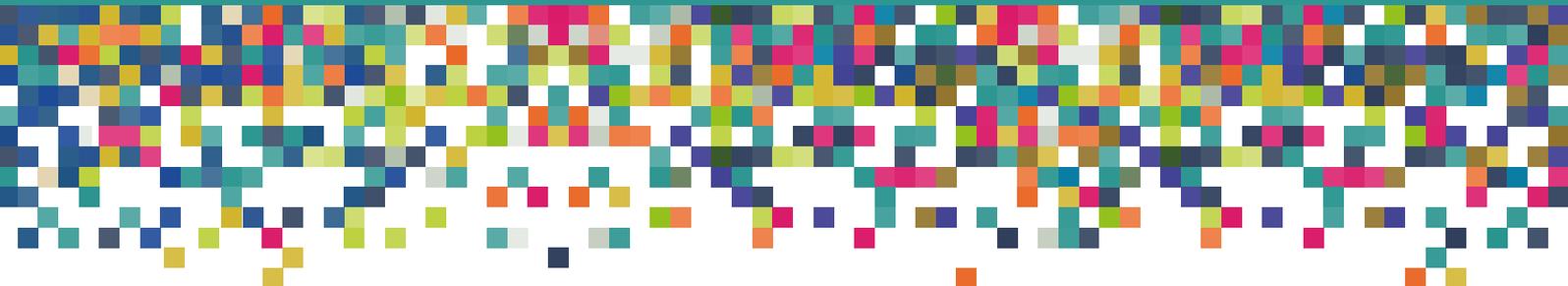




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Straightening out Same Sex Marriage for 'all' Australians

A content analysis study of prejudices in Australia's
campaign for marriage equality

Tate Soller



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ABSTRACT

In August 2017 the Australian Federal Government announced that it would hold a postal vote to gauge the public's opinion on same sex marriage. In response to this, queer rights advocacy group 'Australian Marriage Equality' (AME) attempted to prove to the public that same sex marriage was desirable 'for all Australians' (AME, 2017). It primarily did so through social media campaigning. Drawing on theories of representation, power and nationalism, this research attempts to deconstruct how particular groups were represented in AME's marriage equality campaign. It does so through conducting quantitative content analysis of AME's campaign materials.

The final results of the analysis found that 'outgroups' were commonly underrepresented and misrepresented throughout the campaign. Thus, even though the campaign had socially progressive intentions, like many other forms of national media, it fell victim to the prejudiced portrayal of people who challenged the dominant national narrative. As a consequence, while white, cis, middle class, monogamous gay and lesbians may have been granted greater freedoms as a consequence of the campaign, those who did not comply with such norms were arguably more marginalized as a result of it.

1 INTRODUCTION

In August 2017 the Australian Federal Government announced that it would be holding an optional postal vote to gauge the public's opinion on same sex marriage (Karp, 2017). From the 12th of September until the 7th of November the public were asked the question; 'Should the law be changed to allow same-sex couples to marry?' (Karp, 2017). The survey offered two responses: 'Yes' or 'No'. On November 14 the results were published, reporting 7,817,247 (61.6%) 'Yes' responses and 4,873,987 (38.4%) 'No' responses (ABS, 2017). Same sex marriage was legalized on 9 December 2017, making Australia the 24th State to permit same-sex couples to marry (Berlinger, McDonnell, Westcott, 2017).

Following the Australian Government's decision to hold this vote, Australia Marriage Equality (AME) launched a 'Yes' campaign to encourage the Australian public to vote in support of same sex marriage. The five main goals of the campaign were; Convincing people to vote Yes (49.1%), Encouraging people to return their ballots (27.9%), Encouraging people to enroll to vote (4.5%), Encouraging people to convince others to vote Yes (5%), and Showing general support for marriage equality (13.6%)¹. Through identifying these themes, the target audience can largely be identified as; Complacent Yes voters and On the fence/No voters.

The Yes campaign was funded by the public through tax deductible donations as well as by some 600 businesses (Karp, 2017). The campaign largely relied on social media, television, radio and website advertisements to reach their audiences (Karp, 2017). Call centers and text messaging were also utilized (Karp, 2017). While AME claims to have had a positive role in influencing the final result of the survey (AME, 2017), the campaign itself has been criticized as exclusionary in its own right (Gallagher, 2017). This study thus seeks to explore if, and how, particular groups were (mis)represented across the entire campaign.

¹ These results were concluded through content analysis of the campaign materials.

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Whilst a number of academic studies have looked at the prevalence of homophobic or prejudiced attitudes in popular national media; namely in television shows, news, books and movies (Otton, 2001; Castañeda, & Campbell 2006; Dines, Humez, & McMahon, 2015), few studies look at how 'progressive' campaigns are also implicated with such prejudices. With regards to LGBTQIA rights campaigns, most studies instead focus on the ways in which these campaigns were or were not successful in achieving their goal (often a change of law) (Rosen, 2015; Elkink, Farrell, Reidy, & Suiter, 2017; Dorf, 2017). This research will thus bring to light issues of inclusivity and diversity in national advocacy campaigns, particularly in the Australian context. Whilst I do not seek to provide a definitive response as to 'where to draw the line' between ethically representing a community and meeting tangible goals, I hope to raise awareness as to how, in and of themselves, such campaigns can be both beneficial and harmful.

Before I begin the body of my dissertation, I would like to note that, despite its flaws, the Yes campaign's *aims* were progressive. Homosexuality remains illegal in 72 countries around the world and is punishable by death in 10 of them (Duncan, 2017). In another 89 countries, homosexuality is not illegal per se, however the LGBTQIA community maintain legal restrictions (Duncan, 2017). For example, they may be restricted in their ability to adopt, to participate in the military, or to be protected from hate speech (Duncan, 2017). Furthermore, even within the Australian context, lobby groups such as the No Campaign² overtly campaigned against the legalization of same sex marriage. The campaign's main argument was that same sex marriage would result in the normalization of 'radical' gender theories and the undermining of heterosexual relationships (Kelly, 2017). So, while I seek to reveal how the Yes campaign may have been problematic in its representation of particular groups, I do acknowledge that the campaign's main aims were socially progressive.

²The No campaign was also established in response to the government's decision to hold the postal vote. It was largely sponsored by the Christian Lobby and public donations (approx. \$20,000) (Kelly, 2017)

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This dissertation analyses the ways in which prejudices manifested in AME's Yes campaign through conducting a quantitative content analysis on the campaign materials. It examines the data collected through a theoretical lens of prejudice, power, representation and nationalism.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to effectively reveal the prejudices prevalent within AME's Yes campaign, it is important to understand not only how social prejudices are formed, but also how, within the Australian context, particular groups have historically been discriminated against. By tying theories of prejudice, power and ideology together with theories of national media and representation I hope to use this literature review to help uncover underlying patterns of prejudice in contemporary political campaign materials that are themselves aimed at ending a form of discrimination.

