

THE ARTICULATED THOUGHTS OF HETEROSEXUAL MALE COLLEGE
STUDENTS IN REACTION TO ANTI-GAY HATE SPEECH

by

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Abstract

Though scholars acknowledge heterosexuals can be targets of anti-gay aggression, little research has examined the effects of such victimization. This study examines how the experience of being the target of anti-gay hate speech impacts heterosexual males and how these impacts differ from those of hostile non-hate speech. Using the Articulated Thoughts in Simulated Situations Paradigm (ATSS), 58 heterosexual male college students were randomly assigned to one of two ATSS conditions: an anti-gay hate speech condition (“fag”) or a hostile non-hate speech condition (“asshole”). Results indicate that being the target of anti-gay hate speech resulted in significantly less anxiety than hostile non-hate speech. However, participants who attributed their being targeted to anti-gay motivations expressed significantly more anger than participants who did not.

Chapter 1: Background and Significance

What is Hate Speech?

Hate speech is not simply an expression of anger or hate. It includes the communication of intent to subjugate a target group or an individual thought to belong to that target group. It has been defined as “words intended to harm or intimidate an individual because of their membership in a minority group” (Herek, 1989) and language “used to ambush, terrorize, wound, humiliate, and degrade” (Matsuda, Lawrence, Delgado, & Crenshaw, 1993). Matsuda et al. (1993) define hate speech using three criteria: first, it is speech that suggests inferiority; second, it is directed at a member of an oppressed group; and third, it is degrading, hateful, and persecutory. Further, hate speech is a core feature of hate crimes, often playing a critical role in the defining of a crime as a hate crime. Herek (1989) argues that hate speech, even in the absence of physical aggression, may itself be declared a hate crime because of its impact on victims. Though the First Amendment aims to preserve free speech, many governmental and non-governmental institutions have regulations that limit the use of language that are judged to express bias towards particular groups or members of those groups.

What is often overlooked or underappreciated in societal and academic considerations of hate speech is that it does not need to be aimed at members of a socially-devalued group to be harmful. In fact, some types of hate speech, like the use of terms like “fag,” are directed at individuals who do not belong to the group to

which these terms refer, but instead may often be used by individuals to derogate or ostracize others. The use of such terms likely has effects on both members of targeted groups and on individuals who do not belong to targeted groups. In fact, Burn (2000) found in a survey of college students that males often used terms like “faggot” as an insult among their peer group. Anti-gay terms are likely used to deride others outside of one’s peer group as well, but there is little data on the frequency of such events.

How Common is Anti-gay Hate Speech?

What limited research there is regarding the prevalence of anti-gay verbal harassment comes from studies addressing experiences of sexual minority victimization. In a national study of the experiences of sexual minority middle school and high school students conducted by the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network (GLSEN, 2001), nearly 83% of respondents reported being verbally harassed or threatened because of their sexual orientation in the previous year. Nearly 42% of respondents reported being physically harassed and 21% physically assaulted during the same period.

Another study, conducted by the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF, 2003), of 1,669 sexual minority respondents from fourteen college and university campuses across the United States found derogatory remarks about sexual orientation to be the most frequently cited form of anti-gay harassment. Of those reporting anti-gay harassment within the previous year, 48% reported being verbally

harassed, 11% reported threats of physical violence, and 2% reported actual physical assault. Twenty percent of all respondents feared for their safety because of their sexual orientation and 51% concealed their sexual orientation to avoid intimidation. In total, about one third of gay, lesbian, or bisexual respondents reported experiences of harassment based on their sexual orientation.

A study by Herek, Gillis, Cogan, and Glunt (1997) of sexual minority adults found that more than 75% of their sample had been the target of anti-gay harassment since age 16. Similar to the findings of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (2003) study, approximately half Herek et al's (1997) sample had been the target of verbal harassment within the previous year.

It should be noted that these studies tell us nothing about the experiences of heterosexuals regarding anti-gay hate victimization. While the statistics reported in each sample vary, possibly as a function of the age-related decline associated with all forms of aggression (Tremblay, 2002), taken as a whole, these studies demonstrate that hate-based verbal harassment (e.g., hate speech) is the most commonly experienced type of victimization among sexual minorities. As mentioned, it is likely that such experiences are common not only among sexual minorities, but as the findings of Burn (2000) suggest, among heterosexual populations as well.

The Impacts of Anti-gay Hate Speech

The research to date has suggested that hate crimes are, as might be expected, harmful. The findings from two studies of sexual minority adults found that anti-gay hate crime victims, as compared to non-hate crime victims, were more anxious, more angry, believed less in the benevolence of others, and reported perceptions of greater vulnerability to future victimization (Herek et al., 1997; Herek, Gillis, & Glunt, 1999). Based on these findings, it seems that the experience of hate crime victimization, as compared with that of non-hate victimization, causes individuals to see the world in a different light. These data indicate cognitive changes that Janoff-Bulman (1989) suggests occur with traumatic events. She suggests that such events challenge basic assumptions, altering in negative ways how victims view themselves, others, the world, and the future. These basic assumptions include benevolence of the world, meaningfulness of the world, and worthiness of self (Janoff-Bulman, 1989). The negative mental health outcomes linked to having such beliefs challenged include depression, anxiety, and Post-traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). How non-minority hate crime targets experience hate crimes or what the effects of such experiences are remains unknown.

How Might Anti-gay Hate Speech Impact Heterosexual Males?

According to Harry (1992), four elements must be in place for anti-gay violence to occur: (1) victims must violate norms; (2) victims must be distinguishable;

(3) perpetrators must have a need to declare their status; and (4) perpetrators must have skewed or disconnected morals. These requisites suggest that one must be a distinguishable gay target or violate accepted gender norms. This perspective does not account for the possibility that an individual may be targeted in the absence of either or both of Harry's first two criteria. One can be a heterosexual male, the target of anti-gay hate speech, be impacted by the experience, and thereby become a victim of anti-gay hate speech. However, Harry's proposed necessary features suggest what being the target of anti-gay hate victimization might mean to victims, whether they are a sexual minority male or not.

