

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL OKLAHOMA

Edmond, Oklahoma

Jackson College of Graduate Studies

Defensive Reactions to Masculinity Threat

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE FACULTY

In partial fulfillment of the requirements

For the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN PSYCHOLOGY

By

Chad M. Cotner

Edmond, Oklahoma

2012

Author Note

The author would like to thank Dr. Robert Mather, Dr. Alicia Limke, Dr. Jennifer Bosson, Dr. Merry Buchanan, Dr. Mickie Vanhoy and Tiffany Roberts for their input and guidance with this project.

Correspondence regarding this article should be addressed to Chad Cotner, Department of Psychology, University of Central Oklahoma, Edmond, OK 73034.

Electronic mail may be sent to chad.cotner@gmail.com.

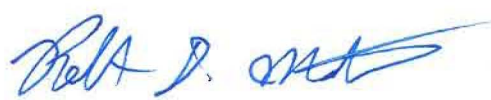
Word Count: 5213

Defensive Reactions to Masculinity Threat

A THESIS

APPROVED FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PSYCHOLOGY

April 23rd, 2012

By 
Name Committee Chair


Name Committee Member


Name Committee Member

Abstract

Compensatory behaviors are defined as behaviors that are intended to make up for a perceived lack of competency in a particular area. The present studies investigated how men compensate for perceived masculinity threats. The first study found that men who are under a state of masculinity threat will derogate a fellow in-group member in order to compensate for their own perceived deficits. The second study found that men under a state of masculinity threat will psychologically distance themselves from in-group members who are behaving in contrast to the expectations of the group. Specifically, the second study found that compared to non-threatened men, masculinity threatened men tend to assign harsher bail amounts to perpetrators of sexual orientation based hate crimes, specifically when they learned that the hate crime occurred close to home, which further promotes in-group identification. Implications for the study of masculinity threat and compensational behaviors are discussed.

Defensive Reactions to Masculinity Threat

“Unlike femininity, relaxed masculinity is at bottom empty, a limp nullity. While the female body is full of internal potentiality, the male is internally barren. Manhood at the most basic level can be validated and expressed only in action.” (George Gilder, 1969).

From playground bullying to knock-down, drag-out bar fights, men are continuously seen in the media and pop culture as constantly displaying acts of aggression in various forms to reassert their own personal sense of masculinity. Shows like *Jersey Shore*, *Cops*, and *WWE Raw* propel a mainstream stereotype that heterosexual men aggress in various manners when threatened. While these aforementioned shows may not directly examine compensatory masculinity, the winners of various fights depicted in these shows typically boast about being the most manly or label the “loser” as a wimp, sissy, or any other assortment of stereotypically “feminine” qualities.

Various rites of passage regarding manhood are easily observed in many cultures. In American culture, a rite of passage may include hazing to ensure membership in a fraternity. Hazing is often endured by the victim to ensure membership in a desired in-group (Stoudt, 2006). In Jewish culture, most boys participate in a bar mitzvah as a cultural rite of male passage. While these rites of passage and displays of masculinity inherently differ from each other, they are all focused on an *active* display and assertion of one’s manhood in front of significant others.

Previous research shows that men who restrict their emotions and are personally threatened display physical aggression (Cohn, Seibert, & Zeichner, 2009). While there is a clear stereotype that men who are threatened by others display physical aggression, it is

unclear if men will derogate other individuals as a means to compensate for a perceived loss of masculinity. This display may apply more so to men who are hyper masculine and fear being perceived as effeminate or homosexual. Previous research has found that after viewing a homosexual erotic videotape, homophobic men were more likely to show physical aggression to homosexual than heterosexual men (Bernat, Calhoun, Adams, & Zeichner, 2001). Researchers have theorized that negative behaviors in men, such as aggression, have been socialized as an acceptable response to conflict or stress (Moore & Stuart, 2004). Thus, when dealing with the stress of masculinity threat, men may be more likely to act out in indirect aggression or social aggression when physical aggression is not possible.

