THE QUEER AGENDA:

EXPLORING THE POLITICAL PARTICIPATION OF LGBTIQ+ YOUTH.

By

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"Only the political life, the life of action and speech, is free; only the political life is human.

To be a human is to be a citizen..."

– Dana Villa.[1]

[1] Dana Villa, *Arendt and Heidegger: The Fate of the Political* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), 28.

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Abstract

Youth participation literature is yet to fully explore the ways in which young marginalised LGBTIQ+ identifying youth engage in the political sphere. While there is a significant amount of existing literature about youth and their participation habits, research has not quite begun to explore the intersection of youth and LGBTIQ+ marginalisation, and identification, in relation to political participation. This research seeks to address these knowledge gaps, and explore the ways in which high school aged LGBTIQ+ youth in the Wellington region participate in politics. To do so, it organized a survey among Wellington high school students (N=91). The empirical data showed that most of the participants did not view their LGBTIQ+ identity as being political. It also found that the majority of respondents felt as though they have greater political efficacy and ability to make a change as LGBTIQ+ peoples than they do as young citizens under the voting age. Furthermore, the analyses revealed that the extent to which youth feel as though they belong to the queer community positively affects the extent to which they are involved in the LGBTIQ+ community. This research has served to challenge normative assumptions of political participation, and thus broaden understandings of how minority groups perform their citizenship, and engage in politics.

Introduction

Understanding political participation is critical for the health of a democracy, as participation is a keystone of the system. Hence, it makes sense that political scientists should attempt to understand its multitude of different facets and intricacies. There are, naturally, several subsets of the study of political participation — such as alternative participation, citizenship, minority participation, and so on — many of which intersect. One intersection of participation studies that has rarely been explored is the ways in which young people who are part of the marginalised LGBTIQ+[2] community participate in politics. While there is an increasing amount of scholarship regarding youth, minority groups, and political participation, more is still needed. Voter turnout trends are steadily declining across the globe, and youth participation is disproportionately low.[3] It is thus necessary to examine how youth themselves view participation, and what forms of participation they are engaging in. This research will look into both traditional and alternative forms of political participation, in order to open up conversations about how we view and legitimise political participation. It will sit in the liminal space between formal/informal, public/private, and individual/collective discussions of political participation.

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[2] The acronym LGBTIQ+ stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex, queer, and others. It is important to note that the terms used to describe the community are constantly evolving. Queer is one term that is used; it is used as a reclaimed word to represent diversity in sexual orientation and gender identity. However, there are many who are uncomfortable with this. Many prefer the acronym LGBTIQ+, or the phrase 'sex, sexual orientation, and gender diverse'. These terms are used interchangeably in this work. Alongside this, trans is used as an umbrella term to encompass people of diverse gender identities such as transgender people, intersex people, whakawahine, fa'afafine, and genderqueer people, amongst others. While it is easy to presume that this is a unified community, there are often harmful power dynamics within the community itself. Scholars such as Jillian Todd Weiss have written extensively about the issue. For a greater understanding of indigenous identities, Elizabeth Kerekere has written prolifically about the intersection of Māori and queer identities.
[3] Judt, Tony. *Ill Fares the Land.* (New York, USA: Penguin Press, 2010).

There are several overarching elements to this research that have shaped the direction it is to take. The two general elements are; that there is very little research on LGBTIQ+ youth in Aotearoa New Zealand, and that there is very little research on LGBTIQ+ youth politics. Furthermore, there does not appear to be any intersection of the two; there is no research, seemingly, on how LGBTIQ+ youth in Aotearoa New Zealand participate in politics — yet. The next overarching element of this research is that the primary focus of normative political science youth research has been about the formal political sphere, thus overlooking youth as citizens who are participating politically. Furthermore, another primary element — or foundation — of this research is that broader definitions of political participation are needed to be able to encompass the everyday of young people. Following on from this, the main aims of the research are to expand on our current knowledge of LGBTIQ+ youth in Aotearoa New Zealand, and to contribute to a broader definition of political participation by exploring the lives and experiences of LGBTIQ+ youth.

This research will look at youth in the LGBTIQ+ community, as they are under-represented group in academia and wider society as a whole. It will seek to address the stigmatisation that young people face about being apathetic and disinterested in politics.[4] In doing so, the following research will pursue the argument that perhaps we need to reconceptualise normative assumptions about what constitutes political participation. The LGBTIQ+ community is inherently political; this comes part and parcel of being a marginalised community. However, whether or not members of this community see themselves as such is a different story. This research will explore these assumptions by finding out whether LGBTIQ+ youth in secondary education are politically engaged actors, if

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[4] Therese O'Toole, David Marsh, and Su Jones, "Political Literacy Cuts Both Ways: The Politics of Non-participation among Young People," *The Political Quarterly* 74, no. 3 (2003): 355, doi: 10.1111/1467-923X.00544.

they see themselves as such, and whether or not they are involved in their communities. This will, hopefully, allow political scientists to better conceptualise the ways in which young people view civic engagement and politics.

The main research question to be investigated is: how do LGBTIQ+ youth in the Wellington region participate in politics? This question will be explored through the following sub-questions:

- To what extent are young people who see their LGBTIQ+ identity as political likely to engage in political action when compared with those who do not see their LGBTIQ+ identity as political?

- To what extent are young people who see their LGBTIQ+ identity as political more active in their communities — particularly the queer community — compared with those who do not see their LGBTIQ+ identity as political?

- To what extent do politically active young LGBTIQ+ people feel as though they have an ability to create political change?

- To what extent do young people who are active in their communities feel as though they have an ability to create political change?

- To what extent does feeling as though one belongs to the queer community influence their community engagement?

- To what extent are queer youth who are interested in politics likely to participate in politics when compared to those who are not interested?

These questions will frame both the literature review, and the data tests in the empirical analysis chapters of this thesis.

This research will be approached by a preliminary literature review of current academic work on political participation, in order to develop a framework for the empirical research. It will also seek to find any gaps in the literature, in order to see where and how empirical research could address them. The literature review will look at works pertaining to; political participation, youth participation, and queer participation. It will investigate theories ranging from social institutionalism, communitarianism, citizenship, and forms of capital. Such theoretical conceptualisations will provide a thorough understanding of queer youth participation. These theories will allow for a focus on alternative forms of political participation, which is necessary as this thesis will be presenting empirical research that surveys young people under the voting age, so will therefore be unable to present any data about how and when respondents vote. The empirical research component of this thesis will seek to explore what political activities queer youth are participating in, how they view their queer citizenship/identity, and to also test the hypotheses of the research questions listed above.

Through this research, political scientists can learn how to promote diversity in political participation, and how to engage a new generation of voters. Minority groups often feel disenfranchised from the state, as much of their struggles are characterised by oppression from the state and a denial of equal rights.[5] So, encouraging minority groups to participate in political life is a means to begin to break down the barriers that exist between these groups and the state. Obviously, this will not immediately solve all of the issues that the queer community faces, nor will everyone in the community want to participate in politics. However, increased engagement and communication will be a significant step forward in their fight for greater equality.

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[5] Brodie Fraser, "Queerly Beloved: Moving Beyond Marriage Equality," *Counterfutures* 2, (2016): 67.

Potential outcomes of this work include a heightened understanding of the motivations behind why LGBTIQ+ rangatahi[6] become involved in politics. This will expand our knowledge of youth motivations as a whole, which leads to an understanding of how to politically engage young people in a meaningful and lasting way. Knowledge such as this is imperative in being able to create and foster positive attitudes towards habitual civic engagement in future generations. People are less likely to vote throughout their life if they do not form habits of voting at a young age, so it is important to have wide range of ways in which youth participation can be encouraged.[7]

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[6] Rangatahi is the te reo Māori word for young person. 'Youth,' 'young person,' and 'rangatahi' will be used interchangeably throughout this text.
[7] Helena Catt, "Children and Young People as Citizens: Participation, Provision and Protection," in *Child and Family Policy Conference, Dunedin, July 2015*, Wellington: Electoral Commission, 2015, accessed June 12, 2016, http://www.elections.org.nz/sites/default/files/plain-page/attachments/Youth%20Participation.pdf.

Literature Review

Political Participation

"If democracy is rule by the people…then the notion of political participation is at the centre of the concept of the democratic state."[8] Political participation is undoubtedly important in democracy; it is a keystone of enfranchisement, and allows citizens to engage with the state. It is primarily concerned with representation, and is perceived to be a marker of a healthy democracy.[9] Normative definitions of political participation summarise it as "all voluntary activities by individual citizens intended to influence either directly or indirectly political choices at various levels of the political system."[10] However, this is a rather narrow view of political participation; it makes room for public participation, but does not provide space to conceptualise private and informal modes of participation, which have historically been the domain of women and young people under the voting age.[11] By focussing on the realm of the formal political system, definitions of political participation inherently exclude informal and personal politics that are "related to issues of identity, agency and participation, and more commonly the domain of children and young people."[12]

Such an exclusionary definition "overlooks the fact that many citizenship opportunities (in particular, voting and political representation) are inaccessible to children

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[8] Max Kaase and Alan Marsh, "Political Action: A Theoretical Perspective." in *Political Action*, ed. Samuel Barnes and Max Kaase (London: Sage, 1979), 28.

[9] Andrew McVey and Jack Vowles, "Virtuous Circle or Cul De Sac? Social Capital and Political Participation in New Zealand," *Political Science* 57, no. 1 (2005): 5, doi: 10.1177/003231870505700102.

[10] Kaase and Marsh, "Political Action: A Theoretical Perspective," 42.

[11] Bronwyn Wood, "Crafted within Liminal Space: Young People's Everyday Politics," *Political Geography* 31, (2012): 338, doi: 10.1016/j.polgeo.2012.05.003.

[12] Ibid.

and young people as a reflection of their age."[13] In much of political science, there appears to be a normative assumption that voting is the best way to participate in a democracy.[14] However, having such an adult-centric mode of engagement be the dominant mode of participation, political science discourse is thus posing alternative/other youth-framed forms of political participation as being an inferior, or soft, version of participation.[15] Politics can be seen and enacted in the everyday; it does not exist purely in the formal realm. Thus, political science needs to move towards a broader conceptualisation of participation that includes the myriad of so-called 'alternative' modes of participation that groups such as women, young people, and minorities are undertaking. Furthermore, new grammars of political action and identity have not replaced our traditional conceptualisations of the political, they are, instead, modernising — and broadening — how we view political participation.

Political scientist Russell Dalton notes that "nothing quite epitomises democracy as much as voting in elections."[16] Current norms of behaviour mean we now associate democracy and voting as going hand in hand. Former Chief Executive of the New Zealand Electoral Commission, Helena Catt, has argued that while there are other forms of political participation, "voting is the easiest, most visible, and the most routinely counted."[17] This perfectly summarises why voting is so intensely privileged in modern democracies; it is relatively simple to enact and measure. However, voting is an adult-centric and narrow way to look at political participation. As will be shown, there are a large number of scholars who

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[13] Bronwyn E. Wood, "Young People's Emotional Geographies of Citizenship Participation: Spatial and Relational Insights," *Emotion, Space and Society* 9 (2013): 52, doi: 10.1016/j.emospa.2013.02.004.

[14] David Van Reybrouck, *Against Elections: The Case for Democracy*, trans. Liz Waters (London: The Bodley Head, 2016), 136.

[15] Wood, "Crafted within Liminal Space: Young People's Everyday Politics," 338.

[16] Russell Dalton, *Citizens Politics* (Los Angeles: Sage, 2014), 40.

[17] Helena Catt, "Children and Young People as Citizens: Participation, Provision and Protection," in *Child and Family Policy Conference, Dunedin, July 2005*, Wellington: Electoral Commission, 2015, accessed June 12, 2016, http://www.elections.org.nz/sites/default/files/plain-page/attachments/Youth%20Participation.pdf.

have theorised about why and how we must move beyond theories of political participation that are so narrow. Firstly, though, it is necessary to briefly conceptualise voting and participation norms.

There is a significant amount of concern about the continuing decline of participation in elections, and it is often posited as a crisis of democracy. Many political scientists have noted that voter turnout at general elections has been declining for decades in Western democracies.[18] Another disconcerting trend in voting patterns is the exceptionally low rate at which young people are engaging with formal modes of participation.[19] Age and participation rates are an important issue to consider; young people are often thought to be uninterested in politics as they have more pressing concerns to devote their time and energy to.[20]

There is significant evidence suggesting that young people who do not vote the first time they are eligible are less likely to vote throughout their lives.[21] This is, obviously, quite concerning. Voting is a habit that must be learnt and practiced over time, so if young people are not learning this habit early, they will be less likely to ever develop and use it.[22] Thus, knowing how to get rangatahi consistently engaging with politics is crucial in ensuring the future of democracy. Participation in politics is important — as is voting — but it is time to move on and look at reconceptualising the best ways for citizens to participate in political life. Specifically, participation norms could move towards institutionalising alternative forms

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[18] Brendan McCaffrie and Sadiya Akram, "Crisis of Democracy?," *Democratic Theory* 1, no. 2 (2014): 48, doi: 10.3167/dt.2014.010105.; Dalton, Citizens Politics, 41.; Catt, "Children and Young People as Citizens: Participation, Provision and Protection.".
[19] Ibid.
[20] Dalton, *Citizen Politics*, 64.
[21] Catt, "Children and Young People as Citizens: Participation, Provision and Protection."
[22] Ibid.

of participation — such as community involvement, for example — as well as looking to implement practices of deliberative democracy.[23]

Voting does not exist on its own. Political participation can occur in a vast range of ways; voting is merely one of the more institutionalised forms of participation. As Bonner notes,

"…while the act of exercising one's citizenship by marking a ballot paper in the privacy of a voting booth is often taken as the contemporary example of people exercising their responsibilities and rights as citizens in a representative democracy, it cannot be an act of citizenship in the fullest sense of the term…"[24]

When exploring notions of political participation, we cannot do the concept justice by focussing solely on voting. Political scientists Melo and Stockemer note that "indeed, voting may be an incomplete and misleading measure of political engagement and civic awareness."[25] Participation in democracy is more than just voting at elections. As Verba, Nie, and Kim argue, "political participation does not take place only at election time, nor is participation at election time necessarily the most effective means of citizen influence."[26] McCaffrie and Akram pose a similar argument; that mainstream participation literature provides a "limited account of trends in political participation because of its narrow

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[23] Deliberative democracy is a concept championed by political scientist James Fishkin, and focuses on enacting a form of democracy in which citizens vote *and* engage in collective deliberation with each other and politicians. Such practices allow citizens to formulate solutions to social challenges in an informed and reasoned manner. For more information, refer to Van Reybrouck, *Against Elections,* 109.

[24] Kieran Bonner, "Arendt's Citizenship and Citizenship Participating in Disappearing Dublin, in *Acts of Citizenship*, eds. Engin Isin and Greg Nielsen, 137-159 (London: Zed Books, 2008).

[25] Daniela Melo and Daniel Stockemer, "Age and Political Participation in Germany, France, and the UK: A Comparative Analysis," *Comparative European Politics* 12, no. 1 (2014): 38, doi: 10.1057/cep.2012.31.

[26] Sidney Verba, Norman Nie, and Jae-On Kim, *Participation and Political Equality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978), 47.

understanding of politics."[27] They acknowledge that while there has certainly been a decline in traditional forms of participation, alternative participation is on the rise.[28]

It is thus necessary to look at alternative forms of participation — such as community engagement, activism, education, and so on — and what they mean for democracy. This will allow for a more diverse and all-encompassing view of political participation, and ensure that participation in politics is opened up to all, regardless of the privilege they may hold. Verba and Nie argue that priority preferences are unequally communicated when people are unequally active.[29] This idea poses some obvious, and significant, issues with political participation. If norms of participation inherently give voice to privileged groups, then how can the priorities of marginalised demographics be adequately represented? Developing alternative means of participation to increase engagement will be necessary to improve the equality of preference communication. Participation in democracy extends beyond electoral participation. A means of equalising political involvement would be to further institutionalise forms of participation that see high levels of involvement by marginalised demographics.

