paluck, 2016). Strong, deeply ingrained motivations to fit in and belong, compel us to perform normative behaviors and prevent us from performing non-normative ones (e.g., Cialdini, Kallgren, & Reno, 1991; Hogg & Reid, 2006; Schroeder & Prentice, 1998). How, then, might the Supreme Court's recent marriage equality ruling shift social norm beliefs and why might that matter?

Among many factors that modulate the expression and suppression of prejudice, people's social norm beliefs are especially influential (Crandall & Eshleman, 2003; Crandall, Eshleman, & O'Brien, 2002; Dovidio & Gaertner, 2004). Ample evidence demonstrates that as prejudice toward a particular group is perceived to be more socially normative, people become more willing to express that form of prejudice and are more permissive of discrimination (e.g., Blanchard, Crandall, Brigham, & Vaughn, 1994; Blanchard, Lilly, & Vaughn, 1991; Crandall et al., 2002). It follows then that when behaviors (like same-sex or interracial marriage) are illegal and not protected under law, people tend to view prejudice toward groups who engage in these behaviors as normative. However, when those same behaviors become legal, such as with the case of interracial (*Loving v. Virginia*, 1967) and, later, same-sex marriage (*Obergefell v. Hodges*, 2015), expressing prejudice toward groups who engage in these behaviors becomes less socially normative. This was made apparent by a controlled experiment conducted in the months leading up to the Supreme Court's marriage equality ruling. Tankard and Paluck (2017) explored how expectations about the likely outcome of the same-sex marriage case affected social norm beliefs about the degree to which other Americans supported same-sex marriage. The researchers found that people inferred social norms from the expected outcome—that is, when researchers claimed the court was likely to *support* marriage equality, people reported that, overall, Americans were more supportive of same-sex marriage compared to when researchers claimed the court

was likely to *oppose* marriage equality. A large body of scholarly work linking social norm beliefs to prejudice expression (e.g., Blanchard et al., 1994, 1991; Crandall et al., 2002; Crandall & Eshleman, 2003) suggest that, to the extent that an institutional action shifts norm beliefs toward egalitarianism, institutional actions can indirectly suppress discriminatory behavior.

Taking off those rose-colored glasses, however, we see that the mere existence of an egalitarian-leaning institutional action, like the marriage equality ruling, is no guarantee of normative shifts toward egalitarianism (e.g., Tankard & Paluck, 2016). Nor is it a guarantee of prejudice reduction (e.g., Tankard & Paluck, 2017). Institutional actions do not occur inside a vacuum—the prevalence of counter-movements prepared to mobilize against egalitarian efforts can dilute a particular institutional action’s effect (e.g., Persily, Egan, & Wallsten, 2006). For example, even though the marriage-equality ruling sparked celebration and a flurry of marriage ceremonies on the side of LGBT activists and allies (Gates & Brown, 2015), an opposing force of politicians and lobbyists redoubled their efforts, initiating counter-legislation to bypass the court’s ruling (Socarides, 2016). In Indiana, for example, then Governor Mike Pence signed one of the first Religious Freedom Restoration Acts (RFRA), a law ostensibly instituted to protect Indiana business owners from substantial burden to their religious freedoms (Pence, 2015). Critics claimed the RFRA was a (not so thinly) veiled attempt to legally permit discrimination against same-sex couples (e.g., Cohn, 2015). Swift, nationwide backlash against the RFRA in the form of marches, petitions, and boycotts propelled lawmakers to “clarify” the law (Payne, 2015). In its current form, the law cannot be used to justify discrimination against sexual and gender minorities (Cook, LoBianco, & Stanglin, 2015). Much like Indiana’s RFRA, many other well-documented incidents demonstrate that discrimination against same-sex couples persists, in spite of the court ruling. Readers may recall how Kentucky clerk, Kim Davis, refused to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples (e.g., Von Drehle, 2015) or how a Colorado cake shop owner refused to bake a wedding cake for a same-sex couple (e.g., *Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission*, 2018). These examples demonstrate a clear need for researchers to empirically examine the prevalence and form that anti-gay discrimination may take within the wedding industry.

Although egalitarian institutional actions *may* afford targets of prejudice social protection by rendering prejudiced attitudes and discriminatory behavior less socially normative (e.g., Tankard & Paluck, 2016, 2017), assessing the claim that any one institutional action affords social protection requires surveying and empirical investigation. Although research suggests that social norm belief changes spurred by the marriage equality ruling may have profound implications for how same-sex couples are actually treated (e.g., Crandall & Eshleman, 2003), no studies to our knowledge have investigated the extent to which discrimination against same-sex couples is considered socially normative nor

the extent of actual discrimination in the wedding industry. Thus, the present studies systematically survey Americans' beliefs about the acceptability of prejudice toward same-sex couples (Study 1) and examine how actual wedding venue professionals behave towards these couples as they seek marital services (Study 2).

Overview of the Present Research

Two studies explore the subtle and blatant discriminatory attitudes and behaviors that operate against same-sex, interracial, and heterosexual couples within the wedding industry. In Study 1, we measure the extent to which prejudice against these couples is considered socially normative. In Study 2, we conduct an audit study to examine whether actual discriminatory behavior in the wedding industry follows a pattern similar to the one forecasted by participants in Study 1.

Consistent with previous research demonstrating that it is more socially acceptable to express prejudice toward historically stigmatized (vs. non-stigmatized) groups (Crandall et al., 2002), we expected Americans to report that it is more socially acceptable for people to express prejudiced attitudes and discriminatory behavior towards interracial and same-sex couples, compared to white-heterosexual couples who have not experienced the same historical and legal stigmatization in America. It is less clear how people's social norm beliefs will differ between same-sex and interracial couples. It's possible that we will see differences in norms and treatment between these two groups. For example, Americans may view prejudice toward interracial couples (whose unions were legalized in the United States in 1967) as more *socially unacceptable* than prejudice toward same-sex couples (whose unions were only legalized in 2015). However, it is also quite possible that we will not see differences. Stigma can have long-term ("sticky") effects on people's perceptions of stigmatized groups, affecting the perception of groups long after legal protections have been conferred (e.g., Devine & Elliot, 1995). Given the multiple, theoretically-grounded predictions we could make about the normative acceptability of prejudice toward stigmatized and non-stigmatized couples, this is an exploratory question.

In addition to examining differences among the three target groups, we will examine whether certain *types of prejudice expression* are *more* socially permissible and prevalent than other types. Much is unknown about how stigmatized couples will be treated on the ground by wedding industry professionals. However, blatantly-biased behavior (e.g., denial of service; verbal or physical assault) is often viewed as more socially inappropriate than subtly-biased behavior (e.g., avoidance, discouraging future contact, and unhelpfulness; Dovidio & Gaertner, 2004). Therefore, we expect that *subtle* expressions of prejudice, like avoidance or discouragement, may be more normative and prevalent than *blatant* expressions of

prejudice, like refusal of service or using slurs. In fact, this may be especially true because we are examining the wedding industry context. Being caught in the act of blatantly prejudiced behavior could lose a company business and cause culpable employees to be fired. Thus, if biased behavior is detected at all, subtle bias will likely be the predominant form of bias expression in the wedding industry context.

