

Apr 23rd, 11:30 AM

## How Queer Speech in Popular Media May Be Changing Society's Views on the LGBTQ+ Community

Nicholas Brandt  
*Northeastern Illinois University*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://neiudc.neiu.edu/srcas>

---

Brandt, Nicholas, "How Queer Speech in Popular Media May Be Changing Society's Views on the LGBTQ+ Community" (2021). *NEIU Student Research and Creative Activities Symposium*. 5.  
<https://neiudc.neiu.edu/srcas/2021/s06/5>

This Event is brought to you for free and open access by the Conferences and Symposia at NEIU Digital Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in NEIU Student Research and Creative Activities Symposium by an authorized administrator of NEIU Digital Commons. For more information, please contact [h-owen3@neiu.edu](mailto:h-owen3@neiu.edu), [wallis@neiu.edu](mailto:wallis@neiu.edu).

## **How Queer Speech in popular media may be changing society's views on the LGBTQ+ Community**

Nicholas Brandt

Department of Linguistics, Northeastern Illinois University, Chicago, IL 60625

Recent research in the area of queer speech, specifically research done by Robin Queen, has shifted the focus of research toward the “doing” aspect of language. In concert with this approach to studying queer language I explore what the prevalence of queer language in popular media is doing to the views of the community by mainstream society. The importance of this research is that it shows how popular media icons from various subgroups in American society, like the queer community, can use their language to bring about a greater acceptance of these subgroups within society as a whole.

The methods I use to show this include creating three corpora, two of which include mainstream media articles. The first contains data from text that was written in 2005, which was a few years before *RuPaul's Drag Race* started, but during time when acceptance of queer culture was increasing, thanks in part to the popular TV show *Will and Grace*. The second corpus contains data from mainstream media articles during 2017, a time after which *RuPaul's Drag Race* had gained in popularity. The final corpus includes data directly from season 9 of *RuPaul's Drag Race* season. The two mainstream media corpora are then compared individually against the *RuPaul's Drag Race* corpus for evidence of convergence between the language used in *RuPaul's Drag Race* and the Mainstream media.

The analysis of language used in mainstream media from two different periods in time and language used in *RuPaul's Drag Race* yield evidence of a convergence of the two. This is important because the language used in *RuPaul's Drag Race* is Queer speech and generally when two language groups converge it is because they like each other and want to be more accommodating to one another.

In conclusion there has been a convergence between the language of mainstream media and the language of drag queens which is queer speech. Thus, according to Accommodation Theory (Giles & Coupland 1991); society at large is becoming more accepting of queer society as a result of drag queens who use queer speech.