University of Alberta

Shadow of a man: On the relationship between threats to masculinity and negative attitudes toward homosexuals.

by

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Abstract

A large body of literature suggests that masculinity is a fragile construct. Unlike femininity, which has continued to evolve, modern notions of heteronormative masculinity remain ossified and defined mainly by their opposition to that which is not masculine. Research has shown that challenges to heterosexual men's masculinity are perceived as accusations of femininity and thereby implicit homosexuality. This study explored whether masculinity threats might tap into this deep-seated fear of being seen as unmasculine by giving men false evaluations on their performance of a prewritten speech and then asking them to evaluate a crime committed against the gay community. We predicted that those men who were given a masculinity threat in their evaluations would be more punitive toward the gay community than those who were given a positive evaluation or a negative evaluation. Results indicated trends in this direction, but yielded no statistically significant findings.

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Introduction

On a seemingly normal night in May 2013, Mark Carson and his partner decided to take a walk in the affluent and progressive West Village neighborhood of Manhattan. While on their stroll, they were accosted by a drunk passerby who hurled gay epithets at them. Though obviously offensive and upsetting, this type of thing was not, unfortunately, unusual, so Mark and his partner walked away and didn't think much of it. An hour later, the same intoxicated man found them, but this time, his words were accompanied by violent aggression. Without provocation or warning, the man, later identified as Elliot Morales, pulled out a gun and shot Mark in the head, killing him instantly (2013). It appears the motive was simply that Mark and his partner were gay. In a bit of poetic irony, this hate crime occurred just a few blocks from the famed Stonewall Inn, the iconic site of the landmark 1969 Stonewall Riot and what many believe was the birthplace gay liberation movement. 1

As far as crime goes, violence and aggression directed toward gay men is not uncommon. According to the FBI's Annual Hate Crimes Statistics report, of 6,216 single-bias hate crimes reported in 2011, more than 20% were tied to sexual orientation bias (*FBI*, 2012). Of those 1,508 hate crime offenses with a sexual orientation bias, nearly 90% were directed at homosexual men. Alarmingly, there is some evidence that these attacks are underreported, and according to the Southern Poverty Law Center's analysis of aggregated hate crime data, gays in the United States are "more than twice as likely to be attacked in a violent crime as

Jews or blacks; more than four times as likely as Muslims; and 14 times as likely as Latinos," (*SPLC*, 2010). So-called "gay bashing," the name for the verbal and physical abuse to which some gay men are subjected due to their sexual orientation, is usually perpetrated by other men, and often is more brutal and vicious than other hate crimes. These attacks often involve torture, cutting, and mutilation (Altschiller, 2005). Homophobia, a term coined by George Weinberg in the 1960s to describe irrational fear and hatred of homosexuals (Weinberg, 1972), is still common in contemporary Western society. As a means of explaining this particularly vicious brand of violence, The Gay Panic Defense, a psychological pseudodiagnosis based on psychiatrist Edward Kempf's description of an acute, short-lasting psychotic episode triggered by an unwanted homosexual advance (Chuang and Addington, 1988), has been used in courtrooms around the world, most notably in the torture and murder of University of Wyoming student Matthew Shepard in 1998.

Given the prevalence and brutality of anti-gay crime, a few foundational questions emerge:

1)Why is it that homosexual men are common targets of prejudice, violence, and aggression?

2)Why are heterosexual men almost always the perpetrators of this violence?

3)What are the psychological factors that undergird this particularly charged form of hostility?

In the pages that follow I review the theoretical and empirical literature on the origins of negative attitudes toward gay men, with an eye toward answering these fundamental questions. Based on this review, I then develop and test the hypothesis that male prejudice toward gay men stems from a sense of diminished or threatened masculinity.

Why are homosexual men targets of hatred?

Prejudice toward gay men is likely determined by multiple factors. For one, homosexuality presents a threat to heteronormative values. Because two persons of the same sex are unable to procreate without artificial medical intervention, some people may view homosexuality as an aberration to the natural order **(**Herek, 2000**).** Along similar lines, homosexuality may be viewed by some as a threat to family values and the very fabric of society. Indeed, if homosexuality is perceived to be unnatural, then the homosexual union would also seem like a deleterious environment for raising children. Facilitating this view, homosexual behavior is depicted (and often stereotyped) as highly sexual and promiscuous **(**Herek, 2000). As such, some people may judge homosexual behavior as morally corrupt and on par with other forms of sexual deviance such as prostitution or pornography. Moreover, most major religious texts (e.g., the Bible, the Quran) denounce homosexuality as wicked and depraved, which further perpetuates negative attitudes among those who follow these teachings (Herek, 2000). Insofar as homosexual individuals are perceived as belonging to a group, they are also

viewed as an outgroup. A long history of theorizing and research based on social identity theory shows that even minimal separation of humans into groups leads to increased identification with and favorability toward one's own group relative to salient outgroups (Tajfel & Turner, 1986).

Certainly, all of these social factors (and others) could play a powerful role in cultivating prejudice and hatred toward gay men. However, most of these explanations are non-specific in that they can be applied to understanding prejudice toward both gay men and women. And yet, as noted at the outset of this paper, the lion's share of hatred and violence toward homosexual persons is directed at gay men, suggesting that there may be additional, more specific social-psychological factors at work. One such factor may have to do with the way gender identity is constructed and maintained.