Study 1

Study 1 investigates American's beliefs about the acceptability of prejudice expression toward same-sex, interracial, and heterosexual couples in the United States and examines their behavioral forecasts regarding the extent to which same-sex and interracial couples are likely to encounter discriminatory behavior when they interact with wedding industry professionals. We also asked respondents to forecast how likely it would be that wedding industry professionals would behave in blatantly- or subtly-biased ways towards same-sex and interracial couples as they seek wedding-related services. Because heterosexual couples have not been stigmatized in the United States and enjoy privileged status as the "normative" couple type, we predicted that Americans would report that it is more acceptable to feel negatively toward same-sex and interracial couples, than toward heterosexual couples. Given different plausible yet competing theories (reviewed above), we did not have strong a priori predictions regarding American's beliefs about the acceptability of prejudice toward same-sex couples relative to interracial couples.

Finally, to the extent that respondents anticipated discriminatory behavior by wedding industry professionals towards any group, we predicted that this expected discrimination would take the form of subtly-biased behavior—behaviors such as ignoring and avoiding the inquiry entirely, discouraging future contact, and providing less helpful information—instead of more socially inappropriate, blatantly-biased behavior—like explicitly denying a couple services, using slurs, or otherwise explicitly derogating the couple because of their group membership. To assess forecasted discriminatory behavior on the part of wedding industry professionals, we asked about the blatantly- and subtly-biased behaviors that are commonly described and measured in the prejudice literature (e.g., Carter & Forsyth, 2010; Salvatore & Shelton, 2007; Murphy, Richeson, Shelton, Rheinschmidt, & Bergsieker, 2013).

Method

Sample

Ninety-three American adults were recruited through Amazon's Mechanical Turk for a study about people's attitudes toward groups and were compensated \$1.00. Two participants were excluded from all analyses, due to missing data. The

final sample consisted of 91 American adults ($M_{\text{age}} = 33.8$, 74.7% White, 60.4% male, 86.8% heterosexual).²

To determine the smallest detectable effect possible given this sample size ($N = 91$), we conducted a sensitivity analysis using G*Power (v. 3.1). Using established effect-size conventions (i.e., small: $f = .10$, medium: $f = .25$, large: $f = .40$), a sensitivity analysis indicated that, with our design³ and sample size, power of .80, an α of .05, and correlations of .3 among repeated measures (e.g., Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007), we could detect a small-to-medium-sized effect (*Sphericity Assumed*, $\epsilon = 1$: $f = .16$; *Sphericity Unassumed*, $\epsilon = .5$: $f = .20$).

Measures and Procedure

Social norm beliefs were assessed by asking participants to report the extent to which they believed most Americans thought it acceptable to feel negatively toward a diverse list of groups (e.g., blind people, teen mothers, terrorists). Participants responded to each group using a three-point scale (1 = “*Definitely not okay to feel negatively*,” 2 = “*Maybe okay to feel negatively*,” 3 = “*Definitely okay to feel negatively*”; see Crandall et al., 2002 for previous research using the same method; all Study 1 measures are included in Appendix 1). The focal groups of interest—same-sex couples, interracial couples, and heterosexual couples—were embedded within the list and the order in which each couple type appeared in the list was randomized.

Participants were then asked to respond to follow-up questions regarding two ostensibly randomly-selected groups from the list. All participants were asked to forecast the treatment of same-sex and interracial couples by wedding industry professionals. Participants were asked to forecast the treatment of each couple separately and the order of presentation was randomized. Specifically, participants were asked to forecast the extent to which American workers in the wedding industry would be likely to treat same-sex and interracial couples in subtly-biased (i.e., ignore or avoid the couple, respond unhelpfully, and discourage future interaction; $\alpha_{\text{SameSex}} = .92$, $\alpha_{\text{Interracial}} = .93$) and blatantly-biased ways (i.e., deny service to the couple, use slurs, verbally assault, physically threaten, and physically assault; $\alpha_{\text{SameSex}} = .92$, $\alpha_{\text{Interracial}} = .93$). Participants responded using a 7-point scale (1 = “*This type of treatment is extremely*

² A portion of our sample reported current or previous involvement in an interracial relationship (29.7%) or a same-sex relationship (6.9%). All analyses reported in the main text include the entire sample. Refer to the Supporting Information section to see the results without the participants who indicated previous or current involvement in same-sex and/or interracial relationships.

³ We planned to conduct a repeated-measures ANOVA with one within-subjects predictor (i.e., Couple Type) consisting of three measurements (i.e., heterosexual couple, same-sex couple, interracial couple).

Table 1. Summary of Intercorrelations, Means, and Standard Deviations for Study 1 Measures

Measure	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Same-Sex Norms	–						
2. Interracial Norms	.46***	–					
3. Heterosexual Norms	.27*	.43***	–				
4. Subtle Bias (Same-Sex)	.25*	.09	.12	–			
5. Subtle Bias (Interracial)	.20	.26*	.25*	.62***	–		
6. Blatant Bias (Same-Sex)	.23*	.28**	.30**	.75***	.66***	–	
7. Blatant Bias (Interracial)	.12	.24*	.28**	.51***	.80***	.77***	–
<i>M</i>	1.81	1.66	1.51	4.12	3.31	3.20	2.57
<i>SD</i>	0.63	0.65	0.71	1.60	1.70	1.58	1.51

Note. Intercorrelations for all Study 1 participants ($n = 91$) are presented. Means and standard deviations are presented in the vertical columns. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

unlikely” to 7 = “This type of treatment is extremely likely”). Participants then provided demographic information, were given a debriefing statement, and were compensated.

Results

Social Norms

A one-way, repeated measures ANOVA revealed a significant effect of couple type on respondents’ social norm beliefs, Wilk’s $\Lambda = .87$, $F(2, 180) = 7.91$, $p = .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .13$ ($\eta_G^2 = .04$). Planned comparisons revealed that people perceived it to be significantly more socially acceptable to feel negatively toward same-sex couples ($M = 1.81$, 95% CI [1.68, 1.95]) than either interracial couples ($M = 1.66$, 95% CI [1.52, 1.80], $p = .03$, $d_{RM} = 0.23$)⁴ or heterosexual couples ($M = 1.51$, 95% CI [1.36, 1.65], $p = .001$, $d_{RM} = 0.38$). Contrary to expectations, social norm perceptions regarding interracial and heterosexual couples did not significantly differ ($M = 1.66$, 95% CI [1.52, 1.80] vs. $M = 1.51$, 95% CI [1.36, 1.65], $p = .05$, $d_{RM} = 0.21$; see the top panel of Figure 1). Taken together, these findings demonstrate that Americans perceive it to be more socially acceptable to feel negatively toward same-sex couples than both interracial couples and heterosexual couples (see Table 1 for intercorrelations and descriptive statistics).