As mentioned, one purpose of hate victimization is, by definition, to communicate that one is being targeted because of their actual (or perceived) group membership and to subjugate the individual based on that group membership (Berk, 1990). This is of importance in understanding the impact that falsely assumed sexual minority status might have on heterosexual males. For heterosexual males who are targeted because of perceived minority status, such victimization might pose several threats: they may believe that someone judges them to be, look, or behave like a homosexual; they may be treated as a sexual minority again (i.e., re-victimized); or friends or family may reject them because of this.

Though no research to date has directly examined how heterosexual males react to being the target of anti-gay hostility, research on aggression and negative attitudes towards homosexuals may offer clues. Two studies (Bernat, Calhoun,

Adams, & Zeichner, 2001; Parrot & Zeichner, 2005) provide a link between homosexual stimuli and anger and aggression. Bernat et al. (2001) provide evidence of an association between higher levels of homophobia and higher levels of negative affect, anxiety, anger, and physical aggression towards gay males (as measured by electric shock intensity and duration) after viewing a homoerotic video. Parrot & Zeichner (2005) replicated and extended the design of Bernat et al. (2001) by providing a comparison between viewing heterosexual and homosexual erotic videos. In addition to supporting the results of Bernat et al. (2001), the results of this study also provide evidence of a positive association between beliefs in traditional gender roles and homophobia. Although these studies tend to utilize homoerotic stimuli (homoerotic video) to elicit emotional arousal, they relate such findings to the threat that homosexuality poses to masculinity, though such links have yet to be empirically established.

While anti-gay aggression is likely to have many correlates, these data indicate that anti-gay attitudes are associated with anti-gay aggression and that there is a link between experiencing homosexual stimuli and directing anger and aggression at gay males. In the instance of being attacked, verbally or physically, because someone thinks they are gay, heterosexual males with higher levels of anti-gay attitudes are more likely to respond with aggression than they might if they were attacked for other non-biased reasons. This reaction may ultimately relate to the threat that being assumed to be gay represents to one's masculinity.

Study Aims

Previous research has examined minority targets' reactions to hate speech or hate crime using retrospective approaches (Herek, Cogan & Gillis, 2002; Herek, Gillis, Cogan, & Glunt, 1997; Herek, Gillis & Cogan, 1999; Hershberger & D'Augelli, 1995; Nielsen, 2002; Rose & Mechanic, 2002) or has examined how society or bystanders might perceive hate speech victimization (Boeckmann & Liew, 2002; Cowan & Hodge, 1996; Cowan & Mettrick, 2002; Leets, 2002; Leets, 2001; Rayburn & Davison, 2002). Though there are a few articles on the topic of anti-gay hate speech, few if any data exists on the impact that anti-gay hate speech has on heterosexual males. Furthermore, little published research to date has sought to experimentally examine targets' reactions to hate speech in a controlled setting.

The present study seeks to address the gaps in this body of research by experimentally examining how heterosexual males might respond to being the target of anti-gay hate speech and by employing an assessment method that avoids the problems of retrospective self-report (Davison, Robins, & Johnson, 1983). This study examines how heterosexual males experience anti-gay hate speech, how this experience differs from the experience of hostile non-hate speech, and how anti-gay attitudes and previous victimization experiences relate to these reactions. Given the findings of previous research and the stigma associated with homosexuality, we hypothesized that heterosexual males would react with greater anxiety and greater anger, hostility, and aggression to experiencing anti-gay hate speech than they would

to experiencing hostile non-hate speech. Further, it was expected that participants' reactions to anti-gay hate speech would be related to anti-gay attitudes such that participants endorsing higher levels of anti-gay attitudes would react with more anger, hostility, and aggression while experiencing anti-gay hate speech than would participants endorsing lower levels of anti-gay attitudes. Finally, we expected that previous victimization within the past year would be related to expressed anxiety across all conditions.

Chapter 2: Methods

Participants

Fifty-nine college-age, self-identified heterosexual males were recruited from the University of Southern California's undergraduate subject pool and also from the wider university community. One participant was dropped from analyses due to multiple extreme values, yielding a final sample size of 58. The mean age (20.1 years old) and age range (18-27 years old) of our sample reflects a college population. Our sample was racially and ethnically diverse with approximately 7% Black and African Americans, 7% Hispanic or Latino, 3.4% Indian or Native American, 24% Asian or Pacific Islander, 48% White Non-Hispanic, and 10% indicating other race or ethnicity. All participants were offered either credit towards psychology courses' research participation requirements or entry in a cash lottery.

Measures

The Articulated Thoughts in Simulated Situations Paradigm. The Articulated Thoughts in Simulated Situations paradigm (ATSS; Davison, Robins, & Johnson, 1983) was used to examine participants' reactions to anti-gay hate or hostile non-hate speech. In the ATSS paradigm, participants are asked to imagine themselves in a hypothetical situation and, at intervals throughout the scenario, speak-aloud the thoughts that are going through their mind. The ATSS paradigm is a nearly concurrent assessment tool utilized to "present specific, concrete stressors designed to

elicit cognitions” that are of theoretical interest in the specified situation (Davison, Vogel, and Coffman, 1997). The flexibility of the ATSS paradigm provides the opportunity to isolate hate speech from other phenomena typically associated with hate victimization (i.e., physical harassment etc.) and allows for a direct comparison between hate speech and a comparable hostile non-hate speech condition.

ATSS Scenarios. The ATSS scenarios constructed for this study were intended to reflect a realistic analog of experiences of verbal aggression based on either minority or non-minority status. The two scenarios were constructed so that they were identical, with the exception of the type of speech used. In both scenarios, the participant is asked to imagine that he is shopping in a grocery store late at night. The participant notices another male in the grocery store staring at him and, then shortly afterwards, this other person becomes verbally hostile. Soon it becomes clear that the other person in the scenario is becoming hostile toward the participant either because he is perceived to be gay (anti-gay hate speech condition) or for some other reason (hostile non-hate speech condition). This becomes evident as the participant hears the other person say either “this fag here keeps looking at me” or “this asshole here keeps looking at me.” The scenarios proceed identically with the exception of the type of speech used. See Appendix A and B for full ATSS scenarios.