Heteronormative gender constructs are rigidly defined and explicitly opposed to that which is homosexual. Men are expected to embody typical masculine gender attributes and roles, and women are expected to assume a feminine bearing in their day-to-day lives (Bem, 1994). More and more, however, recent scholarship is indicating that femininity is evolving into a flexible and inclusive construct. Women can be women in a variety of socially acceptable ways, and they are not "required" by perceived cultural scripts to reject homosexuality to preserve their "feminine" status (Whitley & Kite, 2006, p. 368). Western notions of masculinity, however, are more narrowly defined. For men, specifically heterosexual men, their masculine identities are often tied to a

"hegemonic" system in which men (and women) are expected to subordinate their personal gender identities to a hierarchy of societal expectations defined by an exaggeration of heteronormative, traditional masculine scripts (Connell, 1996; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). This "hegemonic masculinity" values the heterosexual over the homosexual, explicitly devalues the feminine, and expects gender role conformity over individualized, sui generis masculine identity (Connell, 1996). For men who internalize (via socialization) this masculine identity, whereby masculinity is defined more or less by its opposition to that which is not masculine (i.e., feminine), rejecting homosexuality is a way to demonstrate correct gender role and gender identity compliance, and ensure social acceptance (Whitley and Kite, 2006, p. 368; Wilkinson, 2004). As such, heterosexual men socialized in the dominant cultural system of hegemonic masculinity may be particularly threatened by male homosexuality because it incorporates female characteristics into the masculine (bodily) form, and thus represents a diminished form of masculinity.

Why do straight men perpetrate the hate?

As a group, men are markedly more homophobic than women, and recent scholarship has noted that heterosexual men maintain more negative attitudes toward gay men than they do toward heterosexual and homosexual women (Davis, 2004). And though negative attitudes toward homosexuality can be found among both women and men, a good deal of recent research has shown that heterosexual men hold the most negative attitudes toward homosexuals—

specifically, homosexual men (Kite & Whitley, 1996). In other words, for many heterosexual men, their problem isn't with "gayness." In fact, in Western media, lesbianism is often glorified and hypersexualized (Wirthlin, 2009). There is something decidedly different about male homosexuality, which appears to elicit from heterosexual men a special type of opposition to male homosexuality.

As previously discussed, given the rigid, binary version of masculinity that is prevalent in the western world, heterosexual men are expected to reject traits and characteristics associated with femininity wholesale (Connell, 1996). As unfair as the following bit of stereotype validation may be, male homosexuality is highly correlated with femininity (Urdy & Chantala, 2006)—and most men, gay and straight, seem to know it instinctively. As such, an aversion to homosexuality seems to come with heteronormative masculine aversion to feminine traits and bearings, which Kimmel argues is predicated on a male fear that other men will emasculate them and reveal that they're not real men (Kimmel, 1993). It is this perpetual fear of being perceived as gay, i.e., not a man, that is essential to the longevity of the dominant heteronormative iteration of masculinity (Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005; Kimmel, 1993), which invites the exaggeration of all the traditional elements of masculinity (1993). In other words, to quote Kimmel and Mahler, "homophobia is the hate that makes men straight" (Kimmel & Mahler, 2003). Even in junior high and high school, boys promulgate homophobic attitudes, avoid touching one another, and use homophobic labels and vulgarities to avoid being "homosexualized" (McCormack, 2012). The fear of femininity in

men is so strong that level of endorsement of the gay- men-are-effeminate stereotype is positively correlated with strength of anti-gay attitudes (Kilianski, 2003). Similarly, Glick and colleagues found that men who were told that they received a "feminine" score on a personality test showed more negativity toward effeminate, but not masculine, gay men (Glick et al., 2007). It appears it isn't homosexuality, per se, that offends these men. It's effeminacy, which is linguistically and culturally bound to homosexuality. In other words, it's possible that a fear of being seen as gay and thereby effeminate is nearly universal for hetereosexual men, who may lash out in traditionally masculine ways—e.g., with violence—to protect their masculine image, which, as we've seen, is susceptible to external and internal forces.

What psychological processes underlie hatred toward gay men?

Historically, for scholars investigating the origins of homophobia and negative attitudes toward gays, it's been difficult to dispel the notion that anti-gay sentiment could be a sort of compensatory distancing mechanism (Bosson, Prewitt-Freilino et al., 2005; Adams, Wright et al., 1996; Mahaffey, Bryan et al., 2005). Indeed, one long standing idea advanced by psychoanalytic theorists is that irrational fear and hatred of homosexuality stems from the ego's need to defend against an unacceptable thought or desire within oneself. This process most closely resembles Sigmund Freud's *reaction formation* defense mechanism. Although Freud did not apply this process to an understanding of homophobia, in his classic work on the sociology of homosexuality, West (1977) argues that a fear

of homosexuals is predicated on a deep-seated fear of being or becoming gay. This is classic reaction formation, whereby an unacceptable id desire is subsumed by the ego's projection of its opposite (Hall, 1999). In this model, if a person fears his latent homosexuality, then it follows that he might project hatred onto gay men as a means of transforming and thus repressing his transgressive desire.

Following a similar line of psychodynamic theorizing, is Carl Jung's notion of the shadow. Jung argued that we all carry with us a "shadow," a negative side of ourselves about which we have doubts and fears and spend a great deal of defensive energy trying to deny and control (Jung, 1951/1959; 1968). Like many of Fred's contemporaries, one of the ways in which Jung made his break with Freud was by moving away from the notion that defenses function to prevent unacceptable sexual and aggressive desires from to entering consciousness, placing more emphasis on the role compensatory defenses play in maintaining self-worth. For Jung, people work to deny the shadow because having negative traits and desires would reflect negatively on the self. More recent conceptualizations closely resemble Jung's position. Markus and Nurius' notion of undesired possible selves (Markus & Nurius, 1986; Ogilvie, 1987) and Higgins' theory of Self-Discrepancy (Higgins, 1987), both posit the existence of a negative "self" that people seek to purge. In support of the general idea that people defend against characteristics they fear in themselves, Schimel, Pyszczynski, Greenberg, O'Mahen, and Arndt (2000) found that when people were led to believe they possessed a latent tendency to be hostile or dishonest, they rated themselves as

having very different personality traits from an individual who expressed their anger as inappropriate violence or a person who broke the law by being dishonest, respectively.