Current participation analysis predominantly focuses on voting and assumes that those who do not participate in conventional political activities are politically apathetic.[30] However, it is often the case that many of those who do not participate in conventional politics make a conscious decision to remain disengaged. As Van Reybrouck notes, there has been no recent decline in citizens being informed about politics; instead, concern about political issues appears to be growing and people are discussing political issues with friends,

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[27] McCaffrie and Akram, "Crisis of Democracy?," 47.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Sidney Verba and Norman Nie, *Participation in America* (New York, Harper & Row, 1972), 5.
[30] Therese O'Toole, Michael Lister, Dave Marsh, Su Jones, and Alex McDonagh, "Tuning Out or Left Out? Participation and Non-Participation among Young People," *Contemporary Politics* 9, no. 1 (2003): 46, doi: 10.1080/1356977032000072477.

family, and colleagues more than in the past.[31] This suggests, then, that people are aware of politics, but are choosing not to participate. Thus, there is a need to move away from this dominant viewpoint that associates voting and political participation as being, in essence, the same thing. Such a shift in dominant paradigms would widen discourse surrounding political participation, and thus — hopefully — result in a change of participation norms.

As Verba and Nie note, different modes of political participation represent the different ways in which the citizen influences their government.[32] Focusing participation scholarship purely on voting is becoming a misguided and outdated approach to political participation. While there is no doubt that voting is structurally an important and embedded part of democratic systems, there is more to participation than filling out ballot papers every few years. Sociological institutionalism could serve to provide a greater frame of meaning for the idea that there is more to engaging people than getting them to vote every few years. Political scientists Hall and Taylor argue this framework views institutions as "not just as formal rules, procedures or norms, but the symbol systems, cognitive scripts and moral templates that provide the 'frames of meaning' guiding human action."[33] We can thus see institutions — such as communities, perhaps — as a vital guide that prompts citizens to engage in democracy.

To a sociological institutionalist, institutions such as one's community "influence behaviour by providing the cognitive scripts, categories and models that are indispensable for action, not least because without them the world and the behaviour of others cannot be

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[31] Van Reybrouck, *Against Elections*, 4.
[32] Verba and Nie, Participation in America, 102.
[33] Peter Hall and Rosemary Taylor, "Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms," *Political Studies* 44, no. 5 (1996): 947.

interpreted."[34] Breaking this down, the institutions individuals associate themselves with socialise the individual to take action. It could thus be possible, for example, for one's community to provide a worldview that prompts action about an issue that their community faces.[35] Communities are valuable institutions to those who belong to them; they allow for members to create meaning, explore issues that affect them, and seek methods to address these issues.

Another frame of meaning that enables an understanding of political participation is that of forms of capital, as championed by Pierre Bourdieu. While Bourdieu outlines four main forms of capital — social, economic, human, and symbolic — political theorists focus mostly on social capital and its relationship with participation.[36,] Social capital is the "sum of resources that accrue to an individual or group as a result of social connections and relationships."[37] Social capital can be closely linked to political participation. In his influential book *Bowling Alone*, Robert Putnam argues that "declining electoral participation is…the most visible symptom of broader disengagement from community life."[38] Putnam argues that the decline in communities — and thus social capital — has led to greater disengagement with the political system and modes of participation. Social capital refers to the capital "produced through networks and structure of relations between individuals…[that]

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[34] Ibid., 948.

[35] I will further discuss the importance of community in facilitating participation in a later chapter on how LGBTIQ+ people participate in politics.

[36] Pierre Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," in *Cultural Theory: An Anthology,* ed. Imre Szeman and Timothy Kaposy (Oxford: Wiley & Blackwell, 2001) 81. For comprehensive discussions of the different types of capital that Bourdieu identifies and their relationship with political science, see A. Davis' *Forms of Capital and Mobility in the Political Field*, M. Sisiainen's *Two Concepts of Social Capital: Bourdieu vs Putnam*, and D. Swartz's *After Bourdieu: Influence, Critique, Elaboration*.

[37] Bronwyn E. Wood, "Participatory Capital: Bourdieu and Citizenship Education in Diverse School Communities," *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 35, no. 4 (2014): 582, doi: 10.1080/01425692.2014.777209.

[38] Robert Putnam, Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000), 35.

facilitate[s] certain kind of positive actions…"[39] We can thus see social capital as facilitating

positive democratic engagement.

[39] Celine Teney and Laurie Hanquinet, "High Political Participation, High Social Capital? A Relational Analysis of Youth Social Capital and Political Participation," *Social Science Research* 41, no. 1 (2012): 1213, doi: 10.1016/j.ssresearch.2012.03.012.

The current study focuses on young people aged 13-17;[40] a period of life that can be exciting, confusing, transformative, and scary for those experiencing it. In their conceptualisation of youth, Wyn and Woodman state that:

"In order to understand the meaning of youth, we need to take account of, but go beyond, the framing and defining actions of the state. Young people's actions, attitudes, and priorities reveal disjunctures between their lives and the assumptions about youth made by state policies. Policies that govern youth are often incoherent and there are gaps that young people themselves must fill – in doing so they also shape the distinctive and historical meaning of youth."[41]

What they are suggesting is that there is tension between the state's conceptualisation of youth, and young people's conceptualisation of youth. This dichotomy suggests a need to tease out the aforementioned incoherence, in order to create youth focussed policies that adequately cater to their lived experiences. We must, therefore, address these discrepancies. How can we advocate for policies that reflect the lived experiences of young people? We ought to engage them in our reconceptualisation of their political experiences.

While this research focuses on young people aged 13-17 who are not able to vote (yet), they are still incredibly important political actors. As Smith, Lister, Middleton, and Cox suggest: "it is…apparent that a lack of voting rights does not necessarily preclude

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[40] This age bracket was chosen to represent high-school aged young people under the voting age.
[41] Johanna Wyn and Dan Woodman, "Generation, Youth and Social Change in Australia," *Journal of Youth Studies* 9, no. 5 (2006): 497, doi: 10.1080/13676260600805713.

opportunities for active political participation, and young people — including those aged younger than 18 — have been reported to have high levels of participation in campaign and social action groups."[42] This suggests that young people are seeking out ways in which they can express their citizenship and political ideas. These forms of action, however, are not necessarily understood and institutionalised in the ways that voting is. O'Toole, Marsh, and Jones found that many young people:

> "…believed they are excluded from, or marginalised within, mainstream politics because they are young, and this was accompanied by a recurring sense of weak political efficacy. Second, there were a number of concerns and issues that our respondents discussed as being important to them that related quite specifically to their age, or the process of transition from young person to adult that they were experiencing, and there was a marked sense that these issues were inadequately or inappropriately addressed – contributing to a weak sense of political inclusion."[43]

Young people are routinely excluded from institutionalised forms of political life. They are excluded from decision-making processes due to their age, poorly represented at all levels of politics, rarely consulted with in regards to policy, and are rarely encouraged to participate, or taught how to participate.[44]

This indicates a need to reconceptualise how they are performing their citizenship as young people. It is imperative to study how young people are engaging in civic life, as

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[42] Noel Smith, Ruth Lister, Sue Middleton, and Lynne Cox, "Young People as Real Citizens: Towards an Inclusionary Understanding of Citizenship," *Journal of Youth Studies* 8, no. 4 (2005): 428, doi: 10.1080/13676260500431743.

[43] O'Toole, Marsh, and Jones, "Political Literacy Cuts Both Ways," 355.

[44] Ibid., 356.

teenagers are not fundamentally removed from the socio-political sphere. The parameters that are stipulated by the inherently exclusionary conception of institutionalised political activity serve to alienate youth. In spite of this, it is possible to move beyond these limitations and advance a research agenda that utilises these often under-examined modes of participation that youth are engaging in. Political scientists need to look at how young people are engaging in politics as they are our future. To understand the possibilities of future changes to political engagement, we need to understand what motivates and drives these young people. Understanding what matters to them, their preconceived notions about political participation, and so on, will allow for us to recognise how we can engage them in the political system throughout the rest of their lives. This will allow those of us who are interested in political participation to understand how to educate a generation of upcoming political actors, and ensure that we have a system that will represent them.

As has been discussed, political participation is an important aspect of political science, and scholars are increasingly looking at on the ways in which younger generations are participating. Work from Fisher suggests there is a general consensus that young people are "more selfish and less collectively minded than any previous generation,"[45] meaning they have lower levels of political participation. There are a number of reasons given as to why this is so, ranging from; the fading of public life, increasing individualism, political climate, a lack of education, lack of representation, social and cultural capital, and so forth. To paint all young people in such a way fails to account for the diversity of political actions and viewpoints of young people. There is, of course, merit in what these multitude of authors are

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[45] Dana Fisher, "Youth Political Participation: Bridging Activism and Electoral Politics," *Annual Review of Sociology* 38, no. 1 (2012): 120, doi: 10.1146/annurev-soc-071811-145438.

saying. However, it is necessary to also look to the ways in which young people do participate.

Cohen argues that youth-hood is "simultaneously constituted as a place and time of marginality and powerlessness…"[46] Being a young person is fraught with contradictions and frustrations. This is no different when it comes to political participation. Throughout their school years, young people are often told by family and friends that they are too young to understand or participate in politics. This is, until their 18th birthday, at which they are old enough to vote. They are then expected to immediately be interested in, and knowledgeable about, politics. Instead, we find increasingly low turnout rates amongst young voters.[47] Comparative theorists Daniela Melo and Daniel Stockemer note that a significant amount of literature suggests that "youth participation can be understood as a battle for societal inclusion."[48] Young people expend significant amounts of time and energy fighting for inclusion, so it makes sense that this shapes the way they participate in politics.

The ways in which young people are engaging in politics is changing, so our conceptualisation of political participation must also change with it. Current norms in literature suggest that young people do not care about politics and engaging in civic life.[49] This idea needs to be explored, as well as the ways in which we can address why this appears

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[46] Philip Cohen, Rethinking the Youth Question: Education, Labour and Cultural Studies (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1997), 225.

[47] The voting rates of young people have been discussed earlier in the section on political participation.

[48] *Comparative European Politics* 12, no. 1 (2014): 37, doi: 10.1057/cep.2012.31. For more on this, look to Russel Dalton's *Citizen Politics*, as quoted throughout this thesis, which discusses the idea that politics is a low-level priority for young people.

[49] For discussions of the supposed political apathy and indifference of youth, refer to; William Damon, "To Not Fade Away: Restoring Civil Identity Among the Young." In *Making Good Citizens: Education and Civil Society*, edited by D. Ravitch and J. Viteritii (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001); Mark Bauerlein, *The Dumbest Generation: How the Digital Age Stupefies Young Americans and Jeopardizes Our Future (Or, Don't Trust Anyone under 30)*, (New York: Tarcher, 2008) and; Jean Twenge and W. Keith Campbell, *the Narcissim Epidemic: Living in the Age of Entitlement*, (New York: Free Press, 2010).

to be so. Theorists such as Melo and Stockemer have looked at how and why young people are so apparently disinterested, and how we can engage them in meaningful political action. They argue that while young people are voting at more infrequent rates than was the norm in previous decades, young people are now engaged in forms of direct action.[50] Such a change indicates that it is necessary to mould norms of participation to better suit young people, rather than moulding young people to fit accepted norms of political participation. Melo and Stockemer propose that:

"… it is plausible with the fulfilment of material needs and the extension of political rights in post-modern societies, the politically active youth is likely to seek self-realisation and the advancement of their goals through unconventional participation."[51]

So, to adequately conceptualise youth participation, we must look at alternative — and more inclusive — modes of political participation. The empirical research component of this thesis will thus explore what modes of participation queer rangatahi are engaging in, and it will also seek to determine how these young people view their efficacy as political actors. The result of this, hopefully, will be to gain insights into what civic engagement means to queer youth.

Perhaps one of the most important reasons as to why young people are not participating is that they are not visibly represented, and are often looked down on by older people for not understanding the intricacies of a political system. This, then, suggests a need to treat young people as political actors who are perceptive and understand the issues that are

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[50] Melo and Stockemer, "Age and Political Participation in Germany, France, and the UK: A Comparative Analysis," 49.
[51] Ibid.

important to them. Perhaps, then, it would be beneficial to look to a system that allows them to participate no matter their knowledge base. O'Toole, Lister, and Jones found that young people commonly felt that

> "…young people's perspectives and concerns needed to be represented and listened to – either because young people had experience of the issues that affected them, or because they were able to understand their peer group better than adults, or because they were a source of fresh ideas and solutions."[52]

Viewing young people as ignorant of politics does not help to foster a young generation of political actors. It is clear that young peopledo have an understanding of how they can contribute to politics, and are increasingly frustrated at adult-centric views of political participation. Lucia Rabello de Castro argues that children and youth's worlds "are not fundamentally separate from politics, and despite their formal exclusion from the institutionalised political domain, they do participate politically."[53] She suggests that politically subjective dispositions can be developed in young people through their creation of discussion spaces and action concerning common interests that will improve their own lives and their environment.[54] This suggests a need for a way to conceptualise the effectiveness of youth engagement projects.

Hart's Ladder of Participation is a model frequently used to assess the quality of young people's participation in various projects and events. It is a model which can neatly be

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[52] O'Toole, Marsh, and Jones, Political Literacy Cuts Both Ways: The Politics of Non-participation among Young People," 356.
[53] Lucia Rabello de Castro, "Political Participation in the School Context: Youths' Experiences in Collective Action," *Children, Youth and Environments* 17, no. 2 (2007): 94, accessed June 9, 2016, http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7721/chilyoutenvi.17.2.0093.
[54] Ibid.

applied to discussions of how young people participate in politics. The Ministry of Youth Development uses the Ladder of Participation, and outlines the eight rungs of it as being a useful tool for organisations to use when engaging with young people. From bottom to top, the rungs are; manipulation, decoration, tokenism, young people assigned but informed, young people are consulted and informed, adult-initiated shared decisions with young people, young people lead and initiate action, and young people and adults share decision-making.[55] This is a valuable lens through which we can view youth participation. It provides a means to understand what forms of participation are both useful and beneficial to young people.

Conceptualising youth citizenship is also integral to perceiving youth participation. Much citizenship literature focuses on citizens' responsibilities *to* the state, a lens which asserts that a lack of citizenship 'skills' can be traced to a dearth of 'civic knowledge.'[56] Instead, as Kennelly and Dillabough argue, citizenship should be "…understood as much more than an instrumental political term. Rather, it should be seen as both a cultural and symbolic marker of social division…"[57] This viewpoint posits that citizenship extends beyond the purely political and, rather, encapsulates the cultural and social lived experiences of humans. This, in turn, becomes political; citizenship and state membership are thus held together by a common world and set of worldly institutions.[58]

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[55] "Models of Youth Participation," *Ministry of Youth Development*, accessed June 9, 2016, http://www.myd.govt.nz/working-with-young-people/youth-participation-in-decision-making/youth-participation-models.html.

[56] Jacqueline Kennelly and Jo-Anne Dillabough, "Young People Mobilising the Language of Citizenship: Struggles for Classification and New Meaning in an Uncertain World," *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 29, no. 5 (2008): 496, doi: 10.1080/01425690802263643.

[57] Ibid., 505.