ATSS Variables. ATSS coded variables included verbalizations of anxious thoughts; verbalizations of angry, hostile, and aggressive thoughts; and three codes reflecting attributions of being targeted because of racial ethnic prejudice, sexual

orientation prejudice, or non-prejudicial reasons. Further definition of ATSS coded variables can be found in Appendix D. ATSS coded variables were assessed for frequency of occurrence. Frequency was determined by summing the occurrence of words or statements reflecting ATSS coded variables across the segments.

ATSS Variable Coding. Transcripts of participants' responses were scored by raters blind to the ATSS scenario condition. Raters were extensively trained using ATSS transcripts generated from pilot study participants. Raters were paired, each coding pair was assigned ATSS coding variables, and they were directed to code transcripts independently.

Transcripts were grouped and coded in blocks of twenty-five to facilitate the identification of any difficulties raters might have experienced in coding. Inter-rater reliability was examined within each block and if a significant discrepancy (intra-class correlation coefficients less than .70) in ratings were identified, the raters were asked to meet and discuss their understanding of the problematic code without reference to specific transcripts. Raters were then sent back to recode the entire block of transcripts without reference to their previous coding score sheets. If discrepancies were found after the second round of coding, the raters were asked to meet with the investigator to discuss the problematic code further and then sent back to recode. If satisfactory inter-rater reliability was not reached after this third attempt, then data from the last coding were accepted as final.

Inter-rater reliability of rater pairs for ATSS coded variables was assessed

using intra-class coefficients (ICC; McGraw & Wong, 1996). ICC values of ATSS coded variables ranged from .73 to .96. Final scores of ATSS coded variables were obtained by averaging the values obtained by the two raters, resulting in a single value for each ATSS coded variable. See Table 1.

Table 1.
Intra-class Coefficients for ATSS Coded Variables

Variable	ICC Values
ATSS-Anxiety	.730
ATSS-AHA	.955
ATSS-Attr SO	.938
ATSS-Attr Prej	nv
ATSS-Attr Other	nv

Note. ATSS-Anxiety= ATSS coded anxiety; ATSS-AHA= ATSS coded anger/hostility/aggression; ATSS-Attr SO= ATSS coded sexual orientation based attributions; ATSS-Attr Prej= ATSS coded other minority status attributions; ATSS-Attr Other= ATSS coded other (nonprejudicial) attributions. ^{nv} Zero variance due to lack of occurrence.

Demographic Questionnaire. Participants completed a demographic questionnaire that included questions regarding sexual minority group membership. Given that the current study examines heterosexual males' reactions to anti-gay hate speech, we assessed sexual orientation with a multidimensional approach to be certain

that our sample consisted solely of heterosexual males. Specifically, in addition to standard demographic variables (race/ethnicity, religion, religiosity, parents' SES and sex), we asked information regarding sexual identity, sexual behavior, sexual fantasy, and sexual attraction.

Schedule of Prior Victimization. This 46-item questionnaire, a modification of that utilized by Rayburn (2003), asks participants to indicate whether they have experienced a range of verbal, physical or sexual assault experiences over the past 12 months and, if they have, how frequently. Types of victimization assessed in this measure include not only racial/ethnic bias and anti-gay victimization, but also non-bias victimization such as theft and assault.

Implicit Associations Task (IAT; Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998). The IAT is a computerized sorting task in which participants assign a range of stimuli representing two categories of interest to one of two target categories. From this task, composite measures of automatic bias are produced by measuring the amount of time it takes participants to respond to the stimulus items for each category (see Greenwald, et al., 1998 for more information about the IAT).

The IAT administered in this study was designed to quantify the degree to which participants hold negative or positive automatic (implicit) sexual orientation bias (homosexuality vs. heterosexuality). In this particular version of the IAT, individuals were presented with a picture of two brides (homosexuality) and asked to choose between assigning it to a "Good or Gay People" category or a "Bad or Straight

People” grouping. The groupings were then switched to their polar opposites: “Bad or Gay People” or “Good or Straight People.” The amount of time an individual took to correctly assign the stimuli to the appropriate category was recorded and the mean for each combination (“Good or Gay People,” “Good or Straight People,” “Bad or Gay People,” and “Bad or Straight People”) was computed. Faster response times indicate a relative strength in association and slower ones indicate a relative weakness in association (Nosek, Greenwald, & Banaji, 2005). For instance, an individual who has faster response times when he is required to assign homosexual stimuli to the category “Bad or Gay People”, as compared to when he are asked to assign the same stimuli to the category “Good or Gay People”, has a negative automatic association for homosexuals. On the other hand, an individual that responds faster to the task of assigning homosexual stimuli to the category “Good or Gay People”, as compared to when he is required to assign homosexual stimuli to the category “Bad or Gay People”, has a positive automatic association for homosexuals.

Modern Homonegativity Scale (MHS-G; Morrison & Morrison, 2002). The MHS was developed to assess contemporary attitudes towards gay men. Unlike more traditional measures, the MHS does not examine attitudes based on more traditional objections to homosexuality. This 12-item measure asks participants to rate the extent to which they agree with statements such as “Gay men have become far too confrontational in the demand for equal rights” on a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 being “Strongly Disagree” and 5 being “Strongly Agree.” Compared with more traditional

measures of attitudes towards gay men and lesbians, like the Attitudes Towards Lesbians and Gays Scale (ATLG-S; Herek, 1984), the items of the MHS are less extreme, have been shown to be less prone to the floor effects seen with measures like the ATLG-S, and have been shown to predict prejudicial behavior (Morrison & Morrison, 2002). Additionally, the MHS demonstrates good test-retest reliability ($r=.91$).

State-Trait Anxiety Inventory-State subscale (STAI-S; Spielberger, 1983). This 20-item questionnaire asks participants to rate the degree to which they currently feel nervous, apprehensive, or worried on a 4-point Likert scaling. As such, the STAI-S measures situationally dependent states of anxiety and was used in this study to measure baseline anxiety and post-exposure anxiety. The STAI-S was administered as a pre-ATSS and post-ATSS measure. Reported test-retest reliability ($\alpha=.33$) supports such use in that state-based measures are expected to have low test-retest reliability because of the state dependence of the form of anxiety measured.