The notion that people work to defend against specific traits they fear in themselves may explain the severe form of irrational hatred and violence directed toward gay men. In this sense, a fear of being seen as gay and thereby feminine might be a part of every man's shadow. To protect themselves from this element of the shadow, the image of the emasculated man, some heterosexual men might project it onto and become punishing toward targets who embody the undesirable trait, in this case, homosexual men. In support of this line of reasoning, Govorun and colleagues found that stereotypes augment defensive, distancing reactions toward stereotyped others to embody negative traits they wish to deny in themselves (Govorun, et al., 2006). In this model, if a man believes he appears effeminate to others, he will show more negativity toward effeminate others, such as femme gay men (2006). Along these lines, a good deal of research shows that men whose masculinity is threatened react negatively and aggressively (Maass, A, Cadinu, M. et al., 2003). Just as Glick and colleagues found, if that threat comes from a woman or effeminate man, it is correlated with an increase in homophobic attitudes (Parrott, Adams & Zeichner, 2002), especially if the men are highly sensitive to gender stereotypes and feel they don't fulfill the masculine characteristics to which they subscribe (Theodore & Basow, 2000). This research

suggests that a homophobic response serves as a buffer against threatend masculinity.

In support of this notion that homophobia is a defense, Adams and his colleagues found that men who measure high in homophobia (i.e., possess negative attitudes toward homosexuals) demonstrated significant erotic arousal to homosexual stimuli (Adams, Wright & Lohr, 1996). This finding could indicate one of two things. Either it supports the premise that homophobia is a defensive reaction to latent homosexuality, or the homophobic men in the study reacted to the homosexual stimuli with genuine fear, which has been shown to enhance penile tumescence (Barlow, Sakheim, & Beck,1983). In support of the former premise, Mahaffey and colleagues found that heterosexual men who showed a more exaggerated startle blink response in response to gay erotica also demonstrated stronger anti-gay attitudes, indicating a link between negative attitudes toward gays and epiphenomenological reactions (Mahaffey, Bryan & Hutchison, 2005).

It's important to note here that much of the prior research investigating the link between homophobia and masculinity threats is inconclusive regarding homophobia processes and causality. Due to the correlational nature of much of the work done so far (e.g., Theodore & Basow, 2000), it is difficult to determine causal links between masculinity threats and homophobic ideation and behavior. Moreover, in the case of the Glick et al. study, the researchers didn't take into account the effects of a general self-esteem threat and how it might differ from a

masculinity threat; it is possible, in other words, that the participants in Glick and colleagues' study were responding to a variant of a general self-esteem threat. So to determine the specificity of a negative reaction to homosexuals, it is essential to differentiate from a general self-esteem threat. Also, in Adams and colleagues' study, the ambiguity between a genuine fear response and a defensive reaction to latent homosexuality still presents a causative conundrum, which Mahaffey et al.'s work clarified only slightly.

The Experiment

In an effort to elucidate some of these processes, I set out to test the hypothesis that heterosexual men exposed to a mascunity threat would be more punishing toward the gay community as a way of rejecting their shadow. First I had men who identified as heterosexual complete the attitudes toward homosexuality assessment (Kite & Deaux, 1986) in a mass-testing session. I chose the scale because it reflects the general homophobic tenor of the hegemonic masculinity worldview (Davies, 2004), which made it a good proxy for men's investment in masculinity. A few months after mass testing, these men participated in a study in which they had to perform a speech for another participant tasked with evaluating them on their performances. After giving the speech, the participants received one of three types of feedback on their performance: 1) an evaluation that threatened their masculinity, 2) an evaluation that attacked their general self-esteem, or 3) an evaluation that was non-threatening and complimentary. I then measured their level of punishment toward

someone who committed a crime that victimized the gay community. I expected to find that participants whose masculinity had been threatened would be less punitive toward a perpetrator who targeted the gay community. Additionally, I hypothesized that participants whose self-esteem had been attacked and participants who had encountered no threat would exhibit low to moderate levels of punishment toward the perpetrator. If being gay is associated with a loss of masculinity, and heterosexual men are especially sensitive to and fearful of being perceived as feminine, then many of their negative reactions toward homosexual men could stem from a fear of being seen as not masculine. Thus heterosexual men with higher levels of anti-gay prejudice should be more likely to evince this prejudice when their own sense of masculinity is threatened.

Method

Participants

The participants were 69 male introductory psychology students at the University of Alberta[1], each of whom took part in a mass-testing session in the beginning of the semester. During this prescreening process, participants completed the homophobia scale, which measures negative attitudes toward homosexuality (Kite & Deaux, 1986). Participants were selected based on gender (male only), sexual orientation (heterosexual only), and native language (English only). Participants were randomly assigned to one of three different threat conditions (masculinity threat, self-esteem threat, and no threat), yielding a two

[1] One participant was excluded for not following the researcher's instructions.

factor homophobia X threat design. Participants were run in groups of four at a time.

Procedure

Upon arrival, participants were brought into a room and told that the experiment was investigating how people use information to evaluate others. To this end, the participants were then given a short, one-page excerpt from a story in *The Structured Essay* (Spangler & Werner, 1982) and were told they would have to "perform" it for another student, who was able to observe them from behind a one-way mirror. The experimenter explained that this other participant had come in several minutes earlier. Her job was to evaluate the other participants on their performances. As such, they should do their best to deliver engaging recitations (using gestures, strategic voice inflection, etc.). In reality, this "other participant" was a confederate on the research team and did not assess the participants' performances. The participants were given a few minutes to familiarize themselves with the excerpt, and when at least one participant indicated he was ready, the experimenter permitted him to go first.

One at a time, each participant then recited the short story in front of the one-way mirror (and confederate) while the other participants and experimenter waited in the hallway, out of earshot. After all the participants finished, the experimenter brought them back into the room in which they had begun the study. Once the participants were seated, the experimenter explained that the evaluator participant probably needed a bit of time to finish her evaluations. While they

waited, the experimenter casually asked each participant about his major ("what is your major?") as a benign way to pass a few minutes of time. When each participant had given an answer, the experimenter announced that he was going to collect the evaluations from the other student and dismiss her, since she would then be finished with her portion of the study. It should be noted here that the walls separating the rooms in the laboratory in which this study was carried out are very thin. Speech in particular travels freely throughout the space. Thus, to bolster the illusion that the confederate was actually preparing the evaluations in real time, the experimenter exploited the lab's acoustics and asked the confederate several audible questions with the hope that the other participants could hear them through their own closed door. First, he asked her whether she was finished, and she replied, "just a few minutes." While the experimenter waited for those minutes to elapse, he organized the evaluation envelopes, which were assigned at random to the participants, and affixed handwritten identification stickers to each one ("John," "Soo-Yin," etc.). After a brief wait, the experimenter asked the confederate again whether she was finished, and this time, she said, "yes." At this point, the experimenter opened her door and brought her out into the common area of the laboratory. He told her she was finished, and dismissed her into the hallway, at which point she left the vicinity. Given the aforementioned thin walls, the other participants ostensibly could hear this exchange. After the confederate left the lab, the experimenter then returned to the other participants with four envelopes containing their speech evaluations and distributed them accordingly.