2.1 Power and Ideology

Prejudice refers to the formation of opinions on groups of people, based on arbitrary characteristics (Eagly, & Chaiken, 1978; Ruscher, 2001). Marger (2011) proposes that, in order to qualify as prejudices, these opinions must be inflexible and primarily negative (Marger, 2011). Allport (1954) similarly argues that such opinions must be stubbornly persistent (cited in Katz 1991).

Early social scientists (Bolton, 1935; Lewin, 1952; Lippitt, 1949; Marrow, & French, 1945) proposed that prejudices are learnt from observing other's interactions, and are thus socially constructed (Dawkins, 1976; Sherif, & Sherif, 1953). Whilst Sumner (1906) argued that ingroup love was directly associated with outgroup hatred (Sechrist, & Stangor, 2001; Katz, & Braly, 1933), Allport (1954) and Turner (1975) recognized that belonging to a particular ingroup does not necessitate antagonism toward outgroups. Rather it necessitates 'positive distinctiveness' (Turner, 1975: 33). This means that each group 'develops a way of living with characteristic codes and beliefs, standards, and "enemies" to suit their own adaptive needs' (Allport, 1954: 39). Social dominance theory (Sidanius, & Pratto, 1993) proposes that, in the political arena of

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modern citizenship and democracy, this system of social relations works through connections to social interests and power.

If prejudices are spread with respect to social hierarchies, the next question we must ask is, how are these hierarchies produced and maintained? Many scholars have accounted for the normalisation of these inequalities through conceptualising ideology (See Marx 1884; Althusser, 1971; Gill, 2007). According to Gill (2007: 54), ideology refers to the 'way in which meaning is mobilized for the maintenance of relations of domination'. Some social scientists (Bukharin, 1969) propose that dominant ideologies are disseminated by those with access to material power. They believe that 'society and its evolution are as much subject to natural law as is everything else in the universe' (Bukharin, 1969: 46). Such an argument however has received significant opposition. Marx (1884) challenged this material conception of power by arguing that power has structural and economic components as well. Through his conception of the superstructure, Marx (1884:37) proposed that ideology is created through the distortion 'of ideas, of conceptions and of consciousness' by the bourgeoisie. Overtime, he contends, such ideologies are institutionalized in organizational structures and social norms. The micro prejudices of the ruling elite therefore evolve into macro social oppressions (Marx 1884).

Althusser (1971) challenges Marx's assumption that reality is distorted by the ruling class, instead proposing that reality is entirely socially constructed. For Althusser (1971:693) therefore ideology is the 'imaginary relationship' between an individual and this constructed existence. As these fabrications are built in real social conditions, the individual often interpellates³ them as they are unable to identify the dialectic relationship between reality and ideology. Thus, critical in Althusser's understanding of ideology and power, are 'systems of representations' (Hall 1985: 10).

For Bourdieu (1989), one's ability to represent reality is dependent on their symbolic power. This power emanates from three main areas. The first is economic; an individual's access to

³ Here Althusser uses a Lacan's (1981) psychoanalytic theory of the mirror phase.

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assets and monetary capital. The second is cultural; how an individual is defined as a result of their credentials, class and self-presentation. The final is social; which is reflective of an individual's social network. Adopting Gramsci's (1971) concept of hegemony, Purvis (1983) proposes that, through utilizing symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1989), the elite are able to refabricate representations of a society that justify their hegemonic position. Others then naively accept the hierarchical (and thus discriminatory) values of a society as 'commonsense' (Purvis, 1993:478; Zizek, 1989).

2.2 National Identity

Nationalism is one dominant modern ideology. AME's Yes campaign targeted individuals throughout the entirety of Australia. Its national target audience, and thus its reliance on nationalistic discourses, means that under Dimitrakopoulou's (2015) contention⁴, it can be perceived as a form of 'National Media'. According to Turner (1988) national media often relies on deeply socialized narratives defining what it means to belong to that nation. With regards to film, he (1988: 182) proposes that as 'the filmmaker is only a bricoleur, a handyman who does the best she or he can with the material at hand', the content of film is constrained by the director's ideological limitations. Abrash and Walkowitz (1994: 205) relatedly contend that the audience's nationalistic fantasies similarly limit the diversity of content, as in order to engage the audience, the final product must align with their perception of reality. As a result, the language of national media often mirrors mainstream 'logics' (Metz, 1974:4).

If nationalistic ideologies continue to influence one's understanding of the world, it is critical to explore what constitutes a nation. The concept of the modern nation emerged in western consciousness during the enlightenment era (Smith, 1998; Billig 1995; Giddens, 1990). It has since been conceptualised in a number of ways (Smith, 1998; Gellner, 1983; Billig 1995: 128;

⁴ Dimitrakopoulou proposed that in order qualify as national media the target audience must be the Nation Citizen

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Giddens, 1990). While Smith proposed that the nation was 'a product of an almost primordial ethnicity' (Smith, 1995: 78), Anderson (1991) conceptualized the nation as an 'imagined community' that was both 'inherently limited and sovereign'. Anderson (1991) proposed that nations are constructed by a national narrative that privileges particular memories of unity and suppresses memories of resistance. To be effective, this narrative must be consistent and fluid (Guibernau, 2001; Wodak, 1999). As a result of the rise of the printing press, readers across the nation were encouraged to associate with this narrative and therefore each other, giving the community 'the emotional legitimacy' required for nationhood (Eagleton, 1991). Gellner (1983: 56) builds on Anderson's argument by proposing that the nation is not merely constructed but 'fabricated'. For Gellner (1983), nationalism is the *imposition* of a particular order on society, implemented through ideologies of difference.

Duggan (2007) proposes that since the rise of neoliberal discourses in the 1980s national politics have become increasingly ingrained in the social psyche of society. Although neoliberalism is largely seen as model of 'non-politics', (Duggan, 2007: 177; Winnubst, 2012: 80), scholars (Bergeron, & Puri, 2012:761) challenge the perception of neoliberalism as a 'pregiven, material reality'. Rather, they argue that neoliberal discourses are ingrained in social expectations of ideal citizenship with respect to the modern nation (Marzullo, 2011; Winnubst, 2012). Namely, through idealizing particular bodies and relationships, neoliberal discourses continue to privilege and oppress groups with regards to their compliance with the dominant national narrative (McMurria, 2008). Thus, as Billig (1995) and Barthes (2013) propose, nationalistic myths⁵ are institutionalized as 'banal thought' through everyday experiences. Nation-states can therefore be conceptualized as political institutions that work discursively to validate the conditions of social relations (Laclau, & Mouffe, 1985).

⁵ See Barthes (2013)

2.3 Representing the Nation

Brown (2011) proposes that national media reflects the most socially significant stories of the times. For Brown (2011) therefore is also through the inclusion or exclusion of particular identities in national media that such identities are deemed worthy members of the nation.