[58] Kieran Bonner, "Arendt's Citizenship and Citizenship Participating in Disappearing Dublin, in *Acts of Citizenship*, eds. Engin Isin and Greg Nielsen, 137-159 (London: Zed Books, 2008).; Kennelly and Dillabough, "Young people Mobilising the Language of Citizenship," 496.

Accordingly, youth citizenship needs to be understood in the context of their everyday — not just in the context of public and formal spaces.[59] This allows us to refocus our attention on "…the local, the micro, and the mundane and also on the intersection of these spaces with the global, the macro, and the political."[60] Such a focus results in a conceptualisation of youth citizenship that moves beyond a focus on the public sphere and thus gives young people a greater amount of freedom to explore how the spaces they have access to are political, and what that could mean for them.

Citizenship education is important in fostering political participation among young people; it encourages them to understand why people engage in political and civic life, and to find the means to do so. Smith, Lister, Middleton, and Cox claim the argument that suggests young people are not citizens because they are not seen as citizens is unhelpful.[61] This is, they argue, because the ways in which young people's citizenship status is viewed will have an impact on how they are represented and treated in daily life, which in turn influenced their self-identities and world views.[62] Thus, teachings about citizenship can enable rangatahi to conceptualise their role in the political sphere. Citizenship education is becoming an increasing focus of the Aotearoa New Zealand education system, with citizenship attitudes expressed throughout the guiding principles of the curriculum.[63] The New Zealand Curriculum encourages young people to engage in their communities, become international

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[59] Bronwyn E. Wood, "A Genealogy of the 'Everyday' Within Young People's Citizenship Studies," in *Politics, Citizenship, and Rights,* eds. Kirsi Kallio, Sarah Mills, and Tracey Skelton, 392 (Singapore: Springer Singapore, 2016).

[60] Ibid., 394.

[61] Smith, Lister, Middleton, and Cox, "Young People as Real Citizens: Towards an Inclusionary Understanding of Citizenship," 429.

[62] Ibid.

[63] Bronwyn E. Wood, "Participatory Capital: Bourdieu and Citizenship Education in Diverse School Communities," *British Journal of Sociology of Education* 35, no. 4 (2014): 578-579, doi: 10.1080/01425692.2014.777209.

citizens, and contribute to the wellbeing of Aotearoa New Zealand.[64] While these are important goals to have embedded in a national curriculum, there are a number of questions that arise from this. For example; how are schools implementing these goals?; Are efforts to engage young people adult-centric and tokenistic?; and finally, how do these goals account for diversity and differing views on what constitutes the ideal citizen?. As Wood has noted, citizenship is not a neutral concept.[65] In many Western nations — Aotearoa New Zealand too — citizenship is intertwined with individualism and neoliberal values.[66] What this means, essentially, is that our neoliberal state views active citizenship as participation that allows individuals to develop the ability to contribute to global economies.[67] In teaching citizenship in such a way, we are educating young people to focus their political action more on individual levels, which does not account for the alternative, community based, ways in which people often engage in politics and civic life. Creating and teaching citizenship in our young people is imperative in engaging them with the political sphere. Active citizens are then active in the political sphere, so how can we enable this? As noted earlier, Hart's Ladder of Participation is a means through which we can address this. By using this framework in teaching rangatahi about political participation and citizenship, we can engage them in a way that is meaningful, long lasting, and moves beyond the dominant neoliberal view of citizenship. Much citizenship education and engagement in Aotearoa New Zealand is tokenistic and adult-oriented. It treats adolescents as adults in training, not as their own, autonomous, beings. It also focusses on individual and economic conceptions of citizenship.

However, there is more to citizenship than learning how to contribute to an economy. This neoliberal model of citizenship is prone to further marginalising minority youth. Wood

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[64] Ministry of Education, *The New Zealand Curriculum* (Wellington: Learning Media Ltd, 2007), 8-10.
[65] Wood, "Participatory Capital: Bourdieu and Citizenship Education in Diverse School Communities," 579.
[66] Ibid., 580.
[67] Ibid.

argues that these narratives of citizenship "assert an abstract notion of belonging that does little to understand or engage with the highly variegated ways that citizenship is both understood and handled by young people in different communities…"[68] Thus, political participation and citizenship norms need to be aware of underlying biases that can serve to marginalise different groups. Kennelly and Dillabough note that efforts to increase youth participation focus on attempts to get youth 'civically engaged,' which "locates the problem of democratic disengagement within young people themselves."[69] In order to address this, strategic efforts to construct more inclusive political environments must be undertaken.[70] Establishing inclusive political environments will not just benefit youth; it will also benefit different identity groups, and those groups who are marginalised within participation norms and society as a whole.

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[68] Ibid., 581.
[69] Kennelly and Dillabough, "Young People Mobilising the Language of Citizenship," 494.
[70] Ibid.

Much of the literature on young people participating in politics does not account for active minority youth, such as LGBTIQ+ identifying young people. Growing up as part of a minority group is inherently political. It is political because of the sheer concept of being a minority; your identity and beliefs are quashed by the norms of your society, so to simply survive is a political act. Thus, navigating these experiences results in a political group of young people who are often forgotten about in mainstream political — and youth — participation literature.

An example of the inherent political nature of minority group belonging is the first school-based LGBTIQ+ support group. Founded in 1972, students at New York City's George Washington High School created a group that provided a safe, and supportive, environment within their heteronormative school. This occurred in the era of the Stonewall Riots; a pivotal, early, moment for the fight for LGBTIQ+ equality and inclusion. As Johnson notes, "these students utilised a definitively political orientation in their activism for participation in their school community and for safer schools where they could be free from both physical and psychological harm."[71] These students negotiated their agency and used their school as a site of activism. The students themselves acknowledged the inherent politicisation of this act in a pamphlet they wrote about how the group began:

"To maintain our rights and dignity, we must assert ourselves and our very being! This is political! The very nature of coming out not only demands that we become

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[71] Dominique Johnson, "This is Political!: Negotiating the Legacies of the First School-Based Gay Youth Group," *Children, Youth and Environments* 17, no. 2 (2007): 381, accessed June 9, 2016, http://www.jstor.org/stable/10.7721/chilyoutenvi.17.2.0380.

political, but there is no other choice…And since the high school is a microcosm of society in general, gay students are expected to keep their self-identity buried under the unfounded and senseless prejudices of their "authorities" and prejudices which are based upon backward social, political, and economic ideas."[72]

These young people knew how important it was to acknowledge their politicisation as marginalised young people. This — brief — historical conceptualisation of the LGBTIQ+ movement shows the importance of young people working in tandem with adults. Bringing this closer to home, it is important to look at the history of LGBTIQ+ inclusion in Aotearoa New Zealand. To be able to fully understand the political participation of those in the LGBTIQ+ community, we must first look at the history of the social movement that fought for the community's equal rights. This will provide context to understanding the relationship between queer identities and political action in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The LGBTIQ+ equal rights movement began in the mid 1960's in Aotearoa New Zealand, when men began to speak out about same-sex attraction.[73] Then, in 1972, the queer liberation movement properly sprang to life at the hands of academic and activist Ngahuia Te Awekotuku.[74] It was not until 1985 that the Homosexual Law Reform Bill was introduced to parliament, passing into law.[75] The movement has continued to fight for de-stigmatisation, and in 2013 the Marriage Amendment Act passed into law.[76] While this was an important moment for the community, there is still a significant number of issues preventing them from

[72] Ibid., 382.
[73] Chris Brickell, *Mates and Lovers* (Auckland: Random House New Zealand, 2008), 283.
[74] Ibid., 290-294.
[75] Ibid., 352.
[76] *One News*, "MPs Vote to Legalise Same-Sex Marriage," April 17, 2013.

reaching true equality.[77] This movement, while a very long one, is also hopeful. It shows us the power of persistence in creating positive social change. Alongside this, it shows that collective action and wider community involvement are integral in the community's push for equal rights and meaningful political change. As Paulo Freire notes in his powerful *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, "they [oppressed groups] will not gain this liberation by chance but through the praxis of their quest for it, through their recognition of the necessity to fight for it."[78] Understanding the community's fight is important in understanding their wider place in the public realm.

While very little is known specifically about the ways in which queer youth in Aotearoa New Zealand participate in politics, there is a small selection of research projects that have focused on the general wellbeing and everyday outcomes of Aotearoa New Zealand's queer youth. For example, Auckland University's *Youth 2000* reports have consistently provided an overview of how LGBTIQ+ youth experience their school and community lives, as well as their health outcomes.[79] The most recent of these, *Youth 2012*, provided a comprehensive and clear insight into the life of queer New Zealanders. The report found that in 2012, the majority of queer students had 'come out' to their friends and whānau, [80] compared to the 2001 results that had found only roughly one third of queer students had 'come out.'[81] These findings suggest queer students are becoming increasingly comfortable

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[77] Fraser, "Queerly Beloved," 80-81.

[78] Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, trans. Myra Beugman Rames (New York: Continuum, 1983), 29.

[79] Refer to the *Youth 2001, Youth 2007,* and *Youth 2012* reports for more information about the purpose of the project and its findings.

[80] Whānau is a te reo Māori phrase that can be loosely translated to mean extended family.

[81] T. Clark, et al., "Young People Attracted to the Same Sex or Both Sexes: Findings from the Youth '12 National Youth Health and Wellbeing Survey," *The University Of Auckland,* accessed May 15, 2016, https://www.fmhs.auckland.ac.nz/assets/fmhs/faculty/ahrg/docs/Youth'12%20Young%20People%20Attracted%20to%20the%20Same%20or%20Both%20Sexes%20Report.pdf.

with being open about their sex, sexual orientation, and gender identities; that they feel as though they have a place to belong in society.

The report also found that queer youth reported less positive relationships with their families than non-queer youth, that they have trouble accessing healthcare, and are more likely than non-queer youth to seek help for emotional worries. [82] Furthermore, queer youth in Aotearoa New Zealand are increasingly experiencing depressive symptoms, and have consistently reported higher rates of depression, suicide attempts, and self-harm when compared to non-queer youth.[83] Following on from this, queer youth had overwhelmingly felt unsafe in their schools at some point, and there had been no improvement in bullying at schools since 2001.[84] Overall, the *Youth 2000* reports have provided incredibly valuable insights into the health and wellbeing of queer youth in Aotearoa New Zealand. However, these studies are some of the only empirical research in Aotearoa New Zealand that looks at the lives and experiences of queer youth. LGBTIQ+ peoples are becoming a much more visible and accepted group, but academic research does not quite reflect this just yet.

The queer community has grown and increased visibility, and is now more than just a social movement.[85] They are a community, a whānau, and an increasingly recognised group in society. The reach of the community extends far and wide, and the community fights for the rights and inclusion of its members across the world. However, the community still faces social exclusion. Social exclusion is a term used "for what can happen when people or areas suffer from a combination of linked problems such as unemployment, poor skills, low

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[82] Ibid.
[83] Ibid.
[84] Ibid.
[85] Fraser, "Queerly Beloved," 61-66.

incomes, poor housing, high crime environment, bad health and family breakdown."[86] Social exclusion scholars Claypool and Bernstein argue that those who face social exclusion are adaptive in that they frequently respond by seeking out likeminded people and form connections with them.[87] LGBTIQ+ peoples are undeniably an excluded group across the globe, so this theory can easily be applied to their experiences.[88] It is perhaps becoming less of a fact that queer folk are an excluded group in all nations, but it is imperative to remember that while a number of the community are becoming 'accepted' by wider society, it is no excuse to ignore the adversities that many of them still face.[89] While social exclusion is not something anyone should have to go through, there is evidence to suggest that social exclusion is not all bad. Excluded individuals appear to "possess a set of social-perceptual and social-cognitive skills that might aid in finding promising re-affiliation partners."[90] The queer community, then, seek each other out in the face of social exclusion.

The 2016 mass-shooting of 49 LGBTIQ+ people of colour in Florida, America, showed the size of the queer community.[91] The horrific incident saw support pour in from across the world. LGBTIQ+ communities across the globe held candlelight vigils to honour the memory of their family in Florida, and raised money to support those affected.[92] It was made clear that the community stands with its global whānau, and will support them in any way possible. This shows the extent of the community, as well as members' ability to seek

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[86] Annie Abello, Rebecca Cassells, Anne Daly, Gabriela D'Souza, and Riyana Miranti, "Youth Social Exclusion in Australian Communities: A New Index," *Social Indicators Research* 128, no. 2 (2016): 637, doi: 10.1007/s11205-015-1048-9.

[87] Heather Claypool and Michael Bernstein, "Social Exclusion and Stereotyping: Why and When Exclusion Fosters Individuation of Others," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 106, no. 4 (2014): 571, doi: 10.1037/a0035621.

[88] Fraser, "Queerly Beloved."

[89] For more information regarding the depth and breadth of adversitities the queer community still faces, refer to Brodie Fraser, "Queerly Beloved: Moving Beyond Marriage Equality," *Counterfutures* 2, (2016).

[90] Claypool and Bernstein, "Social Exclusion and Stereotyping," 571.

[91] Melanie Eversley, "Orlando Releases 911 Tapes from Pulse Nightclub Shooting," *USA Today*, September 1, 2016.

[92] Ibid.

out supportive networks. Community is, obviously, incredibly important to LGBTIQ+ peoples. Many do not have supportive communities within their own families, neighbourhoods, schools, and/or religions, and therefore seek each other out and create communities amongst themselves. The ties they make in their communities are, without hyperbole, what keeps many of them alive. In a world that is so often unkind and violent towards the community, it is important that they have each other in times of need. The community they have created allows them to be themselves, explore their identity, and simply live. Howarth argues that "community is not a latent, abstract concept; instead, we find *communities* that give our daily practices, our political differences and our understanding of ourselves significance."[93] Community enables queer folks to make meaning of an often-oppressive society. Sullivan posits that community is a sense of commonality and a network of social relations and emotional connections that have a shared understanding and sense of obligation to each other.[94] For LGBTIQ+ identifying folk, community is imagined as a safe and cosy place.[95] When existing in a world that can be incredibly hostile to queer folks, they seek out communities as a source of strength, a home, and a safe place where they can connect with the shared experiences of their peers.[96] Community is, clearly, invaluable to LGBTIQ+ identifying people.

Communitarianism is a beneficial framework through which we can view the political participation of queer people; community engagement is an important form of civic engagement. Ball argues that communities require "the state [to] cultivate certain values, such as civic virtue, self-respect, and social responsibility, which encourages individuals to

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[93] Caroline Howarth, "Towards a Social Psychology of Community: A Social Representations Perspective," *Journal for the Social Theory of Behaviour* 31, no. 2 (2001): 225, doi: 10.1111/1468-5914.00155.
[94] Nikki Sullivan, *A Critical Introduction to Queer Theory* (New York: New York University Press, 2003), 136.
[95] Ibid., 137.
[96] Ibid.

participate actively in their own communities…"[97] Communitarianism is a theory which challenges the liberal notion of the individual, and instead argues that the liberal state constructs, and actively promotes, a framework that places individual freedom atop normative hierarchies.[98] Essentially, the constant promotion of individualism is not morally neutral and should be challenged as a way of life, and as a framework of approaching societal issues. As its name suggests, communitarianism advocates for communities large and small as means through which we shape our frames of reference and action.