Prior research has shown that manhood, but not womanhood, is a concept that is seen as something that can be lost through a wide range of transgressions (Vandello, Bosson, Cohen, Burnaford, & Weaver, 2008). Previous research has also shown that men who are subjected to a masculinity threat often respond in an aggressive or anxious manner (Vandello et al., 2008). The purpose of the present study is to examine if men will respond to a perceived threat toward their masculinity by derogating other men, both those who are similar and dissimilar to the self. If men do perceive a threat toward their masculinity, this study aims to examine if men will experience anxiety and aggression as a result of experiencing a masculinity threat. Thus, a second purpose of this study is to determine if men who receive information that they are more stereotypically feminine than masculine will have aggressive or anxious responses to threatening information.

Maintaining Masculinity via Compensation Behaviors

Previous research suggests that individuals who are subject to various cultural stereotypes will often feel a need to continuously maintain the stereotype associated with their group (Rudman & Fairchild, 2004). The realignment effect of an individual to his or her group is particularly pronounced for individuals who are highly identified with their group (Schmitt & Branscombe, 2001). For instance, men may engage in hyper-masculine behaviors when their membership as a prototypical male is threatened. Additional research has also shown that men who perceive a threat toward their self-concept of masculinity will over-exaggerate their perceived competence in stereotypically masculine domains (Babl, 1979).

Masculinity threat appears to be a unique self-threat because men generally value their masculine identity. Previous research has shown that femininity can be threatened, but does not typically produce the same pattern of compensatory responses as a masculinity threat (Vandello et al., 2008). Furthermore, women are not as personally offended when their gender role comes under fire. The masculine self-concept is something that is very personal to men. When this self-concept is under threat, men will react in extreme measures as a means of protection (Prewitt-Frelino & Bosson, 2008). Furthermore, men who do not respond in a socially expected manner risk falling prey to identity misclassification. Identity misclassification occurs when people violate certain social norms, or for our purposes heteronormative gender role expectations, and therefore risk being classified as a member of a negatively perceived out-group (Bosson, Taylor, & Prewitt-Frelino, 2006).

This realignment with the masculine self could be a result of group affirmation.

Group affirmation theory suggests that individuals who receive threatening information to the self will often realign themselves with a group membership to relieve some of the negative affects associated with the perceived self-threat, particularly for high identifiers within the target group (Sherman, Kinias, Major, Kim, & Prenovost, 2007; Glasford, Dovidio, & Pratto, 2009). By realigning oneself with a particular in-group, individuals faced with a self-threat can use group affirmation to serve as a buffer for threatening information to the self. This study examines how men who perceive a masculinity threat may realign themselves with an in-group (masculinity) while simultaneously excluding others.

Past research has examined various means of compensatory masculinity, but less is known about indirect derogation of others as a compensatory mechanism. Preceding studies have provided support for aggression as a compensating behavior for a perceived loss of masculinity (Cohn et al., 2009), an increase in competitiveness (Vandello et. al, 2008), and increases in fear, hostility, discomfort, and negative affect (Glick, Gangl, Klumper, & Weinberg, 2007; Vandello et. al, 2008). While these forms of derogation support a more direct method, the researchers in this study examined derogation in a new context: that of indirect derogation of others via exclusion of others from an in-group or out-group.

This research suggests that men will compensate for perceived masculinity threats by realigning themselves with their group; however, the evidence is less clear regarding whether men will go so far as to negatively derogate another individual as being stereotypically feminine in the face of a masculinity threat toward the self. The purpose of this research is to provide empirical evidence to support the assumption that

men will negatively derogate others as stereotypically feminine when faced with a perceived masculinity threat. Various studies have examined derogation of various out-groups as a compensation mechanism (Vanhoomissen & Van Overwalle, 2010; Hutchinson, Abrams, Gutierrez, & Viki, 2008); however, less is known about derogation of an in-group member as a self-protective strategy. The researchers examined how and if this type of derogation occurs with masculinity threats.

The second study in this project examines the effects of masculinity threat on the perceptions and judgments of both in-group and out-group members by examining how men perceive victims of sexual orientation based hate crimes and the perpetrators of these crimes. By manipulating the location in which the hate crime occurred, we also aimed to examine how similarity or relatedness may affect judgments of others.