Discrimination Forecasts

A two-way repeated measures ANOVA, with couple type (same-sex, interracial) and bias type (subtle, blatant) as predictors, revealed two significant main

⁴ To estimate effect sizes for the planned contrasts, we computed Cohen’s d , factoring in the correlations among the within subjects variables, using the following equation: $d_{RM} = \frac{|M_1 - M_2|}{\sqrt{s_1^2 + s_2^2 - 2r_{s1,s2}}}$

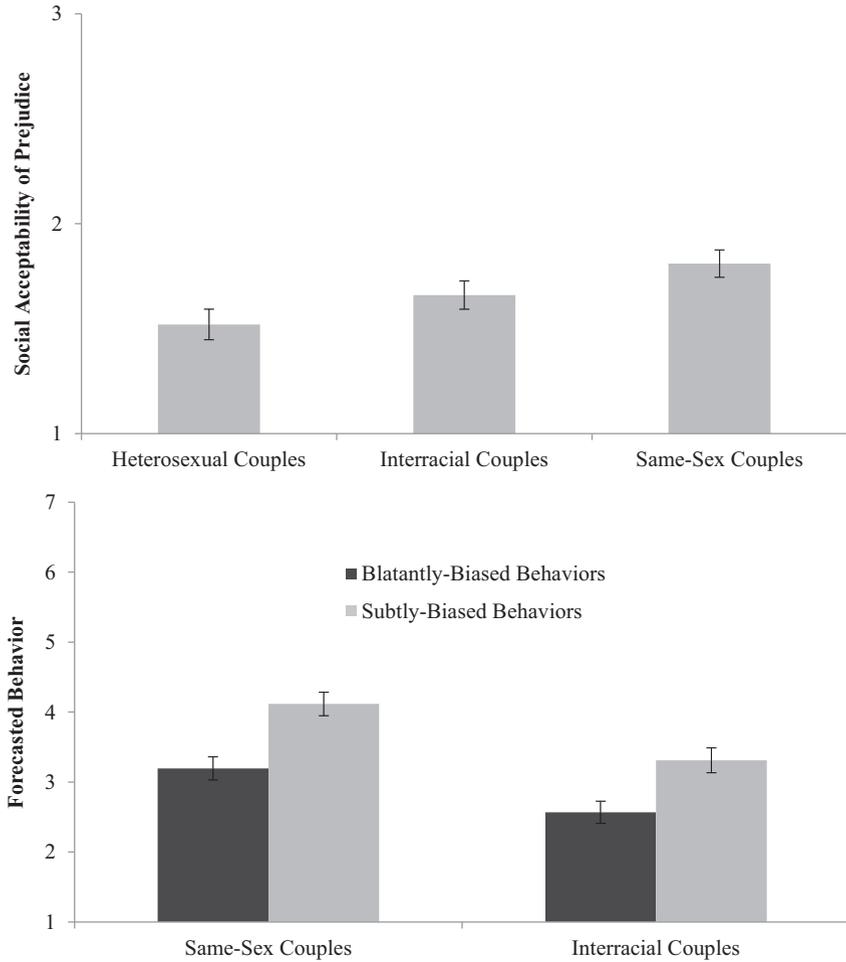


Fig. 1. Study 1 ($N = 91$): Social Acceptability of Prejudice (Top Panel) and Forecasted Discriminatory Behavior (Bottom Panel) by Couple Type. *Note.* Error bars represent standard errors.

effects. Consistent with the social norm findings, participants expected wedding industry professionals to discriminate more against same-sex couples ($M = 3.66$, 95% CI [3.35, 3.97]) than interracial couples ($M = 2.94$, 95% CI [2.62, 3.26], Wilk's $\Lambda = .71$, $F(1, 90) = 36.65$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .29$ ($\eta_G^2 = .05$). What form did the forecasted bias take? Consistent with our expectation that blatant discrimination (e.g., denial of service, verbal assault, or other explicit derogation) is generally viewed as more socially unacceptable than subtle discrimination (e.g.,

ignoring requests for information), participants expected subtly-biased behaviors ($M = 3.71$, 95% CI [3.41, 4.02]) to be more commonly expressed by wedding industry professionals than blatantly-biased behaviors, regardless of couple type ($M = 2.88$, 95% CI [2.58, 3.19], Wilk's $\Lambda = .54$, $F(1, 90) = 75.30$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .46$ ($\eta_G^2 = .06$); see the bottom panel of Figure 1). The interaction between couple type and bias type was not statistically significant, indicating that this bias pattern (more subtle compared to blatant bias forecasts) was similar for both same-sex and interracial couples ($p = .13$).

Discussion

The findings of Study 1 demonstrated that prejudice toward same-sex couples is perceived to be more socially acceptable than prejudice toward interracial couples and toward heterosexual couples. Likewise, forecasters expected same-sex couples to experience more discrimination by wedding industry professionals than interracial couples. Finally, forecasters expected discrimination—toward any couple—to manifest as subtly-biased (vs. blatantly-biased) behavior, at least when considering the wedding industry context. Given that social norms are theorized to shape whether people suppress or express prejudice (e.g., Crandall, et al., 2002), we hypothesized that wedding industry professionals would behave in ways consistent with the social norm beliefs revealed in Study 1.

Study 2

The purpose of Study 2 was to investigate how wedding industry professionals *actually behave* toward same-sex, interracial, and heterosexual couples. That is, we did not examine how wedding professionals said they *would* behave or how they thought they *should* behave—but instead, focused on how they actually behaved when they did not know their behavior was being monitored. To this end, we conducted an *audit study*—a field study that employs experimental methods designed to unobtrusively measure behavior. Using this approach, we were able to document the actual behavior of people working in the wedding industry as they fielded inquiries from same-sex, interracial, and white-heterosexual couples, ostensibly when no one was watching.