State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory-State Anger subscale (STAXI-SA; Spielberger, 1996). The STAXI-SA is a 10-item questionnaire that asks participants to rate the degree to which items such as “I am furious” reflect how they currently feel on a Likert scale of 1 (“Not at all”) to 4 (“Very much so”). The STAXI-SA is intended to measure situationally dependent anger; the measure’s low test-retest reliability ($\alpha=.25$) supports its use for this purpose. As such, the measure was utilized as a pre-ATSS and post-ATSS measure.

Procedures

The experiment was conducted in one session lasting approximately 1 ½ hours. After consent was obtained, the participants were administered the aforementioned questionnaires. The experimenter then administered the IAT. After the participant completed the IAT, the experimenter entered the room and explained the ATSS task and informed the participant that they would now complete a ATSS practice task. During the ATSS Instruction tape, which included an ATSS practice exercise, the experimenter remained in the room with the participant to be sure that he adhered to the ATSS procedure and coached him if he was in need of further explanation. Then the participant heard and responded to either the anti-gay or hostile non-hate speech ATSS tape. The participant then completed the post-experimental questionnaires, including the STAI-S and the STAXI-SA for a second time.

Chapter 3: Results

Manipulation Check

Several measures were utilized to assess whether participants in each condition perceived the scenarios as intended. First, we examined the number of times during the ATSS participants expressed that they were being victimized because they were thought to be gay or bisexual. Significant differences were found between the two conditions (See Table 2). The mean values of this code reflected participants' belief that they were targeted because they were thought to be gay, with the anti-gay hate speech condition being significantly higher than in the non-hate condition ($t=3.42$, $p=.001$), suggesting that participants perceived the scenarios as intended. We also coded for thoughts reflecting participants' beliefs that they were targeted because of racial or ethnic bias or for other reasons. Codes reflecting these two attributions did not occur. See Table 2.

A second manipulation check measure was taken during the debriefing interview. Participants were asked to rate on a 5-point Likert scale the extent to which they believed the perpetrator in the scenario was aggressive toward them because of their real or perceived sexual orientation. Significant group differences were again found with the mean rating for this measure being higher in the hate condition than in the non-hate condition ($t=5.94$, $p<.001$) even after controlling for experiences of victimization within the previous year. None of the participants expressed a belief that they were being targeted for any reasons other than perceived sexual orientation.

These measures suggest that participants in the anti-gay hate scenario believed that they were being targeted because the perpetrator believed them to be gay.

We were also interested in how engaging and realistic participants found the two experimental ATSS scenarios. These measures included the realism of the scenes participants imagined during the ATSS, the validity of the thoughts participants vocalized during the ATSS, and the extent to which participants actually felt as if the situation was happening to them. Participants were asked to respond to each item using a 5-point Likert scale, with 1 being the lowest value and 5 being the highest. No significant differences between the two conditions were found using independent samples t-tests. See Table 2.

Mean values of these three measures suggest that participants were moderately engaged by the ATSS scenarios and that participants believed that their thoughts verbalized during the ATSS were reasonably similar to those they might have if the situation actually occurred to them (see Table 2).

Table 2.

 Manipulation Check: Attributions Regarding ATSS Condition

Variable	Hate mean/sd	Non-hate mean/sd	t-value	df	p-value
Attr SO	3.3/3.5	1.6/4.3	3.42	51	.001
SoTarg	3.6/1.5	1.5/1.0	5.94	49	.000
Realism	3.2/.93	3.2/1.1	0.12	56	.90
Thoughts	4.3/1.2	4.0/.87	0.85	55	.40
Engaged	2.8/1.2	3.0/1.2	-0.75	56	.45

Note. Attr SO= ATSS coded sexual orientation based attributions; SoTarg=debriefing: belief about being targeted because of being believed to be gay; Realism= debriefing: how realistic; Thoughts= debriefing: realism of thoughts; Engaged= debriefing: engagement in ATSS. Reported means and standard deviations are for untransformed variables. Test statistic and significance values are reported for tests of variables after square root transformations.

Experimental Group Differences

To ensure that participants in the anti-gay hate speech and hostile non-hate conditions were comparable, we examined differences on age, race, and ethnicity, negative attitudes towards gay men, and consideration of issues regarding race, gender, and sexual orientation. Additionally, because our primary measures relied on participants' verbalization during the ATSS scenarios, we conducted an independent

groups t-test on the mean number of words participants produced in each condition.

The two groups did not differ on any of these measures, giving us confidence that the groups did not differ with regard to these variables we believe to be important with regard to this study. See Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3.
Demographic Differences Between Experimental Groups

Variable	Hate Condition	Non-hate Condition	Value/significance
Age	20.3/1.9	19.9/1.7	$t = 0.86, p = .40^a$
Race	Asian=20.7% Black/Afr.Am.=13.8% Hispanic/Latino=3.4% Indian/Ind.Am.=3.4% White=48.3% Other=10.3%	Asian=27.6% Black/Afr.Am.=0% Hispanic/Latino=10.3% Indian/Ind.Am.=3.4% White=48.3% Other=10.3%	$\chi^2 = 5.29/.38^b$

Note. “Other” racial/ethnic category may include those of Middle Eastern ethnicity and others who feel their race/ethnicity was not represented by one of the response options. No participants indicated Native American as their racial/ethnic group. ^a = independent groups t-test with 56 df, group means, and standard deviations. ^b = Pearson Chi-square with within group category percentages

Table 4.
Independent Samples t-tests of Group Differences in Potential Confounders

Variable	Hate mean/sd	Non-hate mean/sd	t-value	df	p-value
GLB issues	2.1/0.9	1.9/0.6	1.02	46	.31
Race issues	3.1/0.6	3.0/0.8	0.55	56	.58
Gender issues	3.0/0.9	2.8/0.8	0.89	56	.38
Word Count	771/309	733/243	0.51	51	.61
MHS	32.5/9.9	33.4/9.1	-0.38	54	.71
IAT	.62/.51	.50/.39	1.01	56	.32
CrVt12 ^a	2.7/2.4	1.5/1.4	2.23	45	.03
RaVt12	.68/1.3	.17/.38	1.97	31	.06
SoVt12	.03/.19	0/0	1.00	28	.31

Note. GLB issues = time thinking about gay, lesbian, and bisexual issues; Race issues = time thinking about racial/ethnic issues; Gender issues = time thinking about gender issues; ATSS-WC = ATSS word count; MHS = Modern Homonegativity Scale; IAT = Implicit Associations Task; CrVt12 = criminal victimization- past 12 months; RaVt12 = racial victimization- past 12 months; SoVt12 = sexual orientation victimization- past 12 months