Aggressive and Anxious Responses to Masculinity Threats

Previous works have demonstrated evidence to support the assumption that men who are presented with a threat toward their masculinity will respond by being more aggressive towards others (Cohn et al., 2009). Additional work suggests that men exposed to a masculinity threat will complete a series of neutral word stems in an aggressive or anxious manner (Vandello et al., 2008). One goal of this project was to examine the limitations of anxiety and aggression in response to masculinity threat. By presenting masculinity threatened men with the option to derogate another individual before completing a word-stem task, we aimed to examine group affirmation via derogation of others as a buffer for anxiety and aggression in masculinity threatened men. We predicted that masculinity threatened men who were given the option to derogate another individual prior to completing a series of neutral word stems would not complete

the word stems in an aggressive or anxious manner. A derogation task may in fact serve as an absorber of anxious or aggressive reactions.

While previous research has demonstrated that group affirmation can relieve out-group derogation (McGregor, Haji, & Kang, 2008), less is known regarding derogation of an in-group member as a means of group affirmation. Further research demonstrated how group affirmation serves as a buffer for personal failures (Sherman et al., 2007). The researchers aim to expand upon these findings by incorporating group affirmation processes into the study of masculinity threat. Specifically, this research predicts that men subjected to a masculinity threat will compensate for a perceived lack of masculinity by derogating an in-group member, but they will not respond anxiously or aggressively if given the opportunity to derogate an in-group member first.

In-group Favoritism and Out-group Exclusion

Extant research indicates that most individuals are highly motivated to protect those who are similar to them and also ostracize those who are dissimilar (Batalha, Akrami, & Ekehammar, 2007). This process even occurs on an implicit level beyond the conscious awareness of the observer (Olson, Crawford, & Devlin, 2009). Due to the fact that we often favor our in-group, even when we are not aware of it, other researchers have theorized that there could be an evolutionary basis for in-group favoritism (Efferson, Lalive, & Fehr, 2008). Therefore, when under a state of masculinity threat, we expected men to favor their in-group and distance themselves from out-groups.

Victim Blaming

Victim blaming occurs when a target of an event such as an assault or rape receives backlash for the event occurring to them. Often times, these victims are blamed due to the fact that others may believe that they deserved what happened to them (Savani, Stephens, & Markus, 2011). For example, men who learn that a female victim of a rape who was dressed provocatively prior to the rape often assign more blame to the victim than if they learned that the victim was not dressed in a provocative manner (Workman & Freeburg, 1999). Additional research suggests that men who learn that a sexual orientation based hate crime occurred in an area that is not gay friendly were less sympathetic to the target of an assault (Plumm, Terrance, Henderson, & Ellingson, 2010). Such victim blaming could be a result of system justifying beliefs. System justifying beliefs (SJB) suggest that people are highly motivated to not only maintain a favorable attitude about their own in-group, but the overall higher social order as well (Jost & Banaji, 1994). We expected that men who learned of a hate crime occurring to a gay man would employ SJBs to rationalize the situation while simultaneously affirming and favoring their in-group.

The Present Research

The first purpose of this research project is to examine if men will downplay their own perceived feminine characteristics and highlight feminine qualities of others to effectively disassociate others with their group while simultaneously reaffirming their own group membership. An additional purpose of study 1 is to determine if men will experience anxiety or aggressive responses to a masculinity threat exposure. Previous research indicates that men will display physical aggression (Cohn, Seibert, & Zeichner,

2009) and will be less receptive of another man (Schmitt & Branscombe, 2001); however, it is unclear if men will derogate other men as being more stereotypically feminine when they are faced with a threat toward their own concept of masculinity.

To address these questions, men completed a test of gender knowledge. This test of gender knowledge was adapted from Rudman and Fairchild's Gender Knowledge Test (2004). Participants were then presented with feedback regarding their performance on this test. Half of the participants were told that their performance indicated that they performed more femininely as compared to the average masculinity score on the measure, while the other half of participants were told that they performed similarly to the average masculine score. The purpose of this experimental manipulation in feedback was to induce a masculinity threat for participants who received the threatening information that they performed more femininely (Vandello et. al, 2008).