Hall (1992) however proposes that national narratives are created not just through inclusion or exclusion of certain identities but through language. Drawing on Said's (1978) seminal work, 'Orientalism'⁶, Baumann and Gingrich (2006: 5) propose that Othering is often used by the nation to discursively delimit those who do not conform to the hegemonic group's ideal. Namely, by portraying the other as inferior, the elite are able to define themselves as powerful. While the Other may oppose these discourses they often lack the agency to challenge them. Consequently, they may self-produce such limiting stereotypes as they are without the means to disrupt them (Dirlik, 1996). Couldry (2010) similarly proposes that the Other may be unable to challenge these reductive identities. Through his conception of the voice as 'socially grounded', Couldry (2010:7) proposes that 'a voice requires resources: both practical resources (language) and the (seemingly purely symbolic) status necessary if one is to be recognized by others as having a voice.' Therefore, even if outgroups are seemingly given a platform in the media to speak for themselves, their representation may be tokenistic⁷ as their true voices are often not heard.

Baumann and Gingrich (2006) however also argue, that this binary distinction between ingroups and outgroups in the nation is context dependent. This means that outgroups can both be 'Orientalised' as entirely different from ingroups and 'Encompassed'⁸ into them. This means that while perceived as 'different' in some way from the ideal citizen, by complying

⁶ This work explores how the binary opposition between the exotic East and the advanced West works to discursively reduce the power of the East.

⁷ Tokenism refers to the inclusion of minority groups in media or business for the purposes of seeming inclusive, rather than as a means of valuing their input. See Michalowski (1993)

⁸ For Baumann and Gingrich (2006) 'Encompassment' refers to the inclusion of outgroup members in the nation based on a performance of their identity in line with dominant social expectations.

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with other social expectations of the elite, outgroup members can be seen as 'worthy' members of the nation (Bourdieu, 1991). For example, Jacobs (2007) explores how in Australia from the 1880s until the 1940s, mixed race people were sometimes discriminated against because of heritage, yet also sometimes accepted on account of their white characteristics. Dovidio and Gaertner (1986) argue these discourses of encompassment and assimilation ensures ingroup values remain hegemonic as everyone is attempting to comply with them. According to Shachar (1999) this works to improve the rights of only the most privileged members of the outgroup.

2.4 Context

The Australian nation can therefore be understood as a construction of temporal discourses. In order to reveal the prejudices within the national Yes campaign, I must first reveal who and how groups have been discriminated against throughout Australian history.

2.4.1 Australia Prior to the 1960s

Scholars contend that gender roles and heterosexuality are critical to the conception of the modern nation state (See Mosse, 1986; Lettow, 2015; Valocchi, 2017). Binnie (2004) and Mosse (1985) propose that a desire to have national futurity resulted in the privileging heterosexual 'sexual citizenship' in modern England and Germany respectively. While Turner (2008) contends that rather than privileging sexuality, these nations privileged reproduction, various academics have responded to this contention through a meticulous delineation of the interconnectivity between sexuality and reproduction. Through exploring the fragmentation of 'primitive community structures' during the industrial revolution, Lettow (2015) proposes that the nuclear family⁹ was favored as it provided a means of ensuring the modern nation could be continued (through conception), protected (through the man) and nurtured (through the women). Thus 'natural' conception, remained the ideal means of fulfilling reproductive

⁹ According to Murdock (1965) the nuclear family refers to a family group of two parents (of each sex) and their biological children

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citizenship (Lettow, 2015). Similarly, Valocchi (2017) uses a functionalist approach to explain that such a family structure was idealized as a consequence of its national economic advantage. The nuclear family was seen to promote economic productivity (through the gendered division of labour), and increase worker's incentives to save and invest (as wealth can be passed on inter-generationally). The national narrative of many Western societies can thus be seen to privilege the nuclear family and oppose the 'queer' in attempt to maintain bourgeois privilege and national futurity (Mosse, 1986; Lettow, 2015; Valocchi, 2017).

Upon the colonisation of Australia therefore, national politics was 'embodied within internalised heteronormative ideals regarding family, citizenship and gender' (Garwood, 2016: 8). This can be evidenced in the legal and extra-legal oppression of LGBTQIA groups and women within Australia at this time. Anti-sodomy laws punished homosexuality by death until 1949, and imprisonment until 1951 (Smaal, & Moore, 2008). Further, legal and social restrictions on women ensured that they remained dependent on their male counterparts and therefore fulfilled their role as the nurturers of the family unit (Smaal, & Moore, 2008). For example, until 1888 women were not given the right to own property, until 1902 women were not allowed to vote, and until the 1960s and 1970s women weren't given equal wage, the right to a no fault divorce, or the right to ownership of their sexual reproductive organs (as rape was not recognized as a crime) to name a few (Anderson, 2012).

Upon the colonisation of Australia however, it was not only the nuclear family that was privileged, but the white middleclass nuclear family. Drawing on Said's (1978) work 'Orientalism', Rivera Santana (2018) proposes that ideologies of the backwards and despotic Other were requisite for Britain's colonization of Australia as they justified it under a guise of the Whiteman's burden.

Policies were thus created to explicitly support the creation of a 'White Australia'. For example, the White Australia policy (1901-1973) prevented 'ethnic Others' from entering Australia through a dictation test. The test could take place in any European language, and deemed anyone unable to accurately write the officer's 50 chosen words an 'illegal' (Government of

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Australia, 1925). Any 'Illegal' immigrants living in Australia were forcefully deported (Atkinson, 2015).

Assimilative policies also looked to entirely abolish Indigenous Australian culture. 'Half-caste' children were removed from their families and placed into white society or under the control of the 'Protection Board' in order to incorporate them into white culture (AITSIS, 2017). Darker skinned children were often taken as domestic slaves. It is estimated that between 1 in 10 and 1 in 3 indigenous children were removed from their families from 1901- 1974 (AITSIS, 2017). Furthermore, the fact that indigenous people were not counted in the census, but rather classed under the Flora and Fauna act until 1967 reflects the dominant racial discourse of white superiority within Australian society at this time (AITSIS, 2017).

2.4.2 Australia from 1960-1980

The 1960s and 1970s saw a rise in social activism in Australia. Influenced by the rising momentum in social activism internationally, alongside increasing immigration, Australians began to challenge restrictive gendered, racial and sexual laws (Fordham, 2018). In the 1960s a group of social activists called the Freedom Riders drove around Australian towns and cities promoting Indigenous Australian's rights. Women took to the streets demanding rights over their bodies, to better jobs and wages and to social inclusion (Frances, 1994). The Campaign Against Moral Persecution (CAMP) was also launched in 1970 by the Lesbian and Gay community of Australia to promote a positive view of homosexuality (Fela, & Mccan 2018), and in 1972 indigenous and non-indigenous people came together in support of indigenous land rights through the creation of a 'tent embassy' on parliament's lawn¹⁰ to name a few (Fordham, 2018).

As a consequence of this wave of social activism, laws began to change to give 'everyone' access to 'equal' opportunity and 'a fair go' (Reeves, 1983). This can be seen in the 1967

¹⁰ This involved setting up an 'Embassy' for Aboriginal Australians opposite Old Parliament lawn. This movement called specifically for the return of land to indigenous Australians.

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amendment, which included Indigenous people in the constitution, the end of the white Australia policy in 1972 (Atkinson, 2015) and a move towards policies of self-determination¹¹ to address indigenous rights. Further the racial Discrimination Act was passed in 1975, punishing the 'Institutional or personal mistreatment of individuals based on race' (Government of Australia, 1975). Homosexuality was legalized across States between 1975 and 1991 and women gained the rights to enter pubs (1963), use contraception (1961), receive equal pay for equal work (1972) and not be discriminated against based on their sex (1984) amongst other things (Frances, 1994).

