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Homophobia in the 90's : intolerance and acceptance of alernative lifestyles

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HOMOPHOBIA IN THE 90'S: INTOLERANCE
AND ACCEPTANCE OF ALTERNATIVE LIFESTYLES

A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the Department of Psychology

San Jose State University

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Science

by

Jenifer M. Cullen

May, 1997

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Abstract

HOMOPHOBIA IN THE 90'S: INTOLERANCE AND ACCEPTANCE OF ALTERNATIVE LIFESTYLES

by Jenifer M. Cullen

The present study investigated current demographic and personality variables that may be predictors of homophobia. Predictor variables explored include traditional sex role beliefs, religion, gender, age, personal contact, self-esteem, community raised in, and personality characteristics. Participants included 123 SJSU university undergraduates enrolled in either introductory psychology or sociology. Participants completed a questionnaire containing demographic inquiries and four psychological measures including the Attitudes Towards Gays and Lesbians scale, the Bem Sex Role Inventory, the Neuroticism-Extroversion-Openness scale, and the Rosenberg Self-Esteem scale.

Results revealed personal contact with a homosexual, gender, and the personality variable Openness to Experience as the most substantial predictors. A significant difference on indices of homophobia was also found amongst the various religious groups ($p < .05$). The remaining variables (sex roles, age and community raised in) were not significant predictors. These results comprise a theoretical framework that identifies the personality and demographic predictors of the archetypal homophobe and may assist in our effort to understand the public's overall biases, discriminations, and dissenting attitudes.

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Homophobia in the 90's: Intolerance and
Acceptance of Alternative Lifestyles

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Running head: HOMOPHOBIA IN THE 90's

Footnotes

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Abstract

The present study investigated current demographic and personality variables that may be predictors of homophobia. Predictor variables explored include traditional sex role beliefs, religion, gender, age, personal contact, self-esteem, community raised in, and personality characteristics. Participants included 123 SJSU university undergraduates enrolled in introductory courses in psychology or sociology. Subjects completed a questionnaire containing demographic inquiries and four psychological measures (the ATLG, BSRI, NEO-PI, and the RSE). Results revealed personal contact with a homosexual, gender, and the personality variable Openness to Experience as the most substantial predictors. A significant difference on indices of homophobia was also found amongst the various religious groups ($p < .05$). The remaining variables (sex roles, age and community raised in) were not significant predictors. These results comprise a theoretical framework that identifies the personality and demographic predictors of the archetypal homophobe and may assist in our effort to understand the public's overall biases, discriminations, and dissenting attitudes.

Homophobia in the 90's: Intolerance and Acceptance of Alternative Lifestyles

Categorizing human beings according to their sexual orientation has been inextricably woven into our culture in which being heterosexual, homosexual, or bisexual carries with it social significance. Sexual orientation may be defined as a pattern of sexual and affectional preferences for persons of a particular sex (Herek, 1986). If one is attracted to persons of the same sex, one's orientation may be defined as homosexual (Ernulf, Inhala, & Whitham, 1989). The term homosexual may imply that a pure dichotomy exists: one is either homosexual or heterosexual. However, Kinsey (1948), as cited by Weis and Dain (1979), emphasized that there is no clear dichotomy, but rather varieties of sexual behavior that occur on a continuum ranging from extremes of exclusively heterosexual to exclusively homosexual.

In recent years there has been an increasing awareness among the public in Western societies of the large number of adults who classify themselves as homosexual, as well as growing interest in all aspects of homosexual lifestyles. According to Smith (1993), there are at least 20 million homosexuals, namely gay men and lesbians, in the United States today. Empirical estimates of the incidence of homosexuality range from 1 to 15% of the population. However, determining the exact number of homosexuals is difficult because homosexuals are, by and large, an invisible minority. Because of the

social stigma that accompanies homosexuality, homosexuals tend not to identify themselves under ordinary circumstances (Weis & Dain, 1979).

Strong prejudices within American society towards those who identify themselves as homosexual have been well documented by social scientists. Glassner and Owen (1976) suggested that prejudice directed towards homosexuals is not any different from prejudice towards other social categories. According to Bagley (1979), men and women tend to have a pervading need to maintain self-esteem and some personality equilibrium while minimizing anxiety and uncertainty from everyday affairs. In line with one's particular social circumstances, this need for order in the social world and enhancement of the ego may be realized through prejudiced attitudes. Bagley argues it is the fulfillment of these underlying psychological needs that may force the individual to become intolerant in the first place and, more specifically, in this case, may cause one to exert his or her prejudices towards homosexuals.

Of the many words that describe this particular prejudice against homosexuals, the term "homophobia" is currently the most popular (Weis & Dain, 1979). Characterizing prejudice towards homosexuals in terms of a "phobia" implies that those attitudes are based upon an irrational fear, similar to the fear some people experience when confronted with feared objects or specific situations (Herek, 1984).

When the term homophobia was first described in 1920 by F.E. Kempf, it was not defined as or used in reference to a phobia per se. Alternatively, Kempf discussed

homophobia as a “sudden state of feverish panic or agitated furor, amounting sometimes to temporary manic insanity, which breaks out when a repressed homosexual finds himself in a situation in which he can no longer pretend to be unaware of the treat of homosexual temptations” (p. 477). This acute mental disturbance was referred to in medical textbooks as “Kempf’s Disease” (Chuang & Addington, 1988).

The current use of the term “homophobia” was actually coined in 1967 by G. Weinberg. He was the first to define homophobia as “the irrational condemnation of homosexuals which results in violence, deprivation, and separation (p. 423).” Since 1967, other researchers have developed different labels in an effort to more precisely define the feeling that has existed for hundreds of years. Present researchers now use a more general definition of homophobia that is taken to mean the fear and dislike or hostility and prejudice towards gay men and lesbians (Briton, 1990; Herek, 1986).

According to Morin and Rothblum (1991), although same-gender sexual orientation has been expressed in some form throughout history and in all cultures (as well as in most nonhuman species), it was not until 1973 that the American Psychiatric Association (APA) removed homosexuality from its official list of mental disorders. In the early part of this century, the prevailing view of same-gender sexual orientation changed from one of sin to one of mental illness. Subsequently, the psychological research conducted by Evelyn Hooker in 1957 fueled a reconsideration of this view when she established that trained clinicians could not differentiate between gay and

heterosexual men on measures of positive adjustment. Additional research demonstrated that lesbians and gays were similar to heterosexuals on measures of adjustment and self-esteem (Thompson, McCandless, & Strickland, 1971). Thus, researchers established that same-gender orientation was not, in itself, a sign of poor psychological adjustment. These findings were instrumental in bringing about the APA's adoption of an official policy statement that claimed "homosexuality per se implies no impairment in judgment, stability, reliability, or general social or vocational capabilities" (Morin & Rothblum, 1991, p. 947).

Although homosexuality has lost the status of a psychological disorder, homophobia is still quite prevalent. In the United States, homosexuals are targets of considerable prejudice which is manifested in a wide range of behaviors from verbal expressions of dislike to violent attacks (Herek, 1988). In a survey of 2,000 homosexuals in eight U.S. metropolitan areas, for example, more than 90% of the males and 75% of the females reported having been verbally harassed because of their sexual orientation and almost one-half reported being threatened with physical violence (National Gay Task Force, 1984).

More recent information, compiled in 1995 by the Community United Against Violence (CUAV), claims that the increase in hate crimes against gays and lesbians has risen 35% since 1991. The CUAV also reports that locally, in 1994, 545 individuals faced anti-lesbian, gay, and bisexual violence. This number is a 37% increase from the

397 victims reporting in 1993. Unfortunately, while 62% of these victims were injured, 35% of them required medical treatment.

It is not surprising that the rate of hate crimes against gays and lesbians is so high. According to Britton (1990), in a national survey conducted by the Gallup Poll (1986), 54% of respondents agreed that homosexual relations between consenting adults should be illegal. Additionally, 51% believed the Constitution should not protect private homosexual acts. Unfortunately, reports throughout the United States suggest that such prejudice and violence is increasing, fueled in part by the current AIDS epidemic and its perceived linkage with the gay community (Herek, 1988).

Although efforts to understand homophobia have been, at best, sporadic, some consistent patterns that identify those holding negative attitudes towards homosexuals have been observed across samples. The following variables have been identified empirically as influences on homophobia: an individual's support for traditional sex roles, gender, degree of religiosity, self-esteem, age, type of community raised in, level (or amount) of personal contact with a gay man or lesbian, and particular personality variables (Glassner & Owen, 1975; Irwin & Thompson, 1977; Maykovich, 1975; Nyberg & Alston, 1976; Smith, 1971; Weinberger & Millham, 1979; Whitley & Kite, 1995). What distinguishes the current study from others is its ability to identify possible facets of personality that may help us bolster our identification of a homophobic

orientation. Knowledge of the personality factors that give rise to homophobia might ultimately prove useful in combating it.

One variable critical to understanding the intolerance of homosexuality is the socialized tendency which individuals have to maintain a clear and traditional distinction between the sexes. A number of studies have demonstrated this relationship and have concluded that traditional sex role proscriptions (e.g., traditional beliefs about how men and women should behave) correlate positively with negative attitudes towards gay men and lesbians (Brown & Amoroso, 1975; Thompson, Grisanti, & Pleck, 1985).

Weinberger and Millham (1979) explained homophobia as related to support for traditional masculinity-femininity because it serves to reduce gender-identity confusion. An earlier study carried out by the same authors found that a significant portion of the negative response to homosexual activity was due to the belief that homosexuals behave in a manner that is incongruent with their anatomical sex (Millham & Weinberger, 1979). In sum, it appears that the need to maintain traditional sex role standards is an important factor in understanding intolerance of any deviation from "gender-specific" behaviors.

As noted by Herek (1988), one of the most consistent predictors of homophobia is an individual's gender. Many studies have shown that heterosexual males manifest more antigay hostility on average than do heterosexual females (Herek, 1988; Kite, 1984; Weis & Dain, 1979). Although this sex difference in attitudes has been observed quite

often, few attempts have been made to explain it. Herek (1988) interpreted the gender difference by claiming that males are more likely to direct their aggressive impulses outward (against real or imagined frustrators), thus externalizing their defense mechanisms. In contrast, he stated that females internalized their defense mechanisms with such employments as projection; thus they held less outward, hostile attitudes towards homosexuals.

Herek (1988) stated that sex differences in attitudes might additionally be understood by considering cultural constructions of gender because men and women are likely to have had different experiences associated with principal correlates of homophobia. For example, American culture emphasizes the importance of males continuously affirming their masculinity by rejecting those men who violate the heterosexual norm. This ideology is likely to be strongly supported by one's male peers, especially in late adolescence and early adulthood. Consequently, adherence to such ideologies limits a male's opportunity for contact with the entire homosexual population due to their supposed violation of everyday "gender-specific" behavior.