Once each participant had his envelope, the experimenter permitted them to open it and briefly look at the evaluation.

Each participant received an evaluation form comprising four questions rated on a 7-point scale (with higher scores reflecting higher agreement with each question) and an open-ended comments section. The first question read, "Did this person put effort into giving their speech?" The second question read, "Did this person speak clearly?" The third question read, "How interested did this person seem in the topic they spoke about?" And the fourth question read, "Did this person speak loudly enough." Participants in the "no threat" condition were given a "6" on questions 1, 2, and 3, and a "7" on question 4. In the open-ended comments section, they received a handwritten message: "All around good speech. The speaker was loud enough and engaging. He also spoke slowly enough for me to listen, which I appreciated."

Participants in the "Self-Esteem Threat" condition were given a "4" on questions 1, 2, and 4, and a "2" on question 3. In the open-ended comments section, they received a handwritten insult concerning their performance: "The speaker was boring to listen to, not an Academy Award winner if you know what I mean."

Participants in the "Masculinity Threat" condition were given a "4" on questions 1, 2, 3, and 4. In the open-ended comments section, they received a handwritten insult aimed at their masculinity: "The speech itself was mostly ok.

I'm not sure if this matters, but this guy's mannerisms and tone of voice seemed feminine for a guy. I just mention it because I found it distracting."

Once all the participants had read their evaluations, they were instructed to put them away so the experimenter could begin the next task. When they were ready, the experimenter explained that he was also interested in how people use information to evaluate others in terms of jury decision making processes. To help him gain insight into people's evaluative approaches, the participants would be asked to read a news report about someone who had committed a crime. The experimenter then explained that he needed the participants' help in determining an appropriate bail and length of punishment. Each participant received the same news story, which centered on the actions of a man named Michael Harris, who infiltrated a gay community centre and intentionally embezzled large sums of money from the organization, thus crippling the gay community centre and forcing it to close down. After reading this news story, the participants were asked to fill out two questionnaires, the Social Judgment Survey and the Justice Perceptions Survey, each of which consisted of two items.

In the Social Judgment Survey, participants were asked to make two evaluations: 1) "Please assign a bond amount for this defendant" and 2) "Please assign a jail sentence for this defendant." Both questions instructed participants to make their determinations based on an ascending four-point scale, which reflected severity in terms of dollar amount for bail and jail sentence length, respectively. For bail, the participants were instructed to check one of the following options: $0

to $25,000 (characterized as “mild”), $25,000 to $50,000 (characterized as “moderate”), $50,000 to $75,000 (characterized as “severe”), and $75,000 to $100,000 (characterized as “very severe”). In terms of punishment, participants were instructed to check one of the following options: 0 to 3 years, 3 to 6 years, 6 to 9 years, or more than 10 years (10+).

In the Justice Perceptions Survey, participants were asked to make determinations about two items: 1) “To what extend do you think Michael Harris is a menace to society?” and 2) “Given his crime, to what extent would you be willing to forgive Michael Harris for what he’s done?” Each participant was instructed to make a determination based on a 7-point scale. At the bottom of the page, participants were also asked to jot down which factors bore on their decisions regarding bond amount and punishment.

Once participants finished this task, they were asked to complete two more short surveys, and a series of questions asking them to evaluate the feedback they received.

The enjoyment of experience questions asked them to consider how much they had enjoyed the study so far on a 7-point scale (1 = low enjoyment; 7 = high enjoyment). The questions were as follows: 1) “Did you enjoy participating in this study?”; 2) Given the chance to participate in this study again, how likely would you be to say ‘yes?’”; and 3) If you had the opportunity, would you be interested in participating in a similar study?”.

The feedback evaluation questions asked participants to reflect on what it was like to be evaluated. There were six statements ranked on a 7-point scale (1 = low; 7 = high). Participants were asked to answer according to how accurately each statement reflected their feelings: 1) "I felt that my speech performance was assessed accurately"; 2) "I felt that my speech performance was assessed fairly"; 3) "I found the feedback to be helpful"; 4) "Something in the evaluation was offensive to me as a man/woman"; 5) "Something in the evaluation was offensive to my ethnic group"; and 6) "Something in the evaluation was offensive to my religious beliefs." Of critical importance was the fourth item, "Something in the evaluation was offensive to me as a man/woman," which was nested among the others to cloak its significance. This item was scrutinized carefully and used as an independent variable manipulation check.

When the participants finished these questionnaires, the experimenter then gave them a comprehensive debriefing and dismissed them.

Results

Manipulation Checks

Enjoyment of experience questions.

To assess the effectiveness of the threat conditions, the three questions asking participants how much they enjoyed the experience participating in the study were averaged (alpha = .91) to form a composite measure of enjoyment of experience. This measure was then submitted to a one-way ANOVA, which yielded no effect of condition, $F(2, 59) = .39$, $p = .68$. To assess the specific a-

prior hypothesis that the two threat conditions would decrease enjoyment relative to the neutral conditions, two planned orthogonal contrasts were performed. The first contrast showed that participants in the neutral condition had a higher enjoyment of experience than participants in the self-esteem and masculine threat conditions combined, $t(63) = 2.01$, $p = .048$. The second comparison showed that the self-esteem and masculine threat conditions did not differ from one another. Cell means are reported in Table 1.

Feedback evaluation questions.