Why not simply ask wedding industry professionals how they treat same-sex, interracial, and white-heterosexual couples? Why go to the trouble of conducting an audit study? Despite dwindling endorsement of prejudiced attitudes on self-report measures (e.g., Bobo, 2001), audit studies have shown that discriminatory behavior against stigmatized groups persists (e.g., Friedman, Reynolds, Scovill, Brassier, Campbell, & Ballou, 2013; Milkman, Akinola, & Chugh, 2015; Moss-Racusin, Dovidio, Brescoll, Graham, & Handelsman, 2012). When people suspect that researchers are studying sensitive topics, like prejudice and

discrimination, they tend to report beliefs and practices that make them appear (to themselves and others) more socially desirable (Krumpal, 2013). When people do not realize they are being observed, there is less external pressure to respond in a socially desirable manner. Consequently, behavioral scientists have a long history of conducting audit studies to observe whether people discriminate against stigmatized groups. Audit studies have been instrumental in revealing the extent and form of discrimination against LGBT individuals (Friedman, et al., 2013; Hebl, Foster, Mannix, & Dovidio, 2002), racial and ethnic minorities (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2004; Gaertner and Bickman, 1971; Milkman et al., 2015; Yinger, 1986), women (Moss-Racusin, et al., 2012), overweight people (Agerström & Rooth, 2011), and the elderly (Lahey, 2008). Following this tradition, the audit study paradigm allowed us to unobtrusively examine discrimination in the novel context of the American wedding industry. We discreetly examined the prevalence and form of discrimination against same-sex, interracial, and white heterosexual couples who wished to be married and sought wedding services.

To examine the extent to which the social norm beliefs of Americans revealed in Study 1 align with behavior in the wedding industry context, randomly-sampled wedding venues were electronically contacted three times—once by each of the three couple types (a white same-sex couple, a black-white interracial-heterosexual couple, and a white-heterosexual couple).⁵ Each couple's message expressed interest in booking the venue's services for a wedding reception within the following year.

Consistent with the social norm findings of Study 1, we predicted that wedding venue employees would treat the same-sex couple most negatively, compared to the interracial couple and the white-heterosexual couple. Similarly, we expected the form of discriminatory behavior displayed by wedding professionals to consist of more subtly-biased behaviors than blatantly-biased behaviors. To examine this question, we coded the behaviors that the wedding venue professionals displayed in the email interactions.

Method

Sample

Prior to recruitment, research assistants compiled a comprehensive list of wedding venues by visiting several prominent online wedding resource websites (e.g., theknot.com, mywedding.com, etc.). We stipulated the following inclusion criteria: a) all of the venues were restricted to the same Midwestern state and b) venues needed to provide electronic contact information—either an email address

⁵ The sampling method is detailed in Methods.

or a contact form—on their business website. Four hundred and seventy venues met these criteria.

Two hundred and fifty-eight wedding venues were randomly sampled from the pool of 470 venues and were contacted by the ostensible couples. This number was chosen to allow even counterbalancing of the order in which the emails were sent, the content of emails associated with each couple, and the gender make-up of the interracial (black man-white woman vs. white woman-black man) and same-sex (lesbians vs. gay men) couples. Of the original 258 venues, 23 were unreachable either because the emails immediately bounced back (10 venues) or the links were broken or outdated (13 venues). Of the 235 remaining venues, 204 responded to the inquiry from at least one of the three couples. There are many possible reasons why 31 venues failed to respond to any of the couples (e.g., the posted email address may have been invalid; the venue may have been booked for the dates inquired, etc.). Because we were investigating potential discrimination between couples, the 31 venues that failed to respond to *any* of the couples were excluded from analyses. Thus, our final sample consisted of the 204 wedding venues that responded to at least one of the couples.

A sensitivity analysis indicated that, with our design and sample size, we could detect a small-to-medium-sized effect (*Sphericity Assumed*, $\epsilon = 1: f = .11$; *Sphericity Unassumed*, $\epsilon = .5: f = .13$).⁶

Procedure

Each venue was emailed by three ostensibly different couples—a white-heterosexual couple; a black-white interracial heterosexual couple; and a white same-sex couple. Each couple expressed interest in booking the venue for their wedding reception. Race and sexual orientation of the couples was manipulated through stereotypically racial and gendered first names and photos⁷ (all manipulations are included in the Supporting Information). Data collection was closed one month after the initial email inquiries were sent.

⁶ We conducted the sensitivity analysis using G*Power (v. 3.1): repeated-measures ANOVA with one within-subjects predictor (i.e., Couple Type) consisting of three measurements (i.e., heterosexual couple, same-sex couple, interracial couple), with power of .80, alpha of .05, and correlations of .3 among repeated measures.

⁷ A single photograph was chosen to represent each couple (five photographs total: one White-heterosexual couple; one White, gay male couple; one White, lesbian couple; one Black female, White male interracial couple, and one White female, Black male interracial couple). These pictures were small, thumbnail “profile” photos attached to the separate email accounts we created for each couple in order to send out the messages. We acknowledge that using a single photo for each couple is a limitation of the study design. Future work could use multiple photographic stimuli to ensure that the results generalize beyond any one photograph (e.g., Judd, Westfall, & Kenny, 2012). However, in this study, we were limited in the number of email accounts we could create for the audit study and adding another factor regarding stimuli was not practical.

To ensure that our effects were not confounded with order or message content, we counterbalanced these factors. One-third of the sample was contacted first by the white-heterosexual couple, another third by the interracial couple, and the remaining third by the same-sex couple, and so on. Each venue was contacted by the three couples over the course of one week, separated by 2–4 days.

Due to the within-subjects nature of the study design, the content of each email inquiry could not be identical; this would raise suspicion among the responding venue employees. Three unique email messages were created that requested similar information, but were worded slightly differently. The content of the messages was counterbalanced between couples (the content of the email messages can be found in the Supporting Information). When a venue responded to a couple, an additional message inquired about the availability of five specific reception dates. After recording any response to this follow-up inquiry, communication was discontinued.

Behavioral Coding

Coders evaluated blatantly-biased behavior (i.e., the extent to which wedding venue employees (a) used homophobic or racial slurs, (b) explicitly denied service because of the couples' group membership, and (c) threatened the couple with physical, social, or emotional harm) and subtly-biased behavior (i.e., the extent to which wedding venue employees displayed (a) avoidant behavior, (b) encouraged future contact, and (c) provided helpful information to each of the three couples). Intraclass correlations (ICCs) examined the reliability among coders.⁸ According to conventional standards (Koo & Li, 2016; LeBreton & Senter, 2008), ICCs within each couple type were strong (all ICCs $\geq .94$; see Table 2). Ratings were averaged across coders.

Blatantly-biased behaviors. Consistent with forecasters' expectations that the overall prevalence of blatant discrimination would be quite low, we expected to observe very few—if any—instances of blatantly-biased behavior, regardless of couple type. Coders evaluated three types of blatantly-biased behavior. They rated the number of times that wedding industry professionals (a) used homophobic or racial slurs, (b) explicitly denied service because of the couples' group membership, and (c) threatened the couple with physical, social, or emotional harm (Appendix 2 includes all behavioral codebooks). Coders were blind to experimental condition (i.e., couples' group membership) and the study hypotheses.

⁸ All ICC calculations used two-way random-effects models, with absolute agreement. See Table 2 for a full listing of all ICCs.