Herek (1988) additionally theorizes that heterosexual females, on the other hand, are less likely to perceive rejection of lesbians and gay men as integral to their own gender-identity. As a result, females probably experience fewer social pressures to express hostile attitudes and thus have more opportunity to interact with gay men and lesbians. Herek's interpretation specifies that when females do express negative attitudes, they are

most likely resulting from ideological concerns, such as religious and familial beliefs, rather than pressure from peers as in the case of male homophobia.

This brings us to the next correlate of homophobia: amount of personal contact one has had with gay men and lesbians. Past studies show that persons who have been acquainted with homosexuals show less prejudice than those who have not (Glassner & Owen, 1976; Herek, 1988). As explained by Glassner and Owen, (1976), this may be because those who have been in personal contact with homosexuals have discovered flaws in the stereotypes and have seen a variety of personalities and experiences among homosexuals. The authors add that increased contact results in a demystification of the typical homosexual; the character becomes a real person on the basis of their being a person who happens to be homosexual. Additionally, according to Millham, San Miguel, and Kellogg (1976), previous experience with a homosexual may lower one's prejudice because as a heterosexual gains further exposure and understanding of a different group, personal feelings of discomfort, disgust, and/or anxiety are significantly lowered.

Religious orthodoxy has also been found to be a significant predictor of homophobia. Because Western religion generally encourages love of one's neighbor, religious Americans presumably should be less prejudiced than their nonreligious counterparts (Herek, 1987). Yet many studies show persons with high levels of homophobia are more likely to be religious, attend church frequently, and to subscribe to a conservative

religious ideology (Henley & Pincus, 1978; Herek, 1987; Newman, 1989). Nyberg and Alston (1976) operationalized religiosity by frequency of church attendance and found that those high on religiosity were most likely to reject the legitimacy of homosexual behavior.

Various explanations exist in the literature for the high degree of prejudice among those who hold strong religious beliefs. A number of researchers have found that those who ascribe to more dogmatic religions (e.g., Catholics, Protestants, and Baptists) tend to express more fundamental religiosity and subsequently, have more negative attitudes towards homosexuals than those who ascribe to less dogmatic religions (e.g., Jews and Episcopalians) or those with no religious affiliation (Irwin & Thompson, 1977; Nyberg & Alston, 1976).

Herek (1987) argued that the degree of conservatism toward religious beliefs better predicts homophobia than does religious orientation. Herek claims that those religions that encourage tolerance and acceptance report less prejudice than those that adhere to condemnation of homosexuality.

An individual's personal level of self-esteem is also a significant predictor of prejudice towards lesbians and gay men. When describing prejudice in general, Heaven (1983) links it to self-esteem in that a low self-esteem may result in feelings of inadequacy. This may cause the individual to re-assert him-or herself in various ways, one being to proclaim prejudiced attitudes. Also noted by Maykovich (1975), prejudice

varies systematically with the degree of satisfaction with oneself. In particular, a negative self-attitude is a major supporting mechanism of prejudice.

Extending these same ideas towards the prejudice exhibited towards homosexuals, those people who have a higher self-esteem and increased positive regard for themselves may be less likely to hold negative attitudes towards homosexuals. Herek (1988) explained these results by pointing out that individuals who exhibit a greater need than others for social approval and those who conform to greater levels of social network pressure, exhibit lower levels of self-esteem, and in return, are more likely to negatively evaluate those subgroups that are different from theirs.

In the literature, the region and city size that one was raised in also tends to be associated with variations in prejudice towards homosexuals. Research has shown that those from northern and larger cities will express less prejudice than those from southern and smaller cities (Glassner & Owen, 1976). Stephan and McMullin (1982) believe the reason for this variation in tolerance levels stems from the fact that "cities encourage the expression of unusual, bizarre, or different tastes and interests by providing a place in which the persons who have them can congregate and thereby mutually reinforce one another" (p. 411). It seems as though an urban childhood may have a direct effect on homophobia. Such a childhood probably prepares a person to more readily accept a heterogeneous collection of people as part of the social scene (Klassen, Williams, & Levitt, 1989).

Stephan and McMullin add that urban-rural differences might lie in the willingness to permit others to pursue alternative lifestyles. Specifically, urban dwellers tend to be more tolerant of deviant behavior than rural residents. Irwin and Thompson (1977) also found that urbanization was positively related to increasing toleration and similarly interpreted their findings by claiming people in these areas are forced to deal with diverse values and lifestyles. Thus, homosexuality as a visible urban phenomenon is quite notable here.

Additionally, an individual's age is also significantly related to one's attitude towards homosexuals. Studies have shown that as one ages, his or her level of intolerance increases (Irwin & Thompson, 1977; Nyberg & Alston, 1976). This relationship between one's age and prejudice has been discussed in the literature for many years. For example, Maykovich (1975) claims age as one of the most important factors in determining prejudice. He adds that being young (below age 30) and liberal decreases one's chances of being prejudiced, while being over age 30 has the opposite effect.

An interpretation of this finding may be that as people age, they become increasingly intolerant of diversity and nonconformity. Additionally, there are accelerated generational differences in our society, with each new generation becoming increasingly tolerant due to the rapidly changing cultural contexts within which they are socialized. Irwin and Thompson (1977) add that longitudinal data are needed to test these alternative explanations.

Aside from these various demographic variables, particular personality predictors have been found to affect the degree to which one is prejudiced, and thus homophobic. According to Simpson and Yinger (1972), researchers in the field of the social psychology of prejudice have sought to discover the degree to which an attitude of prejudice should be interpreted as more of a “trait” or the manifestation of a total personality. The question then becomes, “Is there a prejudiced personality that is different from the unprejudiced personality or is prejudice a specific response to a specific stimulus?” (Simpson & Yinger, 1972, p. 77). In the last several years, there has been a great deal of research to test the hypothesis that prejudice is actually part of a complicated “personality syndrome” (Simpson & Yinger, 1972, p. 77).

The authoritarian-type personality abounds throughout the literature as being a personality type that is increasingly prejudiced. As defined by Ray (1988), authoritarian behavior is exhibited through one’s desire or tendency to impose one’s own will on others. Characteristics of the authoritarian personality were defined as early as 1950 by Adorno, Frenkel-Brunswick, Levinson, and Sanford. These authors were among the first to confirm the association between prejudice and authoritarian attitudes. They defined the authoritarian-type personality as that which is opposed to the subjective, the imaginative, and the tender-minded. They argued that these individuals are generally hostile, destructive, and cynical, similar to those who are racially prejudiced.

In order to understand the relationship between prejudice and the authoritarian-type personality, Dustin and Davis (1967) compared 20 men who scored high in authoritarian tendencies with 20 men who scored low. All participants were permitted to reward or punish a series of “followers” for their performances. Results showed authoritarian participants significantly more often used negative sanctions (e.g., negative evaluations) while the less authoritarian participants more often used no sanctions.

In addition is the possibility that those who are deeply prejudiced manifest high levels of anxiety and avoid stimuli likely to produce anxiety. As noted by Simpson and Yinger (1972), being prejudiced may serve to make sense of a complex situation by making it simple and for giving one a sense of belonging. When one can fulfill these needs, a feeling of ambiguity may fill the void. This sensation of the unknown and ambiguous may then cause one to become anxious, thus causing displacement of that anxiety with a prejudiced attitude towards targets with whom they cannot understand or identify. Simpson and Yinger add that to find a semblance in spite of one’s frustrations, he or she will mobilize a variety of defense mechanisms against anxiety and self-hate. In essence, in order to displace one’s anxiety, he or she may put forth attitudes of prejudice.

One of the most widely accepted applications of social psychological theories to prejudice is found in the frustration-aggression hypothesis. Frustration is defined as “the blocking of someone’s behavior directed at a definite goal, by some other person or

object as opposed to an individual's failure to achieve a goal because of his own ability" (Bagley, Verma, Mallick, & Young, 1979, p. 37). Frustration can sometimes lead to the expression of aggression which can in turn be expressed against other races or homosexual targets.

Along these same lines, Simpson and Yinger (1972) add that all human beings experience major and minor frustrations in life. Because no human being moves smoothly towards all the goals that have become part of him or her, hostile impulses towards a scapegoat may be created. In many instances, when this hostility cannot be directed towards the source of frustration, it may be stored up or directed towards oneself or toward some substitute target that is less able to strike back. This is what is commonly called displacement, and is also known to occur when anxiety enters the picture. When this free-floating hostility (resulting from frustration) causes the displacement of one's aggression, prejudiced attitudes may result. Such a vicious circle helps to explain the tenacity with which prejudice, once started, survives in our society today.

It appears that cognitive rigidity may also be part of a general set of attitudes which make up the prejudiced personality (Adorno, et al., 1950). A person who has a rigid outlook on his or her life may be labeled as dogmatic. According to Ehrlich (1973), dogmatism implies a closed cognitive structure which blocks an individual from learning anything different from what has been established as social norms. Dogmatism also

refers to resistance to change of total systems of beliefs, since the individual's set of beliefs and disbeliefs tend to be consistent in direction.

Prejudice in dogmatic individuals may thus be explained as ego defensive in that rigidity is a function of the individual's inability to control or make sense of the complex stimuli with which he or she is faced. Stereotyping then becomes a function of mental rigidity because it allows for a psychic balance in that it forcibly imposes static concepts on a complex and threatening world (Bagley et al., 1979).

The function of dogmatism, as noted by Rokeach (1956), may be that of yet another defense against threat and an attempt to satisfy the need to know the world one lives in. A major result of the dogmatic individual, with their stifling stereotypes, is the rejection and prejudice towards any person who disagrees with him or her (Simpson & Yinger, 1972).

The final two personality predictors of prejudice center around Eysenck's well known schema of personality (Eysenck & Eysenck, 1968). Eysenck originally proposed that there were only two main facets of personality, namely neuroticism and extroversion. Some researchers argue that both are tied into being prejudiced. More specifically, prejudiced individuals are more likely to exhibit neurotic tendencies, while non-prejudiced people are most likely to be extroverted.

According to Watson, Pritzker, and Madison (1955), neurosis is a type of defense against impulses an individual feels are dangerous. They add that defenses (which arise

from threats that hostile impulses may overwhelm the individual) may be the trigger which causes neurosis to be the behavioral outcome.

More recent authors (McCrae & Costa, 1987) argue neuroticism as negative emotionality with the propensity to experience a variety of negative affects such as anxiety, depression, anger, and embarrassment. They define neuroticism with such terms as worrying, insecure, self-conscious, and temperamental. Impulsive behaviors such as tendencies to overeat, smoke, or drink excessively, also form a facet of neuroticism.