To further assess the effectiveness of the threat conditions the three questions asking participants to evaluate how much their evaluator's feedback was accurate, fair and helpful were averaged (alpha = .84) to form a feedback evaluation composite. This measure was then submitted to a one-way ANOVA, which yielded a significant effect of condition, $F(2, 61) = 11.72$, $p = .00$. To assess the specific a-prior hypothesis that threatened participants would have lower evaluations of the feedback than non-threatened participants, I conducted two planned orthogonal contrasts. The first contrast showed that participants in the two threat conditions combined had lower evaluations of their feedback than participants in the neutral condition, $t(63) = 3.63$, $p = .0006$. The second contrast revealed that the two threat conditions also differed from one another such that the masculine threat led to more negative evaluations than the self-esteem threat, $t(44) = 2.83$, $p = .007$. Cell means and standard deviations are presented in Table 1.

To assess the effectiveness of the masculine threat condition, specifically, we submitted the critical evaluation question 4 ("Something in the evaluation was offensive to me as a man/woman"), to a one-way ANOVA, which revealed a significant effect of condition, $F(2, 59) = 4.19$, $p = .02$. Two planned orthogonal contrasts were then performed. The first contrast showed that the masculine threat condition led to higher levels of masculine threat than the self-esteem threat and neutral conditions combined, $t(63) = 9.81$, $p = 0$. The second contrast showed that the neutral and self-esteem threat conditions did not differ from one another, $t(40) = 1.00$, $p = .32$ (see Table 1).

Ancillary analyses.

I performed the same one way ANOVA on the remaining filler items asking participants how much the feedback was offensive to their ethnic group or religious beliefs. As expected, these analyses produced no significant effects, both Fs < 0.77. Although no higher order interactions were predicted, to assess this possibility I regressed each of the relevant manipulation check composites and feedback evaluation item 4 on centered homophobia scores, threat condition, and the interaction of the two. These analyses produced no significant homophobia x threat interactions, all $ps > .05$.

Target evaluation composite

To develop an overall measure of leniency toward the anti-homosexual target from the news article, I constructed a composite leniency score composed of the jury decision items and the attitude items. The two jury decision items,

"Please assign a bond amount for the defendant" and "Please assign a jail sentence for this defendant," were scored on a four-point scale. The latter two attitudinal items, "To what extent do you think Michael Harris is a menace to society?" and "Given his crime, to what extent would you willing to forgive Michael Harris for what he's done?" were scored on a seven-point scale. To form a composite measure using these items, the first three items were reversed scored such that higher values would reflect higher levels of leniency. Since the scales for the various items were different (4-point vs. seven-point scales), I then standardized the scores for each of the four items and summed them to form a composite measure of leniency (alpha = .66). I then conducted a hierarchical regression model tracing the relationship among feedback condition; the two composite punishment variables, one exploring the effects of the masculinity threat (1 = masculinity threat, 0 = neutral, 0 = self-esteem threat) and the other exploring the effects of the self-esteem threat (1 = self-esteem threat, 0 = neutral, 0 = masculinity threat); and the centered homophobia scores (see table 1). The main effect of homophobia was not significant, (β = -.09), t(59) = -.71, p = .48, nor were the masculinity threat contrast, (β = .06), t(59) = .42, p = .68 and the self-esteem threat contrast, (β = .5), t(59) = .33, p = .74. Additionally, there were no significant interaction effects in the comparison between homophobia and the masculinity threat condition, (β = -.17), t(59) = -1.13, p = .43, or the comparison between homophobia and threat condition, (β = .05), t(59) = .30, p = .77.

Bond amount

I also conducted the same analyses on each leniency item individually. First, I examined whether feedback condition influenced the amount of bail money participants recommended for the criminal they were asked to judge, which was my main DV. I regressed the two composite SJ1 variables, one exploring the effects of the masculinity threat (1 = masculinity threat, 0 = neutral, 0 = self-esteem threat) and the other exploring the effects of the self-esteem threat (1 = self-esteem threat, 0 = neutral, 0 = masculinity threat), and the centered negative attitudes toward homosexuals scores. The main effect of negative attitudes toward homosexuals was not significant, (β = -.16), t(59) = -1.3, p = .2, nor were the masculinity threat contrast, (β = -.11), t(59) = -.72, p = .48, nor the self-esteem threat contrast, (β = -.18), t(59) = -1.2, p = .23. Additionally, there were no significant interaction effects in the comparison between homophobia scores and the masculinity threat condition, (β = -.22), t(59) = -1.1, p = .28, nor the comparison between negative attitudes toward homosexuals and the self-esteem threat condition, (β = .08), t(59) = .47, p = .64. Although the predicted interaction was non-significant, the overall pattern of results was in the predicted direction (see Figure 1). Therefore, I examined the simple effects within each condition to assess the strengnth of the pattern. The simple effect of homophobia score within the neutral condition was not significant (β = -.044), t(59) = -.183, p = .857, nor was the simple effect of homophobia score within the self-esteem threat condition (β = .95), t(59) = .44, p = .67. But the simple effect of homophobia score within the masculinity threat condition was significant (β = -.

464), t(59) = -2.4, p = .026, indicating that for participants whose masculinity was threatened, higher homphobia scores were assosciated with higher levels of leniency toward the anti-gay target. Although this slope was significant, some caution is warranted in interpreting it because the overall interaction was not significant.

Jail time sentencing

Next, I examined whether feedback condition influenced the length of jail sentence participants recommended for criminal they were asked to judge. I regressed the two SJ2 variables, one exploring the effects of the masculinity threat (1 = masculinity threat, 0 = neutral, 0 = self-esteem threat) and the other exploring the effects of the self-esteem threat (1 = self-esteem threat, 0 = neutral, 0 = masculinity threat), and the centered negative attitudes toward homosexuals scores. The main effect of negative attitudes toward homosexuals was not significant, (β = -.07), t(59) = -.56, p = .58, nor were the masculinity threat contrast, (β = -.06), t(59) = -.42, p = .68, nor the self-esteem threat contrast, (β = -.13), t(59) = -.82, p = .41. Additionally, there were no significant interaction effects in the comparison between negative attitudes toward homosexuals and the masculinity threat condition, (β = -.06), t(59) = -.28, p = .78, nor the comparison between negative attitudes toward homosexuals and the self-esteem threat condition, (β = -.05), t(59) = -.30, p = .78.