Social psychological literature (Bobo, & Fox, 2003) however contends that, rather than removing all forms of prejudice and discrimination, absolute forms of racism and sexism were replaced by subtler forms a prejudice during this period. Namely, institutional biases and symbolic language still worked to disenfranchise groups that were seen to threaten Australia's national identity (Billig, 1978; Pettigrew, & Meertens, 1995; van Dijck, 1992).

2.4.3 Australia in the Neoliberal Era

Fekete (2010) supports the social psychological argument, proposing that over the past four decades the discourse around social inclusion in Australia has radically shifted. Rather than overtly discriminating against groups of people, neoliberal discourses have permitted the subtle mistreatment of groups of people due to their inability to comply with the 'natural norms' and therefore 'prevent Australia from moving forward' (Smith, 2018)

Notably, the past four decades has seen the improvement of LGBTQI rights within Australia. As explored above, homosexuality was legalized between 1975 and 1997 across all Australian states, and between 2001 and 2006 all states and territories recognized same sex de facto relationships (Ross, 2009). Furthermore, in 2009 same sex couples were granted access to family law courts to dispute matters relating to property (Olson, 2009). Despite the

¹¹ This policy moved away from ideas of assimilating Indigenous Australians into white culture and towards the promotion and practicing of indigenous cultures.

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liberalization of these laws however, Douglas (1990) found that the government and the press often account for social problems such as rising unemployment and crime through a 'breakdown in family values'. As a result of this discourse, queer couples, single parents and working class parents continue to be excluded from the conception of the 'ideal' citizen (Douglas, 1990). Richardson (2005: 515) thus proposes that, in attempt to be deemed worthy of national citizenship, LGBTQIA people have been further encouraged to comply with heteronormative¹² ideals (Vitulli, 2010: 156). Duggan (2002) labeled this idealization of a particular, white, middle class, monogamous queer relationships 'homonormativity'. It is important to note that bisexuality opposes homonormative ideals as it challenges archetypical gender roles (Butler, 2004) and is often associated with promiscuity, polygamy, and inauthenticity (Israel, & Mohr, 2004; Ochs, & Rowley, 2005).

Neoliberal discourses of a 'fair go' can also be seen to deracialize bigoted policies (Rapley, 1998; Reeves, 1983). For example, immigration laws now prevent people from entering Australia, not on account of their race, but on 'the means through which they arrive'. In 2002, Howard proclaimed that his political party would decide 'who and how individuals would be able to come to Australia' (Howard, 2002 in Johnson, 2007; Howard, 2002 in Hollander, 2007). In 2016 the government similarly prohibited anyone who came to Australia via boat to gain citizenship (Abbot, 2013 in BBC). Fekete (2010) highlights the dominance of Xeno-racism in these policies guised by a discourse of 'illegality'. Furthermore, changes to migration laws in 2007 to have new citizens sign a 'Values Statement', 'a confirmation that they will obey the laws and Australia's way of life' (Department of Home Affairs, 2018), demonstrates the nation's attempt to assimilate other cultural groups into the existing Australian identity.

Furthermore, despite policies of self-determination, Indigenous communities continue to see the removal of their children by the government, and are overrepresented in prisons

¹² Heteronormativity refers to privileging heterosexuality as the norm or expectation. See Diangelo (1997).

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throughout Australia. Cherney and Murphy (2017) propose that this is because their communities are more rigorously policed. Gale and Bolzen (2014) on the other hand contend that this is a result of racial bias. They (2014) found that the same crime, indigenous Australians were six times more likely to receive a prison sentence than their white counterparts.

It can therefore be seen that since Australia was colonized, laws and social expectations have resulted in the discriminatory treatment of particular groups within Australian society. While at the start of the 20th century this discrimination was overt, today it is more subtly revealed in an understanding of how 'ideal' Australians perform their identity.

2.4.4 Campaigning

Whilst undertaking this research, it is important to keep in mind theories of successful campaigning. Literature explores how 'successful' campaigns have clear and centralised messages and a tangible goal (see Plant, Montoya, Rotblatt, Kerndt, Mall, Pappas, Klausner 2010; Lees-Marshment, 2011; Schusterman, 2002). In order to achieve this goal, Lees-Marshment (2011) argues that the campaign must appeal to the dominant beliefs, values or norms of your targeted population. Rosenfeld (2017) explores this through analysing the same sex marriage campaign in the United States. She proposes that framing same sex marriage as compliant with the bill of rights enabled the campaign's success as it connected with the target audience.

Furthermore, as a result of the technological age we live, campaign materials that are visually engaging and emotive are also deemed to have a greater influence. Paek, Hove, Jung, & Cole (2013) propose that this is because they initiate more virtual reactions, and as a result permit the message to spread further.

Within the context of the Yes campaign, the target audience was assumed to be very diverse. They were however all Australian. This could impact how discourse was used to discuss marriage equality.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

As explored above, national media holds significant discursive power (Hall, 1992; Bourdieu, 1991; Althusser, 1971). The Yes campaign therefore warrants critical examination in the ways it used this power to frame same-sex marriage.

The conceptual framework is firstly built on an understanding of how prejudices can be produced, maintained and challenged. Rejecting Bukharin's (1969) argument these discourses are maintained through material power, I adopt Bourdieu's (1991) perspective that such discourses are fabricated through access to symbolic power. From this perspective I can better reveal how and why the Yes campaign relied on dominant social ideologies (namely its cultural capital) to justify same sex marriage. By rejecting Smith's (1995) contention that the nation is inevitable, and adopting Anderson's (1991) perception of the nation as an imagined community, I can also better understand how, in national campaigns, materials may manipulate national narratives to promote the campaign's goals. Naturally, the framework then proceeded to reveal how, within the Australian context, over the past two centuries, particular groups have been discriminated against legally and extra legally on account of their race, gender and sexuality. Through this understanding, I can conduct a more in depth analysis of how and why, in relation to the nation, these groups may be misrepresented in the campaign materials.

The literature review concluded by exploring academic's perception on what constitutes successful campaigning. It did so to ensure that, whilst analyzing the ways in which groups are disenfranchised in the campaign materials, I could maintain perspective as to why this may have occurred.

2.6 Research Aims

The dissertation sets out to reveal how the Yes campaign (mis)represented particular groups. Existing literature reveals that queer people have historically been ostracized in Australia through their non-compliance with dominant social norms. Through exploring the evolution of Australia over the past century it becomes evident that people of colour and women have

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also been marginalized by both the law and the media. With this in mind this dissertation seeks to answer the question 'What role did racism, homophobia and gender roles play in Australian Marriage Equality's (AME's) National Yes campaign'. As clear and concise hypotheses aid the ease and efficacy with which quantitative content analysis takes place (Riffe 1998), I seek to test the following predictions:

H₁: The people represented in the campaign will reflect perceptions of the 'Ideal Australian'; namely they will largely be white, middle class, heterosexual and monogamous.