What these behaviors have in common is their shared negative affect along with disturbed thoughts and behaviors which accompany emotional distress. For example, individuals high in neuroticism may have great difficulty than others in quitting smoking because they more frequently use inappropriate coping responses (e.g., hostile reactions and wishful thinking) because they deal more often with disruptive, negative emotions.

The literature on personality disorder and mental health and its relation to various manifestations of prejudice is scattered and contradictory. While some studies have empirically demonstrated that prejudice is related to poor mental health, other studies have failed to show this (Bagley et al., 1979).

Bagley et al. (1979) argued that the prejudiced person is not mentally healthy. He claimed the individual sometimes "has prejudices which are sufficiently ego defensive to prevent the manifestation of further symptoms, but under certain social conditions as

when, say, prejudice is not deemed respectable or acceptable to the individual, it may be accompanied by manifestations of neurosis” (p. 66). This leads one to believe there may be some correlation between manifestations of anxiety, depression, and neurosis in people who are also prejudiced.

The final trait that helps provide a personality profile for the individual who is homophobic is extroversion. According to Bagley et al. (1979) extroversion-introversion supposedly measures at one end of a continuum the degree to which individuals are sociable, impulsive, and enjoy arousing stimuli, also known as extroversion; at the opposite end of this continuum are introverts who are quiet and enjoy reflection rather than action.

In contrast to neuroticism, the extroversion facet may be labeled as positive emotionality (McCrae & Costa, 1987). These authors use terms such as fun-loving, affectionate, friendly, and talkative to describe this facet. They conclude what seems to be the core of extroversion as the enjoyment of others’ company.

In relation to prejudiced attitudes, Eysenck’s research (1967) has shown that introverts condition more easily, while extroverts are more resistant to the pressures of socialization. This involves being conditioned to stimuli requiring social conformity. Eysenck argues that it is this socialization process that extroverts have a more difficult time achieving. Thus, Eysenck argued (on the basis of learning theory), that extroverts, who are more likely to hold tough-minded attitudes, tend to internalize to a lesser degree

the dominant value system, and will therefore be less conservative, religious, and prejudiced than introverts.

One such study that elucidates aspects of introversion and its relationship to prejudiced attitudes looked at a sample of 211 college students. Bagley, Wilson, and Boshier (1970) tested (using Eysenck's personality scales of extroversion and neuroticism) a social learning hypothesis that centered around the acquisition of prejudiced norms. The inference made was that since extroverts condition less well than introverts, they will have to a lesser extent internalized the social norm of prejudice. This was in fact supported by the data in that the stable extroverts showed significantly lower scores on conservatism, attitudes towards the handicapped, and racism. By contrast, neurotic introverts were the most reactionary on three of the four scales. In sum, this study is yet another indication that aspects of personality are clearly involved in prejudiced attitudes.

Because no single variable can explain the variance in attitudes held by a heterogeneous group, several different predictions were explored. This variety may be important to the understanding of the social and psychological needs of different subsets of individuals in a group. Consequently, this study employed eight hypotheses: 1) Support for traditional sex roles for males and females will increase one's incidence of homophobia; 2) Participants with high levels of homophobia are more likely to subscribe to conservative religious ideologies; 3) Individuals with high levels of

homophobia are more likely to be male rather than female; 4) Individuals with high levels of homophobia are more likely to have been raised in rural areas or small towns; 5) Individuals with high levels of homophobia are more likely to be older than younger; 6) Individuals with high levels of homophobia are more likely to have had less contact with a lesbian or gay man; 7) Individuals with high levels of homophobia are more likely to possess a low, rather than high, self-esteem; 8) Possessing particular personality characteristics will increase one's incidence of homophobia. More specifically, those with higher levels of homophobia are more likely to score high on the Neuroticism (N) scale of the NEO-PI, and score low on the Extroversion (E) and Openness (O) scales of the NEO-PI.

The purpose of this research was to focus attention on and understand the characteristics that differentiate individuals who are intolerant of homosexuality from those who are more accepting of this alternative lifestyle. More specifically, these data may assist in the development of a theoretical framework that identifies the personality and demographic predictors of the person who is homophobic. The development of such a framework may serve to help the American public better understand negative attitudes towards homosexuality.

The rationale for completing this study centers around the novel contribution it may make in the area of personality. According to Simpson and Yinger (1972), the theory of personality is of great value in the analysis of any sort of prejudice. The authors

additionally argue that prejudice is a complicated phenomena compounded with social and cultural elements, as well as personality elements. Although this study carries with it overlap where the demographic variables are concerned, its generation of new information will allow us to increase our knowledge of personality and its relation to homosexuality. Facets such as age, gender, and amount of contact have all been repeatedly linked to homophobia but particular aspects of one's personality are yet to be identified. Therefore, the results of this study hope to contribute uniquely in this area so as to allow for insight into how to decrease homophobia. Our greater comprehension of the prejudice towards this group may then have more general applications when attempting to understand the public's widespread and overall biases, discriminations, and prejudiced attitudes.

Method

Participants

One hundred and twenty-three undergraduate university students were recruited from introductory psychology and sociology classes to serve as participants. Participants represented the range and ethnicities of the population of this large, urban university.

Instruments

Survey format was employed to gather data in this study. A questionnaire packet, including a demographic information sheet and four psychological measures, was

utilized (See Appendix A). Chosen measures reflected our attempt to obtain a broad spectrum of information related to attitudes towards gay men and lesbians.

The 20-item Assessment of Attitudes Towards Lesbians and Gay Men (ATLG; Herek, 1984) was used first to measure personal feelings about homosexuality and towards lesbians and gay men as a group. This measure was designed as an attitude scale along the lines of previous measures of intergroup attitudes. The ATLG consists of two 10-item subscales, one for attitudes towards lesbians (ATL) and the other for attitudes towards gay men (ATG). The 20 statements are presented in Likert format with a 9-point scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” Scoring is accomplished by summing scores across items for each subscale. Reverse scoring is used for some items. Total scale scores can range from 20 (extremely positive attitudes) to 180 (extremely negative attitudes). Subscale scores can range from 10 to 90.

Reliability and validity have been documented for the ATLG, ATG, and the ATL. Alpha coefficients indicate satisfactory levels of internal consistency for the ATLG scale ($\alpha=.90$) and its subscales ($\alpha=.89$ for the ATG and $.77$ for the ATL). In addition, ATL and ATG scores correlate significantly ($p<.05$) with construct validity measures.

Personality dimensions were assessed using the NEO Personality Inventory, Form S (NEO-PI; Costa & McCrae, 1985). The NEO-PI consists of 181 self-report items answered on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.”

The NEO-PI measures the five dimensions of *normal* adult personality traits. In addition, three of the five domains (N, E, and O) each include six facets.

The first domain, Neuroticism (N) contrasts adjustment or emotional stability with maladjustment or neuroticism. This dimension is sometimes called “general anxiety.” The six facets of Neuroticism include Anxiety, Hostility, Depression, Self-Consciousness, Impulsiveness, and Vulnerability. The second domain, Extroversion (E), measures the degree to which an individual is sociable. An extrovert is explained as someone who prefers large groups and gatherings, is assertive, upbeat, energetic, cheerful in disposition, optimistic, active, and talkative. Facets of this personality dimension include Warmth, Gregariousness, Assertiveness, Activity, Excitement-Seeking, and Positive Emotions. The third domain, Openness (O), measures one’s general openness to experience. More specifically, it measures the following elements of openness: active imagination, aesthetic sensitivity, receptiveness to inner feelings, preference for variety, intellectual curiosity, and independence of judgment. Openness to experience is comprised of the following six facets: Fantasy, Aesthetics, Feelings, Actions, Ideas, and Values.

Two additional domains, Agreeableness (A) and Conscientiousness (C) make up the NEO-PI. These remaining domains include clusters of adjectives that describe aspects of personality not related to the N, E, or O. Agreeableness measures the extent that people are cooperative, trusting, and sympathetic. Conscientiousness measures the

extent that one is punctual, hard-working, and responsible. Scores for the N, E, and O domains are calculated by summing the six facets that compose each of them.

Internal consistency and test-retest reliability for the NEO-PI have also been established (Costa & McCrae, 1985). Alpha coefficients have ranged from .60 to .86 for the individual facets. Examination of overall domains have yielded coefficients ranging from .85 to .93. Test-retest reliabilities have ranged from .66 to .92 for facets and from .86 to .91 for the domain scales. These correlations suggest the NEO-PI domains are highly reliable.

According to Costa and McCrae (1985), scales show strong construct validity in that consistent patterns of moderate-to-strong correlations with corresponding scales from other inventories, such as the Eysenck Personality Inventory (EPI; Eysenck & Eysenck, 1964) and with ratings of the same traits made by different observers are evident. Costa & McCrae added that construct validity has also been provided by examining the results with those outside the domain of personality (e.g., studies of psychological well-being, vocational interests and behavior, health perceptions, and coping mechanisms).

The 10-item Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSE; Rosenberg, 1979) was used to measure participants' global level of self-esteem and allowed for the classification of subjects into one of two categories: positive (+RSE) or negative (-RSE) self-esteem. The 10 statements are presented in Likert format with a 4-point scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." Scoring is accomplished by summing scores

across items for each of the three subscales (Global RSE, +RSE, and -RSE) to arrive at a total score, which allows for the classification of someone having a positive or negative self-esteem.

Reliability has been documented for the RSE. For example, Chiu (1988) showed a two-week test-retest reliability of .85, proving the RSE to be highly reliable. In addition, alpha coefficients indicate satisfactory levels of internal consistency for the RSE scale ($\alpha=.77$).

The final psychological measure included in this investigation was the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI; Bem, 1973). The shorter, 30-item version of the original 60-item BSRI was used to measure the extent to which an individual reports beliefs that are masculine, feminine, androgynous, or undifferentiated. Participants were asked to indicate on a 7-point Likert scale how well each of the 30 characteristics described him or herself. The scale ranged from “never or almost never true” to “always or almost always true.”

The 30 personality scale items are separated into three categories: ten stereotypic feminine characteristics (e.g., affectionate, gentle, sensitive), ten stereotypic masculine characteristics (e.g., self-reliant, assertive, independent) and ten filler items (e.g., truthful, happy, conceited). The filler items represent a neutral domain with respect to gender stereotypes.

The BSRI was handscored. Calculation involved summing each subject's femininity and masculinity scores, then dividing by the number of items rated (10), in order to obtain a standard score (SS). This standard score allowed for the final classification of each participant as feminine, masculine, androgynous, or undifferentiated.

Internal consistency (alpha) of the BSRI range from .75 to .90. Test-retest reliability has also been established (Bem, 1973).

Finally, participants completed a demographic information sheet. This section reported personal background including gender, ethnicity, religious affiliation, marital status, sexual orientation, age, type of community raised in, year in college, and type and degree of personal contact with a gay man or lesbian. Subjects were also asked to state their definition of homophobia.