Table 2. Results of ICC Calculation Using Average-Rating, Absolute-Agreement, 2-Way Random-Effects Model

	Intraclass correlation	95% Confidence interval		<i>F</i> test with true value 0			
		Lower bound	Upper bound	Value	<i>df</i> 1	<i>df</i> 2	Sig.
<i>Same-sex couple</i>							
Invited further Contact	.940	.918	.956	18.25	164	328	< .001
Helpfulness	.937	.906	.956	18.49	163	326	< .001
<i>Interracial couple</i>							
Invited further contact	.942	.926	.956	17.27	169	338	< .001
Helpfulness	.950	.930	.964	22.58	169	338	< .001
<i>White-hetero couple</i>							
Invited further contact	.936	.917	.951	15.56	158	316	< .001
Helpfulness	.952	.936	.965	22.26	158	316	< .001

Subtly-biased behaviors. We expected to observe more instances of subtle (vs. blatant) discrimination overall. If the discrimination forecasts of Study 1 are confirmed in actual behavior, we would expect to observe more instances of subtle discrimination toward same-sex couples than interracial couples and white-heterosexual couples. Coders evaluated three types of subtly-biased behavior. They rated the extent to which wedding venue employees displayed (a) avoidant behavior, (b) encouraged future contact with, and (c) provided helpful information to each of the three couples. Specifically, coders recorded whether venues ignored or responded to each couple's initial email inquiry (0 = *venue never responded*, 1 = *venue responded*); the number of times that venues encouraged each couple to email them, speak over the phone, or schedule a tour or in-person meeting; and the amount of information that venue employees provided to each couple (e.g., promotional materials, catering menus, information about wedding packages, etc.).

Results

Blatantly-Biased Behavior

Coders reported zero instances of blatantly-biased behavior (i.e., slurs, explicit derogation, threats of physical or emotional harm, or denial of service based on the couples' social group memberships) toward any of the couples. Moreover, whereas the wedding venue employees often referenced the couples' first names, no one explicitly mentioned the couples' group memberships. These behavioral findings are consistent with theories of modern prejudice (e.g., aversive racism theory; Dovidio & Gaertner, 2000, 2004) and the intuitions of Study 1's forecasters who, on average, anticipated that blatantly-biased behaviors would be much less prevalent than subtly-biased behaviors among wedding industry professionals.

Subtly-Biased Behavior

Avoidant Behavior. Descriptively, of the 204 venues that responded to one or more of the couples, 178 venues responded to the white-heterosexual couple; 184 venues responded to the interracial couple; and 168 venues responded to the same-sex couple.

Each venue was contacted three times—thus, each venue had three separate binary choices to either respond to or ignore a couple’s inquiry. To analyze these data, we used a generalized estimating equation, which improves the accuracy of standard errors by harnessing the within-venue similarity of the residuals to re-estimate regression parameters. This method is preferable when there are a large number of small clusters (Hanley, Negassa, Edwardes, & Forrester, 2003). The generalized estimating equation, with couple type as a within-subjects factor and avoidant behavior as a binary outcome (0 = Venue Ignored Couple’s Inquiry, 1 = Venue Responded to Couple’s Inquiry), revealed a marginal main effect of couple type, Wald $\chi^2(2) = 5.54, p = .063$. The full regression equation (with the same-sex couple as the reference group) is provided below:

$$\hat{Y} = 1.54 + .383 \text{ (heterosexual, SE1} = .26) + .679 \text{ (interracial, SE2} = .30) + \varepsilon$$

Venues were significantly more likely to ignore the same-sex couple compared to the interracial couple (17.6% vs. 9.8%, $b = .68, 95\% \text{ CI } [0.10, 1.26], p = .02, \text{OR} = 1.97$; see Figure 2). No other comparisons reached statistical significance (same-sex vs. white-heterosexual couple, $b = .38, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.13, .89], p = .14, \text{OR} = 1.47$; interracial vs. white-heterosexual couple, $b = .30, 95\% \text{ CI } [-.28, .88], p = .32, \text{OR} = 0.74$).

Invited Further Contact. On average, venues made about two attempts to invite further contact with prospective clients ($M = 2.34, 95\% \text{ CI } [2.18, 2.49]$, ranging from 0 to 5 attempts). A one-way repeated measures ANOVA revealed a significant effect of couple type, Wilk’s $\Lambda = .95, F(2, 278) = 3.22, p = .04, \eta_p^2 = .02 (\eta_G^2 = .003)$. Venues encouraged significantly less future contact with the same-sex couple ($M = 2.26, 95\% \text{ CI } [2.09, 2.42]$) than with the interracial ($M = 2.38, p = .02, d_{\text{RM}} = 0.20, 95\% \text{ CI } [2.21, 2.55]$) and white-heterosexual couples ($M = 2.38, p = .03, d_{\text{RM}} = 0.19, 95\% \text{ CI } [2.22, 2.53]$; see Figure 2). Responses toward the interracial and white-heterosexual couples did not significantly differ ($p = .98, d_{\text{RM}} = 0.002$; see Table 3 for intercorrelations and descriptive statistics).

Helpfulness. On average, venues provided about four pieces of helpful information to prospective clients ($M = 4.13, 95\% \text{ CI } [3.83, 4.43]$, ranging from 0 to