H₂: Queer Australians will be represented in compliance with expectations of the ideal Australian

H₃: People of Colour will overly perform their Australian identity

In testing these hypotheses this dissertation will reveal whether the AME's advocacy campaign, aimed at improving queer rights, ethically represented the people it intended on supporting. If the above hypotheses are true, then the campaign cannot be deemed a complete success, as whilst it may have achieved its material aim, it discursively worked in opposition to many of the people it claims to have aided.

3 METHODOLOGY

In order to explore the prevalence of racism, homophobia and gender roles within AME's Yes campaign, I conducted quantitative content analysis on the social media campaign materials shared.

Holsti (1969: 14) described content analysis as a 'technique for making inferences by objectively and systematically identifying specified characteristics of messages'. Bell (2001: 14) similarly described it as method for 'testing hypotheses about the ways in which the media represent people, events, [and] situations'. Through systematically coding and analyzing the texts, hidden patterns of representation may be revealed (Lutz, & Collins, 1993: 89).

3.1 Rationale for Methodology

In order to reveal the marginalization of groups within AME's Yes campaign, it is necessary to analyse a significant number of the campaign materials. The reductive style of content analysis thus provides an ideal framework to systematically manage the content shared. From this, inferences about the collection of texts as a whole, and its wider social significance, can be made (Hansen et al, 1998: 95). While there would be merit in employing a top down analysis technique in this research (such as Audio Visual Analysis), the scale of the campaign means that the subtle nuances of a few pieces of content would be exposed at the expense of revealing the prejudices of the campaign more holistically (Gerbner, in Deacon, et al. 1998: 117).

Furthermore, content analysis provides a more objective means of analyzing data than other forms of analysis. Berelson (1952: 152) proposes that content analysis effectively reduces the subjectivity of the researcher in the analysis. Having clear and definitive signifying codes, and 'systematic classifications' (Bauer, & Gaskell, 2000: 132) such as a race, skin color and sexuality will reduce my personal biases in the research process. Furthermore, as these results can be replicated, their inferences are valid (Krippendorff, 2004: 18)

Finally, content analysis was chosen due to its unobtrusive nature. As the nature of the content of the campaign has proven sensitive to many (particularly queer) people, rather than directly engaging with the audience to see how they felt about the materials, and having to overcome difficult ethical challenges by bringing up traumatic experiences, I decided to look at how the materials themselves could be seen as problematic. Furthermore, as it is now many months since the campaign was launched, and the results have been published, it is possible that, with retrospect, subject's opinions and attitudes may have changed. Engaging subjects in the debate could therefore increase the subjectivity of the analysis. The unchanging nature of content analysis prevents any retrospective biases (Becker, & Geer, 1957).

3.2 Limitations

One limitation of content analysis is that it fails to reveal cause and effect. As Rose (2016: 88) contends, content analysis focuses on the site of representation, not the social context in which

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it was created. Whilst my codes will draw on existing literature in attempt to answer my question, the research itself will fail to conclusively understand why prejudiced representations are present in the campaign materials and the impact of such representations on the public. I must therefore be cautious to not make general statements about the cause or effect of the materials.

Furthermore, quantitative content analysis has been critiqued for hiding biases (Bauer, 2000). In order to reduce my personal bias, I will position my research in line with previous research, designing the codes with reference to both academic literature and the content of the campaign itself (Bauer, 2000: 132; Hansen et al., 1998: 95). Despite this, I must be aware of my own reflexivity in my analysis and acknowledge the limitations of my study.

3.3 Sampling

AME had two main campaign strategies. The first was through social media, television and radio. This strategy aimed to both directly influence 'No' or 'On the fence' voters to vote 'Yes', and encourage 'Yes' supporters to post their votes. The second strategy was through engaging volunteers to raise awareness about the postal vote. The content created for this was shared on the AME website and aimed to indirectly influence the vote by engaging already passionate Yes voters. While the content produced for both purposes is important, I primarily seek to engage with the content that looked to *directly* impact the results of the postal survey. I will therefore be using the content shared on social media and advertised on the television and radio, rather than resources available only on AMEs website in my analysis.

The campaign used four main social media channels, Facebook, Instagram, Youtube and Twitter to broadcast its message, alongside television and radio. These sites have 301.5K, 17.4K, 1.3K and 29.3K followers/likes respectively. Of these sites Facebook has significantly the largest reach. The Facebook posts also had significantly more likes, views and shares than the other media channels. On top of this, Facebook had the largest number of original materials produced on it. All original materials shared on YouTube, the radio and television appeared on Facebook. 88% of original materials shared on Instagram appeared on Facebook

and majority of the original materials shared on twitter were also shared on Facebook. For these reasons I decided to analyze the materials only shared on Facebook.

I chose to use materials collected between when the survey was announced and when it was officially closed (From August 17 until November 7). While the AME campaign for marriage equality dates back to 2004, I wish to look at the materials shared specifically for the Yes campaign. In total there were n=226 materials shared on this platform. After removing duplicate posts there were n=222 materials remaining.

3.4 Design of Codebook

The codebook consisted of mutually exclusive and exhaustive codes. They were formulated from research regarding prejudice and discrimination in Australia. Codes were then added and others eliminated after gaining more exposure the content. These codes were clearly articulated, and covered a range of important tools for analysis such as themes, lexical choices and voice (Kroger, & Wood, 2000: 23). A number of responses were given to each code following Krippendorff's (2013) argument that more options results in more accurate, specific and detailed findings. These codes explored topics such as gender, race, performance of gender and purpose of the video (Appendix 1).

3.5 Pilot Study

Alongside my co coder I conducted a pilot study. This included coding 30 randomly selected posts (22 videos and 8 photos). I intentionally chose an Australian to co-code for this study as they would be most likely to identify the presence of Australian ideologies within the content.

For the initial pilot study inter coder reliability ranged between 0.86 and 1.0 for all the variables except age, performance, pronoun and straight to queer talking time. I perfected the codebook accordingly by merging and separating signifiers and better articulating instructions for organizing the codes to avoid confusion. I removed irrelevant codes and created codes for interesting comments that could not be accounted for within my original

codebook. For example, codes were made to account for content showing support for the campaign and for content regarding references to one's career.

3.6 Analysis

All of content collected was then coded manually by two coders. The inter coder reliability lay between 0.92 and 1.0 for all variables. The data was then processed in SPSS v.21.0 for analysis. As the majority of the codes collected were descriptive statics, constructed as nominal level categories, the data was largely analysed through frequencies, population means and cross tabulations of particular variables. Through using Pearson's chi-squared test and t-tests, I was able to identify whether the results were statistically significant.

4 RESULTS

Overall, the results lie in conjunction with the study's expectations. Specifically, AME's Yes campaign depicted same sex marriage as congruous with dominant Australian national narratives. Groups who challenged Australian gender and racial ideals therefore were often marginalized in the campaign materials. Through exploring the salient findings of each hypothesis, the following section draws attention to the ways in which these minority groups were marginalized.