Menace to society

Then, I examined whether feedback condition influenced how much participants felt that the criminal they were asked to judge was a menace to society. I regressed the two JP1 variables, one exploring the effects of the masculinity threat (1 = masculinity threat, 0 = neutral, 0 = self-esteem threat) and the other exploring the effects of the self-esteem threat (1 = self-esteem threat, 0 = neutral, 0 = masculinity threat) and the centered negative attitudes toward homosexuals scores. The main effect of negative attitudes toward homosexuals was not significant, (β = .06), t(59) = .49, p = .62, nor were the masculinity threat contrast, (β = .17), t(59) = 1.13, p = .26, nor the self-esteem threat contrast, (β = .18), t(59) = 1.2, p = .23. Additionally, there were no significant interaction effects in the comparison between negative attitudes toward homosexuals and the masculinity threat condition, (β = -.13), t(59) = -.61, p = .55, or the comparison between negative attitudes toward homosexuals and the self-esteem threat condition, (β = .09), t(59) = .55, p = .59.

Forgiveness

Finally, I examined whether feedback condition influenced participants' belief that the criminal they were asked to judge could be forgiven for his crime. I regressed the two JP2 variables, one exploring the effects of the masculinity threat (1 = masculinity threat, 0 = neutral, 0 = self-esteem threat) and the other exploring the effects of the self-esteem threat (1 = self-esteem threat, 0 = neutral, 0 = masculinity threat), and the centered negative attitudes toward homosexuals scores. The main effect of negative attitudes toward homosexuals was not

significant, (β = .09), t(59) = .69, p = .49, nor were the masculinity threat contrast, (β = -.18), t(59) = -1.2, p = .24. The self-esteem threat contrast, however, was borderline significant (β = -.18), t(59) = -1.2, p = .08, indicating that participants whose self-esteem had been threatened were more likely to be forgiving. Additionally, there were no significant interaction effects in the comparison between negative attitudes toward homosexuals and the masculinity threat condition, (β = .07), t(59) = .32, p = .75, or the comparison between negative attitudes toward homosexuals and the self-esteem threat condition, (β = -.01), t(59) = -.09, p = .93.

Discussion

The hypothesis guiding the current research was that prejudice toward gay men stems, at least in part, from a need to restore threatened masculinity. The results offered modest support for this hypothesis. Heterosexual men who scored higher on a measure of homophobia, and who thus held more negative attitudes about male homosexuality, exhibited more lenient attitudes toward an anti-gay law breaker if their masculinity had recently been threatened. Interestingly, this pattern of increased prejudice toward homosexuality was not observed among participants whose self-esteem had been threatened more generally, suggesting that this effect is specific to threatened masculinity. Although the current investigation offers moderate support for the threatened masculinity hypothesis, the findings should be interpreted with caution given that 1) the overall pattern of

results was not statistically significant and 2) that the supportive trend was only observed on one of the four main dependent variables.

Given the complexity of the construct I chose to examine, there are a lot of potential explanations for why the results remained statistically non-significant. First of all, it's possible the Social Justice (SJ) and Justice Perceptions (JP) measures, which constituted my dependent variable, were not sensitive enough. The two SJ questions assessed how much punishment participants would recommend for a criminal action. Both were scored on a 4-point scale, which could have reduced variability in participants' responses. In future studies, a 7-item or even 10-item scale would permit me to more precisely map level of punishment. As for the JP questions, which measured attitudes toward the perpetrator and were scored on a 7-point scale, perhaps the wording of the questions required more detail about the context in order for participants to make these judgments. Participants were asked to reflect on the extent to which the perpetrator could be forgiven for what he had done and deemed a menace to society. It's possible that participants didn't feel they had enough information to make judgments of forgiveness and danger to society in the absence of other important details such as whether the perpetrator expressed being sorry for his actions or whether the perpetrator had any prior convictions. In a similar vein, perhaps participants considered judgments to be above their paygrade, so to speak. The solution to this problem in the future, then, would be to more precisely target their perceptions of the crime and what it might say about the perpetrator. This

could take form as a denser, more sensitive battery of questions, with more items and dimensions on which to measure participants' attitudes. It could also include a number of open-ended follow-up questions, which would permit researchers to dig a little deeper into individual differences in participants' perceptions.

Additionally, it is possible that there was not enough at stake for participants in the DV stimulus, a news story reporting the forced closure of a gay community centre. In the story, the perpetrator of the crime was revealed to have deep-seated anti-gay motives for posing as a gay man, assuming the role of community centre director, and embezzling money from the centre as a way of destroying it from the inside out. During the debriefing, many participants reported interpreting the crime as fairly standard—an unfortunate instance of predatory exploitation, but not shocking or particularly heinous. I chose a less "heinous," violent DV stimulus to draw a reaction to threatened masculinity without the possible confounds of standard aggression. Since aggression is a traditionally masculine reflexive mechanism to restore diminished masculinity, I wrote a nonviolent, group-centered news story. The victims were a city's gay community, not a single homosexual man. The perpetrator didn't use his fists. And the criminal act was unprovoked. As such, the news story was designed to determine whether participants' negative reactions to the gay community would be due to threatened masculinity as opposed to a more general type of masculine aggression.