Design and Procedure

The descriptive statistics were summarized in Table 1 and included means and standard deviations for all independent variables.

Correlations between all demographic independent variables (age, gender, contact, traditional sex roles, religious affiliation, type of community raised in, and self-esteem) and the dependent variable (score on the ATLG) were calculated. Additional correlations examined the relationship between the three scales of the NEO-PI (including each of the 18 subscales and the "A" and "C" facets) and the dependent variable.

T-tests were used in order to locate possible significant differences which may have existed between gender (male versus female) and between the two contact groups (those who had versus those who had not had personal contact).

A one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to analyze the following variables: religiosity, type of community raised in, and support for traditional sex roles. Further simple effect and complex comparisons were computed in order to measure the impact of specific groups on self-reported ratings of homophobia.

Finally, a simultaneous Multiple Regression Analysis (MRC) was conducted. The following nine predictor variables were included: gender, age, contact, self-esteem and the five personality characteristics (Neuroticism, Extroversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness). The purpose of this analysis was to assess the overall relationship and predictive ability of the demographic and personality predictor variables in association with homophobia.

Participants were recruited to participate in this investigation from both the introductory psychology and sociology classes. Subjects were tested individually and/or as a group during an open research day at the university. Prior to completing surveys, participants were presented with two consent forms (See Appendix B) explaining the nature of the study and guaranteeing their confidentiality. One consent form was to be returned to the investigator. Participants kept the second for their records and proceeded to complete the survey which included the four psychological measures and the

demographic questionnaire. This process took no more than 45 minutes. Upon completion of the questionnaire, participants were presented with a debriefing statement describing the purpose of the experiment (See Appendix C). Participants were thanked for their participation.

Results

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics such as means and standard deviations were computed for all variables (see table 1).

Inferential Statistics

Numerous hypotheses were advanced in this investigation. Analyses included one-tailed *t*-tests, analyses of variance (ANOVA's), simple and complex comparisons, and standard multiple regressions (MRC's). Several of the hypotheses were supported, several others were not. Each is presented below.

Gender. In order to test hypothesis #1, that males would be more homophobic than females, a one-tailed *t*-test was calculated, with $t(121) = 7.40, p < .01$. Scores for males ($M = 85.3$) on the ATLG were significantly higher, or more unfavorable, than those for females ($M = 66.7$).

Contact. Hypothesis #2, stating that participants who had previous contact with homosexuals would express more favorable general attitudes than those without such contact, was also supported, $t(122) = 8.54, p < .01$. As expected, ATLG scores for those

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Predictor Variables and ATLG Scores

Variables	Descriptives		
	Mean	SD	N
Gender	85.30	33.25	77
Male	66.69	28.44	46
Female			
Contact			
Yes	65.20	32.30	84
No	92.24	25.82	38
Age			
<20	84.89	28.44	61
>20	61.95	32.92	61
Community Raised			
Rural	83.46	36.64	26

Note. Lower scores reflect negative attitudes.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics Continued

Variables	Descriptives		
	Mean	SD	N
Community Raised-Continued			
Urban	77.11	28.70	37
Suburban	67.19	32.91	58
Sex Role Self-Concept			
Masculine	76.05	40.71	21
Feminine	73.20	28.76	25
Androgynous	65.84	28.77	44
Undifferentiated	81.81	33.59	32
Self-Esteem			
Low	81.80	34.07	56
High	66.84	30.08	67

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics Continued

Variables	Descriptives		
	Mean	SD	N
Religious Affiliation			
Atheist	40.67	24.04	9
Buddhist	93.26	22.78	19
Catholic	74.80	28.79	41
Muslim	119.00	24.04	2
Protestant	59.00	27.98	4
Other	70.00	34.29	46
Neuroticism			
Low	72.37	30.39	60
High	75.64	35.01	60
Extroversion			
Low	79.53	30.75	58

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics Continued

Variables	Descriptives		
	Mean	SD	N
Extroversion-Continued			
High	68.79	33.47	58
Openness			
Low	85.22	28.57	59
High	62.78	32.81	59

who had personal contact with a gay man or lesbian were significantly lower ($M = 65.2$) than those who had not had previous contact ($M = 92.2$).

Religion. A one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was conducted in order to investigate hypothesis #3, which predicted that religious participants would be more homophobic than their non-religious counterparts. This hypothesis was also supported with $F(5, 115) = 5.07, p < .05$. This suggests that significant differences do exist between various religious groups in relation to their self-reported levels of homophobia. Exploratory analyses of the religious groups will be discussed in the post-hoc analysis section.

Sex Roles. Hypothesis #4 stated that those participants holding traditional sex roles (classified as Masculine or Feminine on the BSRI) would be significantly more homophobic than those who held non-traditional sex role beliefs (classified as Androgynous or Undifferentiated on the BSRI). This hypothesis was not supported [$F(3, 118) = 1.57, p = ns$].

However, complex comparisons were computed to explore whether there were any significant differences between feminine, masculine, androgynous, and undifferentiated groups and their ATLG scores. The following comparisons between traditional and non-traditional groups were made: (a) Masculine/Feminine v. Undifferentiated, with $F(1, 118) = 7.98, p < .05$, (b) Masculine/Feminine v. Androgynous, with $F(1, 118) = 2.58, p = ns$, and (c) Masculine/Feminine v. Undifferentiated/Androgynous, with $F(1, 118) =$

.56, $p = ns$. Consequently, significant differences on ATLG scores existed only between the Masculine and Feminine groups combined when compared to the Undifferentiated group.

Age. Hypothesis #5 predicted that older participants would be more homophobic than their younger counterparts. This hypothesis was not supported by correlational analysis ($n = 122$, $r = -.24$, $p < .05$). The Pearson correlation coefficient indicates just the opposite of what was hypothesized: as participants got older, their level of homophobia actually decreased.

Community Raised. In order to test hypothesis #6, that those participants who were raised in a rural area would be more homophobic than those raised in a suburban or urban area, a one-way ANOVA was calculated. This hypothesis was not supported, with $F(3, 118) = 1.71$, $p = ns$. Thus no significant differences existed between various geographic communities in relation to their self-reported indices of homophobia in this study.

So as to reveal any significant differences between community groups and to target the hypothesis more specifically, further simple and complex comparisons were calculated. Results showed a significant difference existing between (a) rural and suburban areas, with $F(1, 118) = 15.30$, $p < .05$, and (b) suburban and urban areas combined versus the rural area, with $F(1, 118) = 9.89$, $p < .05$. These results indicate that being raised in a small town, or rural area, may be a stronger predictor of homophobia than being raised in suburbia. Furthermore, those participants raised in a rural area were significantly more

homophobic than their suburban/urban counterparts. A non-significant difference was found between rural v. urban areas, with $F(1, 118) = 2.36, p = ns$. These findings, in opposition to the hypothesis, suggest that those raised in a rural area do not show more or less homophobic attitudes than those raised in an urban area.

Regression Analyses

In order to determine the best non-redundant set of predictors and institute a more integrated analysis, the final two hypotheses (#7 and #8), focusing on participants' self-esteem and personality variables (e.g., N, E, O, A, & C constructs), along with hypotheses numbers 1, 2, and 5, were subjected to a multiple regression correlation (MRC) analysis. The purpose of this MRC was to eliminate non-significant predictors among the hypothesized variables. The results of this analysis are summarized in table 2.

In order, the predictors selected were contact with homosexuals, gender, and Openness to experience (see table 3). These three significant variables resulted in a final multiple R of $[F(3,113) = 10.8, p < .01]$ and accounted for 22% of the total variance. It appeared that whether a participant had contact with a homosexual or not was most important in determining his/her level of homophobic attitudes, followed by gender, and then by Openness.

Post-Hoc Analysis

For purely exploratory reasons, a final contrast was computed that examined the Christian religious groups, Catholics and Protestants, to their non-religious counterparts, Atheists. Results for this analysis were $F(1, 115) = 61.97, p < .001$ and indicated that,

Table 2

Results of the Simultaneous Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Levels of Homophobia

Predictors	R	R ²	R ² adj	F	df
Gender					
Contact					
Age					
Community raised					
Sex role self-concept					
Self-esteem					
Religious affiliation					
Neuroticism					
Extroversion					
Openness	.51	.26	.19	4.01*	9, 104

*p < .001

Table 3

Summary of Multiple Regression Equation

Predictors	Standardized beta
Contact	.28*
Gender	.21*
Openness	-.18*

* $p < .001$

for this particular sample, Christian participants reported significantly higher homophobia ratings than did Atheist participants.

Discussion

As suggested by Glassner and Owen (1976), prejudice towards homosexuals is not unlike that towards other social categories. As individuals learn to incorporate themselves comfortably into social categories of their own, they also learn special ways of responding to minority groups, such as homosexuals, which are proscribed by that particular social division. For various psychological, social, and cultural reasons, those responses are not always positive. The data from the present study support this notion and are consistent with previous research in demonstrating the generally negative public response to homosexuality in the United States today (Klassen et al., 1989).

Because prejudice is a complicated phenomenon consisting of social and cultural elements, as well as individual personality elements, the goal of this investigation was to identify demographic and personality variables that might ultimately prove useful in combating homophobia. The primary purpose was to focus attention on and understand the characteristics that differentiate individuals who are intolerant of homosexuality from those who are more accepting of this alternative lifestyle. Our goal was to achieve a more comprehensive understanding of negative attitudes towards homosexuals.

In this investigation, the three variables found to be most important when trying to identify who may or may not be homophobic were: gender, personal contact, and the

degree of openness to new experiences. The importance of gender and exposure to homosexuals has been noted in previous studies (Herek, 1986, Herek & Glunt, 1993). What is unique about this study is its contribution to the literature regarding the personality elements related to homophobia, and more specifically, how "open-mindedness" may be a critical predictor.

Gender. Because America explicitly emphasizes the importance that males adhere to strict heterosexual norms, it is not surprising that males were found to be significantly more homophobic than females. According to Herek (1986), being a "man" is a crucial component of personal identity for males in our society. As an identity, being a heterosexual male embodies such personal characteristics as acting tough, successful, independent, and aggressive. In addition, males are expected to be successful in all they undertake, especially occupationally, and never show any sign of fragility (Thompson, et al., 1985). Society does not permit a man to act effeminate, overly intimate, or fail in sexual relationships. Instead, they must elude anything even vaguely feminine. Expressing hostility towards gay people enhances such an identity and forces males to continuously affirm their masculinity by following these standards. It allows males to show what they are not by directing animosity towards that symbol, and all the while disqualifying males who violate this norm.

This ideology puts much social pressure on heterosexual males to express malicious attitudes towards homosexuals, especially in late adolescence and early adulthood. The

pressure of societal standards and peers thus causes males to internalize great anxieties. The source for this anxiety is "fear of losing sense of one's self, or identity, as a heterosexual man, which is equivalent to a male's identity as a person" (Herek, 1986, p. 567).