Thus, it could be suggested, it is possible for LGBTIQ+ peoples to frame their references of participation through community ties. This links with ideas of sociological institutionalism. Communities can be seen as informal institutions that provide us with frames of meanings and a lens through which we can view society.[99] Communitarianism can easily be applied to queer theory and discussions regarding the political participation of queer people. Communitarianism strives to promote "greater civic virtue and participation by citizens in their own self-government."[100] It is argued, from the communitarian perspective, that chosen communities provide members of the LGBTIQ+ community with the "human ties and bonds that can help them flourish and lead lives of pride and dignity."[101] Ball argues that it is these communities that play the most significant role in the formation of queer identity.[102]

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[97] Carlos Ball, "Communitarianism and Gay Rights," *Cornell Law Review* 85, no. 2 (2000): 445, accessed May 6, 2016,
http://heinonline.org/HOL/Page?public=false&handle=hein.journals/clqv85&collection=journals&id=451.
[98] Ibid.
[99] Peter Hall and Rosemary Taylor, "Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms," *Political Studies* 44, no. 5 (1996): 947.
[100] Ball, "Communitarianism and Gay Rights," 449.
[101] Ibid., 448.
[102] Ibid.

So, then, why is communitarianism so important in these discussions? Ball suggests that communitarianism believes a "vision of individuals inextricably linked to their communities is consistent with the descriptive reality of most people's lives and appropriate as an ideal to which a theory of political morality and democracy should aspire."[103] Ball eloquently describes the necessity of community for queer folks; "because of the hostility that emanates from the broader society, a gay or lesbian individual has extreme difficulties attaining true freedom and dignity by remaining isolated from gay and lesbian communities."[104] Communities can be seen to constitute sexuality as a common experience, rather than a purely individual identity. This makes sense for a minority group; while their identities ultimately belong to themselves, it is important that the community recognises the common experiences of being queer. In doing so, they can connect with each other and seek out ways to address the common discrimination they face. This is a means to unite queer folks, and to increase participation. In coming together and participating, they can break down oppressive structures. It should be noted that the central goal of forming communities is not an increase in political participation. Participation is merely a nice by-product. The goal of forming communities is to create vital human connections that keep queer folks alive and thriving.

Community engagement is an integral facet of the encouragement of political participation among young people. Community ties give them the social and human capital needed to be able to explore political and civic life. Political scientist Dana Fisher has found that community-based youth organisations represent potentially powerful settings for

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[103] Ibid., 457.
[104] Ibid., 468.

activism among marginalised, urban, youth.[105] So perhaps, then, our young queer people are not only finding themselves in the safe spaces created by LGBTIQ+ centric community organisations, but they are also developing as meaningful political actors. This would suggest that community organisations aiming to create safe spaces for young LGBTIQ+ people do more than just that. They are also fostering a generation of politically active and aware young people. It is remarkable that these organisations can be so powerful purely in their goal to simply provide safe spaces for marginalised youth to just be.

Fisher also argues that these community organisations "expose individuals to social networks of activists that facilitate longer-term engagement and retention."[106] This would suggest that the humble support group is incredibly important on a number of levels. Not only do they provide incredibly valuable and necessary support for vulnerable young people, but they are also educating a generation of young people about how to be political and civic actors. By giving young people the space to explore their identities with like-minded people, community groups are also giving young LGBTIQ+ people the space to explore their politics. Identity politics is becoming increasingly important in the formal political sphere. It makes sense, then, that identity focused community groups are a site of creation for political activity for many young people.

Identity politics is becoming an increasingly important aspect of political life. Wrenn notes that "identity politics…is a neutral phrase that suggests movement against the established state which serves in the current, historical context, the interests of neoliberalism

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[105] Dana Fisher, "Youth Political Participation: Bridging Activism and Electoral Politics," *Annual Review of Sociology* 38, no. 1 (2012): 122, doi: 10.1146/annurev-soc-071811-145438.
[106] Ibid.

to the neglect of its citizens."[107] Identity politics is being used more and more as a means to rail against the neoliberal identity, and find common political ground outside of it. O'Toole and Gale found that the rise of identity politics and new social movements have greatly altered the political terrain on which minority groups have mobilised.[108] They note that these politics are now being expressed in a more personalised, *ad hoc*, form of activism.[109] Identity politics is clearly changing the ways in which marginalised demographics are participating in political life. Morgan and Warren found that for Indigenous youth in Australia, identification is a process these youth use "…by which particular identity positions come to achieve a subjective centrality, to operate as 'master codes' in shaping social actors and their public roles at particular moments."[110] Identification, they argue, requires "…a performance of identity work in the fields of culture or politics."[111] Identity politics can thus be seen as a subversive performance that marginalised young people engage in.

O'Toole and Gale found that "emergent political subjectivities, new grammars of action and changing forms of socio-political identification"[112] are becoming increasingly significant. They note, however, that these newer modes of political identification and participation do not entirely override older forms of action — rather, they can co-exist with them.[113] In other words, new grammars of political action and identity have not replaced our traditional conceptualisations of the political, they are, instead, modernising how we view political participation. There is, then, plenty of scope for the old and new to intersect. Thus,

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[107] Mary Wrenn, "Identity, Identity Politics, and Neoliberalism," *Panoeconomicus* 4, (2014): 511, doi: 10.2298/PAN1404503W.

[108] Therese O'Toole and Richard Gale, "Contemporary Grammars of Political Action among Ethnic Minority Young Activists," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 33, no. 1 (2010): 128, doi: 10.1080/01419870903118122.

[109] Ibid.

[110] George Morgan and Andrew Warren, "Aboriginal Youth, Hip Hop and the Politics of Identification," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 34, no. 6 (2011): 926, doi: 10.1080/01419870.2010.517323.

[111] Ibid.

[112] O'Toole and Gale, "Contemporary Grammars of Political Action among Ethnic Minority Young Activists," 129.

[113] Ibid.

O'Toole and Gale argue, "…declining participation in key institutions of representative democracy is not evidence of political apathy *per se*, but potentially indicative of wider social and political changes."[114] Again, this stresses the importance of researching and understanding just how participation norms are evolving. Furthermore, these authors note, ethnic minority groups are far more likely to engage in alternative forms of participation, and within social movements, "as a consequence of exclusionary norms and practices within mainstream political arenas."[115] We can thus see that the normative/formal sphere of political participation excludes minority groups. This suggests an intersection between the theories of social exclusion and identity politics, and indicates a need to research the intersections of exclusion, identity, and participation — such as queer identities and political participation. In doing so, researchers will be able to modernise our conceptions of participation, which has the potential to result in new norms of engagement and participation.

Verba, Schlozman, and Brady argued that affluence and activity go together.[116] Numerous studies have shown that the queer community faces increased levels of poverty and homelessness in relation to their heterosexual and cisgender counterparts.[117] LGBTIQ+ peoples are systematically forced into poverty by a society that deems them to be deviating from the norm.[118] For example, the community consistently faces job denial and workplace harassment, extraordinary healthcare costs for life-saving gender reassignment surgery, and

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[114] Ibid., 131.

[115] Ibid., 132.

[116] Sidney Verba, Kay Schlozman, and Henry Brady, *Voice and Equality: Civic Voluntarism in American Politics* (London: Harvard University Press, 1995), 189.

[117] D. Ho, et al., "Bias in the Workplace," *The Williams Institute,* accessed May 15, 2016, http://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/Badgett-Sears-Lau-Ho-Bias-in-the-Workplace-Jun-2007.pdf.; J. Grant, L. Mottet, and J. Tanis, "Injustice at Every Turn: A Report Of The National Transgender Discrimination Survey," *National Gay and Lesbian Task Force*, accessed May 15, 2016, http://www.thetaskforce.org/static_html/downloads/reports/reports/ntds_full.pdf.

[118] Fraser, "Queerly Beloved: Moving Beyond Marriage Equality," 70-73.

high levels of homelessness, amongst others.[119] Therefore, if we take this suggestion — that affluence and activity go hand-in-hand — to be true for all groups of society, LGBTIQ+ people would thus be less likely to participate in politics. However, this does not necessarily hold true. Auckland University's *Youth 2000* reports have consistently found that LGBTIQ+ identifying young people in Aotearoa New Zealand are more likely to engage in volunteering than their cisgender and heterosexual counterparts.[120] While affluence can certainly be seen to relate to the ways in which people traditionally engage in politics, it may have less relevance to more alternative forms of participation.

As McFarland and Thomas argue, "it is not enough simply to possess reserves of experience and capital. To be of value, they [young people] need to be activated."[121] This can be by way of volunteering. Fisher found that those who volunteer in their youth are more likely to continue to volunteer throughout their life.[122] So, if young LGBTIQ+ peoples are volunteering at higher levels in their youth, one can infer that this will continue right throughout their lives. Volunteering is inherently political; even the act of offering up one's time to an organisation, for free, is a subversive and political act. As Eliasoph argues, "…pretending there is a neutral realm for "volunteering" that can be entirely separate from "politics" is a mistake."[123] The two are inherently intertwined. Statistics New Zealand found that — in 1999 at least — people spend "more time in unpaid work than they do in market

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[119] Ho et al., "Bias in the Workplace."; Heather du Plessis-Allan, "'Absolutely Nuts': Health Minister Slams Labour's Free Sex-Change Surgery Idea," *One News,* May 19, 2015.; Grant, Mottet, and Tanis, "Injustice at Every Turn."

[120] Clark, et al., "Young People Attracted To The Same Sex or Both Sexes: Findings From The Youth '12 National Youth Health And Wellbeing Survey."; F.V. Rossen, et al., "Youth '07 The Health and Wellbeing of Secondary School Students in New Zealand: Results for Young People Attracted to the Same or Both Sexes," *The University Of Auckland*, accessed May 15, 2016, https://www.fmhs.auckland.ac.nz/assets/fmhs/faculty/ahrg/docs/2007-samesex-report-web-02.pdf.

[121] Daniel A McFarland and Reuben J Thomas, "Bowling Young: How Youth Voluntary Associations Influence Adult Political Participation," *American Sociological Review* 71, no. 3 (2006): 403, accessed July 24, 2016, http://www.jstor.org.helicon.vuw.ac.nz/stable/pdf/30038997.pdf.

[122] Fisher, "Youth Political Participation: Bridging Activism and Electoral Politics," 122.

[123] Nina Eliasoph, *The Politics of Volunteering* (Cambridge: Polity, 2013), 43.

work."[124] This indicates that volunteering has a significant social value, and is a means through which young people can participate in civic life.

Navigating adolescence can be a confusing and emotional time for many young people. There can be a lot of pressure placed on our young people to formulate opinions and different worldviews, and plans for their future, as well as trying to navigate their identity and find a community of people to immerse themselves in. This is doubly so for minority youth. Navigating adolescence and a marginalised identity can be a challenging time for many young people. This is where the importance of community comes in to play. In having a community to support them, young people are able to explore their identities, formulate opinions in safe spaces, and expand their worldview.

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[124] Statistics New Zealand, *Measuring Unpaid Work in New Zealand 1999* (Wellington: Statistics New Zealand, 2001), 11.

Methodology

In order to answer my research questions, I organised a survey amongst high school aged LGBTIQ+ identifying youth in the Wellington region.[125] Surveys were the best method to gain the information that this research was seeking. I considered the possibility of conducting interviews with young LGBTIQ+ students in the Wellington region, however I decided against this. The primary reason for this decision was that a quantitative approach will be best to undertake the initial exploration of the intersections of political participation, youth participation, and queer politics. As there is very little research about the intersections of the three, a quantitative study allowed me to begin to explore these intersections. Quantitative measures enabled me to draw conclusions that could easily be tested on larger sample sizes. Quantitative analysis allows for the researcher to define their scope broadly and make generalisations.[126] Such research allowed for me to explore what factors influence participants' responses across the queer community.[127] Essentially, this means the research explored if the youth in the LGBTIQ+ community are political actors, and inferred whether or not their sexuality or gender orientation was an influencing or associated factor behind them becoming engaged in political life.

I gathered data to test the hypotheses of my thesis using an anonymous electronic survey. I chose a survey as the best method for three main reasons. Firstly, my hypotheses were designed to be tested using quantitative data. My main hypotheses involved testing the relationship between personal and political orientation. My survey design allowed me to

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[125] A full list of the research questions this thesis seeks to explore can be found in the introductory remarks.
[126] James Mahoney and Gary Goertz, "A Tale of Two Cultures: Contrasting Quantitative and Qualitative Research," *Political Analysis* 14 (2006): 230, doi: 10.1093/pan/mpj017.
[127] Ibid.

analyse the correlation between these across a large survey group and thus make a generalisation about the correlation between politics and identity in the queer youth population. Secondly, as my research centred around participation, a simple-to-propagate survey tool would encourage participation from more young people than a qualitative data-collection method could. Thirdly, a survey tool was easy to anonymise in a way that an interview would not be. Ethics approval for the survey was granted on August 8, 2016, reference number 22972. The survey was open for responses from August 10, 2016, through to November 10, 2016.

I decided to use surveys to collect data because I felt that I would gain better data if the information was collected anonymously. It can take a lot of time to build trust with vulnerable young people. Thus, if I had conducted interviews with them it would be unlikely that I would have been able to spend enough time building up a level of trust needed for them to open up to me. Interviews would have meant that the young people I engaged with could have become uncomfortable during interviews, due to the sensitive nature of identity and politics. Surveys were a way of getting around this; it is often easier for young people to share information anonymously, and it was easier for them to opt out being part of the research. However, one of the drawbacks of surveys was that young people might not have felt comfortable filling it out on home computers, where their parents could have been watching or looking at their browsing history. This had the potential to put closeted youth in unsafe situations. To combat this, I also took hard copies of the survey around to youth organisations, community groups, and school-based support groups.

One of the main challenges of this research was finding participants who were able and willing to engage with the research. Auckland University's *Youth '12* report found that

roughly 4% of high-school aged young people identified as queer, and a further 4% either were unsure, or not attracted to any genders.[128] The queer community in Wellington is relatively small — as is to be expected with minority demographics — and the rangatahi in the community are often closeted and do not feel safe discussing their identities. However, through relationships with community organisations and youth workers I was able to access large numbers of young people in the community.

In order to reach as many young people as possible, I sent the survey to a wide range of organisations and people in the Wellington region. Details of the survey were shared with all high schools in the region, youth health providers, religious youth groups, local government, Members of Parliament, queer support organisations, and youth groups such as Wellington Young Feminists.[129] This was done via social media, email, and face-to-face meetings. The surveys were sent with a brief letter that explained the purpose of this research, and asked recipients to distribute the survey.[130] I also attached a copy of a more comprehensive information sheet about the research.[131]

The survey asked a range of questions on topics such as identification with the LGBTIQ+ community, other community identification, political behaviour, community behaviour, and the perceived ability to create change.[132] These questions were designed to explore both the normative and alternative ways in which young people can participate in politics. The survey also placed a large emphasis on community engagement. It has previously been found that community ties are very important in fostering habits of

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[128] Clark, et al., "Young People Attracted to the Same Sex or Both Sexes: Findings from the Youth '12 National Youth Health and Wellbeing Survey."
[129] Refer to Appendix A for a full list of who the surveys were sent to.
[130] Refer to Appendix B for a full copy of the letter sent to organisations and individuals.
[131] Refer to Appendix C for a full copy of the information sheet.
[132] Refer to Appendix D for a full copy of the survey.

engagement and participation in young people — particularly those who belong to minority groups.[133] A five-point Likert scale (ranging between 'Not at all' and 'Completely,' or 'Never' and 'Very Often,' or 'Not at all' and 'Very') was provided for each question, allowing respondents to indicate to what extent they agreed with each statement.[134]

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[133] Dana Fisher, "Youth Political Participation: Bridging Activism and Electoral Politics," *Annual Review of Sociology* 38, no. 1 (2012): 122, doi: 10.1146/annurev-soc-071811-145438.
[134] Refer to Appendix D for a full copy of the survey.