Along these lines, in future studies, it might be worthwhile to explore a more potent IV stimulus. I had participants perform a scene excerpted from a short story in front of a one-way mirror. The purpose of this setup was to get the participants talking and moving, which I thought should, in theory, inform and justify a subsequent evaluation that commented on these features of the participants‘ performance. Initially, the performance task seemed like a good way to elicit a defensive reaction from the young men I sampled, especially if I delivered an explicit critique of their expressive masculinity. But in practice, these critiques had an unexpectedly complicated effect on many of the participants. When asked in the evaluation survey if their evaluation offended them as men, only those in the masculinity threat condition answered in the affirmative, which indicates that the manipulation worked as expected. But during the course of the debriefing, many of these same participants reported not considering other people's opinions in constructing and maintaining their personal sense of masculinity—especially when they were just reading "a stupid story." Others claimed they just accepted the critique as evidence that they "just weren't good at public speaking." To avoid future ambiguity, it seems important to consider the possibility that the task itself isn't linked strongly enough to prototypical masculine concerns. Perhaps for many men, it's easier to distance themselves from a critique of their oration because it's not necessarily "their thing." But if we challenged their general masculine bearing, as Glick, Gangl, and colleagues did with a personality evaluation that labeled them as "feminine" or

"masculine" (2007), it's likely we could evoke stronger reactions. It would be interesting to ask participants to throw a ball to a confederate, for example, and provide them with an evalution on their "technique." Perhaps men would have more masculine stock invested in appearing manly while engaged in a stereotypically masculine activity, such as athletics.

Also, it's possible that the difference in feedback structure between the self-esteem threat and mascunlinity threat conditions could be seen as a limitation. Participants in the self-esteem threat condition received markedly lower scores in the self-esteem threat condition than participants in the masculinity threat condition. That said, it's important to note that the masculinity threat was not intended to be insulting. Unlike the self-esteem threat, which took form as an explicitly derogatory evaluation, the masculinity threat comprised a neutral composite speech performance score (all 4s on the scale) and an evaluation centered on the participant's effeminacy. As such, it was important that the masculinity threat evaluation scores *not* be negative. In this sense, the apparent differences between the self-esteem threat and masculinity threat evaluations serve to validate the separateness of the masculinity threat effect, not diminish it.

Another factor that may have weakened the results has to do with the particular characteristics of the individuals who participated in the study. With regard to masculinity and attitudes toward homosexuals, I was surprised by the low presence of negative attitudes toward homosexuals in our sample. Kite and Deaux's Attitudes Toward Homosexuals measure (1986) evinced good reliability

(Cronbach's alpha = .92). But it appears my participants scored lower than average. For my sample, the mean negative attitudes toward homsexuals score was 2.04 (out of a possible 5), indicating that, on the whole, these men do not hold negative attitudes toward homosexuals. In a broad societal sense, this is an encouraging finding, but it nonetheless may have had a deleterious effect on my study, which presupposed that young heterosexual men harbor a more negative general attitude toward homosexuals. One way to address this issue in future research would be to recruit only participants who score higher than average on the negative attitudes toward homosexuals measure.

In support of this possibility, it appears that attitudes toward homosexuality are changing among younger populations. Though as Herek notes, geography, education level, and socioeconomic status play a role in how heterosexual men perceive homosexuals (Herek, 2000), there is a growing body of evidence indicating that generation might be an equally important determinant of attitudes toward masculinity and homosexuality alike. In an interview in *The Atlantic* just a little more than a year ago, famed sociologist and masculinity critic Michael Kimmel argued that Generation Y was already operating within a healthier mascunility framework. On the whole, they are more likely to see women as equals, do more housework, and show more friendliness toward the LGTB community (McBee, 2012). Along these lines, a number of theorists and researchers have proposed that the dominant form of hegemonic masculinity is rapidly transforming into a number of "inclusive masculinities," a central feature

of which is a mitigation of homophobic attitudes (McCormack, 2012; Anderson, 2003). In his research on college-age heterosexual men, sociologist Eric Anderson found that college athletes and fraternity members that he sampled demonstrate progressive support and acceptance of gays (Anderson, 2003). He also claims that femininity and male homosexuality are becoming less and less linguistically or socially bound, which could be helping this transition from a hegemonic masculinity to a more inclusive constellation of masculinities (2003). The catch, of course, is that these changing attitudes have been observed after men receive some manner of training, e.g., Mark McCormack's highly successful work with British high school students, in which his intervention led to marked improvements in the students' homophobic beliefs and behaviors (McCormack, 2012). In Jungian terms, then, it appears that masculinity education eliminates fear of being gay as part of heterosexual men's shadow.

But that isn't to say that all such progress has been the result of inculcation. There is evidence to suggest that even untrained high school students are showing markedly more progressive attitudes toward homosexuals than ever before (Kosciw, Greytak, et al., 2012). Moreover, Pascoe's findings suggest that, almost as a backlash to the predominance of hegemonic masculinity, 21st-century teenage boys are finding other ways of defining their masculinity, including an interest in style, hobbies, and various forms of social rebellion (Pascoe, 2003). This, in turn, could be contributing to the changing face of societal masculinity, which in turn is changing the ways in which young heterosexual men engage homosexual men.

With respect to the current theorizing and research, a change in societal attitudes that moves away from valuing a narrow-stereotypic form of hyper-masculinity should ameliorate negative reactions to homosexual men. Indeed, it was only heterosexual men with pre-existing negative attitudes about male homosexuality (and who presumably endorse this form of hyper-masculinity) that expressed the most gay prejudice under the masculinity threat.

Despite the large corpus of evidence indicating that attitudinal shifts regarding masculinity and perception of homosexuality and homosexuals appear to be moving in the direction of peace and inclusion, reminders to the contrary abound. Mark Carson is simply one casualty of the most predmoninant and senseless strain of hate crimes: violence directed toward gay men. The term senseless is used here because most if not all forms of such violence are unnecessary, and because the sexual orientation of another individual poses no rational or realistic threat to the life and limb of those who perpetuate such violence. As such, the hope is that the present research will inspire further thought and inquiry into the multifarious causes of hatred and violence toward people based solely on their sexual orientation.

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Appendix:

Dependent Variable Stimulus

Former Director's Embezzlement Forces Harton Mainstay to Close its Doors

Dylan Thompson
Harton City Bugle

The Pemberton House, a community centre that has served and empowered Harton City's gay, lesbian, transgendered, and queer community for 16 years, is closing its doors permanently, with the organization's board of directors citing "economic difficulties, past debt and inability to raise funds" as chief reasons.

"The organization has debts which exceed revenues at this time, and without significant cash infusions from major donors, they are unable to continue operations financially," reads a statement sent out Wednesday.