The presence of homosexuals may spark additional anxieties for males. For instance, they may be forced to question their own sexuality. In addition, they might be fearful a homosexual will initiate a sexual relationship with him, or perhaps other people will infer that they, too, are homosexual if their interaction with a homosexual were recognized (Gurwitz & Marcus, 1978). Herek (1986) explains that, in the end, it is this conformity and defense against anxiety that pushes the heterosexual male to express homophobic attitudes.

While this explanation of male homophobia has been observed quite often, few attempts have been made to explain why females consistently hold more positive attitudes towards homosexuals than males. As noted by Herek (1988), gender differences in attitudes can best be understood by "considering cultural constructions of gender, since men and women are likely to have had different experiences associated with the principal correlates of homophobia (perceived attitudinal norms, religiosity, personal contact with gay people, and ideologies of family and gender)" (p. 471). Herek adds that unlike males, females may be less likely to perceive rejection of homosexuals to be integral to their own gender-identity, thus experiencing fewer social pressures to express hostile attitudes.

This is not to say female homophobia does not exist; although when it does, it may be due to ideological issues such as religious beliefs and/or family-and-gender ideology instead of gender-identity needs such as conformity and decreasing defensive anxiety (Herek, 1988).

Personal Contact. Adherence to these self-perpetuating ideologies for both sexes thus causes individuals to consequently have fewer opportunities to interact with homosexuals. Their prejudice makes it unlikely they will seek out any interaction and if they do, it will most likely be negative (Simon, 1995). This brings us to the next closely related finding. Subjects' attitudes towards homosexuals were, in general, all significantly influenced by prior interpersonal contact with a gay man and/or lesbian.

Results show direct personal contact as a powerful predictor of heterosexuals' attitudes towards homosexuals. This observation, known as the "contact hypothesis" (Allport, 1954) is consistent with previous empirical research (Herek & Glunt, 1993; Simon, 1995). Past studies have found that when assessing various demographic and social variables, interpersonal contact predicted attitudes towards gay men (Herek & Glunt, 1993) and lesbians (Simon, 1995) better than did other included variables.

As prior contact continues to decrease negative attitudes towards homosexuals, it may be best explained in the following manner. Acquaintance with a suspected or known homosexual may dispel unwarranted stereotypes and opinions that may have contributed to the initial discomfort. It may be assumed that "more direct contact results in a

demystification of the character homosexual...and allows for the loosening of boundaries around acceptable role behavior" (Glassner & Owen, 1976, p. 169).

It may be important to note here that contact with gay men and lesbians will be most beneficial if that interaction is under conditions which minimize anxiety and are positive and friendly (e.g., a close family-friend is homosexual) instead of a negative experience (e.g., sexually approached by a homosexual). Consequently, it would seem plausible that increased positive interaction would cause those with already favorable attitudes to become more so, while those holding already negative inclinations may be given the chance to unlearn these attitudes by inducing incompatible positive effects derived from new and gratifying interactions (Herek, 1984; Gentry, 1986).

It is one thing to explain the significance of the "contact hypothesis", but it is a feat to actually implement contact in the real world. As mentioned by Klassen et al. (1989), positive contact with the homosexual world must begin in early childhood. Positive interactions should be part of a regular school curriculum, but because an imbalance unquestionably exists between the heterosexual and homosexual curricula (e.g., human sexuality books geared toward heterosexual couples), there is a desperate need for semblance (Sears, 1992). Increasing representation of alternative lifestyles in junior and high school text books may be one method that could increase childrens' interpersonal contact at a somewhat early age.

Openness to Experiences. This brings us to the final variable that was weighted most heavily among the predictor variables: openness to new and different experiences. As previously mentioned, participants' level of openness was measured via the NEO-PI and is best operationally defined by the NEO-PI's creators, Robert McCrae and Paul Costa. McCrae and Costa state that individuals scoring high on this variable tend to have a strong need for variety and willingly seek out fresh and novel activities. They have a more vivid imagination and subscribe to more flexible and broad-minded approaches when addressing moral and social values. Their attraction to new ideas and alternative value systems may make them especially tolerant of others, and may lead them to adopt unconventional attitudes (McCrae, 1993; McCrae & Costa, 1983).

Costa and McCrae were not the first to observe that having an open cognitive structure could decrease negative attitudes towards minority group members. As early as 1946, researcher E.L. Hartly, as cited by Goodstein (1953) noted that it was general intellectual rigidity which served as the primary source of all specific phenomena and attitude formation in the prejudice area. With this idea in mind, prejudice researchers began to describe what was known as the "dogmatic" individual (Rokeach, 1956). As previously mentioned, these people tend to possess a closed cognitive structure that blocks them from accepting people or ideas that may be ambiguous or that stray from the norm (Budner, 1961; Maykovich, 1975). In fact, when Budner investigated the relationship between people's fear of ambiguities (or closed cognitive structures) to indices of

prejudice (or conventionality), he found a significant positive relationship between the two. Some 25 years later, this finding still coincides with Costa and McCrae's notion (1988) that tolerance for ambiguity (or what today would be termed "openness") positively relates to non-conventionality and the two factors together consequently have a significant effect on one's expressed level of homophobia.

Just as gender and one's prior contact were complementary in relation to homophobia prediction, so is openness to new and ambiguous experiences associated with the previously mentioned contact variable. It is not surprising that gender, contact, and openness were found to be the most heavily weighted homophobia predictors in light of their close link to one another. In the sense that one's gender (e.g., being female) could foster increased contact with homosexuals, having an open cognitive structure may also allow for greater contact with a gay man or lesbian. As noted by Newman (1989), the question still remains: Does interpersonal contact reduce prejudice or are people with more open attitudes more likely to make and maintain contact with homosexuals? It is unlikely that this question can be answered unidimensionally. Instead, both scenarios may co-exist to bolster the implementation of homophobia reduction.

Religious Ideology. The final supported hypothesis predicted that those proscribing to religious ideologies would be more homophobic than their non-religious counterparts. Past research shows that religiously orthodox people tend to have a built-in bias towards dogmatism, especially with issues related to religious beliefs (Pancer, Jackson,

Hunsberger, Pratt, & Lea, 1995) which undoubtedly affects the degree to which they accept homosexuality. The driving force behind fundamentalists' lack of openness is both their strict adherence to the belief that "God controls all" (Lupfer, Hopkinson, & Kelley, 1988, p. 389) and a mind-set which includes an inability to tolerate ambiguity. In addition is their desire for simplistic solutions to problems of living, and a compulsion to impose one's beliefs on others. With such a mind-set, it is no surprise that fundamentalists have been repeatedly shown to hold more negative attitudes towards out-groups, homosexuals included (Kirkpatrick, Hood, & Hartz, 1991; Pancer et al., 1995).

Because most religious teachings generally encourage "love of one's neighbor," it would seem that those who practiced religion would be less prejudiced towards gay men and lesbians than their non-religious counterparts (Herek, 1987). Instead, the reverse seems to be true. According to Allport (1966), the reason behind such a paradox may be that, while most religions do teach concepts of brotherhood, tolerance, etc., they teach them in an authoritarian manner which insists on following a very specific set of rules and beliefs. Under such circumstances, individuals may develop feelings of superiority, self-righteousness, and an in-group out-group mentality towards nonbelievers. Consequently, prejudicial behavior may result which evidently stems from authoritarian-type aggression.

Nelson (1982) cites two other crucial reasons why gay men and lesbians have met with enormously more rejection than acceptance by the church. One is the claim that the

homosexual orientation itself is contrary to "nature," or to God's intention in creation.

The result is that homosexuals get labeled as "unnatural" and are coupled with negative psychological notions such as perversion, illness, or arrested development.

Criticism by the church towards homosexuals is the second claim. Because the church generally believes that procreation is the primary purpose of sex, homosexual sex acts are considered a sin due to its non-procreative aspect. In essence, the church sees gay and lesbian sex as "unnatural and contrary to creation" (Nelson, 1982, p. 168). This exact idea was supported by MacDonald and Games (1974) who found a significant positive relationship between increased negative attitudes towards homosexuals and the view that sex was primarily for procreative purposes. Unquestionably, both claims are based on long disproved homosexual stereotypes and ill-understood emotional reactions (Nelson, 1982).

Upon examination of the religious group data, it became evident that an overall significant difference existed between the various religious groups. While it is evident that something important may be taking place, the results surrounding this hypothesis should be interpreted cautiously for two reasons. The first is that there was not an equal representation of participants in each religious group. For instance, there were only 2 Muslims, but 41 Catholics. Because there were too few participants in one group and many more in another, a sound conclusion can not be drawn from the planned comparison.

Secondly, in retrospect, it seems that a measure of religiosity may have proved beneficial in order to confidently address and support this hypothesis (e.g., a measure of fundamentalism). Within any religion, degree of religiosity may fall anywhere along a continuum. Past studies have shown that it is an individual's degree of religiosity (measured by attendance at church services) that actually impacts his or her attitudes towards out-groups. Future research might employ such a measurement (e.g., Allport's Religious Orientation Scale) in order to appropriately address differing degrees of religiosity and its possible effect on homophobia.

It may be important to note that Christian religion groups have been shown repeatedly throughout the literature to hold more negative attitudes towards homosexuals than their non-religious counterparts (Nyberg & Alston, 1976, Herek, 1984). When the means of these two groups were subjected to an exploratory comparison (Catholic/Protestant v. Atheist) results indicated that for this sample, Christians were more homophobic than Atheists. This result is in line with previous empirical work which has also concluded that "rejection of homosexuality is an integral part of the American Christian heritage" (Nyberg & Alston, 1976, p. 101). Due to the unequal representation of participants across groups, further comparisons beyond this one would not have been meaningful and thus, were not calculated .

So as not to stigmatize any one religious group, two issues should be addressed. The first is that, again, these results must be interpreted carefully due to the earlier discussed

absence of any measurement of religiosity. Like any other group of individuals, the Christian religion embodies people who are prejudiced and those who are not. Secondly, as noted by Kiefer-Hammersmith (1987), over the years many Christian churches have softened their stand on the condemnation of homosexuality. For instance, special task forces, offices, support groups, and religion outreach programs have been implemented so as to provide positive and accepting support for homosexuals.

Non-Predictors of Homophobia. While the aforementioned supported hypotheses allowed for insight into homophobia prediction, it may be relevant as well to discuss any important deviations from the originally proposed expectations. The insignificant personality dimensions will be discussed first; then the remaining demographic variables will be covered.