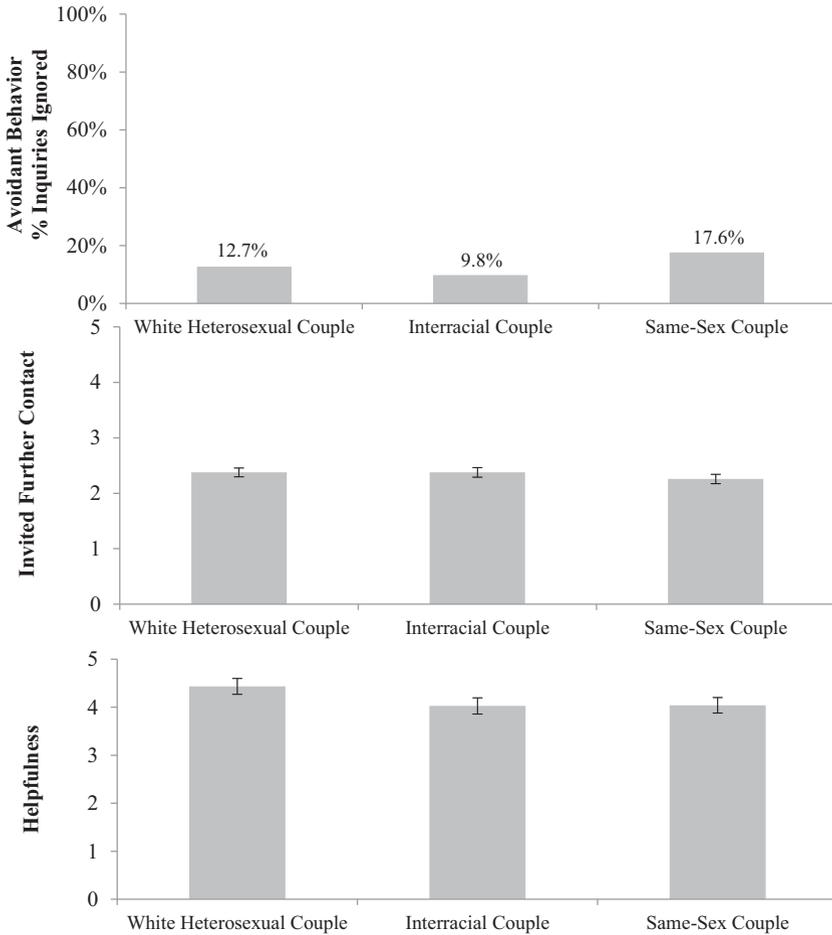


Fig. 2. Study 2. Behavior of Wedding Industry Professionals by Couple Type: Inquires Ignored (Top Panel, $N = 204$), Invited Further Contact (Middle Panel, $N = 140$), and Information Provided (Bottom Panel, $N = 140$). Note. Error bars represent standard errors.

10 pieces of information; e.g., promotional materials, catering menus, information about wedding packages, etc.). A one-way repeated measures ANOVA revealed a significant effect of couple type on helpfulness, Wilk's $\Lambda = .94$, $F(2, 278) = 4.07$, $p = .02$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$ ($\eta_G^2 = .004$). Venues provided significantly more pieces of information to the heterosexual couple ($M = 4.33$, 95% CI [3.99, 4.65]) compared with the interracial ($M = 4.03$, $p = .02$, $d_{RM} = 0.20$, 95% CI [3.69, 4.36]) and same-sex couples ($M = 4.04$, $p = .008$, $d_{RM} = 0.23$, 95% CI [3.72, 4.36]; see

Table 3. Summary of Intercorrelations, Means, and Standard Deviations for Study 2 Measures

Measure	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Invited Further Contact: Same-Sex	–					
2. Invited Further Contact: Interracial	.83***	–				
3. Invited Further Contact: Heterosexual	.79***	.74***	–			
4. Helpfulness: Same-Sex	.37***	.27**	.35***	–		
5. Helpfulness: Interracial	.29**	.33***	.31***	.75***	–	
6. Helpfulness: Heterosexual	.29***	.23**	.37***	.80***	.71***	–
<i>M</i>	2.18	2.32	2.30	3.88	3.93	4.11
<i>SD</i>	1.01	1.02	0.95	2.01	2.01	2.02

Note. Intercorrelations among Study 2 codes are presented (Same Sex: $n = 168$; Interracial: $n = 185$, Heterosexual: $n = 178$). Means and standard deviations are presented in the vertical columns. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

Figure 2). Responses toward the interracial and same-sex couple did not significantly differ ($p = .91$, $d_{RM} = 0.009$).⁹

General Discussion

Across the United States, marriage equality for same-sex couples has only been on the books for a handful of years (Obergefell v. Hodges, 2015). The purpose of the present studies was to survey Americans' beliefs about the acceptability of prejudice toward same-sex, interracial, and white-heterosexual couples and then examine actual behavior among wedding venue professionals towards those couples. Study 1 demonstrated that harboring prejudice toward same-sex couples is viewed as more socially acceptable by American adults than harboring prejudice toward both interracial couples and white-heterosexual couples. Consistent with these normative beliefs, forecasters anticipated that wedding industry professionals would be more likely to discriminate against same-sex couples than interracial couples, and they expected discrimination to take the form of subtly-biased behavior compared to blatantly-biased behavior.

Turning to the actual behavior of wedding professionals in Study 2, wedding venue employees did not blatantly discriminate against any of the couples. This finding is consistent with theories regarding modern forms of biased behavior (Crandall & Eshleman, 2003; Dovidio & Gaertner, 2004) that suggest that subtle bias is more prevalent and acceptable today in professional contexts than blatant bias. Instead, the audit study revealed that wedding employees were, in fact, more likely to *subtly* discriminate against same-sex couples and, to a lesser degree, interracial couples, relative to white-heterosexual couples. Wedding venue employees were more likely to ignore inquiries from same-sex couples (compared

⁹ The avoidant behavior analyses included all venues ($N = 204$). The invited further contact and helpfulness analyses included only venues that responded to all three couples ($N = 140$).

to interracial couples) and discourage future interaction with same-sex couples (compared to both interracial and white heterosexual couples). Additionally, wedding venue employees were less likely to provide helpful information that would assist with wedding planning to both same-sex and interracial couples relative to white-heterosexual couples.

It should be noted that while the results of Study 2 largely replicate the findings of Study 1, there were a few inconsistencies in the exact pattern of discrimination between studies. Given theories suggesting the powerful effect of social norm beliefs to predict prejudice expression (e.g., Crandall & Eshleman, 2003), we predicted that the behavioral results of Study 2 would reflect the pattern of social norm beliefs reported in Study 1. Overall, there were many consistencies. For example, in Study 1, Americans, reported that it was more acceptable to feel more negatively toward same-sex couples, on average, than toward interracial and white heterosexual couples; and, forecasters anticipated that same-sex couples would encounter more discrimination by wedding industry professionals than would interracial couples. Consistent with these findings in Study 1, Study 2 found that same-sex couples experienced the most discriminatory behavior compared to the other two couple types. In addition to these behavioral findings, another set of consistent results includes the form that the discriminatory behavior took. In Study 1, Americans expected subtle discrimination to be more commonly experienced by historically stigmatized couples than blatant discrimination. And, indeed, Study 2 found evidence of subtle discrimination and no instances of blatant discrimination.

Still, there were a few notable dissimilarities between the two studies. Given the results of Study 1, we anticipated that wedding industry professionals would discriminate against the same-sex couple more than the interracial couple, and more than the white-heterosexual couple. While in every case, the same-sex couple was treated most negatively by wedding industry professionals in Study 2, whether each couple was treated differently from the others varied by the behavior observed (i.e., avoidance, future contact, and helpfulness). In examining the avoidance outcome, same-sex couples were more likely to be ignored (17.6% of inquires) than the other two couples (interracial couple: 9.8% of inquires; white-heterosexual couple: 12.7% of inquires) but the only statistically significant difference in treatment was between the same-sex and interracial couple, perhaps due to the low base-rate of this type of behavior. Regarding the encouragement of future contact, the difference between the same-sex couple and other two couples was statistically significant, but the difference between the interracial and heterosexual couple was not. Finally, regarding the helpfulness outcome, the difference between the same-sex and heterosexual couple was statistically significant, but the difference between the same-sex and interracial couple was not. Despite these differences, we observed that in every case—whether forecasted or actual behavior—the same-sex couple fared most poorly. Additionally, we

found consistent evidence of subtle bias (and no evidence of blatant bias) against same-sex couples when observing the behavior of wedding industry professionals. Importantly, the absence of blatant bias in this study should *not* be taken to mean that same-sex couples (and interracial couples) *never* experience blatant bias in the wedding industry (or in other contexts). Indeed, people still express blatant bias towards same-sex couples (e.g., Cohn, 2015; Masterpiece Cakeshop v. Colorado Civil Rights Commission, 2018; Von Drehle, 2015) and efforts to curb such biases are needed.