Descriptive Data

Of an initial 116 responses, the survey had a total of 91 respondents who lived in the Wellington region and identified — even to a small extent — as queer; I filtered out all respondents who responded 'not at all' when asked whether or not they identify as queer and/or sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity diverse (i.e. LGBTIQ+). I decided against filtering out those who did not identify strongly (e.g. those who responded with 'very little' or 'somewhat') as I wanted to be inclusive of those participants who may have been unsure of, or questioning, their identity — queerness is a spectrum, so this enabled me to include anyone on that spectrum.

When asked whether or not they view their queer identity as being political, the majority of participants responded that they did not view this as a very political identity. 78.88% of participants answered the question with 'not at all,' 'very little,' or 'somewhat.' The remaining 21.12% responded with 'a lot' or 'completely.' This was, on the surface level, a somewhat surprising result. Identity focused politics has become such a large part of modern political discourse that it seems almost natural to presume people within these groups inherently see their identity as being political.[135] However, these results challenge this assumption. While the data I gathered does not explore why this is, it is possible that increasing levels of societal acceptance mean that young people are not having to engage in political battles for societal inclusion. It could be that their LGBTIQ+ identities are simply a small part of their overall identity, and it, thus, does not influence their political views.

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[135] For a more in-depth discussion of the role of identity politics, refer to the paragraphs on identity politics in the 'Queer Young People and Political Participation' chapter of the Literature Review.

As far as interest in politics goes, the data revealed a tendency towards being interested in politics, but the majority of participants responded with the neutral, middle, answer of 'somewhat.' Overall, 4.40% were 'not at all' interested in politics, 14.29% had 'very little' interest, 35.16% were 'somewhat' interested, 28.57 were interested 'a lot', and 17.58% were 'completely' interested in politics.

The questions regarding the frequency at which respondents engaged in more formal forms of participation (such as attending protests,[136] signing petitions, and engaging with MPs and political parties) revealed that the majority of respondents either never or only sometimes engage in these activities. As this survey question did not define a specific time-frame, responses are self-defined measures i.e. respondent's perceived engagement with each activity. The responses were as follows:

Table 1. **Perceived levels of political activity (in percentages)**

Question	Never	Sometimes	About half the time	Most of the time	Always	Total (n)
Attend protests?	54.12	34.12	7.06	2.35	2.35	85
Write to an MP?	78.57	17.86	1.19	2.38	0.00	84
Sign petitions?	11.76	32.94	23.53	25.88	5.88	85
Watch Parliament?	55.29	36.47	7.06	0.00	1.18	85

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[136] The question regarding attending protests could have had quite varied results between respondents, as it did not provide any specific examples of recent protests in the region. It is thus likely that respondents would have had varying levels of knowledge about the frequency at which protests are held. For instance, those who discuss politics more frequently might have been more likely to know about when protests were being held, in comparison to those who do not frequently discuss politics. Thus, this questions relates to each respondent's individual knowledge of protests held in the Wellington region; the number of protests they each knew about is likely to have varied. Therefore, the response are self-perceived measures.

Table 1. **Perceived levels of political activity (in percentages)**

Engage with MPs on social media?	79.76	11.90	7.14	1.19	0.00	84
Engage with a political party?	60.00	27.06	8.24	4.71	0.00	85
Volunteer?	32.56	36.05	11.63	10.47	9.30	86
Boycott buying a certain product for political reasons?	24.42	36.05	13.95	16.28	9.30	86
Change your Facebook profile picture to support a campaign?	51.76	17.65	12.94	15.29	2.35	85
Discuss politics on social media?	29.07	31.40	10.47	19.77	9.30	86

As can be seen, the main form of participation that respondents engaged in was signing petitions, with 23.53% signing them about half the time and 25.88% signing them most of the time. However, there were still 11.76% who never sign them, and a significant 32.94% who only sign them sometimes.

When asked about the extent to which they feel as though they have the ability and power to create political change; as a member of the LGBTIQ+ community, and as a young person under the voting age, the majority of respondents answered felt as though they had a greater for capacity to create change as a member of the LGBTIQ+ community:

Table 2. **Perceived ability to create change (in percentages)**

Question	Not at all	Very little	Somewhat	A lot	Completely	Total (n)
A member of the LGBTIQ+ community?	13.95	26.74	34.88	19.77	4.65	86
A young person under the voting age?	22.35	47.06	21.18	3.53	5.88	85

It is evident that respondents felt they had a greater ability to create change as a member of the LGBTIQ+ community than they do as young people under the voting age. This is likely due to perceptions of efficacy and institutionalised forms of participation. Young people under the voting age are rarely represented in conventional politics, but there is growing parliamentary representation of the LGBTIQ+ community.[137] It is possible, then, that these young people are seeing their queerness be better represented than their youth, and thus feel that they have more political efficacy as a queer person than as a young person. The International Civic and Citizenship Education Study (ICCS) found that "to become politically involved, people have to believe that they have the capacity to do this."[138]

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[137] One only has to look to the descriptive representation of Aotearoa New Zealand's Parliament. There are, of course, no Members of Parliament under the voting age, and Todd Barclay is the only MP in their 20s. On the other hand, we know that a growing number of openly queer parliamentarians. At present, there are at least five who are known for being openly queer; Jan Logie, Louisa Wall, Grant Robertson, Paul Foster-Bell, and Chris Finlayson. Refer to the New Zealand Parliament website for more details on the demographics of parliamentarians.

[138] Wolfram Schulz, John Ainley, Julian Fraillon, David Kerr, and Bruno Losito, *ICCS 2009 Report: Civic Knowledge, Attitudes, and Engagement Among Lower-Secondary School Students in 38 Countries* (2010 report), (Amsterdam: International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement, 2010) 117.

The main way that this specific group of young people engages with their queer identity is by educating people about the LGBTIQ+ community. 29.27% of respondents educate people about the community most of the time, and a further 23.17% always educate others about the community. Smith, Lister, Middleton, and Cox argue that

"…when constructive social participation is viewed too narrowly — for example, only in terms of formally organised voluntary work — it obscures the full extent of young people's contribution to their communities."[139]

We should thus view informal social participation, such as education and awareness-raising, as being a meaningful form of civic and community contribution. By making conscious decisions to inform, educate, and challenge their peers' perceptions of the LGBTIQ+ community, rangatahi are engaging in an important and beneficial form of political activity.

The final section of the survey asked about community involvement. As discussed earlier, community engagement is integral in encouraging young people to become politically engaged. Results show that overall, most of respondents were not highly engaged in various communities.

Table 3. **Perceived levels of community engagement (in percentages)**

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[139] Smith, Lister, Middleton, and Cox, "Young People as Real Citizens: Towards an Inclusionary Understanding of Citizenship," 439.

Table 3. **Perceived levels of community engagement (in percentages)**

Question	Never	Sometimes	About half the time	Most of the time	Always	Total (n)
In your school community?	9.64	26.51	16.87	24.10	22.89	83
In the community you live in?	26.51	39.76	19.28	10.84	3.61	83
In the LGBTIQ+ community?	13.25	30.12	18.07	25.30	13.25	83
In any other communities or groups (e.g. sporting, religious, cultural, etc.)?	16.87	31.33	19.28	16.87	15.66	83

However, this data does show that LGBTIQ+ young people think they are, on a small scale, somewhat active in both their school community and the LGBTIQ+ community. This suggests that respondents' school and LGBTIQ+ circles are, possibly, the more meaningful and influential communities in their lives. Further research would do well to explore if this is indeed the case. It could also be that these low levels of community engagement indicate feelings of isolation from these communities. It would have been interesting to explore the extent to which respondents felt as though they belonged to each of the communities the survey asked about. This would have given greater insight into these responses. Furthermore, these results could have, perhaps, arisen from a lack of knowledge about the forms community engagement can take, as well as its importance. As the survey was relatively

short, it is likely that respondents did not spend a great deal of time thinking about what was

meant by each question.[140]

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[140] The mean duration of responses was 3.8 minutes spent answering the survey.

Empirical Analysis

A wide range of variables were tested in order to explore the research questions posed. These tests aimed to explore whether or not any of the hypotheses presented had any statistical significance. Overall, there were 22 significant results out of 81 tests in total.[141] As the sample size was too small for the chi-square approximation to hold, Fisher's exact test was conducted to explore various links between results. The first round looked at political identity, and political and community engagement. These began with the relationships between viewing ones LGBTIQ+ identity as being political, and the series of questions asking about the range of political activities that youth are participating in.[142] The same tests were run between political identity and community engagement.[143] The second round of tests looked at the power to create change and community engagement. These aimed to explore the relationship between community engagement and whether or not respondents felt as though they had the ability and power to create change as either a young person under the voting age or as a member of the queer community. The third round of tests looked at political interest, and political and community engagement. The fourth, and final, set of tests explored feelings of belonging to the LGBTIQ+ community, and political and community engagement. The tables below show the results of all the tests that were run in order to test for positive

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[141] Consideration was given to running Bonferroni corrections on the test results. However, Bonferonni corrections have been criticised for being too conservative when dealing with large numbers of tests. If they were run on these test results, the method would require significant results to be $p<0.0006$ (Bonferroni corrections are calculated by dividing the desired significance level with the number of tests; which is 0.05/81 in this case). As SPSS software cannot compute results $p<0.001$, it would not be possible to tell if there were any significant results with the Bonferroni correction applied. I thus decided to run the risk of having multiple comparison errors.

[142] Refer to Appendix D for a list of survey questions. The ones referred to here were the extent to which young people consider their LGBTIQ+ identity as being political, and the first ten questions of the 'Political knowledge and institutionalised forms of participation' section of the survey.

[143] Refer to the 'Alternative forms of participation' section of the survey for a complete list of the questions about community engagement.

correlation between variables, and indicates which ones were significant, or trending towards significance.

The first round of tests was against the main variable "To what extent do you view your LGBTIQ+ identity as being political?" These tests showed four significant results, and a further four that were trending towards being significant. The main variable was tested against the following:

Table 4. **Political identity and levels of engagement**

Second variable	*P* value	Test statistic
How active are you in your school community?	0.089**	10.315
How active are you in the community you live in?	0.347	6.742
How active are you in the LGBTIQ+ community?	0.174	8.736
How active are you in other communities (e.g. sporting, religious cultural, etc.)	0.298	7.226
How often do you attend protests?	0.036*	12.635
How often do you write to an MP?	0.097**	8.975
How often do you sign petitions?	0.061**	11.533
How often do you watch Parliament?	0.419	5.932
How often do you engage with an MP on social media?	0.09*	14.289
How often do you engage with a political party?	0.034*	12.974
How often do you volunteer?	0.017*	15.121
How often do you boycott buying a product for political reasons?	0.266	7.614

Table 4. **Political identity and levels of engagement**

How often do you change your Facebook profile picture for political reasons?	0.921	2.182
How often do you discuss politics on social media?	0.072**	11.443
How often do you attend events in the queer community?	0.409	6.128
How often do you educate people about the queer community?	0.149	8.268
How often do you engage with a community organisation?	0.329	6.891

*$p<0.05$, thus results are considered to be significant. **$p<0.10$, thus results are considered to be trending towards significance.

The second round of tests focused on the main variable "As a member of the LGBTIQ+ community, to what extent do you feel as though you have the ability and power to create political change?" These tests showed four significant results, and a further three results trending towards significance. The main variable was tested against the following:

Table 5. **Ability to create change as a queer person and levels of engagement**

Second variable	*P* value	Test statistic
How often do you attend protests?	0.337	4.428
How often do you write to an MP?	0.604	2.636
How often do you sign petitions?	0.300	4.727
How often do you watch Parliament?	0.244	5.143
How often do you engage with an MP on social media?	0.281	4.665
How often do you engage with a political party?	0.700	2.330

Table 5. **Ability to create change as a queer person and levels of engagement**

How often do you volunteer?	0.839	1.509
How often do you boycott buying a product for political reasons?	0.068**	8.467
How often do you change your Facebook profile picture for political reasons?	0.484	3.494
How often do you discuss politics on social media?	0.001*	18.570
How active are you in your school community?	0.110	7.073
How active are you in the community you live in?	0.064**	8.676
How active are you in the LGBTIQ+ community?	0.000*	18.585
How active are you in other communities (e.g. sporting, religious cultural, etc.)	0.073**	8.249
How often do you attend events in the queer community?	0.003*	14.723
How often do you educate people about the queer community?	0.011*	11.364
How often do you engage with a community organisation?	0.282	4.998

*$p<0.05$ **$p<0.10$

The third round of tests looked at the main variable "As a young person under the voting age, to what extent do you feel as though you have the ability and power to create political change?" These tests only showed one significant result. The main variable was tested against the following variables:

Table 6. **Ability to create change as a young person versus and levels of engagement**

Table 6. **Ability to create change as a young person versus and levels of engagement**

Second variable	*P* value	Test statistic
How often do you attend protests?	0.172	6.274
How often do you write to an MP?	0.364	3.921
How often do you sign petitions?	0.320	4.679
How often do you watch Parliament?	0.972	0.733
How often do you engage with an MP on social media?	0.570	2.973
How often do you engage with a political party?	0.565	3.010
How often do you volunteer?	0.726	2.146
How often do you boycott buying a product for political reasons?	0.832	1.544
How often do you change your Facebook profile picture for political reasons?	0.343	4.536
How often do you discuss politics on social media?	0.159	6.549
How active are you in your school community?	0.348	4.408
How active are you in the community you live in?	0.029*	10.643
How active are you in the LGBTIQ+ community?	0.652	2.471
How active are you in other communities (e.g. sporting, religious cultural, etc.)	0.808	1.702
How often do you attend events in the queer community?	0.758	2.023
How often do you educate people about the queer community?	0.907	1.406
How often do you engage with a community organisation?	0.654	2.508

*$p<0.05$ **$p<0.10$

The next round of tests looked at the main variable "Generally speaking, how interested are you in politics?" The tests showed five significant results, and a further three results that were trending towards significance. The main variable was tested against the following:

Table 7. **Interest in politics and levels of engagement**

Second variable	*P* value	Test statistic
To what extent do you consider this [LGBTIQ+] identity as being political?	0.012*	13.095
How often do you attend protests?	0.744	2.160
How often do you write to an MP?	0.251	5.521
How often do you sign petitions?	0.187	5.410
How often do you watch Parliament?	0.433	3.608
How often do you engage with an MP on social media?	0.676	2.176
How often do you engage with a political party?	0.273	4.801
How often do you volunteer?	0.272	4.655
How often do you boycott buying a product for political reasons?	0.019*	9.734
How often do you change your Facebook profile picture for political reasons?	0.289	4.545
How often do you discuss politics on social media?	0.000*	22.592
How active are you in your school community?	0.053**	8.361
How active are you in the community you live in?	0.099**	6.597
How active are you in the LGBTIQ+ community?	0.118	6.477

Table 7. **Interest in politics and levels of engagement**

How active are you in other communities (e.g. sporting, religious cultural, etc.)	0.453	3.561
How often do you attend events in the queer community?	0.022*	9.532
How often do you educate people about the queer community?	0.594	2.432
How often do you engage with a community organisation?	0.063**	7.527
As a member of the LGBTIQ+ community, to what extent do you feel as though you have the ability and power to create political change?	0.008*	11.551
As a young person under the voting age, to what extent do you feel as though you have the ability and power to create political change?	0.900	1.160

*p<0.05 **p<0.10

The fifth round of tests looked at the main variable "To what extent do you feel as though you belong to the LGBTIQ+ community?" These tests revealed five significant results. The main variable was tested against the following:

Table 8. **Sense of belonging and community involvement**

Second variable	*P* value	Test statistic
How often do you volunteer?	0.614	4.670
As a member of the LGBTIQ+ community, to what extent do you	0.000*	20.921

Table 8. **Sense of belonging and community involvement**

feel as though you have the ability and power to create political change?		
How often do you attend events in the queer community?	0.000*	34.183
How often do you educate people about the queer community?	0.000*	37.108
How often do you engage with a community organisation?	0.033*	11.801
How active are you in the LGBTIQ+ community?	0.000*	28.009

*p<0.05 **p<0.10*

The final round of tests looked at the main variable "How often do you volunteer?" This series of tests revealed three significant results. The main variable was tested against the following:

Table 9. **Volunteering and community involvement**

Second variable	*P* value	Test statistic
How active are you in your school community?	0.001*	16.472
How active are you in the community you live in?	0.003*	15.799
How active are you in the LGBTIQ+ community?	0.221	5.643
How active are you in other communities (e.g. sporting, religious cultural, etc.)	0.033*	10.292

*p<0.05 **p<0.10*

Fisher's exact tests were run to explore the research's sub-questions "To what extent are young people who see their LGBTIQ+ identity as political likely to engage in political action when compared with those who do not see their LGBTIQ+ identity as political?" and "To what extent are young people who see their LGBTIQ+ identity as political more active in their communities — particularly the queer community — compared with those who do not see their LGBTIQ+ identity as political?"

