



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on April 21, 2012

## “Homophobia” May Hide Repressed Homosexuality, Researchers Claim

“Individuals who identify as straight but in psychological tests show a strong attraction to the same sex may be threatened by gays and lesbians because homosexuals remind them of similar tendencies within themselves,” explained the study’s lead author, Netta Weinstein, of the University of Essex.



Subjects in the study were shown words and pictures on a computer screen and asked to place them in “gay” or “straight” categories. However, beforehand each participant was subliminally primed by having either the word “me” or “others” flashed on the computer screen for 35 milliseconds. “They were then shown the words ‘gay,’ ‘straight,’ ‘homosexual,’ and ‘heterosexual’ as well as pictures of straight and gay couples, and the computer tracked precisely their response times,” reported UPI. “A second experiment — in which subjects were free to browse same-sex or opposite-sex photos — provided an additional measure of implicit sexual attraction.”

Later participants were queried about the type of parenting they experienced while growing up, ranging from authoritarian to democratic. The researchers then measured the level of “homophobia” exhibited by the subjects, both overt as revealed from their answers to questions on social policy and their beliefs, as well as implicit as revealed through word-completion tasks.

“In a predominately heterosexual society, ‘know thyself’ can be a challenge for many gay individuals,” Weinstein said in a measured effort to put the proper “gay”-friendly spin on her findings. “But in controlling and homophobic homes, embracing a minority sexual orientation can be terrifying. These individuals risk losing the love and approval of their parents if they admit to same-sex attractions, so many people deny or repress that part of themselves.”

Dr. Richard Ryan, professor of psychology at the University of Rochester and one of the study’s co-authors, weighed in on the supposed self-loathing he and his team uncovered among their subjects. “In many cases these are people who are at war with themselves and they are turning this internal conflict outward,” Ryan opined with studied compassion.

“Sometimes people are threatened by gays and lesbians because they are fearing their own impulses — in a sense they ‘doth protest too much,’” Ryan suggested to [LiveScience.com](#). “In addition, it appears



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that sometimes those who would oppress others have been oppressed themselves, and we can have some compassion for them too. They may be unaccepting of others because they cannot be accepting of themselves.”

The researchers went so far as to speculate that the study results may shed light on supposed “hate crimes” against homosexuals. Reported [CBS News](#): “People in denial of their sexual orientation often perceive threats from homosexuals and are therefore more disposed to lash out at them, the researchers said. They mention the 1998 murder of Matthew Shephard and the 2011 shooting of [California student] Larry King as possible examples.”

He cited examples of high-profile spiritual leaders, such as the Rev. Ted Haggard, who have later been caught in same-sex indiscretions. “We laugh at or make fun of such blatant hypocrisy,” intoned Ryan, “but in a real way these people may often themselves be victims of repression and experience exaggerated feelings of threat. Homophobia is not a laughing matter.”

Under the evaluation of the above researchers, a group of journalism students in Seattle may have been responding to some latent self-hatred recently when they walked out on a “lecture” by homosexual activist Dan Savage, the guy behind the “[It Gets Better](#)” video ads that are supposed to help teens struggling with same-sex attraction feel better about themselves.

As reported by Focus on the Family’s [CitizenLink](#), the students, part of a seminar called “[Journalism on the Edge](#),” had been told that Savage was going to address the issue of bullying at school. But when he veered into the realm of sex and began denigrating Christianity, the students got up and walked out.

Recalled one of the students to CitizenLink: “The first thing he told the audience was, ‘I hope you’re all using birth control!’ Then he said there are people using the Bible as an excuse for gay bullying, because it says in Leviticus and Romans that being gay is wrong. Right after that, he said we can ignore all the ‘B.S.’ in the Bible.”

Continued the young lady: “I was thinking, ‘This is not going in a good direction at all.’ Then he started going off about the Bible. He said somehow the Bible was pro-slavery. I’m really shy. I’m not really someone to, like, stir up anything. But all of a sudden I just blurted out, ‘That’s bull!’”

Savage has been notorious for making similar objectionable remarks concerning the those whose moral foundations are informed by their Christian faith. Among the more noteworthy (which can be found on YouTube), reported CitizenLink:

- “Most people that you wind up arguing with about religion and homosexuality have not ever read the Bible without their, you know, moron glasses on.”
- “If you believe it is the divinely inspired word of God, if you believe in the literal truth of the Bible, I challenge you to read the first five [expletive] pages. There are two creation myths in Genesis.”
- “We ignore the [expletive] in the Bible about race, about slavery, and we’re going to have to get there for homosexuality.”

The father of the student who stood up to Savage told CitizenLink that while Savage’s remarks were uncalled-for, ultimately the conference organizers bear the responsibility for allowing his boorish and objectionable behavior.

“I’m well-versed in the rules of the game, the captive-audience ethic,” said the father, who is a public school teacher. “You have a bunch of kids. They’re required to go to school. They don’t have the option



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of walking out on you as a teacher, so you guard your speech.”

He said that had Savage been a teacher, “they’d suspend him without pay for this behavior. He didn’t take account of who his audience was. If he was doing this with a bunch of college journalism kids, that would be a different story — that’s more rough and tumble. How many of the kids who didn’t walk out felt backed into a corner? To me, that’s bullying behavior.”



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