4.1 Key Findings

4.1.1 Hypothesis 1

It was found that certain groups were more represented in the materials than others. To tests the diversity of the campaign, a number of frequencies were calculated.

LGBTQIA people:

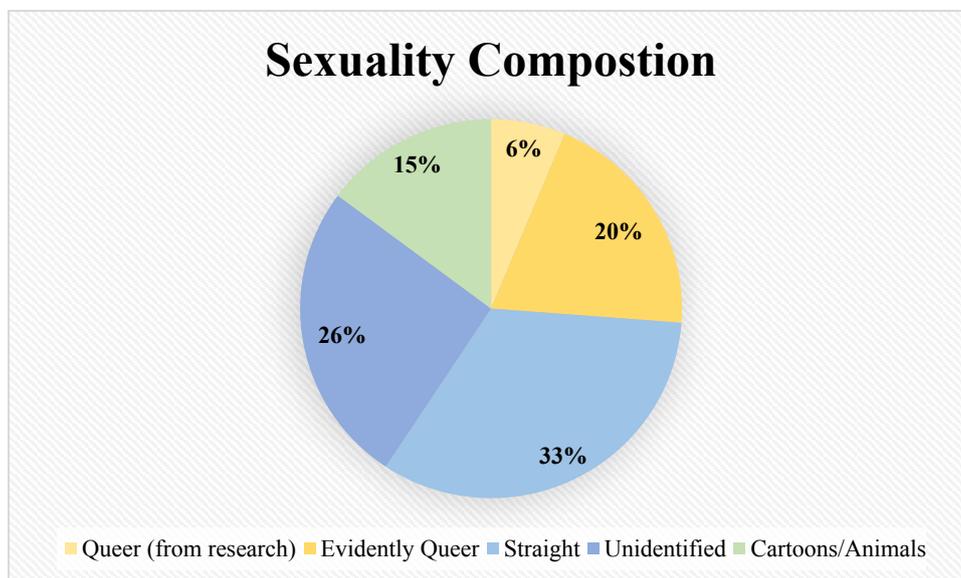
Most strikingly, the number of pieces of content featuring LGBTQIA people was very limited. Of the 222 materials shared by the campaign, only 64 showed people from the LGBTQIA

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community. This means that 29% (less than a third) of the materials actually had a queer presence. Of the 64 videos featuring queer people, 20 did not mention their queer status even implicitly. It was rather through significant further research that I was able to identify their sexuality. This means that there were only 14 more videos that included openly queer people (44) than cartoon memes (17) and animals (13) combined. So, despite the fact that the campaign advocated for LGBTQIA rights, it largely did so through straight or unidentified voices.

Figure 2: Proportion of Sexualities in Content



NB: This graph explores the proportion of different sexualities appearing in posts. The numbers therefore differ in this graph from the above articulation, as some posts featured multiple people with different sexual identities

It is also interesting to draw attention to the ways in which language excluded the LGBTQIA community. In 167 of the 222 posts (75.2%) no mention of any word referencing homosexuality (except for same sex marriage) was used. Of the words used to describe the community, Gay was mentioned the most (n=22 times or in 10% of posts) followed by LGBTQI (n=10 times or in 4.5% of posts) (see Appendix 5).

On top of this, whilst the difference in quantity between gay people and lesbian people is not

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statistically significant at the 10% level of significance, bisexuality, asexuality and pansexuality were not mentioned once in the debate. Furthermore, no intersex or transgender people appeared in the content. The campaign shared two posts starring drag queens. One drag queen was shown in a video with ten other famous people. She however made no reference to her sexuality, and without insight it would be unlikely to recognize her queer status. The other drag queens appeared in a video of the Kinky Boots cast. Thus, rather than necessarily being queer themselves, they performed the role of queer characters.

People of colour:

Another very noticeable feature of the campaign was its limited exposure of people of colour. Of the 222 pieces shared, 31 (13.9%) featured people of colour (POC). In 21 of these pieces however, the ratio of POC to white people was less than 1:15. This meant that in a mere 10 posts (4.5%) POC were highly visible. In fact, in the photos shared, only 2% featured POC alone. In total, the campaign included over 1800 white people and a mere 41 POC. This means that white people made up over 97.8% of the content (Appendix 2). This difference in proportion was found to be statistically significant at the 1% level of significance, with a χ^2 value of 103.778.

Figure 1: Racial composition of posts

Race	Frequency
White	>1800 (>97.8%)
Black	3 (<0.16%)
South Asian	6(<0.32%)
Indigenous	8 (<0.44%)
Mixed	6 (<0.32%)

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Islander	1 (<0.05%)
Asian	19 (<1.03%)
Arab	1 (0.05%)

The limited representation of POC within the campaign does not represent the true diversity of Australian society. According to the Australian Bureau of Statistics (2016), 5.6% of the Australian population have Chinese heritage, 2.8% Indian heritage and 2% are Indigenous Australian.

To test the diversity of the campaign it is also important to look at indicators other than racial heritage. Interestingly, majority of the POC featured had pale skin (70%). Only 5 people had dark skin (Appendix 3). On top of this, POC were rarely given a voice. Of the n=222 posts, POC spoke n=19 times (8.6% of content), in which in only n=15 posts (6.8%) did they have equal or majority of the voice (Appendix 4). Most notably Arabic people, Black people and people with dark skin tones were given no voice whatsoever.

Other Minorities:

Finally, throughout the entire campaign only one disabled person was featured. No homeless people or distinctively working class people were featured.

Intriguingly, there were significant references to giving everyone a 'fair go', a typical Australian saying by all parties throughout the campaign.

4.1.2 Hypothesis 2

This hypothesis relates to the performance of the LGBTQIA community in the campaign. Most interesting LGBTQIA people were largely represented in line with Australian gendered ideals. Of the queer females shown, 47 of 49 were presented as femme/lipstick lesbians. A mere two women were classified as butch lesbians. Of these two, one was a famous Australian actress, who did not mention her sexuality, and the other made only a subtle reference to hers. Of the gay men 58 of 60 were classified as masculine men. This includes two who were classified as

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'Country Australian' and four who were classified as 'Sporty'. Merely two gay men showcased 'femme' characteristics, both of whom were famous.

On top of this, monogamous commitment was consistently referenced by the LGBTQIA subjects. Of the 42 queer couples depicted 25 (59.6%) explicitly referenced their long-term commitment to each other. When analysed through cross tabs, the relationship between queer couple and commitment was statistically significant corresponding to a χ^2 value of 83.184 and a p values of <0.01 (Appendix 6). I also tested whether LGBTQIA people performed their commitment to the Australian community more than other people through referencing their career. They mentioned their career 35 % of the time. This is not statistically significantly more than non-queer people (20%) at the 10% level of significance.

Finally, it is also important to explore how LGBTQIA people were portrayed differently to their straight or unidentified counterparts. In 72.4% (21) of the videos of queer couples, no physical intimacy was shown whatsoever. In 5 (17.2%) mild intimacy (eg. hand holding) was shown and strong physical intimacy (kiss on the lips) was only shown in 3 (7.5%) posts. Of those displaying signs of physical intimacy, 6 of 8 were female couples, revealing a bias against male physical affection. Lastly, only one queer couple mentioned having children. No other references were made to their 'nuclear' families.