Once again, a major goal of this study was to generate new information in the area of personality with its relation to homophobia so as to allow for insight to decrease it. As mentioned by Adorno et al. (1950), the knowledge of the personality factors giving rise to prejudices may ultimately prove useful in combating it. His early research indicated that those with similar personality patterns who manifested prejudiced attitudes towards one group were just as likely to react similarly to other groups. Past literature suggests many demographic variables to be predictive of individuals' indices of homophobia, but personality variables (aside from Smith's 1971 study that explored authoritarianism, status consciousness, and sexual rigidity) have yet to be explored in depth. Previous

explanations of prejudice have been concerned primarily with associated personality factors as authoritarianism and frustration-aggression. This investigation focused primarily on the 5-Factor model of personality which included Neuroticism, Extroversion, and Openness to experience as measured by the NEO-PI.

Contrary to previous findings (Bagley et al., 1979; Eysenck, 1962) Neuroticism (with its NEO subscales: anxiety, hostility, depression, vulnerability, impulsiveness, and self-consciousness) and Extroversion (with its NEO subscales: warmth, gregariousness, activity, assertiveness, excitement, and positive emotions) were not significant predictors of prejudice. For this study, prejudice towards gays and lesbians was specifically targeted. It was hypothesized that those scoring high on the homophobia scale would score high on the Neuroticism and low on the Extroversion scales of the NEO-PI. This notion was, in fact, not supported but may be best explained by J.M. Yinger (1983). Yinger disagreed with the idea that personality traits were *most* responsible for driving prejudices against out-groups. He claimed that while some personality factors (e.g., hostility and anxiety) add power to the system of discrimination, most others (authoritarianism) are often over-exaggerated, particularly if examined in the isolation from the system they are part of.

Instead, Yinger (1983) claims economic and political factors to be of primary importance in the system of discrimination. As Yinger notes, "It is unlikely that authoritarianism or other personal tendencies would express themselves in the form of

ethnic or racial discrimination in the absence of the belief by many that discrimination served an economic or political advantage..." (p. 399).

In a similar vein, Milner (1981) agreed with Yinger's economic and political stance on prejudice by adding that it is difficult to explain how individual functioning at the personality level translates into collective group behavior. Instead, society may have wider social, political, and economic "frustrations" that may be vented through mass prejudice. As a result, minority out-groups such as homosexuals pay the unfortunate consequence.

Because extroverts and open-minded individuals share many resemblances (McCrae & Costa, 1987), it was unusual that NEO Extroversion was not a significant predictor of homophobia as was NEO Openness. Individuals of both categories have an increased assertiveness towards experiencing new and lively situations and are thus more likely to have added details to disclose which are genuinely accurate and insightful. These combined factors are ones that have been known to foster greater tolerance for out-groups so it was quite unexpected that the extroverts of this study did not hold a more positive stance towards homosexuality as exuded by the more open-minded participants.

One final issue shall be addressed when discussing the personality variables in relation to prejudice. Upon initial generation of hypotheses, specific predictions were not made on Agreeableness (A) and Conscientiousness (C) (e.g., those who score *high* on the A scale are *more* likely to be homophobic). The reason for this was that the NEO-PI

version (which did not include subscales for A and C) was used instead of the NEO-PIR, which does include separate subscales for A and C. Therefore, any obtained information encompassing these constructs was purely exploratory due to the non-specific nature of the NEO-PI.

It may be important to note that both A and C did not prove to be significant predictors of homophobia. Because subscales have now been established for each construct and these new scales appear to be reliable and valid indicators of the traits they are intended to measure (Piedmont & Weinstein, 1993; Costa, McCrae & Dye, 1991), future research is warranted surrounding the A and C dimensions in their relation to prejudice, and more specifically, homophobia.

The conclusions concerning the relationship between negative attitudes towards homosexuality and maintenance of traditional male/female gender distinctions are quite scattered throughout the literature. For this study, the hypothesis that stated that subscription to traditional sex roles (being classified as "Masculine" or "Feminine" by the BSRI) would cause individuals to be more homophobic, was not supported.

This finding was unexpected because of the widespread stereotypes that exist suggesting gay people violate the demand of traditional roles; gay men are commonly perceived as effeminate, and lesbian women as masculine or "butch" (Herek, 1984). As noted by Marecek (1979), it is these particular ideas of traditional gender-appropriateness

that constrain men and women from developing "broad, flexible behavior repertoires, and thereby limits human adaptability" (p. 241).

In contrast to Herek (1984), both Simon (1995) and Laner and Laner (1980) would argue that homophobic attitudes towards lesbians are generally not related to the sex and gender role concepts which accompany females. This may hold true for lesbians because, as stated by Laner & Laner, over time, society has seen a gradual decline in the "butch" concept, as conventional-appearing lesbians are becoming the majority. This decline may be apparent because in our society, females are not constantly being forced to affirm their sexuality as males are and over time, have become less sex-typed.

Because society strongly suggests such rigid affirmation for males (starting in early pre-school years), subscription to traditional sex roles still strongly influences males' attitudes towards homosexuals. Exclusively for males, homophobia may be more than just the rejection of homosexuality. Homophobia enlists its own separate, but specific component of a broader antifemininity theme within the male role (Thompson, Grisanti, & Pleck, 1985).

Therefore, this concept can be connected to gender in that being male causes one to undoubtedly adhere to a particular role. Part of that adherence includes rejecting those who do not conform to traditional sex roles, therefore acting negatively towards homosexuals. In essence, being male equals proscription to traditional sex roles; equals rejection of homosexuals; equals homophobia. It may be that because males and females

value this sex-role proscription so differently, this hypothesis was not supported. If males and females did not both follow gender-specific sex roles in a traditional manner, their attitudes towards homosexuals may have also differed.

The categorization of subjects into mutually exclusive sex-role groups (e.g., Androgynous, Undifferentiated, Masculine or Feminine) may be an alternative interpretation for this hypothesis' rejection. According to Lubinski, Tellegen, and Butcher (1984), as cited by Kurdek (1988), sample-specific classifications (according to median splits) restrict the variability of masculinity and femininity scores. Instead, proscription to a particular sex role would be best explained by using continuous masculine and feminine scores, and the product of these two scores could yield an androgyny score.

Another variable that was not a significant predictor of homophobia for this particular sample was the age of participants. It was hypothesized that older participants would be significantly more homophobic than their younger counterparts. The explanation driving such a hypothesis stems from the idea that as people age, they become increasingly intolerant due to accelerated generation-gap differences in our society, with each new generation becoming increasingly tolerant due to rapidly changing cultural contexts within which they are socialized (Irwin & Thompson, 1977). For instance, when comparing older generations with today's younger generations, being "young" increases one's likelihood of childhood sex play, more awareness of the sexual environment, and

increased premarital involvement. These factors consequently engender less negative attitudes towards homosexuals for today's generations (Klassen et al., 1989).

These generational differences did not seem to apply to this particular sample.

Deviating from the initial hypothesis, analysis of the negative age correlation allowed for the conclusion that as participants got older, their levels of homophobia unexpectedly decreased. Because the participants in this study were all university students, it seems possible that subjects' education may have interacted with their age and subsequently influenced the degree of rejection towards homosexuals. That these social factors interacted was not a surprising or novel finding (Nyberg & Alston, 1976).

As stated by Klassen et al. (1989), for elders, homosexuality may be a topic that they have been allowed to avoid learning about. Unless these elderly attain a relatively high level of formal education, what they do learn about alternative lifestyles may be generally negative and go unchallenged. For this sample, because they are earning a formal education, the end product may be a more tolerant stance towards homosexuality. It is possible that their education has fostered an "intellectual flexibility and breadth of perspective" that would be very difficult to achieve without their formal education (Irwin & Thompson, 1977, p. 119).

Other unexpected results centered around the hypothesis that those individuals raised in rural areas (or small towns) would be significantly more homophobic than those raised in suburban or urban areas. While rural areas did have the highest mean homophobia

score, followed by suburban, then by urban areas, an overall significant difference did not exist between the various geographic regions in relation to their self-reported indices.

One explanation for this conclusion may center around a drawback in the actual instrument used to categorize participants. While participants were asked to check which geographical area they were raised in, many had to actually ask the experimenter to operationally define each construct. While a good portion did make an effort to alleviate any confusion, the assumption is that many others did not and so consequently guessed. Therefore, participants' true geographical representations may be absent.

As with previously mentioned variables (e.g., age), this demographic factor may also have been affected by other situational variables. For instance, participants' degree of religiosity may have interacted with community raised. As more liberal attitudes tend to be a function of one's neighboring environment and those residing in rural areas generally tend to proscribe to more orthodox and traditional styles of religion (Nyberg & Alston, 1976), the two variables together may have allowed for, overall, more general negativity towards homosexuals.

Purely exploratory in nature, further analyses were conducted that compared independent group means. While significant differences arose between the various groups, these results should be interpreted with caution because the overall ANOVA was not significant. On the other hand, these findings should not be overlooked because

homophobia scores were in fact reported in the order as hypothesized (rural with the highest scores, urban with lowest scores).

In any case, upon comparing the rural and suburban groups, the data show those raised in the rural area as significantly more homophobic than their counterparts. Furthermore, those raised in a rural area were also significantly more homophobic when compared to the suburban and urban groups combined. These results attest that being raised in a small town may be a stronger predictor of homophobia than those raised in a suburban or urban community.

The final hypothesis that was not maintained was that those who possessed low self-esteem would be more likely to hold negative attitudes towards homosexuals than those with high self-esteem. In essence, this variable was not a significant predictor of homophobia. This finding is in contrast to previous studies which claimed self-esteem as crucial to prediction of negative attitudes towards homosexuals (Heavan, 1983; Larsen, Reed, & Hoffman, 1980). Because acceptance of out-groups has many times been associated with the acceptance of one's self, this finding was unexpected. Previous research has repeatedly linked, perhaps causally, prejudice to individuals' negative self evaluations (Bagley, 1979) and this particular relationship may be part of the driving force behind homophobia today.

But in order to understand just how one's negative self-appraisal plays a role in homophobia, it is crucial we first attain a better understanding of both the broad concept

of "self-esteem" and the instruments used to measure it. According to Bagley, because self-esteem is a variable which requires an emotional appraisal found solely via self-report, this construct may be very difficult to accurately assess. The evolution of people's self-esteem develops in multifarious ways (e.g., structural position in society, experiences with family and school) and these variables may differentially impact one's reactions to out-groups. Simply put, because self-esteem so often interacts with individual situational variables, it becomes difficult to define. Therefore, any significant correlations between self-esteem and another variable, such as prejudice, should be borne with caution.

This may partially explain why self-esteem was not a determining predictor of homophobia in this case. Methodological problems may also surface because the majority of human beings have an unconscious, yet pervading need to show others they possess a positive self-esteem. Consequently, those with low self-esteem may actually try to disguise their shortcoming by putting their projections through somewhat of a filter, thus allowing for an underestimation of their true self-assessment (Bagley, 1979). Additionally, upon realizing that the self-esteem instrument is measuring just that they may also "fake-good," or in other words, conceal genuine feelings of inadequacy for fear of negative evaluation.