Comparing the Treatment of Same-Sex and Interracial Couples

We expected that people would think it more normative to express prejudice toward historically stigmatized couples compared to non-stigmatized couples. However, we were unsure if and how social norm beliefs about the acceptability of prejudice toward historically stigmatized—same-sex and interracial—couples would differ. Ultimately, the findings of both studies were most consistent with the idea that normative beliefs about and treatment toward same-sex and interracial couples differs. In Study 1, Americans viewed prejudice and discrimination towards interracial couples as significantly more unacceptable than prejudice and discrimination towards same-sex couples. Although same-sex couples (whose unions were legalized in 2015) and interracial couples (whose unions were legalized in the United States in 1967) have both benefited from federal court decisions that recognize and protect their unions, interracial couples have had these nationwide legal protections for over half a century, compared to only a few years for same-sex couples. Of course, it is not possible to causally link the recency of these institutional changes to the particular normative and behavioral differences we observed between same-sex and interracial couples. That said, the pattern of findings is nevertheless consistent with theories of institutional change (e.g., Allport, 1954; Lerner, 1967; Tankard & Paluck, 2016). It is possible that, over time, as egalitarian legislation is enforced, people come to hold stronger social norm beliefs about the unacceptability of prejudice and discrimination towards groups who have benefited from anti-discrimination legislation. Institutional change, however, is just one plausible explanation for these findings. It is also plausible that Study 1 forecasters expected wedding industry workers to treat same-sex couples more poorly than interracial couples because of the salience of media reports detailing how some same-sex couples had been poorly treated (e.g., Von Drehle, 2015). An interesting direction for future work would be to examine more directly, and perhaps longitudinally, whether normative beliefs about prejudice expression shift over time in response to institutional changes (e.g., Crandall & Warner, 2005; Tankard & Paluck, 2016) or if other factors—such as salient media exposure—better explain the antecedents of these social norm beliefs.

Societal Implications

An essential step toward combating prejudiced attitudes and behavior is to understand the extent and form that these biases take. Although the statistical effect sizes we observed are relatively small, the discriminatory behaviors we observed are likely to have significant practical effects for the stigmatized couples who experience them. Indeed, whether a wedding venue employee hurls homophobic slurs at a same-sex couple or silently ignores their inquiry, the practical outcome is the same—the couple will need to seek services elsewhere. The psychological harms associated with blatantly-biased behavior (e.g., epithets, slurs, refusal of service based on group-membership) are well-documented and include greater anxiety and vigilance (e.g., Carter & Forsyth, 2010). However, contending with subtly-biased behavior (e.g., being ignored, discouraging future contact) has also been shown to be emotionally and cognitively costly (e.g., Crocker Voelkl, Testa, & Major, 1991; Dardenne, Dumont, & Bollier, 2007; Mendoza-Denton, Shaw-Taylor, Chen, & Chang, 2009; Murphy, et al., 2013; Salvatore & Shelton, 2007). Because subtly-biased behaviors are more difficult to detect (Carter, Peery, Riche-son, & Murphy, 2015; Sommers & Norton, 2006), at minimum this behavior may cause same-sex and interracial couples to waste time and resources on venues and service providers that are uninterested in serving them. However, experiencing subtle bias in the form of discouragement and unhelpfulness may also put strain on the relationships of same-sex and interracial couples who are more likely to experience this negative treatment. The present studies do not measure the potential costs of the discriminatory behavior observed in this context, however other empirical studies have linked people's experiences with subtle discrimination to deleterious cognitive, affective, and interpersonal outcomes (e.g., Hatzenbuehler, 2009).

Limitations & Future Directions

Some limitations of these studies will inspire future research. We limited our investigation to three sets of couples who embody different forms of stigma. Although this initial examination allowed us to investigate how historically stigmatized (vs. non-stigmatized) couples are treated by the wedding industry, there are countless other couple types that could be included in future research. For instance, Black heterosexual couples may face discrimination in the wedding industry, but this discrimination would likely be due to race (and not sexual orientation). Another interesting group to include is doubly-stigmatized couples, such as a same-sex racial minority or interracial couples. Examining how these groups are treated would help answer questions about whether intersectionality compounds the discrimination that targets experience.

A second limitation of this work is that the audit study was conducted within a single U.S. State (Indiana), which limits, to some extent, generalizability. Despite this limitation, an audit study—even one that is restricted to a single State—provides external validity to a theorized link between social norms and prejudice expression that is often missing in social psychology, where the norm is to conduct online or laboratory vignette studies without behavioral measures. In the contemporary research climate, where the ability of psychological theories to predict real-world behavior is critically important, applied studies that examine the external validity of theories in novel, real-world contexts are valuable. In this regard, the present work makes an important theoretical contribution, bolstering theories positing links between social norms and prejudice expression (e.g., Crandall & Eshleman, 2003). Of course, a similar audit study that spanned the entire country would be an exciting and ambitious extension of this work. Such research could examine how different states' legislative histories relates to the social norm beliefs and prejudice expression of its citizens.

Conclusion

Taken together, our findings suggest that while marriage equality may be on the books, it is not yet being practiced on the ground. Same-sex couples seeking wedding venues are more likely to be ignored, less likely to be encouraged to seek future contact, and are provided with significantly less helpful information to assist their wedding planning than are interracial and white-heterosexual couples. Thus, an important takeaway of the present research is that it is unwise to assume that legal change means behavior change. Despite the egalitarian marriage equality ruling, we see that prejudice expression persists. What can be done to bridge gaps between law and behavior? Given the power of social norms to influence behavior, it may be fruitful to examine the efficacy of social norm interventions (e.g., Schultz, Nolan, Cialdini, Goldstein, & Griskevicius, 2007; Stangor, Sechrist, & Jost, 2001), which could directly signal that discrimination and prejudice against same-sex couples is socially unacceptable. Raising awareness about the prevalence and nature of differential treatment is another important step towards intervention. Regular audit studies that systematically examine behavior in this and other contexts is a useful tool to continue to illuminate disparities that may otherwise go unnoticed by individuals or society at large.

Research Disclosure Statement

The submitting authors confirm the total number of excluded observations and the reasons for making these exclusions. All experimental manipulations have been reported in the Method section and all dependent variables that were analyzed are reported in the Method section.