We expected that men who received the threatening information toward their masculinity would feel a sense of urgency to compensate for this perceived threat by rating another individual as stereotypically feminine. The researchers posit that men may do this to reaffirm their own group's values while excluding a perceived other from membership status in the group. Men may feel as if they need to reassert their membership in the masculine domain when they feel as if their potential membership status has been threatened. This point is of practical importance in order to come to an understanding of the lengths men are willing to go to in order to maintain the status quo.

Following the completion of the Gender Knowledge Test, participants in the first study were asked to complete a series of word stems that could be completed in either a neutral, aggressive, or anxious manner (Anderson et al., 2003). Past research has

demonstrated that when men complete a series of word stems after being exposed to a masculinity threat they will complete the stems with more aggressive and anxious words than when not exposed to a masculinity threat (Vandello et al., 2008). To our knowledge, no studies have examined how providing a derogation task prior to word stem completion may serve as a preliminary buffer for anxious and aggressive responses in masculinity threatened men. We expect that men who are exposed to a masculinity threat and are given an opportunity to derogate an in-group member prior to completing word stems will be less likely to complete the word stems in an anxious or aggressive manner as compared to men who are not exposed to a masculinity threat due to priming and group affirmation processes.

Participants in the second study were first given the Attitudes Towards Lesbians and Gays (ATLG) scale to examine any preexisting biases held towards gay men (see Herek, 1984 for reference). Following the completion of the ATLG, participants then received feedback regarding their performance on the Gender Knowledge Test as outlined above. Following the feedback, participants were given an actual news story to read about an assault occurring to a gay man based upon his sexual orientation. After reading the article, participants were then asked to evaluate the extent to which they believed the victim was to blame for the assault as well as set a bail amount for the perpetrator of the crime. We expected that men under a state of masculinity threat would be more likely to blame victims of hate crimes and subsequently assign lenient bail amounts to perpetrators of the assault in order to realign themselves with a masculine ideology.

STUDY 1

Method

Participants

Thirty-seven undergraduate male participants from the University of Central Oklahoma participated in this study in a partial fulfillment of a psychology course requirement. The sample consisted of self-identified heterosexual males with a median sample age of 21 years ($SD = 2.47$). Participants received course credit toward participating in the study.

Design

Participants were randomly assigned to one of two experimental conditions (threat and no threat). The dependent variables consisted of the predicted performance of a fellow in-group member on a Gender Knowledge Test as well as the number of anxious and aggressive related word stems completed.

Procedure and Measures

Participants were told that they were taking part in a study examining various aspects of cultural and cognitive knowledge but they were not explicitly informed of the stereotypically masculine nature of the questions contained within the Gender Knowledge Test (Vandello et. al, 2008). This particular measure was chosen due to its internal consistency ($\alpha = .78$). The questions contained in the measure assess relatively obscure knowledge (e.g., What is the name of the Carolina NHL team? Who was the Cy Young award winner in 1970?).

Participants first completed the Gender Knowledge Test (see Appendix A) . Then the experimenters gave participants instructions asking the participants to imagine their own reactions to hypothetical feedback regarding their performance. The information the

participants received regarding their performance on the Gender Knowledge Test was predetermined based upon the experimental condition; the information the participants received regarding their hypothetical performance was not indicative of their actual score. All participants were informed that the average score for men on the Gender Knowledge Test is 71% masculine and 29% feminine. This information is not in fact true, as the Gender Knowledge Test is only used for a manipulation and does not measure any actual constructs. Half of the participants were informed that they hypothetically performed more femininely on the Gender Knowledge Test (73% feminine to 27% masculine) and the other half of the participants were informed that they performed similarly to the average score (73% masculine to 27% feminine). Participants were given false feedback in an attempt to induce masculinity threat; we expected heterosexual men who receive information that they performed more femininely on the Gender Knowledge Test would perceive this information as threatening toward their concept of masculinity. The results displayed to the participants regarding their supposed masculinity and femininity index were given in both a written format as well as in a graph. After receiving this feedback, participants were shown a picture of a male participant who took the test as well; they were then asked to predict the masculine to feminine ratio the depicted male received on the Gender Knowledge Test.