The present study presents particular methodological limitations that call for any and all conclusions to be labeled as tentative. The first and most obvious drawback was that the sample included only college students. This strictly limits the generalizability and

external validity of the results. Future research might extend such a study to target many diverse populations and include those who may not have had previous interpersonal contact with gays and lesbians (e.g., target the workplace, social clubs, and canvass random neighborhoods). In addition, because most participants fell along the younger end of the continuum, it may be advantageous to target a wider range of ages in the future so as to see if there still remains an inverse relationship between age and homophobia.

An additional drawback to the instrument itself was the fact that the first page of every packet was the ATLG. The homophobia measure may have been more appropriately placed in the middle of the other questionnaires. The purpose for this move is that if participants immediately realized that this study was associated with gays or lesbians, and that individuals' disposition was already negative, they may not answer the rest of the questionnaire to the best of their ability, possibly even trying to sabotage the results or "fake-good" throughout so as to not avow that they might actually be homophobic.

Interestingly enough, many participants did not even know the how to properly define "homophobia". This became apparent when participants were asked to define homophobia at the very end and 48 out of 123 people answered incorrectly or specifically stated, "I don't know," while 10 did not give an answer. This may have caused problems for many filling out the ATLG who could have been confused by unfamiliar terminology centering around alternative lifestyles. While the use of precise nomenclature may allow for more accurate hypothesis testing, operationally defining homophobia anywhere in the

packet may have caused participants to a) immediately put up defensive biases in order to prove they were not homophobic or, b) sabotage their results (e.g., randomly assign numbers to questions).

Because interpersonal contact was so critical to lessening negative attitudes towards homosexuals in this case, future research might investigate which *type* of contact (e.g., relative, college professor, co-worker, roommate) proves to be most beneficial for attitude reconstruction and, are attitudes more favorable with several different contact experiences or is one positive interaction enough to transform attitudes.

In conclusion, this study has strong and serious implications for altering disapproving attitudes towards homosexuals. Developing a theoretical framework that describes the prototypical homophobic may serve to help Americans better understand negative dispositions in hope for an overall decrease in homophobia. American homosexuals are not the only group to benefit from their own liberation. American heterosexuals today have enormous benefits to gain by being released from the destructive dynamics of homophobia. According to Nelson (1982), emancipation may come in the form of enriched possibilities for intimate friendships, fewer debilitating sexual fears between the sexes (as well as in same-sex friendships), and more genuine self-acceptance and affirmation due to greater relational equality. In essence, not only homosexuals, but heterosexuals and society as one can benefit from gains as gays and lesbians continuously struggle for liberation.

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Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. Be as honest as possible. There are no right or wrong answers. Don't spend too much time on any one answer. Please do not leave any answers unmarked.

1 = Strongly Disagree

2 =

3 = Disagree

4 =

5 = Neutral

6 =

7 = Agree

8 =

9 = Strongly Agree

- ___ 1. Lesbians just can't fit into our society.
- ___ 2. A woman's homosexuality should not be a cause for job discrimination in any situation.
- ___ 3. Female homosexuality is detrimental to society because it breaks down the divisions between the sexes.
- ___ 4. State laws regulating private, consenting lesbian behavior should be loosened.
- ___ 5. Female homosexuality is a sin.
- ___ 6. The growing number of lesbians indicates a decline in American morals.
- ___ 7. Female homosexuality in itself is no problem, but what society makes of it can be a problem.
- ___ 8. Female homosexuality is a threat to many of our basic social institutions.
- ___ 9. Female homosexuality is an inferior form of sexuality.
- ___ 10. Lesbians are sick.
- ___ 11. Male homosexual couples should be allowed to adopt children the same as heterosexual couples.
- ___ 12. I think male homosexuals are disgusting.
- ___ 13. Male homosexuals should not be allowed to teach school.
- ___ 14. Male homosexuality is a perversion.
- ___ 15. Just as in other species, male homosexuality is a natural expression of sexuality in human men.
- ___ 16. If a man has homosexual feelings, he should do everything he can to overcome them.
- ___ 17. I would not be too upset if I learned that my son was a homosexual.
- ___ 18. Homosexual behavior between two men is just plain wrong.
- ___ 19. The idea of male homosexual marriages seems ridiculous to me.
- ___ 20. Male homosexuality is merely a different kind of lifestyle that should not be condemned.

Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. Be as honest as possible. There are no right or wrong answers. Don't spend too much time on any one answer. Please do not leave any answers unmarked.

1	2	3	4	5
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

- ___ 1. I really like most people I meet.
- ___ 2. I have a very active imagination.
- ___ 3. I often feel tense and jittery.
- ___ 4. I shy away from crowds of people.
- ___ 5. I keep my belongings neat and clean.
- ___ 6. Aesthetic and artistic concerns aren't very important to me.
- ___ 7. I'm an even tempered person.
- ___ 8. I am dominant, forceful, and assertive
- ___ 9. Without strong emotions, life would be uninteresting to me.
- ___ 10. I'm pretty good about pacing myself so as to get things done on time.
- ___ 11. Sometimes I feel completely worthless.
- ___ 12. I don't get much pleasure from chatting with people.
- ___ 13. I try to keep all my thoughts directed along realistic lines and avoid flights of fancy.
- ___ 14. I rarely feel fearful or anxious.
- ___ 15. I try to perform all the tasks assigned to be conscientiously.
- ___ 16. I like to have a lot of people around me.
- ___ 17. I am sometimes completely absorbed in music I am listening to.
- ___ 18. I often get angry at the way people treat me.
- ___ 19. I sometimes fail to assert myself as much as I should.
- ___ 20. I have a clear set of goals and work toward them in an orderly fashion.
- ___ 21. I rarely experience strong emotions.
- ___ 22. I have sometimes experienced a deep sense of guilt or sinfulness.
- ___ 23. I'm known as a warm and friendly person.
- ___ 24. I have an active fantasy life.
- ___ 25. I work hard to accomplish my goals.
- ___ 26. I am easily frightened
- ___ 27. I usually prefer to do things alone.

- _____ 28. Watching ballet or modern dance bores me.
- _____ 29. I am not considered a touchy or temperamental person.
- _____ 30. I am not a very methodical person.
- _____ 31. I never hesitate to assert my rights if I feel I'm being taken advantage of.
- _____ 32. How I feel about things is important to me.
- _____ 33. I tend to blame myself when anything goes wrong.
- _____ 34. Many people think of me as somewhat cold and distant.
- _____ 35. I pay my debts promptly and in full.
- _____ 36. I don't like to waste my time daydreaming.
- _____ 37. I am not a worrier.
- _____ 38. I really feel the need for other people if I am by myself for long.
- _____ 39. Certain kinds of music have an endless fascination for me.
- _____ 40. I waste a lot of time before settling down to work.
- _____ 41. I am known as hot-blooded and quick-tempered.
- _____ 42. In meetings, I usually let others do the talking.
- _____ 43. I find it hard to get in touch with my feelings.
- _____ 44. I have a low opinion of myself.
- _____ 45. I try to do jobs carefully so they won't have to be done again.
- _____ 46. I really enjoy talking to people.
- _____ 47. I enjoy concentrating on a fantasy or daydream and exploring all its possibilities, letting it grow and develop.
- _____ 48. I often worry about things that might go wrong.
- _____ 49. I prefer small parties to large ones.
- _____ 50. Sometimes I'm not as dependable or reliable as I should be.
- _____ 51. Poetry has little or no effect on me.
- _____ 52. It takes a lot to get me mad.
- _____ 53. I have often been a leader of groups I have belonged to.
- _____ 54. I experience a wide range of emotions or feelings.
- _____ 55. I strive to achieve all I can.
- _____ 56. Sometimes things look pretty bleak and hopeless to me.

- ___ 57. I find it easy to smile and be outgoing with strangers.
- ___ 58. If I feel my mind starting to drift off into daydreams, I usually get busy and start concentrating on some work or activity instead.
- ___ 59. Frightening thoughts sometimes come into my head.
- ___ 60. When I make a commitment, I can always be counted on to follow through.
- ___ 61. I'd rather vacation at a popular beach than an isolated cabin in the woods.
- ___ 62. I am intrigued by the patterns I find in art and nature.
- ___ 63. I often get disgusted with people I have to deal with.
- ___ 64. I would rather go my own way than be a leader of others.
- ___ 65. I like to keep everything in its place so I know just where it is.
- ___ 66. I seldom pay much attention to my feelings of the moment.
- ___ 67. I rarely feel lonely or blue.
- ___ 68. I have strong emotional attachments to my friends.
- ___ 69. As a child I rarely enjoyed games of make-believe.
- ___ 70. I never seem to be able to get organized.
- ___ 71. I'm seldom apprehensive about the future.
- ___ 72. I prefer jobs that let me work alone without being bothered by other people.
- ___ 73. Sometimes when I read poetry or look at a work of art, I feel a chill or wave of excitement.
- ___ 74. People I work or associate with find me easy to get along with.
- ___ 75. I am a productive person who always gets the job done.
- ___ 76. Other people often look to me to make decisions.
- ___ 77. I seldom notice the moods or feelings that different environments produce.
- ___ 78. Too often, when things go wrong, I get discouraged and feel like giving up.
- ___ 79. I take a personal interest in the people I work with.
- ___ 80. I tend to be somewhat fastidious or exacting.
- ___ 81. I would have difficulty just letting my mind wander without control or guidance.
- ___ 82. I have fewer fears than most people.
- ___ 83. I would rather watch an event on television than be there in the audience.
- ___ 84. I enjoy reading poetry that emphasizes feelings and images more than story lines.
- ___ 85. I strive for excellence in everything I do.

- ___ 86. There are some people I really hate.
- ___ 87. Others think of me as being modest and unassuming.
- ___ 88. I find it easy to empathize - to feel myself what others are feeling.
- ___ 89. I am seldom sad or depressed.
- ___ 90. I am easy-going and lackadaisical.
- ___ 91. I'm not the kind of person who must always be busy with something.
- ___ 92. I'm pretty set in my ways.
- ___ 93. I seldom feel self-conscious when I'm around people.
- ___ 94. I often crave excitement.
- ___ 95. I believe that most people are basically well-intentioned.
- ___ 96. I often enjoy playing with theories or abstract ideas.
- ___ 97. I have trouble resisting my cravings.
- ___ 98. I have never literally jumped for joy.
- ___ 99. I believe that letting students hear controversial speakers can only confuse and mislead them.
- ___ 100. I often get into arguments with my family and co-workers.
- ___ 101. I feel I am capable of coping with most of my problems.
- ___ 102. When I do things, I do them vigorously.
- ___ 103. I think it's interesting to learn and develop new hobbies.
- ___ 104. In dealing with other people, I always dread making a social blunder.
- ___ 105. I go out of my way to help others if I can.
- ___ 106. I have sometimes done things just for "kicks" or "thrills".
- ___ 107. I enjoy solving problems or puzzles.
- ___ 108. I rarely overindulge in anything.
- ___ 109. I have sometimes experienced intense joy or ecstasy.
- ___ 110. It wouldn't bother me if I had to punish a child or pet.
- ___ 111. I believe that laws and social policies should change to reflect the needs of a changing world.
- ___ 112. I often feel helpless and want someone else to solve my problems.
- ___ 113. I have a leisurely style in work and play.
- ___ 114. I like to follow a strict routine in my work.
- ___ 115. I think most of the people I deal with are honest and trustworthy.