Of the tests between political identity and political participation, four showed evidence of statistical significance, with a further three that were trending towards significance. The overview of these results are as follows:

Table 10. **Results between political identity and political participation**

Political action	*P* value	% of those who are not at all political, and never engage in this action	% of those who are a lot or completely political, and engage in this action half the time or more	Total valid cases (n)
Attending protests	0.036	77.3	23.5	89
Engaging with MPs on social media	0.009	77.3	23.5	88

Table 10. **Results between political identity and political participation**

Engaging with a political party	0.034	59.1	23.5	89
Volunteering	0.017	45.5	50.0	90
Writing to MPs	0.097	81.0	11.8	88
Signing petitions	0.061	33.3	72.2	89
Discussing politics on social media	0.072	40.9	66.7	90

The first significant result of these, the association between those who viewed their LGBTIQ+ identity as being political and those who attend protests, was significant at $p = 0.036$. Of those respondents who stated their identity as 'Not at all' political, 77.3% said they never attended protests. Of those who stated their identity as being 'A lot' or 'Completely' political, 23.5% said they attended protests they were aware of about half the time or more.

The second test that showed significance was between political identity and engaging with Members of Parliament on social media, with $p = 0.009$. Of those respondents who stated their identity as 'Not at all' political, 77.3% said they never engage with MPs online. Of those who stated their identity as being 'A lot' or 'Completely' political, 23.5% said they engage with MPs on social media about half the time or more.

The third test that showed a significant association was between political identity and engaging with a political party, with $p = 0.034$. Of those respondents who stated their identity as 'Not at all' political, 59.1% said they never engage with parties. Of those who stated their

identity as being 'A lot' or 'Completely' political, 23.5% said they engage with political parties about half the time or more.

The fourth test that showed a significant association was between political identity and volunteering, with $p = 0.017$. Of those respondents who stated their identity as 'Not at all' political, 45.5% said they never volunteer. Of those who stated their identity as being 'A lot' or 'Completely' political, 50.0% said they volunteer about half the time or more.

There were three tests regarding political identity that were trending towards significance. These were against: writing to MPs, signing petitions, and discussing politics on social media. The association between political identity and writing to MPs was $p = 0.097$, which was only just trending towards significance.[144] The association between political identity and signing petitions was $p = 0.061$, while the association between identity and discussing politics on social media was $p = 0.072$. The tests between political identity and political participation that showed no significance whatsoever were political identity and: watching parliament, boycotting buying a product for political reasons, and changing ones Facebook profile picture to support a campaign.

As previously noted, Fisher's exact tests were run between political identity and community engagement. None of these tests showed any statistical significance. However, the association between political identity and engagement in respondents' school communities was trending towards significance with a result of $p = 0.089$. There was no significance between political identity and engagement in: the community respondents live in, the LGBTIQ+ community, and in other communities (such as sporting, religious, or

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[144] Results are considered to be trending towards significance if/when p is less than 0.10.

cultural communities). Tests between political identity and engagement in the queer community also failed to show any statistical significance. These tests were between political identity and the frequency at which respondents: attended events in the queer community, educated people about the community, and engaged with a community organisation.

We now move on to the link between levels of political activity and perceived ability to create change. Fisher's exact tests were also run to explore the relationship between community engagement and whether or not respondents felt as though they had the ability and power to create change as either a young person under the voting age, or as a member of the queer community. These tests sought to explore the sub-questions "To what extent do politically active young LGBTIQ+ people feel as though they have an ability to create political change?" and "To what extent do young people who are active in their communities feel as though they have an ability to create political change?"

Of the tests between those who were found to be engaging in political activity and whether or not respondents felt as though they had the ability to create change as a member of the queer community, there was only one that showed any statistical significance. The results are as follows:

Table 11. **Results between the ability to create change as a queer person and political participation**

Political action	*P* value	% of those who never feel they can create change, and never engage in this action	% of those who feel they can create change half the time or more, and engage in this action half the time or more	Total valid cases (n)
Discussing politics on social	0.001	58.3	66.7	89

Table 11. **Results between the ability to create change as a queer person and political participation**

media				
Boycotting buying products for political reasons	0.068	33.3	50.9	89

As noted, there was only one significant result that appeared in these tests. This association was between discussing politics on social media and the ability to create political change as a member of the queer community. The significance was $p = 0.001$. Of those respondents who said they 'Never' feel as though they have the ability and power to create political change as a member of the LGBTIQ+ community, 58.3% said they 'Never' discuss politics on social media. Of the respondents who said they feel as though they have the ability and power to create political change as a member of the LGBTIQ+ community about half the time or more, 66.7% said they discuss social media online about half the time or more.

Only one of the tests between political activity and political efficacy as a queer person was trending towards being significant. This was between ability to create political change as a member of the queer community and boycotting buying products for political reasons, which had a result of $p = 0.068$. The tests between political engagement and whether or not respondents felt as though they had the ability to create change as a young person under the voting age did not show any statistical significance, nor were any of the results trending towards being significant.

Of the tests between community engagement and feelings about respondent's ability to create change as a queer person, three tests showed statistical significance. There were a further two that were trending towards significance. The results are as follows:

Table 12. **Results between the ability to create change as a queer person and community engagement**

Community engagement	*P* value	% of those who never feel they can create change, and never engage in this action	% of those who feel they can create change half the time or more, and engage in this action half the time or more	Total valid cases (n)
Attending events in the queer community	0.003	41.7	66.7	86
Educating people about the queer community	0.011	16.7	82.0	85
Engaging with the queer community	0.000	41.7	72.5	86
Engaging with the community one lives in	0.064	58.3	39.2	86
Engaging in other communities (e.g. sporting, cultural, and religious)	0.073	41.7	45.1	86

The first of these significant results was between attending events in the queer community and the ability to create change as a member of the queer community, which had a result of $p = 0.003$. Of the respondents who said they 'Never' feel as though they have the ability and power to create political change as a member of the LGBTIQ+ community, 41.7% said they 'Never' attend events in the queer community. Of the respondents who said they feel as though they have the ability and power to create political change as a member of the LGBTIQ+ community about half the time or more, 66.7% said they attend events in the queer community about half the time or more.

The second significant result was between educating people about the queer community and the ability to create change as a member of the queer community, which had a result of $p = 0.011$. Of the respondents who said they 'Never' educate people about the LGBTIQ+ community, 16.7% said they 'Never' feel as though they have the ability and power to create political change as a member of the LGBTIQ+ community. Of the respondents who said they educate people about the queer community half the time or more, 82.0% said they feel as though they have the ability and power to create political change as a member of the LGBTIQ+ community about half the time or more.

The third significant result was between the extent to which respondents are active in the LGBTIQ+ community, and the extent to which they feel as though they have the ability to create change as a member of the LGBTIQ+ community. This had a result of $p = 0.000$.[145] Of

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[145] The statistical software used for all of these tests, IBM SPSS Statistics, is not precise enough to compute the exact answer when $p < 0.0005$, so results appear as $p = 0.000$.

the respondents who said they are 'Never' active in the queer community, 41.7% said they 'Never' feel as though they have the ability to create change as a member of the LGBTIQ+ community. Of the respondents who said they are active in the queer community about half the time or more, 72.5% said they feel as though they have the ability to create change as a member of the queer community about half the time or more.

There were a further two tests that were trending towards being significant. The first was between the extent to which respondents were active in the community they live in, and the extent to which they feel as though they have the ability to create change as a member of the LGBTIQ+ community. This has a result of $p = 0.064$. The other test that was trending towards being significant was between the extent to which respondents were active in their wider communities (such as sporting, religious, or cultural communities) and the extent to which they felt as though they had the ability to create change as a member of the LGBTIQ+ community. This had a result of $p = 0.073$.

The next tests run were between one's perceived ability to create change as a young person, and levels of community engagement. Only one of these were significant, and there were not any results that were trending towards being significant. The results are as follows:

Table 13. **Results between the ability to create change as a young person and community engagement**

Table 13. **Results between the ability to create change as a young person and community engagement**

Community engagement	*P* value	% of those who never feel they can create change, and never engage in this action	% of those who feel they can create change half the time or more, and engage in this action half the time or more	Total valid cases (n)
Engaging with the community one lives in	0.029	52.6	25.9	86

The next significant result was between the extent to which respondents were active in the community they live in, and the extent to which they feel as though they have the ability to create change as a young person under the voting age. This has a result of *p* = 0.029. Of the respondents who said they are 'Never' active in their residential communities, 52.6% said they 'Never' feel as though they have the have the ability to create change as a young person under the voting age. Of the respondents who said they are active in their residential communities about half the time or more, 25.9% said they feel as though they have the ability to create change as a young person under the voting about half the time or more.

Fisher's exact tests were also run to explore if those who are more interested in politics are more likely to engage in political and community activity. These sought to explore the sub-research question "To what extent are queer youth who are interested in politics likely to participate in politics when compared to those who are not interested?"

These showed five significant results. There were a further three results that were trending towards significance. The results are as follows:

Table 14. **Results between interest in politics and political and community engagement**

Form of Engagement	*P* value	% of those who are never interested in politics, and never engage in this action	% of those who are interested in politics half the time or more, and engage in this action half the time or more	Total valid cases (n)
Feeling as though one's queer identity is political	0.012	75.0	25.0	94
Boycotting buying products for political reasons	0.019	33.3	43.8	90
Discussing politics on social media	0.000	100.0	47.9	90

Feeling as though one has the ability to create change as a queer person	0.008	66.7	66.7	89
Attending events in the queer community	0.022	66.7	60.0	87
Engaging with a community organisation	0.063	66.7	54.3	87
Engaging with one's school community	0.053	0.0	64.4	87
Engaging with the community one lives in	0.099	100.0	37.1	87

The first was between interest in politics and respondents feeling as though their queer identity is political. This test had a result of $p = 0.012$. Of the respondents who said they are 'Never' interested in politics, 75.0% said that their queer identity is 'Not at all' political. Of those who said they are interested in politics about half the time or more, 25.0% view their queer identity as being a lot or completely political.

The second significant result was between interest in politics and boycotting buying products for political reasons. This had a result of $p = 0.019$. Of the respondents who said

they are 'Never' interested in politics, 33.3% said they 'Never' boycott buying products for political reasons. Of those who are interested in politics about half the time or more, 43.8% responded that they avoid buying products for political reasons about half the time or more.

The third significant result was between interest in politics and discussing politics on social media. This had a result of p = 0.000. Of those who are 'Never' interested in politics, 100% said they 'Never' discuss politics on social media. Of those who said they are interested in politics about half the time or more, 47.9% said they discuss politics on social media about half the time or more.

The fourth significant result was interest in politics and the extent to which respondents felt as though they have the ability to create political change as a member of the LGBTIQ+ community. This had a result of p = 0.008. Of those who said they are 'Never' interested in politics, 66.7% said they 'Never' feel as though they have the ability to create change as a member of the LGBTIQ+ community. Of those who are interested in politics about half the time or more, 66.7% said they feel as though they can create change as a queer person about half the time or more.

The fifth significant result was between interest in politics and how often participants attend events in the queer community. This test showed a significant result of p = 0.022. Of those who are 'Never' interested in politics, 66.7% said they 'Never' attend events in the LGBTIQ+ community. Of those who said they are interested in politics about half the time or more, 60.0% said they attend events in the queer community about half the time or more.

A further three results from these tests were trending towards being significant. The first of these was between interest in politics and how often participants engage with a community organisation. This had a result of $p = 0.063$. The second trending result was between interest in politics and the extent to which participants are active in their school communities. This showed a result of $p = 0.053$, which was very close to being significant. The final test that was trending towards being significant was between interest in politics and the extent to which participants are active in the communities they live in. This was only just trending towards significance with a result of $p = 0.093$.

Feeling of Belonging to the LGBTIQ+ community, and Political and Community Engagement

The next set of tests run focused on the question regarding the extent to which respondents felt as though they belonged to the LGBTIQ+ community, in order to see if this had any relationships with involvement in the community, and how often participants volunteer.[146] These tests sought to explore the sub-question "To what extent does feeling as though one belongs to the queer community influence their community engagement?"

These tests ran the main variable regarding the extent to which respondents felt as though they belonged to the LGBTIQ+ community against: how often respondents volunteer, the extent to which they feel as though they can create change as a queer person, how often they attend events in the queer community, how often they educate people about the queer community, how often they engage with a community organisation, and the extent to which they are active in the queer community. All of these tests — *except* for the one between the extent to which participants feel as though they belong to the queer community and how often they volunteer — showed significant results. The results are as follows:

Table 15. **Results between belonging to the LGBTIQ+ community and community involvement**

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[146] As noted earlier, queer young people have previously been found to volunteer more than their non-queer counterparts. I wanted to see if this had any relation to their sense of belonging with the LGBTIQ+ community.

Table 15. **Results between belonging to the LGBTIQ+ community and community involvement**

Form of Engagement	*P* value	% of those who do not at all feel belonging to the community, and never engage in this action	% of those who feel they belong to the community a lot or completely, and engage in this action half the time or more	Total valid cases (n)
Ability to create change as a queer person	0.000	40.0	74.1	90
Attending events in the queer community	0.000	20.0	75.0	87
Educating others about the queer community	0.000	40.0	89.1	86
Engaging with a community organisation	0.033	20.0	58.9	87
Engaging with the queer community	0.000	20.0	76.8	87

The test between a sense of belonging to the queer community and the extent to which respondents felt as though they have the ability to create change as a member of the LGBTIQ+ community had a result of $p = 0.000$. Of those who said they do 'Not at all' feel as though they belong to the queer community, 40.0% said they 'Never' feel as though they have the ability to create change as a young queer person. Of those who felt they belong to the community a lot or completely, 74.1% said they feel as though they can create change about half the time or more.

The test between community belonging and how often participants attend events in the queer community had a result of $p = 0.000$. Of those who said they do 'Not at all' feel as though they belong to the queer community, 20.0% said they 'Never' attend events in the community. Of those who said they feel as if they belong to the community a lot or completely, 75.0% attend events in the LGBTIQ+ community about half the time or more.

The test between community belonging and the frequency at which young people educate others about the queer community had a result of $p = 0.000$. Of those who said they do 'Not at all' feel as though they belong to the queer community, 40.0% said they 'Never' educate others about the LGBTIQ+ community. Of those who feel as if they belong to the community a lot or completely, 89.1% said they educate others about the community about half the time or more.