Associations Between Variables

Given the association found in previous literature between negative attitudes toward gay men and aggression towards gay men, we examined the association between our measure of expressed anger, hostility, and aggression coded from ATSS

transcripts and negative attitudes toward gay men as measured by the Modern Homonegativity Scale-Gay (MHS) and also by the Implicit Associations Task (IAT) for participants in our anti-gay hate speech condition. The association between verbalized anger, hostility, and aggression and the MHS was not found to be significant ($r=-.01$, $p=.95$). Although the association between verbalized anger, hostility, and aggression and our self-report measure of negative attitudes toward gay men, the MHS, was not significant, the association between verbalized anger, hostility, and aggression and our implicit measure of negative attitudes toward gay men, the IAT, was found to be significant ($r=.38$, $p=.05$). We also examined the relationship between negative attitudes towards gay men (MHS) and the IAT and verbalized anxiety as coded from ATSS transcripts. Both the association between the MHS and verbalized anxiety ($r=-.08$, $p=.56$) and the IAT and verbalized anxiety ($r=-.20$, $p=.13$) were non-significant. While our paper-and-pencil measure of negative attitudes towards gay men, the MHS, was not associated with expressed anger, hostility, and aggression in the anti-gay hate speech condition, negative attitudes towards gay men, as measured by the IAT, was. Given this association, the IAT was included in later analysis.

We next examined the association between victimization experiences in the past year and verbalized anger, hostility, and aggression and verbalized anxiety. Victimization in the past year was not significantly associated with expressed anger, hostility, and aggression ($r=.19$, $p=.34$) or with expressed anxiety ($r=.23$, $p=.08$).

Contrary to expectations, our measure of experiences of victimization in the past year was not significantly associated with either outcome measure. However, because we thought such experiences would be important to consider with regard to verbalized anxiety, we included this measure in further analysis.

Primary Analyses

Our primary hypothesis was that anti-gay hate speech would evoke greater anger, hostility, and aggression than would hostile non-hate speech. Contrary to this hypothesis regarding the relationship between anti-gay hate speech and verbalized anger, hostility, and aggression, the difference between the two conditions was not significant ($t=.55$, $p=.59$), suggesting that experiencing anti-gay hate speech did not result in greater verbalized anger, hostility, and aggression. Although our measure of perceptions regarding victimization were initially considered part of the manipulation checks, we examined how it related to verbalized anger, hostility, and aggression because such beliefs are likely an important factor in how individuals experience victimization. We found that attributing victimization to the possibility that the perpetrator believes they are gay was associated with greater verbalized anger, hostility, and aggression ($t=4.00$, $p=.001$, $r\text{-squared}=.40$). See Tables 5 and 6.

Given that our implicit measure of negative attitudes towards gay men, the IAT, was found to be associated with verbalized anger, hostility, and aggression, we

examined the effect of negative attitudes towards gay men after controlling for the effects of the belief that they were being targeted because the perpetrator believed they were gay. We entered the IAT into the regression equation of the belief that the incident occurred because of real or perceived sexual identity on verbalized anger, hostility, and regression and found that the effects of implicit negative attitudes toward gay men were not significant ($t=1.00$, $p=.33$) even after considering the effect of attributing targeting to the perpetrator's belief that they are gay. See Table 6.

Table 5
Summary Statistics and t-test values for Variables of Interest

Variable	Hate mean/sd	Non-hate mean/sd	Possible range	Sample mean/sd	t-value	p-value
Anxiety	4.31/3.93	7.45/5.74	0+	5.94/5.15	-2.99	.004
AHA	14.41/10.36	12.41/11.03	0+	13.33/10.67	.55	.59
Attr SO	3.20/3.46	1.55/4.19	0+	2.35/3.91	3.42	.001
MHS	32.60/9.76	32.68/9.46	12-60	32.64/9.52	-.38	.71
IAT	.62/.51	.50/.39	0+	.56/.54	1.01	.32
STAI-S ^a	41.14/10.53	43.62/11.95	0-80	42.40/11.24	-.83	.41
STAXI ^a	13.39/4.58	14.66/7.28	0-40	14.04/6.09	-.79	.44

Note. Anxiety = ATSS coded anxiety; AHA = ATSS coded anger, hostility, and aggression; Attr SO = ATSS coded belief that the perpetrator believes they, the target, are gay; IAT = Implicit Associations Task; STAI-S = State-Trait Anxiety Inventory-State subscale; STAXI = State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory- State subscale. ^a = Post-ATSS values

Table 6
Regression Values for Models of Interest

Model		Estimate	t-value	p-value	R-Squared
AHA ^a	← Attr SO	.94	4.00	.001	.40
AHA ^a	← IAT	.52	1.00	.33	.43
	← Attr SO	.85	3.34	.003	.38
Anxiety	← Condition	.86	3.27	.002	.33
	← CrVt12	.61	2.04	.97	.17
STAI-S(1)	← STAI-S(2)/Condition	.48	1.37	.18	.20
STAXI(1)	← STAXI(2)/Condition	.18	.93	.37	.03

Note. Anxiety = ATSS coded anxiety; AHA = ATSS coded anger, hostility, and aggression; Attr SO = ATSS coded belief that the perpetrator believes they, the target, are gay; CrVt12 =criminal victimization- past 12 months; IAT = Implicit Associations Task; STAI-S = State-Trait Anxiety Inventory- State subscale; STAXI = State-Trait Anger Expression Inventory- State subscale. ^a = Anti-gay Hate condition only

We next examined the hypothesis that participants in the anti-gay hate speech condition would verbalize more anxiety than participants in the hostile non-hate speech condition using an independent groups t-test. This analysis did not support our hypothesis; instead, results of this analysis refute the hypothesis that experiencing anti-gay hate speech would result in more thoughts expressing anxiety than would experiencing hostile non-hate speech ($t=-2.99$, $p=.004$). This, in fact, suggests that experiencing hostile non-hate speech resulted in significantly greater anxiety than did experiencing anti-gay hate speech. Because we expected that previous victimization experiences in the past year might contribute to reactions to being targeted and

previous victimization experiences in the past year was associated with experimental condition, we examined the influence that such experiences had on verbalized anxiety by entering our measure of previous victimization experiences into our linear regression model of experimental condition regressed on expressed anxious thoughts. Results of this analysis indicate that victimization experiences within the past year are significant predictors of verbalized anxiety ($t=2.21$, $p=.03$). After controlling for the effects of these experiences, we found that the difference between the anti-gay hate speech condition and the hostile non-hate condition was greater ($t=3.27$, $p=.002$). These results suggest that experiencing victimization in the past year was an important predictor of verbalized anxiety and masked the difference between our anti-gay hate speech condition and our hostile non-hate speech condition. See Table 6.