4.1.3 Hypothesis 3

This hypothesis looks to analyse how people of colour were given a voice in the content. It was found that people of colour were much more likely to make overtly "Australian" cultural references than white people. When indigenous people spoke, five out of seven times (71.4%) they referenced what it means to be 'Australian'. This relationship between Indigeneity and discussing the nation was statistically significant at the 5% level, corresponding to a Chi Square value of 19.688 (see Appendix 7). In general, people of colour referred to the 'Australian Culture' 10 of the 19 times (52.6%) there were given a voice. White people on the other hand, only made reference to the nation 17 of the 147 times (11.6%) they were given voice. Moreover,

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all but one person of colour in the campaign had an Australian accent, reinforcing their innate 'Australian-ness'.

Finally, only three people of colour discussed problems of racial discrimination in Australia. This is interesting as studies reveal the efficacy of such discussions in influencing people of colour to support same sex marriage (Ghavami & Johnson 2011). The main focus of their arguments instead were fairness (66.7%) and love (61.0%) (see Appendix 8).

4.1.4 Other insights

Subtle Misogyny

While the difference between men and women's talking time (34% of the time men spoke the majority of the time and 24.6% women spoke majority of the time) is not statistically significant at the 10% level of significance, the subject of conversation did differ for men and women. Men were much more likely to talk about the shock of 'coming out'. Men raised these concerns twice as many times as women (see Appendix 9). Such supports the contention that women are seen as more emotional and nurturing than men and therefore men are more justified in their homophobic expressions.

Furthermore, even when overtly describing lesbian relationships the word lesbian was used very sparingly. While the word 'Gay' was said in 22 pieces of content 'Lesbian' was used a mere 10 times. When describing lesbian relationships, the word gay was used 8 times instead. This limited reference of the word lesbian can be seen as problematic as it assumes male autonomy in defining sexuality. Thus, although it does seem on the surface that gender is portrayed ethically, gender hierarchies remained ingrained in the ways in which each genders express themselves in the campaign.

The straight Saviour

In 19 posts the title of the content related directly to 'doing it for' a queer friend/acquaintance/family member. In 24 posts the title directly referenced being 'just like everyone else'. An example of video titles that did this are 'Help couples like De and Kirstie

get married' and 'The marriage equality debate is a great chance for straight allies to stand up and say you will be accepted' amongst many others. There was also a consistent theme of emotional content. Death was referenced 8 times¹³. These two themes combined victimizes the queer person as helpless and places responsibility for change on the straight audience. Such reinforces the existing power dynamic of the powerful straight savior and the helpless queer.

5 DISCUSSION

5.1 The missing queers

Considering the campaign was focused on LGBTQIA people's rights, LGBTQIA people were largely underrepresented in the campaign materials. Only 29% of the content featured queer people, of which in only 67% of these posts were they openly queer. Furthermore, words referencing the queer community (with the exception of same sex marriage) were largely excluded from the debate.

As explored in the literature review, the Australian nation has long been conceptualized in opposition to homosexuality (Duggan, 2007). The campaign's continuous representation of same sex marriage as 'the Australian thing to do', as seen through the consistent reference to giving everyone 'A fair go', yet its limited discussion of, or from, the queer community, arguably acts as a means of presenting same sex *marriage* as in line with dominant national narratives, even if queer identities challenge them.

This can also be evidenced through the campaign's focus on gay and lesbian people as the 'representatives' of the queer community, and the complete exclusion of openly bisexual, pansexual and transgender people. Butler (1990) and Israel and Mohr's (2004) propose that bisexual, pansexual and transgender identities challenge 'Australian Family Values' of gender roles, sexual constraint and monogamy more than lesbian and gay identities. Their lack of

¹³ This related both to partners not being able to marry each other before they died and to people's loved ones not being able to celebrate their weddings.

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representation in the campaign materials can thus similarly be seen to present same sex marriage in its 'least threatening' way to the Australia public.

Thus, while the campaign promoted same sex *marriage* as positive, limited effort is made to encourage the Australian community to accept those in *same sex relationships*. Particularly regarding those identifying as bisexual, pansexual or transgender. This representation of same sex marriage through a predominately straight voice thus works to discursively delimit the queer and preserve heterosexuality as the hegemonic identity in Australian society.

5.2 Locating the other minorities

Like LGBTQIA people, other minorities were also underrepresented in the campaign materials. Such similarly could reflect the campaign's attempt to present same sex marriage in accordance with other dominant national ideologies.

People of Colour:

POC were largely absent from the campaign. The materials featured over 97.8% white people. Asians made up the highest proportion of non-white people (making up 1.03% of the population). One Arabic person and one Islander person were featured. Three Black people were featured, yet only in and amongst a crowd of predominantly white faces. This limited inclusion of these minorities, coupled with the fact that, even when they were represented, they were rarely given a voice, reveals the tokenism of their inclusion. Like with sexual minorities, POC have long been constructed in opposition to the Australian identity. While Australia is now seen as a multicultural country, the laws and institutions continue to prevent cultural diversity (Reeves, 1983). The exclusion or limited representation of POC in the campaign materials could suggest that, as these identities challenge Australian norms and ideals, they do not have the symbolic power (Bourdieu, 1991) to effectively influence others to accept same sex marriage.

This limited representation of diverse racial groups in the national media has material consequences as it works to further reinforce their social position of inferiority. This is because

their lack of, or tokenistic representation projects the opinion to society that they are not worthy of a voice (Morgan, & Stephens, 2012). Like heterosexuality therefore, whiteness is constructed as the superior norm with in AME's Yes campaign.

Disabled people:

Only one person in the campaign had evident signs of a disability (deafness). In the Australian context, disabled people are often perceived as 'burdens' on tax payers 'hard earned' money¹⁴ (Patterson, Darcy, & Mönninghoff, 2012). This representation of one middle class disabled person, in a happy, monogamous relationship, can be seen as a means of being seemingly inclusive, whilst portraying the disabled subject in the means least divergent from Australian ideals as possible. Such a representation is thus arguably a 'tokenistic' act of inclusivity.

5.3 Performing homosexuality

Although queer people were not the face of the campaign, they were not entirely excluded from it. Their social performances thus warrant further analysis. On the whole, the campaign represents the queer community in compliance with most heterosexual ideals.

This is most evident in the fact that when queer people were given a platform, 33% of the time they did not draw attention to their sexuality. This in combination with their very normative performance of gender and consistent references to monogamy reveals that the campaign privileged 'subtle' homosexuality. Such promotes the image of the committed and constrained queer, complying with dominant Australian expectations. The majority of LGBTQIA people featured who did not conform to these gender ideals had social power through their fame. Following Bourdieu's argument that in attempt to improve one's symbolic power, people may exchange one form of capital for another, the LGBTQIA people featured may be seen as

¹⁴ This is evidenced in political discourses and the news media. See Patterson, Darcy, & Mönninghoff, (2012)

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attempting to prove their worth by acting like their heterosexual counterparts and complying with social ideals when possible.