The test between belonging to the community and engaging with a community organisation had a result of $p = 0.033$. Of those who said they do 'Not at all' feel as though they belong to the queer community, 20.0% said they 'Never' engage with a community

organisation. Of those who feel as if they belong to the community a lot or completely, 58.9% said they engage with a community organisation about half the time or more.

The test between community belonging and the extent to which respondents are active in the queer community had a result of $p = 0.000$. Of those who said they do 'Not at all' feel as though they belong to the queer community, 20.00% said they are 'Never' active in the LGBTIQ+ community. Of those who feel as if they belong to the community a lot or completely, 76.8% said they are active in the queer community about half the time or more.

Tests were also run between the survey question that asked about how often participants volunteer and the range of questions that asked about how often participate in school, home, queer, and other communities. The results were as follows:

Table 16. **Results between volunteering and community engagement**

Community engagement	*P* value	% of those who never volunteer, and never engage in this action	% of those who volunteer half the time or more, and engage in this action half the time or more	Total valid cases (n)
Engaging with one's school community	0.001	14.3	85.2	87
Engaging with the community one lives in	0.003	39.3	59.3	87
Engaging in other communities (e.g.	0.033	32.1	70.4	87

Table 16. **Results between volunteering and community engagement**

sporting, cultural, and religious)				84

The test between volunteering and participating in school communities had a result of $p = 0.001$. Of those who said they 'Never' volunteer, 14.3% said they are 'Never' active in their school communities. Of those who volunteer about half the time or more, 85.2% said they are active in their school communities about half the time or more.

The test between volunteering and engagement in the communities' respondents live in had a result of $p = 0.003$. Of those who said they 'Never' volunteer, 39.3% said they are 'Never' active in their residential communities. Of those who volunteer about half the time or more, 59.3% said they are active in their home communities about half the time or more.

The test between volunteering and the extent to which respondents are active in other communities (such as sporting, religious, or cultural communities) had a result of $p = 0.033$. Of those who said they 'Never' volunteer, 32.1% said they are 'Never' active in other communities. Of those who volunteer about half the time or more, 70.4% said they are active in other communities about half the time or more.

Discussion

Outcomes

The main question this research has sought to answer is: How do LGBTIQ+ youth in the Wellington region participate in politics? There were sub-questions designed to guide the way this main question was explored and answered. As stated earlier, the research sub-questions were as follows:

- To what extent are young people who see their LGBTIQ+ identity as political likely to engage in political action when compared with those who do not see their LGBTIQ+ identity as political?

- To what extent are young people who see their LGBTIQ+ identity as political more active in their communities — particularly the queer community — compared with those who do not see their LGBTIQ+ identity as political?

- To what extent do politically active young LGBTIQ+ people feel as though they have an ability to create political change?

- To what extent do young people who are active in their communities feel as though they have an ability to create political change?

- To what extent does feeling as though one belongs to the queer community influence their community engagement?

- To what extent are queer youth who are interested in politics likely to participate in politics when compared to those who are not interested?

The sub-questions were broad and subsequently each of them encapsulated a number of variable tests. The main hypotheses that appeared to hold up under testing were about the relationship between one's interest in politics and their political activity, as well as the relationship between the extent to which one feels as though they belong to the queer community and their levels of community engagement. The main hypothesis that showed no significant results was the idea that politically active young people will be more likely to feel as though they have the ability to create change (as either a member of the LGBTIQ+ community, or as a young person under the voting age). The research question "To what extent do young people who are active in their communities feel as though they have an ability to create political change?" only partially held up under testing.

In regards to the question "To what extent are young people who see their LGBTIQ+ identity as political likely to engage in political action when compared with those who do not see their LGBTIQ+ identity as political?," perception of LGBTIQ+ identity as political was linked to political participation for four of the ten forms of political activity. The participants who saw their queer identity as being political are more likely than those who do not see that identity as being political to: protest, engage with MPs on social media, engage with a political party, and volunteer. From this, it would seem as though there is no conclusive link between queerness as a political identity and political action. It would be more prudent to say, instead, that there is a link between one's political identity and these specific forms of activity. These findings thus emphasise the potential of encouraging young queer people to learn about, and engage in a variety of political activity.

While there is no overly strong relationship between political identity and political engagement, we must not presume that these rangatahi are politically apathetic. Instead, it is

often the case that young people are not given the tools or language to fully explore their political opinions.[147] Furthermore, conventional forms of participation can be inaccessible and isolating for youth, particularly those who are already marginalised — such as queer youth. [148] We must not presume that these rangatahi should want to be political beings, or that they are required to view their identities as political. Instead, we need to recognise that oftentimes, simply getting through each day is difficult enough. Social exclusion is a reality for many of these LGBTIQ+ youth, so much of their time and energy is spent simply trying to navigate the mundane and the everyday.

The hypothesis "To what extent are young people who see their LGBTIQ+ identity as political more active in their communities — particularly the queer community — compared with those who do not see their LGBTIQ+ identity as political?" was not supported by this data. As mentioned, none of the tests ran between political identity and engagement in school, home, LGBTIQ+, and other communities showed any significance. Tests linking political identity and engagement in the queer community also failed to show any statistical significance. These tests were between political identity and the frequency at which respondents: attended events in the queer community, educated people about the community, and engaged with a community organisation. It thus appears that there is no link between political identity and community engagement. These results indicate that for queer rangatahi, community engagement is not strongly intertwined with, or related to, their feelings of existing as a political member of the queer community. This brings into question assumptions about queer youth and their involvement in community action. As discussed in the literature review, Howarth found that community engagement frequently enables people to explore

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[147] O'Toole, Marsh, and Jones, "Political Literacy Cuts Both Ways," 355.
[148] Wood, "Crafted within Liminal Space," 338.

their political identities — particularly young people.[149] However, these findings suggest that while queer youth may be active in their communities, there is no connection between queerness as a political identity and community involvement, meaning that community engagement may not be seen as a site of political activity by the respondents.

The hypothesis that politically active young people will be more likely to feel as though they have the ability to create change (as either a member of the LGBTIQ+ community, or as a young person under the voting age) did not have strong support. There was only one significant result out of the ten forms of political activity that were tested: there was a relationship between discussing politics on social media and the extent to which respondents felt as though they have the ability to create change as a member of the queer community. This indicates that social media is a meaningful platform for political activity amongst these rangatahi. Social media can be an easy means for young people to find supportive communities and explore both their queer and political identities. It has the potential to alter how we conceptualise political participation: and has quickly become an omnipresent aspect of life for many. Social media is used extensively to open political dialogue up with large numbers of people, and can be a site of collective activism for many young people.[150] It is thus creating a new public for young generations, and is an important space for them to make meaning of political and public life. These results suggest that social media facilitates feelings of efficacy in queer youth; it allows them to believe in their ability to be meaningful actors.

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[149] Howarth, "Towards a Social Psychology of Community," 225.
[150] Alcides Velasquez and Robert LaRose, "Youth Collective Activism through Social Media: The Role of Collective Efficacy," *New Media and Society* 17, no. 6 (2014): 914, doi: 10.1177/1461444813518391.

The next research question explored was "To what extent do young people who are active in their communities feel as though they have an ability to create political change?" Tests found that there was a link between community engagement and feeling as though one has the ability to create change as a member of the queer community, but not against feeling as though one as the ability to create change as a young person. These results suggest that there is a significant difference between citizenship as a young person in Aotearoa New Zealand, and citizenship as someone who identifies as queer in Aotearoa New Zealand. From these results, one can infer that participants felt as though they had greater effectivity as queer citizens, rather than as young citizens. Weeks argues that "the moment of citizenship is the moment of making claims on society a claim for inclusion…making demands on a culture which denies you is extremely radical."[151] It can thus be inferred that respondents felt, to a certain extent, that they are more able to make claims for inclusion as a member of the LGBTIQ+ community than as a young person. This suggests respondents feel it is easier, and more acceptable, to fight for inclusion as a queer person than as a young person.

Another research question explored was "To what extent does feeling as though one belongs to the queer community influence their community engagement?" The extent to which respondents felt as though they belong to the queer community was found to be an important factor in determining how involved they are in the community. The tests that were run found an association between the extent to which individuals feel as though they belong to the queer community and; the extent to which they felt they can create change as a member of the queer community, how frequently they attend events within the queer community, how often they educate people about the queer community, how often they engage with a

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[151] Jeffrey Weeks, Against Nature: Essays on History, Sexuality, and Identity (London: Rivers Oram Press, 1995), 323.

community organisation, and how active they are in the queer community in general. Wellington is a — mostly — welcoming and supportive place for the LGBTIQ+ community. The queer community is fairly visible and accessible, so it is likely that these young people find it relatively easy to find themselves immersed in the community, which contributes to their sense of belonging.

It is also likely that the relationship between the two variables runs the other way; that increased engagement with the community leads to a greater sense of belonging. The two can thus be seen to coexist, and each strengthens the other. It would be a point of further scholarly interest to see if these results remain similar in a larger study; due to the small nature of this research it is entirely plausible that this theory only holds true in this specific instance. There was also a connection between community belonging and educating others about the community. Educating people about the queer community is a political act, as it is subversive and challenges the current discourse surrounding marginalisation and queerness. It is a very political act for these young people to stand up and educate their peers and communities about LGBTIQ+ identities. Furthermore, this could be a form of engagement that strengthens one's sense of belonging to their community; in implying their support for the community via educating their peers, these young people are able to reaffirm that they belong to the queer community.

The next research question tested was "To what extent are queer youth who are interested in politics likely to participate in politics when compared to those who are not interested?" For those who had a general interest in politics, they were more likely to; see their LGBTIQ+ identity as being political, boycott buying products for political reasons, discuss politics on social media, feel as though they have the ability to create change as a

member of the queer community, and attend events in the queer community. This is congruent with the ICCS, which found that "interest in politics is generally seen as an important predication for any political activity."[152] It is thus logical that those who are interested in politics are more likely to see their queer identity as being political; their interest in politics means they are potentially more likely to see the political nature of different aspects of their lives. The results of these tests also suggest that interest in politics and engagement with the community are linked. Fenton and Barassi suggest that "all creative human activity has the potential for political transformative capacity but to understand how this potential can be translated into a reality requires an appreciation of enduring social and political structures…"[153] It is necessary, then, to explore why current political institutions are so enduring, in order to be able to translate this to the forms of political activity that queer youth are engaging in — such as engagement with the queer community.

It was intriguing to find a significant association between those who saw their queer identity as being political and how often respondents volunteered, but no association between volunteering and a range of other variables. As discussed in the literature review, volunteering is inherently political: Eliasoph argues that "…pretending there is a neutral realm for "volunteering" that can be entirely separate from "politics" is a mistake."[154] Volunteering has a significant social value, and is a means through which young people can participate in civic life. Furthermore, other tests revealed that there was no significance between volunteering and one's sense of belonging to the queer community, or between

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[152] Schulz, Ainley, Fraillon, Kerr, and Losito, *ICCS 2009 Report,* 116.; Martin Turcotte, *Political Participation and Civic Engagement of Youth* (2015 report), (Ottawa: Statistics Canada, 2015) 2.
[153] Natalie Fenton and Veronica Barassi, "Alternative Media and Social Networking Sites: The Politics of Individuation and Political Participation," *The Communication Review* 14, no. 3 (2011): 194, doi: 10.080/10714424.2011.597245.
[154] Nina Eliasoph, *The Politics of Volunteering* (Cambridge: Polity, 2013), 43.

volunteering and being active in the queer community. For these youth, there does not appear to be any link between engagement with the queer community and volunteering.

As noted, tests were run between how often participants volunteer and the range of questions that asked about how often they participate in school, home, queer, and other communities. Of these, the only one that was not significant was between volunteering and involvement in the LGBTIQ+ community. This was a curious result, as we know that LGBTIQ+ youth are consistently more inclined to volunteer than their cisgender and heterosexual counterparts.[155] However, these findings suggest that it could be possible that queer youth do volunteer, just not in the queer community. It is also possible that there was no relationship between these two variables due to the nature of how queer rangatahi engage with the LGBTIQ+ community. For example, it could be that queer youth do not volunteer or engage in the LGBTIQ+ community in an active and giving way, as they are more in need of support from the queer community. Future studies could do well to explore this in more depth.

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[155] Clark, et al., "Young People Attracted to the Same Sex or Both Sexes: Findings from the Youth '12 National Youth Health and Wellbeing Survey."; Rossen, et al., "Youth '07 the Health and Wellbeing of Secondary School Students in New Zealand: Results for Young People Attracted to the Same or Both Sexes."

Limitations

There are, naturally, a number of limitations to this research. O'Toole, Lister, Marsh, Jones, and McDonagh identify a number of common mistakes made by political scientists researching youth participation. One of the main issues they outline is that there is little effort made by researchers to identify how individuals themselves conceive of politics.[156] This issue is certainly present within this research; the nature of the surveys meant that my own view of what constitutes politics and political action was imposed on participants. In future studies, this could be addressed by conducting interviews and focus groups in which participants are given the space to explore and define what political participation means to each of them, rather than having the researcher impose a definition on them. When designing this research, I tried to include a wide range of activities that constitute political action, in an effort to encompass the range of ways that people can engage in politics. However, this was a relatively top down approach and did not give much room for participants to explore what political actions means to them.

In giving participants a definition of political action, this research has misclassified a range of individuals, and set the boundaries of "what is to be considered as legitimate political action."[157]This leads in to the additional problem of young people under-reporting their political engagement. If young people are not given the space to define what political participation means to them, they are more likely to under-report their political activities as

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[156] Therese O'Toole, Michael Lister, Dave Marsh, Su Jones, and Alex McDonagh, "Tuning Out or Left Out? Participation and Non-Participation among Young People," *Contemporary Politics* 9, no. 1 (2003): 46, doi: 10.1080/1356977032000072477.
[157] Ibid.

they may not view activities the researcher has listed as being a form of political activity.[158] Accordingly, researchers need to design their studies in ways that allows for young people to define what politics means to them. It could be useful, perhaps, for researchers to use frameworks such as Hart's Ladder of Participation — as discussed in the literature review — when designing and researching youth participation. Such considerations will, hopefully, lead to research that works *with* youth, rather than simply *for* youth.

Another limitation of the current study was that the data collected did not provide any reasons as to *why* young people are and are not participating in various forms of political action. The quantitative data collected only provides surface level information about the respondents' political action and engagement. Using quantitative methods to research political engagement is inherently limited by an inability to investigate how young people view politics.[159] The research would have thus benefitted from survey questions that asked about how youth define politics, or by using qualitative methods to allow the youth to define political action in their own terms, without being influenced by the researcher.

An additional limitation of the study was a lack of clarity in explaining what was meant by the questions asking about community involvement. The data collected would have benefitted from a clearer explanation of examples of what community action and involvement entails. This is particularly relevant for the question that asked about how often respondents have been involved in a community organisation. This question referred to involvement with LGBTIQ+ focused community organisations, but this was not made clear in the wording of the question.

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[158] Ibid., 52.
[159] Ibid., 51.

Furthermore, the study would have perhaps benefitted from also surveying young people who do not identify as LGBTIQ+, as to be able to compare whether or not there are any differences between how the two groups participate in politics. One of the high schools that was contacted during the course of this research expressed concerns that the research was only focussing on LGBTIQ+ youth, and would thus not be able to fully explore whether or not the ways LGBTIQ+ youth are engaging is any different to the ways in which all high school aged youth participate. However, due to time constraints and the small size of this research, it was not possible to adequately address this concern.