This news comes just two weeks after the The Pemberton House's former director, Michael Harris, was arrested for intentionally mismanaging hundreds of thousands of dollars from the downtown Harton mainstay's budget.

Further investigation yielded a surprising bit of information about Harris, 36, who was fired in January 2013 after a board member discovered that he was a member of the controversial anti-gay organization, Family Forever. But it wasn't until this month that the Harton District Attorney's Office issued a criminal complaint, charging him with larceny and falsifying business records. Early police reports indicate that Harris had told other members of Family Forever that he was "going to sink this ship [the Pemberton House] from the captain's quarters."

Allegedly, Harris used The Pemberton House's cheques and debit cards to withdraw funds to defray travel costs, cover his restaurant tabs, and even make anonymous donations to Family Forever's "The Youth are our Future" Foundation.

The embezzlement scheme put the Pemberton House so far in the red, there was no choice but to shut down. "As The PH closes, I ask that all Harton City's organizations come together and fill the void that will inevitably be left behind,"said the Pemberton House's Chairman of the Board, Simone Jackson. "My heart breaks for those of us who feel that we no longer have a home away from home."

Tables

Table 1:

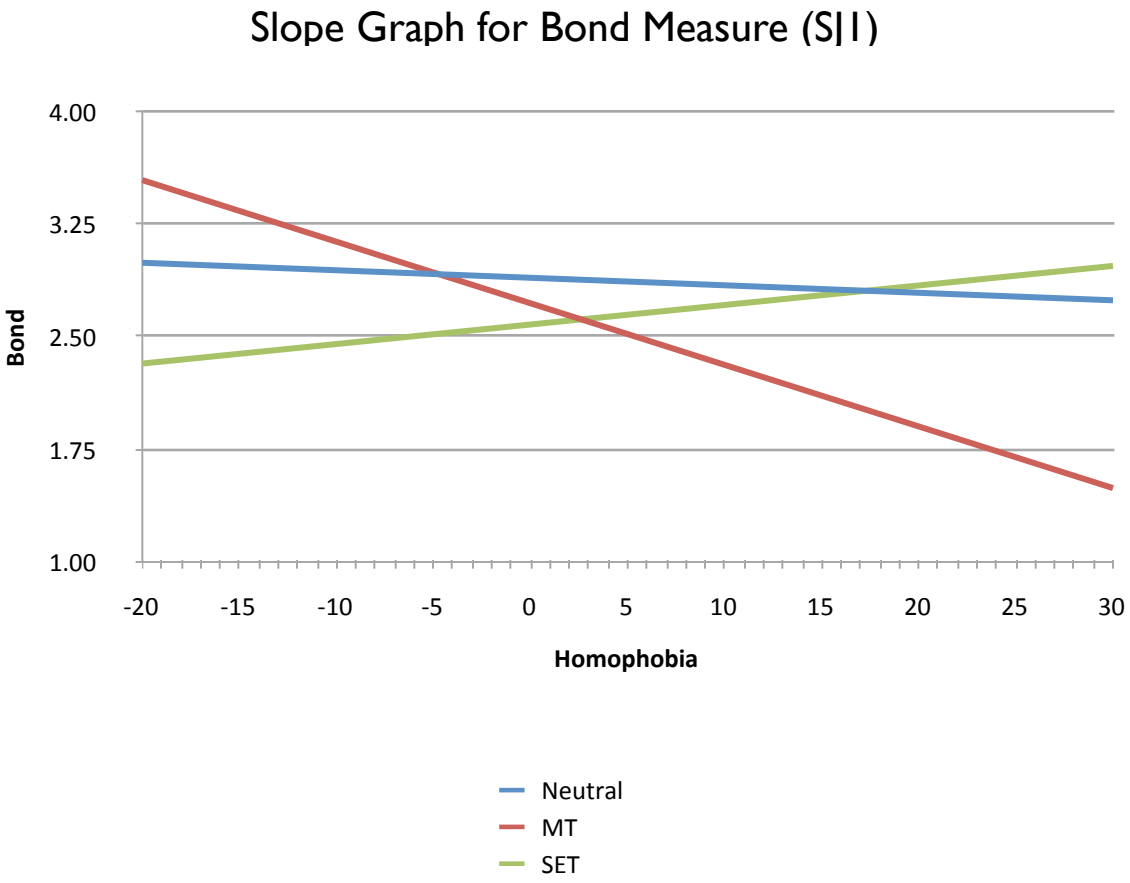
Enjoyment of Experience and Target Evaluation Means as a Function of Threat

IV Condition	EE Total	EE1	EE2	EE3	EQTotal	EQ1	EQ2	EQ3	EQ4	EQ5	EQ6
1	16.21 (4.43)	5.37 (1.26)	5.37 (1.74)	5.47 (1.81)	20.11 (3.96)	5.68 (1.57)	5.95 (1.13)	5.16 (1.68)	1.11 (.32)	1.11 (.32)	1.11 (.32)
2	14.17 (4.14)	4.61 (1.44)	4.91 (1.56)	4.65 (1.40)	18.43 (4.40)	5.30 (1.46)	5.35 (1.43)	3.87 (2.07)	1.52 (1.16)	1.17 (.65)	1.17 (.67)
3	13.91 (3.22)	4.61 (1.04)	4.57 (1.34)	4.74 (1.01)	18.39 (4.58)	3.91 (1.76)	4.17 (1.53)	3.04 (1.46)	4.65 (1.85)	1.35 (.71)	1.26 (.70)
Total	14.68 (4.00)	4.83 (1.28)	4.92 (1.55)	4.92 (1.47)	18.91 (4.34)	4.92 (1.75)	5.11 (1.55)	3.95 (1.93)	2.51 (2.06)	1.22 (.60)	1.20 (.59)

The scores of the manipulation check measures comprising the enjoyment of experience and evaluation questionnaires. Values expressed as mean (± standard deviation).

Graphs:

Graph 1:



With an increase in homophobia score, participants in the masculinity threat condition (MT) assigned a lower bond amount, and were thus more lenient toward the antigay target.