This portrayal of LGBTQIA people supports Duggan's (2002) argument that heteronormative performances of sexuality are privileged in the Australian context. Overall, while scholars have been unable to find the compromise between representing sexual minorities through a 'minoritizing view' of major separatism and a 'universalizing view' of assimilation (Sedgwick, 1990: 1) most scholars (Epstein, 1999: 32–3, Valocchi, 1999: 59) agree that assimilationist representations of the queer community are detrimental in a pursuit of equality (Duggan, 2002: 177) as such a representation would act as a means to erode any oppositional ideologies to social norms and hierarchies and make those who live in non-normative ways more vulnerable (Danby, 2007: 45). In other words, while we must cautiously avoid stereotyping queer people as inherently different, portraying them as homogenous is similarly discriminatory and negative for such identities. Thus, rather than encouraging the Australian public to accept diverse identities in their campaign, AME's depiction of the queer couple reinforces traditional familial binaries (Garwood, 2016).

In saying this, LGBTQIA individuals were not depicted as entirely the same as their straight counterparts. For example, queer couples made limited references to having their own children. This is arguably because queerness is still seen as a threat to the Australian national identity and the promotion of the 'queer family' would significantly challenge such social ideals. Furthermore, unlike in most media discussing heterosexual marriage, almost no physical intimacy was shown between the queer couples in the campaign. This again draws attention to a social fear in the overt expression of homosexuality. It can therefore be seen as a means of rationalizing same sex without disrupting hegemonic ideals of the family unit.

5.4 Performing Race

Similarly, to queer people, people of colour, were represented in a very particular way in the campaign materials. Most evidently they were presented as nationalistic. While literature (Ghavami, & Johnson, 2011) articulates that minority groups, particularly people of colour, are

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most likely to agree with same sex marriage when it is presented as an issue of discrimination of exclusion, throughout the Yes campaign, their main focus was on dominant Australian values.

Like with reference to sexuality, this reliance on dominant Australian discourses for those who physically seem to challenge Australia's white identity supports Dovidio and Gaertner's (1986) theory of power and prejudice. Specifically, although people of colour have been given a platform to speak, in order for their voices to be heard and valued, they must prove their worth. As argued above, utilising Australian discourses and mannerism can be seen as a means of converting one form of capital, namely their national identity, to compensate for their lack of cultural or social capital.

Like with respect to sexual minorities, the limited and homogenous voice of racial minority groups in the campaign acts in opposition to their acceptance in society. Scholars (Dovidio, & Gaertner, 1986; Baumann, & Gingrich, 2006) agree that an assimilative approach to representing people of colour works to preserve white hegemony. Arguable, when parties perform whiteness, the construction of it as 'ideal' is reinforced (Dyer, 1997). AME's depiction of the people of colour in a very nationalist means therefore reinforces the value in performing whiteness, and limits the acceptance of culturally diverse identities.

5.5 Contextualizing the campaign

It is important to note that, while a critique of the content is important, the extent to which radical gender and sexual critiques can be made in this campaign is limited in two main ways. Firstly, marriage is, in and of itself, a social institution that encourages particular behaviors of monogamy and commitment (Ettelbrick, 1992). As queer couples who wish to get married believe in the importance of the institution of marriage, it is not entirely surprising that references to these concepts were made throughout the campaign.

Furthermore, the aim of the campaign was to get the majority population to vote Yes. Through understanding best practices of campaigning (Rosenfeld, 2017), it becomes evident that the

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success of a campaign often relies on its ability to appeal to, and connect with, the audience. As the audience of the campaign was Australian citizens, through utilizing dominant Australian ideologies, it likely that the campaign engaged more with the target audience and therefore had a more tangible impact on the final results of the vote than an inclusive campaign could have. So while, the campaign certainly relied on exclusionary conceptions of race, gender and sexuality, and therefore can be seen as harmful for particular minority groups, in a number of ways it also acted as a major stepping stone towards including an entire group of people in an institution they were previously excluded from.

5.6 Methodological Discussion

Overall, content analysis was an effective tool of analysis to explore my research question. This is largely because of the vast quantity of posts shared by AME over the course of the campaign. By analyzing the content of all of these posts, the general trends of who and how certain groups were represented within the campaign could be explored. Whilst no form of research is completely objective, the nature of the codebook allowed a number of empirical conclusions to be drawn.

The codebook considered a number of alternate factors of both who was included in the campaign and how they expressed themselves physically and verbally. This allowed a number of interesting insights to be made. In saying this, including codes about the cinematography of the posts may have led to some other interesting insights. Another interesting aspect that was under explored in my codebook was the representation of the straight savior. I think that straight people's diverse references of both homophobia and acceptance of queer people warrants further analysis. More specific codes regarding how each individual expressed themselves with respect to their understanding of their role in the postal vote could therefore have induced other insightful results.

Along with creating more codes, a mixed methods analysis would definitely permit a more in depth and enlightened analysis of the content. There were a number of very interesting posts which codes could not adequately analyse. Through using semiotic analysis, the more subtly

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heteronormative and misogynistic representation of gender and sexuality could be better understood. Appendix 10 is just one example of this problematic representation of people within the campaign. This image is particularly interesting as it promotes same sex marriage through very heteronormative and misogynistic lens. Content analysis alone however fails to reveal this.

6 CONCLUSION

This dissertation set out to reveal if and how AME's Yes campaign relied on exclusive ideologies of racism, gender roles and homophobia to promote same sex marriage to the Australian public. It did so through content analysis of the AME's Yes campaign materials shared on Facebook. It sought to reveal not only who was included and excluded in the campaign, but how marginalized groups were given a voice.

Overall, the study illustrated that, like other forms of national media, individuals were largely represented in line with dominant national ideologies. On a broad level this meant that the campaign consistently referenced voting yes as the 'Aussie thing to do' as it ensures everyone has a 'fair go'. On a subtler level it meant that the campaign was very white and heterosexual. This was not only evident in its overrepresentation of straight, white people, but in its poor portrayal of minority groups.

Those who did not comply with dominant Australian norms were represented with a very homogenous voice. When given the chance to speak, people of colour were overly overt in their references to Australian culture. Through an understanding of symbolic power, it can be argued that the campaign attempted to improve the influence of these groups' voices through capitalizing on their Australian status. LGBTQIA people were similarly represented as very much in line with Australian heterosexual ideals. Such supports the argument that the campaign attempted to make same sex marriage seem like the Australian thing to do, without making any attempt to improve Australian people's acceptance of diverse queer people.

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Through exploring the languages of exclusion, I therefore contend that this campaign was, in and of itself, an exclusionary campaign, which further marginalized groups that lay outside of the typical norms. As explored in the above discussion, whether or not this is entirely negative relies on one's opinion as to where to draw the line between achieving a tangible goal and ethical representation. While I do not seek to propose an answer to this question, future studies could attempt to respond to it. This could be done through looking at the reach of different types of content and exploring the impact these campaign materials had on marginalized individuals. Future research could also explore whether this poor representation of marginalized groups is evident in other advocacy campaigns both within and outside of the Australian context.

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