Paper-and-pencil self-report measures of state anger (STAXI) and state anxiety (STAI) were also utilized in this study. Differences between conditions were examined using linear regression adjusting for pretest values. Significant differences between groups were not found using these measures. See Table 6.

Chapter 4: Discussion

Previous research on the impacts of hate speech, and hate victimization more broadly, has utilized retrospective methods and has tended to focus on sexual and other minority groups. In contrast, the present study examines the impacts of hate speech experimentally and focused on these effects in heterosexual men. The design of this study also allowed us to isolate the effects of anti-gay hate components from the effects of hostile speech per se. Further, this study examined the links between previous victimization experiences and anti-gay attitudes. As such, the findings of this study represent what may be a first step toward examining the wider impacts of hate victimization by looking beyond the most obvious victims.

Contrary to our expectations, experiencing anti-gay hate speech alone did not result in participants expressing greater anger, hostility, and aggression than they did in reaction to a verbal assault that had no anti-gay components. Instead, it was participants' beliefs that the perpetrator saw them as gay which resulted in their expressing greater anger, hostility, and aggression. While anti-gay attitudes were found to be associated with expressed anger, hostility, and aggression in the face of anti-gay hate speech, this association disappeared once we considered participants' beliefs about being targeted because the perpetrator thought they were gay. Also contrary to our predictions, experiencing hostile non-hate speech resulted in greater anxiety than did experiencing anti-gay hate speech. As expected, experiencing victimization in the past year was associated with increased anxiety.

Our finding that experiencing anti-gay hate speech did not elicit significantly greater anger, hostility, and aggression than hostile non-bias speech has important implications regarding victimization. Our findings suggest that it was not the experience of being the target of anti-gay hate speech that was meaningful, but instead that participants' understanding of that experience that mattered most in terms of provoking anger, hostility, and aggression. If participants thought the perpetrator believed them to be gay and that this was the reason they were targeted, then participants expressed more anger, hostility, and aggression than they did if they did not attribute their targeting to anti-gay motivations.

We believe there are two possible reasons for this. First, aggressive reactions are linked to the threat that homosexuality poses to masculinity (Bernat et al., 2001; Parrot & Zeichner, 2005). Second, believing that you are targeted because you are not liked does not threaten your social status, but believing that you are the victim of aggression because you are believed to be gay does- it suggests that you are not believed to be heterosexual and, therefore, are a member of a socially devalued group. Despite trends reflecting a decrease in anti-gay attitudes over the past 20 years, anti-gay attitudes continue to persist and with them, the stigma associated with homosexuality (Herek, 1984; Herek, 1992). Being linked to a highly stigmatized group is likely to result in greater negative affect than being linked to many other social categories (Blascovich, Mendes, Hunter, & Lickel, 2000; Herek, 2002). Being

categorized by others, through aggression, verbal or otherwise, is likely to be viewed by individuals as a form of ostracism and met with reactive aggression.

Given the links present in previous research between aggression and anti-gay attitudes, we had expected to find that those with more negative attitudes towards gay men would express significantly greater anger, hostility, and aggression when faced with being the target of an anti-gay hate speech incident than with an incident of hostile non-bias verbal victimization. However, our findings do not support this hypothesis. This was a surprising result given the robust nature of the link between anti-gay attitudes and anger and aggression in previous studies. It may be that anti-gay attitudes do not relate to immediate emotional arousal (i.e., anger, hostility, anxiety) elicited by anti-gay hate speech. It may be that the strong negative social stigma attached to homosexuality, not necessarily individual attitudes toward homosexuality, determines how individuals react to anti-gay victimization; these constructs might be related to one another, but may also have independent effects. For instance, an individual may not hold negative attitudes towards homosexuals and yet, may have negative reactions when others assume him to be homosexual because of the negative social stigma attached to homosexuality (e.g., feminine characteristics). It is also possible that an individual might be outraged by the act of someone targeting a minority group, irrespective of whether they belong to that minority group or hold negative attitudes towards homosexuality.

Another surprising finding was that experiencing anti-gay victimization was not associated with participants expressing significantly more anxiety than they did when experiencing hostile non-bias victimization. We had expected that some participants would express greater anger and aggression while others would express greater anxiety in response to anti-gay victimization as compared to hostile non-bias victimization. We also expected that previous victimization experiences and anti-gay attitudes would be associated with these different ways of responding to anti-gay victimization. Our findings indicate that experiencing hostile non-hate speech, not anti-gay hate speech, resulted in greater expressed anxiety among participants and that this anxiety is associated with experiences of previous victimization in the past 12 months, not with anti-gay attitudes. While such a finding is unexpected, it may be that not having an explanation for why they were being victimized may have led to greater anxiety for those in the hostile non-hate speech condition as compared to those in the anti-gay hate speech condition.

Further, these findings suggest that the ATSS paradigm may be a useful tool in examining such questions. In this study, the ATSS paradigm was able to detect differences when other measures did not. While ATSS coded variables typically relate to self-reported measures of related constructs, the disconnect between paper-and-pencil measures and ATSS coded variables is not unique to this study. At least one study comparing paper-and-pencil measures and ATSS coded variables found that ATSS coded variables were able to detect significant effects that paper-and-pencil

measures did not (Davison, Williams, Nezami, Bice, & DeQuattro, 1991). For this reason, the apparent disconnect between paper-and-pencil measures and ATSS coded variables seen here are not concerning. In fact, these discrepancies might offer further support for the utility of the ATSS paradigm in cases where there is reason to believe that differences exist but are not detected by paper-and-pencil measures.