Finally, participants were asked to complete a series of word stems (See appendix B). Participants viewed a series of letters and were asked to complete the missing blanks to create a word (e.g., TI__ could be completed as TIME or TILE, etc.). Half of the word stems the participants viewed could be completed in an aggressive or nonaggressive manner, while the other half of the word stems could be completed in an anxious, or not

anxious way: GU_ (GUN or GUM), WE__ (WEAK, WEEK, WELL or WEED). After completing the word stems, the experimenters scored the percentage of anxious and aggressive words the participant completed. This measure is commonly used to study anxiety and aggression, and has been previously applied to the study of masculinity threat (Anderson et al., 2003, Carnagey & Anderson, 2005; Vandello et al., 2008). Following the completion of the study, participants were probed for suspicion and debriefed.

Results

A one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to determine the effect of the feedback (threat versus no threat) on the three dependent variables (predicted masculinity score, number of aggressive word stems completed, and number of anxious word stems completed). Following testing for equality of variances and normal distributions of dependent variables, where assumptions were met, Wilks' Λ was significant $F(3, 33) = 3.40, p = .03, d = .714, \eta_p^2 = .236$. After conducting a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), the data showed a significant difference in predicted masculinity score between participant conditions, $F(1, 35) = 7.06, p = .02, d = .734, \eta_p^2 = .168$. Specifically, the data showed that men who received threatening feedback predicted a perceived target's masculinity index to be significantly lower ($M = 59.83, SD = 14.39$) than men who did not receive threatening feedback regarding their performance on the Gender Knowledge Test ($M = 69.53, SD = 6.60$). However, there were no differences in the percentage of aggressive word stems completed between the threat group ($M = 30.44, SD = 14.99$) and the control condition ($M = 37.21, SD = 17.82$) $F(1, 35) = 1.55, p = .221, \eta_p^2 = .042$. or in the percentage of anxious word stems completed between the threat group ($M = 34.67, SD = 19.78$) and the control group ($M = 31.21, SD = 17.59$), $F(1, 35) = 0.32, p = .58, d = .085, \eta_p^2 = .009$.

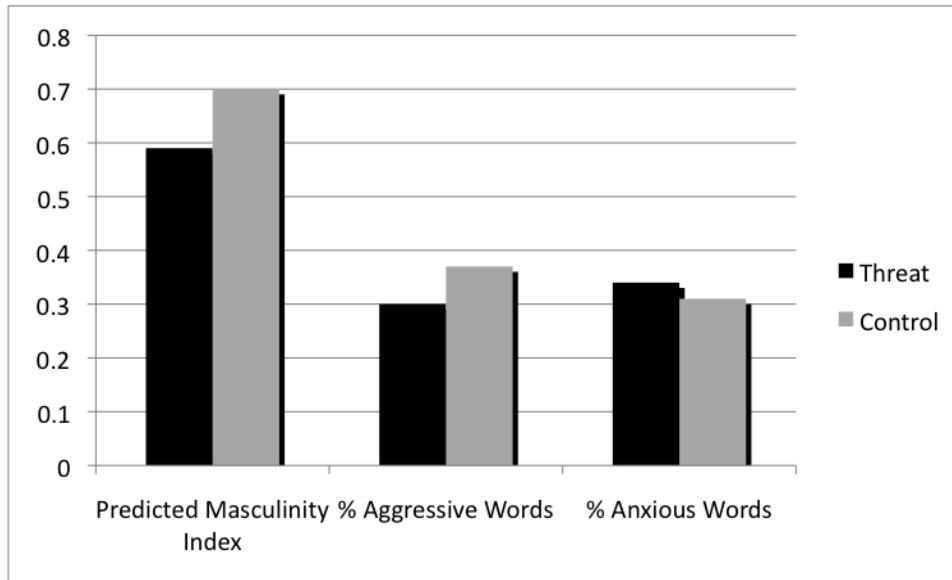


Figure 1. Percentage of points given to target man and word stem completion as a function of masculinity threat

STUDY 2

Method

Participants

Seventy-nine undergraduate male participants from the University of Central Oklahoma participated in this study in a partial fulfillment of a psychology course requirement. The sample consisted of self-identified heterosexual males with a median sample age of 20 years ($SD = 3.11$).