Authors' Contributions

The first and third author developed the study concept and study design. Data collection, data analysis, and interpretation were performed by the first author under the supervision of the third author. The first author drafted the manuscript, and second and third authors provided revisions and feedback. All authors approved the final version of the manuscript for submission.

Data Availability

The de-identified data that support the findings of these studies are publicly available on the OSF website: https://osf.io/4x8mu/?view_only=753fda4b39dd449e99942875079bd400

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Appendix: Study 1 Measures

Social Norms Measure (adapted from Crandall et al., 2002)

Instructions. We are interested in how you think **most Americans** feel about the following groups. Below, we have listed different types of people American citizens could encounter. To what extent do you think **most other Americans** (not you personally) think it is okay to feel negatively about these groups?

Scale. (1 = “Most Americans think it is **definitely NOT OK** to have negative feelings about this group,” 2 = “Most Americans think it is **maybe OK** to have negative feelings about this group,” 3 = “Most Americans think it is **definitely OK** to have negative feelings about this group”)

Scale Item**Heterosexual Couples (Focal Group Studied)****Interracial couples (Focal Group Studied)****Same-sex couples (Focal Group Studied)**

Child Abusers (Filler Group)

Terrorists (Filler Group)

Racists (Filler Group)

Drunk Drivers (Filler Group)

Pregnant women who drink alcohol (Filler Group)

Negligent parents (Filler Group)

Gang Members (Filler Group)

Liars (Filler Group)

People who text and drive (Filler Group)

Drug users (Filler Group)

People who litter (Filler Group)

Illegal immigrants (Filler Group)

Politicians (Filler Group)

Feminists (Filler Group)

Rednecks (Filler Group)

Gay people who raise children (Filler Group)

Police officers (Filler Group)

Lawyers (Filler Group)

Homeless people (Filler Group)

People who are illiterate (Filler Group)

Environmentalists (Filler Group)

Fat people (Filler Group)

Cat owners (Filler Group)

Ugly people (Filler Group)

Doctors (Filler Group)

Manual laborers (Filler Group)

Business women (Filler Group)

Elderly people (Filler Group)

Dog owners (Filler Group)

Male nurses (Filler Group)

Farmers (Filler Group)

Women who stay home to raise kids (Filler Group)

Blind people (Filler Group)

People who don't vote (Filler Group)

Teen moms (Filler Group)

Single mothers (Filler Group)

Single fathers (Filler Group)

Stay at home dads (Filler Group)

Syrian refugees (Filler Group)

People accepted into MENSA (Filler Group)

Political activists (Filler Group)

Drag Queens (Filler Group)

People who never went to college (Filler Group)

People from big cities (Filler Group)

People who eat with their mouths open (Filler Group)

People who give to charity (Filler Group)

Discrimination Forecasts

Instructions. To what extent do you think U.S. workers in the wedding industry (e.g., venue owners or other service providers) generally treat **same-sex couples [interracial couples]** in the following ways?

Scale. (1 = “This type of treatment is extremely unlikely” to 7 = “This type of treatment is extremely likely”)

Scale Item

Deny or refuse service to the same-sex [interracial] couple
 Use slurs against the same-sex [interracial] couple
 Verbally assault the same-sex [interracial] couple
 Physically threaten the same-sex [interracial] couple
 Physically assault the same-sex [interracial] couple
 Ignore or avoid the same-sex [interracial] couple
 Respond unhelpfully to the same-sex [interracial] couple
 Discourage interaction with the same-sex [interracial] couple

Appendix: Study 2 Measures

Codebook for Blatantly-Biased Behaviors

Instructions. Using the scale provided, please indicate if each of the following behaviors occurred. If the venue engaged in the behavior, select yes. If the venue did not engage in the behavior, select no.

Scale: (0 = “No,” 1 = “Yes”). Scores were calculated by summing the codes.

Scale Item

The employee used anti-gay slurs (e.g., “homo”, “fag”, etc.)
 The employee used racial slurs (e.g., the n-word)
 The employee used a slur against heterosexuals.
 The employee clearly stated that same-sex marriages are inferior to other marriages.
 The employee clearly stated that interracial marriages are inferior to other marriages.
 The employee clearly stated that traditional marriages (i.e. with one man and one woman) are inferior to other marriages.
 The employee threatened the potential client with physical harm (e.g., threatened to fight or injure the couple).
 The employee threatened the potential client with emotional or social harm (e.g., threatened to harm the reputation of the couple).
 The employee denied service to the couple explicitly because the employee thought the potential client was in a same-sex relationship.
 The employee denied service to the couple explicitly because the employee thought the potential client was in an interracial relationship.
 The employee denied service to the couple explicitly because the employee thought the potential client was in a heterosexual relationship.

The employee mentioned that the potential client seemed to be in a same-sex relationship.
 The employee mentioned that the potential client seemed to be in an interracial relationship.
 The employee mentioned that the potential client seemed to be in a heterosexual relationship.
 The employee blatantly discriminated against the potential client in some other way (please specify):

Codebook for Invited Future Contact

Instructions. In what ways did venues encourage interaction with the couple? If the venue encouraged the behavior, select yes. If the venue did not encourage the behavior, select no.

Scale: (0 = “No,” 1 = “Yes”). Scores were calculated by summing the codes. Scores ranged from 0 to 6.

Scale Item

Encouraged couple to continue emailing (e.g., venue asks couple to send additional info via email)
 Encouraged couple to speak with them over the phone
 Encouraged couple to schedule a face-to-face meeting
 Encouraged couple to schedule a venue tour
 Encouraged couple to attend a bridal fair or some other wedding-related event
 Other (please specify): -----

Codebook for Helpful Information

Instructions. In what ways did venues help the couple? If the venue provided information on the following topics, select yes. If the venue did not provide the information, select no.

Scale: (0 = “No,” 1 = “Yes”). Scores were calculated by summing the codes. Scores ranged from 0 to 11.

Scale Item

Provided information about venue’s availability (e.g., list of available dates, calendars)
 Provided information about cost of reception or other fees
 Provided brochures/other promotional materials (e.g., photos, videos)
 Provided information about wedding packages or special deals
 Provided information about venue layout (e.g., floor plans, table layouts)
 Provided information about food and drink (e.g., catering menus, bar services, list of approved vendors)
 Provided information about venue’s rules and regulations (e.g., policy sheets)
 Provided legal documents (e.g., contracts, rental agreements, waivers)
 Provided information about entertainment (e.g., DJs, dance floors, etc.)
 Provided information about additional services affiliated with the venue (e.g., wedding planners, photographers, transportation, wedding ceremony planning, rehearsal dinner planning, etc.)
 Other (please specify): -----

Supplementary Information

Additional supporting information may be found online in the Supporting Information section at the end of the article.

Supporting Information

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