The present study has several limitations. First, and foremost, our study was a laboratory investigation of the impacts of hate speech. Our scenarios were designed to emphasize verbal victimization and the ATSS procedure did not allow participants to exit the situation or engage the perpetrator, both of which are possible reactions to victimization experiences and are likely to lead to very different outcomes such as decreased or increased victimization. In a similar real world situation, it is likely that there would be reciprocal interactions between a perpetrator and target, which could either escalate or deescalate the situation and the target's reactions to that situation. What this study can offer is insight into how heterosexuals might think in such situations, but not how they might behave. It is important to emphasize this point because the ATSS examines individuals' concurrent cognitive reactions to an imagined situation; behavior was not observed in the ATSS utilized in the present study. Second, the findings of our study cannot speak to the long-term impacts of experiencing hate speech. While immediate reactions may be predictive of how individuals react to victimization in the long-term, other factors relating to post-victimization experiences, such as the availability of and willingness to engage

support networks and the response of support networks, which can mitigate individuals' long-term reactions.

Additionally, it should be mentioned that this study involved a highly select sample. Important differences are likely to exist between individuals who are college educated and the wider population. Individuals with higher levels of education tend to endorse less prejudicial attitudes and tend to be more accepting of sexual minorities. Our findings are also limited to a specific cohort that has been raised during a time of great changes in terms of the social acceptance and social visibility of sexual minorities, meaning that they are generally likely to be less prejudiced and more accepting of sexual minorities than those of earlier cohorts. Finally, it is also important to highlight the fact that this study examined how the experience of anti-gay hate speech victimization differs from the experience of hostile non-hate speech victimization. Our results should not be taken to represent how individuals might respond to hate motivated aggression more generally. Nor should our results be taken to represent the potential impacts of hate- motivated aggression aimed at sexual minorities or other socially devalued groups like racial, ethnic, or religious minorities.

Despite such limitations, this study is a step toward understanding how heterosexual males may react to the experience of anti-gay hate speech and contributes to efforts to better understand individuals' reactions to experiencing hate speech. The findings of this study are unique as compared to previous research in the domain of hate speech and hate crime research because previous research has not experimentally

examined reactions to being targeted by hate aggression and has not examined how non-minorities might react to being the target of hate aggression. As this is an initial inquiry into this topic, it seems important for future research to address several issues not yet addressed in this or other studies. First, what factors relate to our findings regarding anger, hostility, and aggression and the belief that one was victimized because they were believed to be gay? Second, it is important to experimentally examine the impacts of anti-gay hate speech on sexual minorities using procedures like those employed in this study (e.g., the ATSS), as previous research regarding impacts on victims has utilized retrospective designs. Third, such research initiatives should be extended to examine how other minority groups and non-minority groups respond to other minority-focused hate speech.

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Appendix A

ATSS Instruction Tape

“Thank you for participating in this study. In this study, we are interested in the things people say to themselves when they are confronted with different situations. Often, when people are going about their daily affairs, interacting with others and so forth, they have a kind of internal monologue going through their heads, a constant stream of thoughts or feelings which reflect their reactions to something that is happening.

What we’d like you to do is play a part in a situation we have taped. Your part will involve listening to a situation, imagining yourself in the situation, and tuning in to what is running through your mind. The tape is divided into fourteen segments. At the end of each segment, there will be a tone, followed by a pause of thirty seconds, during which time we would like you to say aloud whatever is going through your mind. Say as much as you can until you hear another tone. Of course, there are no right or wrong answers, so please just say whatever comes to mind, without judging whether it seems appropriate or not. The more you can tell us the better.

Try to imagine as clearly as you can that it is really you in the situation right now. Note that your task is not to speak back to any one of the voices on the tape, as though you were having a conversation with one of them. Rather, you should tune in to your own thoughts and say them aloud. The microphone in front of you will enable us to record your comments.

This is just a brief overview and we will give you more detailed instructions as we go along. But, do you have any questions at this point?"

Appendix B

Anti-gay Hate Speech Condition

Segment One:

It's getting late in the evening and you are at the grocery store doing your shopping. The store is almost empty. You are pushing the shopping cart as you turn down the beverage aisle. This guy is looking at you; you make eye contact with him hesitantly and quickly look away. Still you can feel this guy still looking at you. You look and then quickly overt your gaze and see he is still looking. (tone)

Segment Two:

As you head towards the water section you move closer to him. You turn your head as to keep him in the corner of your vision and see that he is still looking at you. (tone)

Segment Three:

As you move past him you hear him say into his cell phone "this fag here keeps looking at me". (tone)

Segment Four:

As you exit the produce section, you check your cart and see that you have all that you came for and head to the checkout. Walking towards the front of the store, you see a

magazine cover about the upcoming elections. “Fag! Watch where you’re going” the same guy says to you as he cuts ahead of you. (tone)

Segment Five:

A woman nearby looks at you, says “People”, shrugs her shoulders and she heads to the checkout line. (tone)

Segment Six:

As you near the registers, you notice that there is only one checkout open and he is one person ahead of you. (tone)

Segment Seven:

Again, he is on his cell phone and you hear him telling the person he is speaking to “I hate fucking faggots. Hope he dies.” (tone)

Segment Eight:

You turn to the same magazine you had seen before on the election and pretend to read it as you monitor what he is saying. You listen, but can not seem to make out what he is saying as he is being totaled-out by the cashier. As he walks out the door with his groceries in hand you see him turn back and look you in the eyes. (tone)

Segment Nine:

The woman in front of you is getting totaled out. She looks back at you too as she is walking away. (tone)

Segment Ten:

“Hi” the cashier says as she begins to ring you up; you collect your groceries and walk towards the door. The doors open and you walk out into the parking lot. There is a dark car parked in the corner, its engine running and its lights beaming on you. (tone)

Segment Eleven:

You walk to your car and glance over at the car but can't see inside it. (tone)

Segment Twelve:

You step to your car, open the trunk, and load your groceries in the trunk. The black car in the corner is still there. (tone)

Segment Thirteen:

You open your car door, get in, put on your seat belt, start the car and look in the rearview mirror, pull back, stop, and drive towards the exit of the parking lot. You glance in your rearview mirror; the black car is still there- lights on. (tone)