Design

Participants were randomly assigned to one of four experimental conditions based upon masculinity threat (threat present vs. threat absent) and location of sexual orientation based hate crime (Tulsa, Oklahoma versus Toronto, Canada). The dependent variables consisted of a victim blaming score as well as an assigned bail amount for the perpetrator of the crime.

Procedure and Materials

Similar to study 1, participants were informed that they were participating in a study involving cultural knowledge, but were not informed of the masculine nature of the Gender Knowledge Test (Vandello et. al, 2008). Participants first completed a modified version of Herek's (1984) Attitudes Towards Lesbians and Gays (ATLG) scale to control for any preexisting biases towards gay men (see Appendix C). Following the completion of the ATLG, participants then completed the Gender Knowledge Test and received the same randomly assigned false feedback based upon the experimental condition as outlined in Study 1. Participants were given false feedback in an attempt to induce masculinity threat.

After receiving the false feedback, participants were then asked to read an authentic news article about an assault happening to a gay man based upon his sexual orientation. The location in which the hate crime occurred was manipulated; that is, half of the participants read a story about an assault happening to a gay man in an area close to home (Tulsa, Oklahoma, USA) and the other half of participants read about an assault happening to a gay man in a location that was further away (Toronto, Ontario, Canada). The location was manipulated to promote a sense of in-group versus out-group identification.

Finally, participants were asked to evaluate the extent to which they believed the victim was to blame for the assault happening as well as provide a bail amount for the perpetrators of the assault. The victim blaming scale is identical to the one used by Plumm et. al, (2010). Following the completion of the study, participants were probed for suspicion and debriefed.

Results

A factorial multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to determine the effect of the feedback (threat versus no threat) on the two dependent variables (victim blaming and assigned bail). After testing for equality of variances and normal distribution, we found that Wilks' Lambda was significant, $F(2, 84) = 3.043, p = .05$.

Although the study did not reveal any significant differences for victim blaming between groups, $F = .027, p = .871$, one-way ANOVA analyses revealed differences between groups for bail amount. Specifically, participants who were threatened assigned a higher bail amount ($M = \$3952.89, SD = \5933.49) than those who were not threatened ($M = \$2089.44, SD = \4458.46), $F(1, 75) = 3.77, p = .05$. Additionally, participants who learned that the hate crime occurred in a close, conservative area (Tulsa, Oklahoma) set a higher bail ($M = \$4024.42, SD = \5499.74) than those who learned that the hate crime occurred in a further, liberal area (Toronto, Ontario, Canada) ($M = \$1785.19, SD = \2257.05), $F(1, 75) = 6.082, p = .02$. The study revealed a significant main effect for location of the crime and masculinity threat, but did not reveal a significant interaction between threat condition and crime location.