Further studies

The primary ways in which this research could be expanded upon would be to extend the size and scope of the project, in order to see if similar results arise with larger sample sizes. Further studies would also do well to use qualitative data to explore both how young queer people view, and engage in, politics. Such research could conduct focus groups or interviews with young people in order to gather information about the ways in which they define and view political engagement, and then use that information to ask about the political actions that those young people participate in, and how often they do so.

Other similar research could explore how older cohorts of the queer community engage in politics. As the literature review of this research has shown, there is not a great deal of empirical research about the ways in which the queer community participates in politics. It would thus be interesting to explore the wider community's political engagement. Such research could also compare the way different age groups in the queer community view and engage in political action.

Further research would do well to explore whether or not any differences exist between the ways in which LGBTIQ+ youth participate in politics and the ways in which high school aged youth as a whole participate in politics. It would also be interesting to consider whether or not various minority groups participate in similar ways. It would be useful to look at whether or not the rise of identity politics has had a significant impact on the ways in which young people conceptualise politics and political participation. As mentioned earlier, identity politics are becoming a larger part of civic life. It would thus be fascinating

— and useful — to explore how different types of identity politics are engaged with, how such groups view themselves, and how different groups intersect with each other.

The findings in this study suggest that political scientists need to further explore how youth view their different forms of citizenship, and the political efficacy they believe each form of citizenship holds. From the results of this study, one can infer that participants felt as though they had greater effectivity as queer citizens, rather than as young citizens. While there is certainly existing research about youth citizenship, it would be beneficial to delve into the different forms of citizenship that youth hold, and if there are any substantial differences between their conceptualisations of them, and their perceived efficacy regarding each form of citizenship. This would further contribute to understanding youth engagement, and the broadening of discourse surrounding political efficacy and action.

Future studies should place a greater emphasis on exploring the survey questions that asked about the extent to which participants felt as though they had the ability and power to create change as both a young person under the voting age, and as a member of the queer community. If these questions were part of qualitative research, they would provide insights into what forms of participation do and do not work for queer rangatahi. Researchers would thus gain an increased understanding of how we can work to increase and institutionalise how young people and queer people participate in democratic life. Finally, other studies could also look to the results that were trending towards being significant, in order to investigate whether or not the results would become significant in larger studies.

Conclusion

Representation is important in democracies, and representation necessitates participation. Participation studies thus enable us to further our understanding of how to increase representation and engagement. As noted in the introduction, the broad overarching elements of this thesis were that there is very little research on LGBTIQ+ youth in Aotearoa New Zealand, and that there is very little research on LGBTIQ+ youth politics. The other elements that set up the direction of this study were that the primary focus of normative political science youth research has been about the formal political sphere, thus overlooking youth as citizens who are participating politically, and that broader definitions of political participation are needed to be able to encompass the everyday of young people. Thus, the main aims of the research were to expand current knowledge about LGBTIQ+ youth in Aotearoa New Zealand, and to contribute to a broader definition of political participation by exploring the lives and experiences of LGBTIQ+ youth. The subset of these aims was to explore the participation habits of LGBTIQ+ high school students in the Wellington region, and to understand what — if any — relationship exists between their queer identity and participation habits. While much is known about the ways young people as a whole do — and do not — engage in political life, little research has focused expressly on how LGBTIQ+ youth participate. This thesis aimed to bridge that gap, and provide a focused look at how some queer youth participate in politics.

Ultimately, political science scholars need to continue to shift and expand upon normative definitions of what constitutes political participation. The current definitions used by most scholars are exclusionary and narrow; they overwhelmingly focus on institutionalised forms of action within the political system. As this thesis has shown, it is

necessary to explore both the institutionalised and alternative forms of participation that marginalised groups are undertaking, in order to be able to develop a more comprehensive definition of what constitutes political participation. This will enable us to examine how different demographics make meaning of their citizenship and understanding of politics. Such reconceptualisations of political participation will broaden our understanding of the political, and create more space for the forms of participation that minority groups engage in.

This research has found that the extent to which youth feel as though they belong to the queer community influences their levels of community engagement. This suggests that encouraging community belonging and connectedness is vital to ensuring that LGBTIQ+ youth are engaging across a range of activities. In feeling as though they belong to the queer community, these results suggest, LGBTIQ+ youth are able to make meaning of their wider communities, which thus facilitates political and civic engagement. This suggests a need to create safe spaces of belonging for youth, so they have the space to grow, explore, and learn. This would, ideally, result in strong community ties and increased civic engagement. The data collected also revealed that respondents felt as though they had greater efficacy as queer citizens than as young citizens. What this suggests, in essence, is a dichotomy of citizenship as experienced by these rangatahi. Respondents felt, to a certain extent, that they were more able to make claims for inclusion as a member of the LGBTIQ+ community than as a young person. Political scientists need to further explore how forms of citizenship and their perceived efficacy relate to political participation. Data tests also found that there was no link between engagement with the queer community and volunteering, despite the *Youth 2000* reports repeatedly finding that queer youth volunteer more than their non-queer counterparts.

[160] This suggests that LGBTIQ+ youth have reasons beyond engagement with the queer community as their motivation for volunteering. It also suggests that these young people are, perhaps, engaging with the LGBTIQ+ community in a way in which they are seeking support from the community, rather than being at a stage where they can give back to the community by way of volunteering.

This thesis has also sought to add to empirical research about the queer community in Aotearoa New Zealand. While the community is increasing in visibility and support (one only has to look to events such as Big Gay Out, the Auckland Pride Parade, and Out in the Park — to name a few), there is still a lack of comprehensive and wide-ranging research about LGBTIQ+ peoples — particularly queer youth — in Aotearoa New Zealand. The most comprehensive, perhaps, is the *Youth 2000* reports (several of which have been referenced throughout this thesis), which always have at least a chapter dedicated solely to findings related to the queer community. However, the future of this research is uncertain, as the research team no longer has secure funding and is still attempting to secure funding for the scheduled 2018 surveys.[161] The Gay Auckland Periodic Sex Survey and Gay Men's Online Sex Survey have also had their funding cut recently.[162] This is disconcerting; as the literature review of this thesis revealed, there is limited research about LGBTIQ+ folks in Aotearoa New Zealand — particularly that which is recent. Funding cuts make it increasingly difficult for comprehensive studies to be undertaken. While the empirical research presented in this thesis is vastly different to these aforementioned studies, it still provides a valuable

[160] Clark, et al., "Young People Attracted to the Same Sex or Both Sexes: Findings from the Youth '12 National Youth Health and Wellbeing Survey."; Rossen, et al., "Youth '07 the Health and Wellbeing of Secondary School Students in New Zealand: Results for Young People Attracted to the Same or Both Sexes."
[161] "About the Youth2000 Survey Series: National Youth Health and Wellbeing Surveys," *The University of Auckland Faculty of Medical and Health Sciences*, accessed February 10, 2017, https://www.fmhs.auckland.ac.nz/en/faculty/adolescent-health-research-group/youth2000-national-youth-health-survey-series.html.
[162] "Researcher: Vital HIV Study 'Definitely Off'," *GayNZ*, November 6, 2016.

contribution to the wide-ranging experiences and lives of queer folks in Aotearoa New Zealand. It is important to encourage a wide range of studies about LGBTIQ+ peoples, so we can understand their struggles, and learn how to make society more inclusive for them.

This research has investigated the intersection of LGBTIQ+ and youth participation fields, providing a refreshing exploration of political participation. It has explored formal/informal, public/private, and individual/private conceptions of participation theory. Ultimately, the empirical research sits in the liminal spaces between these competing traditional/alternative focuses of political participation studies. This thesis has intertwined and explored these different conceptions of participation, in order to broaden the ways in which political scientists define political participation, serving to make the field more inclusive of young people and minority demographics such as LGBTIQ+ peoples.

Appendices

Appendix A

Copies of the survey were sent to the following organisations and people:

- School's Out
- Inside Out
- Tranzform
- Evolve health services
- Vibe health services
- Boys and Girls Institute
- BOX Oceania
- Wellington High School
- Wellington East Girls School
- Onslow College
- Kapiti Youth Services
- Newlands College
- Hutt Valley High School
- Aotea College
- Tawa College
- Otaki High School
- Bishop Viard School
- Mana College
- Samuel Marsden College
- Hutt International Boys School
- Silverstream College
- St. Pat's School Silverstream
- Upper Hutt High School
- Chilton College
- Naenae College
- Hutt Valley Steiner School
- St. Bernard's College
- St. Oran's College
- Taita College
- Queen Margaret College
- St. Cath's College
- St. Mary's College
- St. Pat's College Wellington
- Zeal youth services
- Deaf Aotearoa
- Wellington City Library
- Hutt Valley Library

- Kapiti Coast Library
- Ara Taiohi
- Outline
- Wellington College
- Wainuomata High School
- Intersex Trust
- Breaking Boundaries
- Rainbow Connections Wellington
- Wellington Young Feminists
- Wellington Youth Council
- Hutt Valley Youth Council
- Kapiti Coast Youth Council
- Youth Disability Network
- Youth Infusion
- PPTA Rainbow Network
- Justin Lester
- Grant Robertson
- Chris Hipkins
- Paul Foster-Bell
- Chris Bishop
- Louisa Wall
- Jan Logie
- Kris Fa'afoi
- Jo Coughlan
- Paul Eagle
- Celia Wade-Brown
- Peter Dunne
- Nick Leggett
- Sarah Free
- Andy Foster
- David Lee
- Simon Marsh
- Iona Pannett
- Mark Peck
- Helene Ritche
- Malcolm Sparrow
- Simon Wolfe
- Nicola Young
- Massive Church
- Arise Church
- AOC Wellington
- Reformed Church
- Wellington Gay Welfare Group
- Uni Q
- Young Act
- Young Nationals
- Young Greens
- FAF Swag

- Youth Parliament

- Youth Disability Network

- Young Labour

- UN Youth

- Wellington City Council

- Porirua City Council

- Hutt City Council

- Kapiti Coast Council

- Northern Hills Church

Tēnā koe,

My name is Brodie Fraser and I am a postgraduate student at Victoria University of Wellington. I am currently undertaking a Masters of Political Science, with a research focus on the political participation of young LGBTIQ+ peoples.

My research is aimed at high school aged young people (13-17), and I was hoping your organisation might be able to share information about my research with the young people you work with. Would you be willing to share links to my survey amongst your networks? I am wanting to find LGBTIQ+ identifying young people in the Wellington region who would be willing to spend 10-15 minutes completing the survey.

My research has approval from the Human Ethics Committee at Victoria. Do let me know if you have any questions.

Ngā mihi nui,

Brodie Fraser.

Masters of Political Science Thesis: Political Participation of Queer Identifying Rangatahi

Brodie Fraser

Information Sheet

Purpose of the Study.

The aim of the study to explore the ways in which high-school aged LGBTIQ+ people participate in politics.

What will the study involve?

The study will involve filling out a survey about your views of politics, how you participate in politics, and your relationship with the LGBTIQ+ community. The survey will take 10-20 minutes to complete. Surveys will be completed online, or in person where you will be able to hand deliver results to me in unmarked and unidentifiable envelopes.

Do you have to take part?

Participation in the research project is voluntary. Surveys will be anonymous, and because of this, you will not be able to withdraw after participating in the survey.

Will your participation in the study be kept confidential?

Yes. Surveys will be anonymous and I will ensure that no clues to your identity appear in any publication related to the research project. All efforts will be made to report the findings in a way that does not identify any participants.

What will happen to the information which you give?

The data will be kept confidential for the duration of the study. On completion of the study, they will be retained for a further 7 years and then destroyed. The information you give might be used in further studies.

What will happen to the results?

The results will be presented in my Masters of Political Science thesis, which will potentially be published in academic journals. I will share the results on my public social media platforms, and with the schools and organisations that assisted in recruiting participants.

What are the possible disadvantages of taking part?

I don't predict any negative consequences for you in taking part; anonymity of the data will ensure that your identity is not revealed. If you have not come out, I will ensure that I do not do anything to reveal your sexuality and/or gender identity.

Ethical Approval.

This study has ethical approval from the Human Ethics Committee at Victoria University of Wellington.

Any further queries?

If you need any further information or have any further comments, you may always contact me:

Brodie Fraser

fraserbrod@myvuw.ac.nz

If you wish to my contact my supervisor, please contact:

Hilde Coffe

(04) 463 6681

Hilde.coffe@vuw.ac.nz

If you have any concerns about the ethical conduct of this research you may contact the Victoria University HEC Convener:

Associate Professor Susan Corbett

(04) 463 5480

Susan.corbett@vuw.ac.nz

By partaking in the survey, you are giving your consent for any data you give to be used in this research.

Appendix D

General Information

To what extent do you identify as queer and/or sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity diverse (i.e LGBTIQ+)?

O	O	O	O	O
Not at all	Very little	Somewhat	A lot	Completely

To what extent do you consider this identity as being political?

O	O	O	O	O
Not at all	Very little	Somewhat	A lot	Completely

To what extent do you feel as though you belong to the LGBTIQ+ community?

O	O	O	O	O
Not at all	Very little	Somewhat	A lot	Completely

Generally speaking, how interested are you in politics?

O	O	O	O	O
Not at all	Very little	Somewhat	A lot	Completely

Political knowledge & institutionalised forms of participation

Please check all that apply. Have you ever:

How often do you:

Attend protests?

O	O	O	O	O
Never	Sometimes	About half the time	Most of the time	Always

Write to an MP?

O	O	O	O	O
Never	Sometimes	About half the time	Most of the time	Always

Sign petitions?

O	O	O	O	O
Never	Sometimes	About half the time	Most of the time	Always

Watch Parliament?

O	O	O	O	O
Never	Sometimes	About half the time	Most of the time	Always

Engage with MPs on social media?

O	O	O	O	O
Never	Sometimes	About half the time	Most of the time	Always

Engage with a political party (online or in person)?

O	O	O	O	O
Never	Sometimes	About half the time	Most of the time	Always

Volunteer?

O	O	O	O	O
Never	Sometimes	About half the time	Most of the time	Always

Boycott buying a certain product for political reasons?

O	O	O	O	O
Never	Sometimes	About half the time	Most of the time	Always

Change your Facebook profile picture to support a campaign?

O	O	O	O	O
Never	Sometimes	About half the time	Most of the time	Always

Discuss politics on social media?

O	O	O	O	O
Never	Sometimes	About half the time	Most of the time	Always

As a member of the LGBTIQ+ community, to what extent do you feel as though you have the ability and power to create political change?

O	O	O	O	O
Not at all	Very little	Somewhat	A Lot	Completely

As a young person under the voting age, to what extent do you feel as though you have the ability and power to create political change?

O	O	O	O	O
Not at all	Very little	Somewhat	A Lot	Completely

Alternative forms of participation

How often do you:

Attend events in the LGBTIQ+ community?

O	O	O	O	O
Never	Sometimes	About half the time	Most of the time	Always

Educate people about the queer community?

O	O	O	O	O
Never	Sometimes	About half the time	Most of the time	Always

Been involved in a community organisation?

O	O	O	O	O
Never	Sometimes	About half the time	Most of the time	Always

How active are you in your school community?

O	O	O	O	O
Never	Sometimes	About half the time	Most of the time	Always

How active are in the community you live in?

O	O	O	O	O
Never	Sometimes	About half the time	Most of the time	Always

How active are you in the LGBTIQ+ community?

O	O	O	O	O
Never	Sometimes	About half the time	Most of the time	Always

How active are you in any other communities or groups (e.g. sporting, religious, cultural, etc.)?

O	O	O	O	O
Never	Sometimes	About half the time	Most of the time	Always

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