Segment Fourteen:

At the exit you turn onto the street and drive away. (tone)

Appendix C

Non-Hate Speech Condition

Segment One:

It's getting late in the evening and you are at the grocery store doing your shopping. The store is almost empty. You are pushing the shopping cart as you turn down the beverage aisle. This guy is looking at you; you make eye contact with him hesitantly and quickly look away. Still you can feel this guy still looking at you. You look and then quickly overt your gaze and see he is still looking. (tone)

Segment Two:

As you head towards the water section you move closer to him. You turn your head as to keep him in the corner of your vision and see that he is still looking at you. (tone)

Segment Three:

As you move past him you hear him say into his cell phone "this asshole keeps looking at me". (tone)

Segment Four:

As you exit the produce section, you check your cart and see that you have all that you came for and head to the checkout. Walking towards the front of the store, you see a

magazine cover about the upcoming elections. “Asshole! Watch where you’re going”
the same guy says to you as he cuts ahead of you. (tone)

Segment Five:

A woman nearby looks at you, says “People”, shrugs her shoulders and she heads to
the checkout line. (tone)

Segment Six:

As you near the registers, you notice that there is only one checkout open and he is
one person ahead of you. (tone)

Segment Seven:

Again, he is on his cell phone and you hear him telling the person he is speaking to “I
hate this fucking asshole. Hope he dies.” (tone)

Segment Eight:

You turn to the same magazine you had seen before on the election and pretend to
read it as you monitor what he is saying. You listen, but can not seem to make out
what he is saying as he is being totaled-out by the cashier. As he walks out the door
with his groceries in hand, you see him turn back and look you in the eyes. (tone)

Segment Nine:

The woman in front of you is getting totaled out. She looks back at you too as she is walking away. (tone)

Segment Ten:

“Hi” the cashier says as she begins to ring you up; you collect your groceries and walk towards the door. The doors open and you walk out into the parking lot. There is a dark car parked in the corner, its engine running and its lights beaming on you. (tone)

Segment Eleven:

You walk to your car and glance over at the car but can't see inside it. (tone)

Segment Twelve:

You step to your car, open the trunk, and load your groceries in the trunk. The black car in the corner is still there. (tone)

Segment Thirteen:

You open your car door, get in, put on your seat belt, start the car and look in the rearview mirror, pull back, stop, and drive towards the exit of the parking lot. You glance in your rearview mirror; the black car is still there- lights on. (tone)

Segment Fourteen:

At the exit, you turn onto the street and drive away. (tone)

Appendix D

ATSS Coding Manual
Differential Impacts Study
Wm. Andrew Mullane, B.A., and Gerald C. Davison, Ph.D.

General Coding Guidelines:

- While coding you will be reading transcripts and listening to their corresponding tapes. You will be coding primarily from transcripts using tapes as a secondary source of information when the content of a particular coding unit is unclear.
- Coding units do not have to represent coherent statements. An example of this may be “I’m scared. Yeah, freaked-out!” Coding units are broken down for you and usually include a clause and stated or implied subject.
- In coding, we are counting the number of times specific variables occur rather than the presence or absence of variables. These occurrences can be either single words or phrases that are related to the coded variable. When you have a phrase that involves multiple occurrences of a coded variable, you should count the number of times this coded variable occurs instead of counting the phrase itself (i.e., “I’m anxious and afraid” counts as two occurrences even though it is one phrase). You code at the statement level when inference is necessary (i.e., “this guy is weird and it’s freaking me out” counts as two occurrences because we count “this guy is weird” and “it’s freaking me out”).
- A statement may contain more than one occurrence of a specific variable and may also be coded as more than one variable. An example of this is when the participant says something like “I am so pissed, but I’m nervous about this.” This could be coded as 2 occurrences of self-reference, and an occurrence of both anger and anxiety. In other words, there is nothing special about coding units, as they are just there to make coding easier.
- Please note that many variables contain word lists. These word lists are not exhaustive. There may be instances when you feel as if a word relates to a variable and yet is not listed for that variable. Coding is subjective and means that you may be required to make inferences about their meaning(s). The word lists and examples are there to provide you with exemplars of codes and not exhaustive explications of them.

ATSS Variables:

Anxiety – number of words or phrases relating fear or anxiety.

Ex. Scared, anxious, distressed, uneasy, worried, dread, apprehensive, frightened, afraid, nervous, uneasy, panic, terrified, alarmed, stressing, dread, panicked, shaky, petrified, apprehensive, worried, concerned, alarmed, cautious, jittery, shaky, startled, “This is not a safe situation”, “This is not good”, “I’m in trouble”, “I can’t handle this”, etc.

AHA - number of words or phrases relating anger, hostility, aggression, or a stated wish that the perpetrator is harmed are all coded as aggression. Expressions that are not directed at the perpetrator are coded as well.

Ex. Angry, mad, pissed, mad, fuming, furious, livid, heated, raging, irate, enraged, boiling, fuming, fired-up, steaming, hostile, teed-off, burned-up, annoyed, agitated, peeved, and uses of angry name-calling or cursing directed at the stimulus/perpetrator (i.e. “what a fucking psycho, fucker”, “Fucking faggot”), etc.

Ex. “I’m going to hurt this guy”, “I’m gonna tell this guy off”, “I’m gonna punch this guy”, “Wish this guy were dead”, “Hope he gets hit by a car”, “My friends will kick his ass”, “I feel like throwing something”, “he’s going to pay”, etc.

Note that we do not code legal action as an aggressive statement.

ATTR SO - number of words or phrases relating that the participant believes that this situation is happening to them because of their real or perceived sexual orientation.

Ex. “Does this guy think I’m gay”, “He thinks I’m a fag”, “Does he think I’m hitting on him”, “He thinks I want to fuck him”, etc.

ATTR Prej – number of words or phrases relating that the participant believes that this situation is happening to them because of other minority status

Ex. “Is this guy starting with me because I’m Asian?”, “Is he starting with me because I am Jewish?”, etc.

ATTR Other – number of words or phrases relating that the participant thinks or believes that this situation is happening to them because of reasons other than sexual orientation, race, ethnicity, or religious affiliation.

Ex. “This guy must think I started with him”, “Does he think I have beef with him?”, etc.