- ___ 116. It doesn't embarrass me too much if people ridicule and tease me.
- ___ 117. I like to be where the action is.
- ___ 118. I enjoy working on "mind-twister"-type puzzles.
- ___ 119. When I'm having my favorite foods, I tend to eat too much.
- ___ 120. I try to be courteous to everyone I meet.
- ___ 121. I am not a cheerful optimist.
- ___ 122. I believe we should look to our religious authorities for decisions on moral issues.
- ___ 123. I keep a cool head in emergencies.
- ___ 124. I often feel as if I'm bursting with energy.
- ___ 125. Starving masses in foreign countries leave me pretty cold.
- ___ 126. Once I find the right way to do something, I stick to it.
- ___ 127. At times I have been so ashamed I just wanted to hide.
- ___ 128. Fast cars and motorcycles have never had much appeal to me.
- ___ 129. I find philosophical arguments boring.
- ___ 130. Some people think I'm selfish and egotistical.
- ___ 131. I have little difficulty resisting temptation.
- ___ 132. Sometimes I bubble with happiness.
- ___ 133. I believe that the different ideas of right and wrong that people in other societies have may be valid for them.
- ___ 134. When I'm under a great deal of stress, sometimes I feel like I'm going to pieces.
- ___ 135. I tend to be cynical and skeptical of others' intentions.
- ___ 136. My work is likely to be slow but steady.
- ___ 137. I often try new and foreign foods.
- ___ 138. I often feel inferior to others.
- ___ 139. I love the excitement of roller coasters.
- ___ 140. I would rather cooperate with others than compete with them.
- ___ 141. I sometimes lose interest when people talk about very abstract, theoretical matters.
- ___ 142. I sometimes eat myself sick.
- ___ 143. I don't consider myself especially "tight-hearted".
- ___ 144. I believe that loyalty to one's ideals and principles is more important than "open-mindedness".

- _____ 145. I believe that most people will take advantage of you if you let them.
- _____ 146. I can handle myself pretty well in a crisis.
- _____ 147. I usually seem to be in a hurry.
- _____ 148. I prefer to spend my time in familiar surroundings.
- _____ 149. I feel comfortable in the presence of my bosses or other authorities.
- _____ 150. Some people think of me as cold and calculating.
- _____ 151. I wouldn't enjoy vacationing in Las Vegas.
- _____ 152. I have little interest in speculating on the nature of the universe or the human condition.
- _____ 153. I am always able to keep my feelings under control.
- _____ 154. I am a cheerful, high-spirited person.
- _____ 155. Most people I know like me.
- _____ 156. I consider myself broad-minded and tolerant of other people's lifestyles.
- _____ 157. It's often hard for me to make up my mind.
- _____ 158. My life is fast-paced.
- _____ 159. On a vacation, I prefer going back to a tried and true spot.
- _____ 160. I'm hard-headed and tough-minded in my attitudes.
- _____ 161. If I have said or done the wrong thing to someone, I can hardly bear to face them again.
- _____ 162. I'm attracted to bright colors and flashy styles.
- _____ 163. I have a lot of intellectual curiosity.
- _____ 164. Sometimes I do things on impulse that I later regret.
- _____ 165. I generally try to be thoughtful and considerate.
- _____ 166. I rarely use words like "fantastic!" or "sensational!" to describe my experiences.
- _____ 167. I think that if people don't know what they believe in by the time they're 25, there's something wrong with them.
- _____ 168. When everything seems to be going wrong, I can still make good decisions.
- _____ 169. I am a very active person.
- _____ 170. If I don't like people, I let them know it.
- _____ 171. I follow the same route when I go someplace.
- _____ 172. When people I know do foolish things, I get embarrassed for them.
- _____ 173. I tend to avoid movies that are shocking or scary.

- ___ 174. I have a wide range of intellectual interests.
- ___ 175. In most situations I try to be aware of how others are thinking and feeling.
- ___ 176. I seldom give in to my impulses.
- ___ 177. I laugh easily.
- ___ 178. I believe that the "new morality" of permissiveness is no morality at all.
- ___ 179. I'm pretty stable emotionally.
- ___ 180. If necessary, I am willing to manipulate people to get what I want.
- ___ 181. I have tried to answer all of these questions honestly and accurately.

Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with each of the following statements. Be as honest as possible. There are no right or wrong answers. Don't spend too much time on any one answer. Please do not leave any answers unmarked.

- 1 = Strongly agree**
2 = Agree
3 = Disagree
4 = Strongly disagree

- _____ 1. I feel that I'm a person of worth, at least on an equal plane with others.
- _____ 2. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.
- _____ 3. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure
- _____ 4. I am able to do things as well as most other people.
- _____ 5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of.
- _____ 6. I take a positive attitude toward myself.
- _____ 7. On the whole, I am satisfied with myself.
- _____ 8. I wish I could have more respect for myself.
- _____ 9. I certainly feel useless at times.
- _____ 10. At times I think I am no good at all.

Listed below are a number of personality characteristics. We would like you to use those characteristics to describe yourself; that is, on a scale from 1 to 7 indicate how true of yourself each of these characteristics is by marking the box to the right of that characteristic. Please do not leave any characteristic unmarked.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Never or almost never true	Usually not true	Sometimes but infrequently true	Occasionally true	Often true	Usually true	Always or almost always true

Defend my own beliefs		Adaptable		Flatterable	
Affectionate		Dominant		Theatrical	
Conscientious		Tender		Self-sufficient	
Independent		Conceited		Loyal	
Sympathetic		Willing to take a stand		Happy	
Moody		Love children		Individualistic	
Assertive		Tactful		Soft-spoken	
Sensitive to needs of others		Aggressive		Unpredictable	
Reliable		Gentle		Masculine	
Strong personality		Conventional		Gullible	
Understanding		Self-reliant		Solemn	
Jealous		Yielding		Competitive	
Forceful		Helpful		Childlike	
Compassionate		Athletic		Likable	
Truthful		Cheerful		Ambitious	
Have leadership abilities		Unsystematic		Do not use harsh language	
Eager to soothe hurt feelings		Analytical		Sincere	
Secretive		Shy		Act as a leader	
Willing to take risks		Inefficient		Feminine	
Warm		Make decisions easily		Friendly	

PLEASE COMPLETE ALL OF THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION ABOUT YOURSELF.

1. Gender
 - ☐ Female
 - ☐ Male
2. Ethnicity
 - ☐ African American
 - ☐ Native American
 - ☐ Asian
 - ☐ Hispanic
 - ☐ Caucasian
 - ☐ Other (Please specify _____)
3. Religious Affiliation
 - ☐ Atheist
 - ☐ Buddhist
 - ☐ Catholic
 - ☐ Jewish
 - ☐ Muslim
 - ☐ Protestant
 - ☐ Other (Please specify _____)
4. Marital Status
 - ☐ Married
 - ☐ Separated
 - ☐ Divorced
 - ☐ Unmarried, Single
 - ☐ Unmarried, Cohabiting
- Children; if "yes", how many
 - ☐
5. Sexual Orientation
 - ☐ Bisexual
 - ☐ Gay/Lesbian
 - ☐ Heterosexual
6. Age
 - ☐
7. Type of community you were raised in
 - ☐ Rural
 - ☐ Suburban
 - ☐ Urban

8. Number of years of education after high school

- ☐ 0-2 years
- ☐ 3-5 years
- ☐ 6-10 years
- ☐ 11 years or more

9. Have you had any personal contact with a gay or lesbian person?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

10. If so, indicate the type of relationship

- ☐ Casual acquaintance
- ☐ Family member
- ☐ Personal friend
- ☐ Romantic/sexual partner
- ☐ Other (Please specify _____)

STATE YOUR DEFINITION OF HOMOPHOBIA:

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION !

College of Social Sciences • Department of Psychology**One Washington Square • San José, California 95192-0120 • 408/924-5600 • FAX 408/924-5605****Agreement to Participate in Research**

**Jenifer Cullen
Michael Alessandri, Ph.D.
Principal Investigators**

I have been asked to take part in research investigating how college students perceive societal acceptance of lifestyle biases. I understand that I will be asked to complete a questionnaire relating to self-esteem, sex roles, views about alternative lifestyles, and a personality profile. Additionally, I understand I will be asked to give a definition of homophobia. I have been informed that no risks are anticipated by my participation in this study, and the questionnaire will take approximately 60 minutes to complete. By participating in this study, I will receive one hour of class credit. Although no specific benefits to me are necessarily expected, my participation in this study may help us to better understand societal attitudes.

I further understand that although the results of this investigation are likely to be published, it will not be possible to identify me with my responses as all questionnaires will remain confidential.

If I have any questions about this project I know that I can contact Dr. Michael Alessandri at (408) 924-5611. Complaints about the research may be presented to the Psychology Department Chair, Dr. Robert Cooper, at (408) 924-5600. Questions or complaints about research, subjects' rights, or research related inquiries may be presented to Serena Stanford, Ph.D., Associate Vice President of Graduate Studies and Research, at (408) 924-2480.

No service of any kind, to which I may be otherwise entitled, will be lost or jeopardized if I choose not to participate in this study. Consent is given voluntarily and I may refuse to participate in any part of the study. If I decide to participate in this study, I am free to withdraw at any time without prejudice to my relations at San Jose State University.

I have received a signed and dated copy of this consent form for my records.

Subject's Signature

Date

Investigator's Signature

Date

Appendix C

Debriefing Statement

Because efforts to understand homophobia have been, at best, sporadic, some consistent patterns which identify those holding negative attitudes towards homosexuals have been observed across samples. The following variables have been found to influence the incidence of homophobia: an individuals' support for traditional sex roles, gender, degree of religiosity, self-esteem, age, geography, amount of personal contact with a homosexual and particular personality variables.

The purpose of this research is to focus attention on and understand the characteristics that differentiate individuals who are intolerant of homosexuality from those who are more accepting of this alternative lifestyle. More specifically, I am interested in developing a theoretical framework which identifies the demographic and personality predictors of homophobia. I believe the development of such a framework may serve to help the American public understand their pronounced fear of homosexuality.