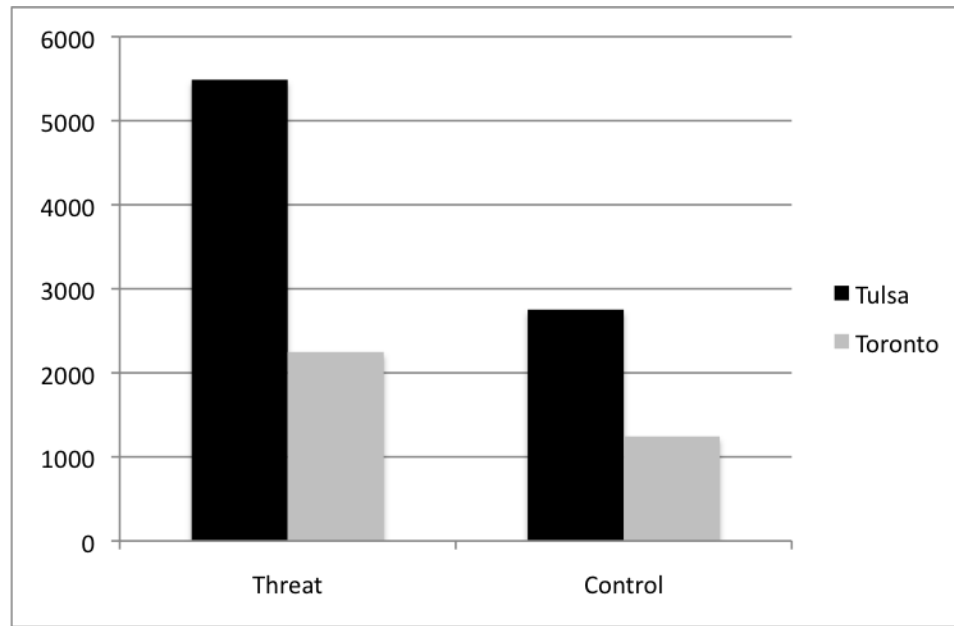


Figure 2. Assigned bail amount for hate crime perpetrator as a function of masculinity threat and hate crime location

General Discussion

The purpose of Study 1 was to examine if men would be more likely to derogate others when faced with a threat toward their personal concept of masculinity. A second purpose of Study 1 was to examine the impact that affirmation and realignment with the masculine self had on potential aggressive and anxious responses to masculinity threat. Results showed that men who were asked to imagine receiving threatening feedback toward their masculinity were in fact more inclined to derogate another individual as being less stereotypically masculine as compared to men who did not receive threatening feedback. This research also demonstrated no significant differences in anxious or aggressive responses to word stems in either group. This pattern of results suggests that men who received masculinity-threatening information were more likely to derogate another individual to compensate for receiving a masculinity threat. This study also

suggests that men who received a masculinity threat did not experience a significant difference in anxiety or aggression as compared to men who did not receive this information, presumably due to masculinity group affirmation processes or gender role realignment.

To our knowledge, no studies have examined derogation as a means of compensatory masculinity. Not only did Study 1 show derogation of in-group members to be the case, it also indicated limitations of previous studies examining anxious and aggressive responses to masculinity threat (Vandello et al., 2008). Study 1 showed that men who received a masculinity threat and were given derogation as a compensatory mechanism responded as anxiously and aggressively as men who did not receive a masculinity threat, suggesting that the derogation task may have served as a buffer for potential anxiety provoking and aggressive responses as a result of the masculinity threat.

Study 1 provides an important extension to the field of masculinity threat. Although previous research has examined aggression (Anderson & Bushman, 2002; Cohn et al., 2009) and anxiety (Vandello et al., 2008) in relation to masculinity threats, little work has examined the interplay of masculinity threat and derogation. Previous research has also examined group affirmation in relation to out-group derogation (McGreggor, Haji, & Kang, 2008); however such research has failed to examine group affirmation in relation to the derogation of a fellow in-group member. Study 1 is the first to our knowledge to examine derogation of an in-group member as a potential compensatory mechanism as well as a buffer for induced states of psychological anxiety and aggression.

The purpose of Study 2 was to determine if men who are under a state of

masculinity threat would in fact blame male victims of sexual orientation based hate crimes more and assign lenient bail amounts to perpetrators of said crimes. We predicted that this would be the case, especially when the hate crime occurred in a location that was close to home. The results actually demonstrated the exact opposite pattern of results than what was predicted. While there were no differences between conditions with victim blaming, participants actually assigned a *harsher* bail amount under a state of masculinity threat. Men also assigned a harsher bail amount when they learned that the hate crime occurred close to home.

A potential explanation for the results pattern found in Study 2 can be found by examining what is known as the black sheep effect (Pinto et al., 2010). The black sheep effect occurs when a member of one's in-group is punished or ostracized for behaving in a manner that is generally inconsistent with the group's ideologies or viewpoints (Pinto et al., 2010). In this study, men who learned that a hate crime occurred close to home were more apt to punish the perpetrator of the hate crime more severely than men who learned of a hate crime occurring further away. Men under a state of masculinity threat also were more apt to punish the perpetrator of the hate crime than men who were not under a state of masculinity threat.

Men under a state of masculinity threat were in fact using psychological distance as originally predicted, but they were instead psychologically distancing themselves from the *perpetrator* of the crime, rather than distancing themselves from the victim. While these results are contrary to what we had originally predicted, they make intuitive sense, especially in light of the results of Study 1. It is likely that men under a state of personal masculinity threat were trying to disassociate themselves from fellow in-group members

who were behaving badly by assigning them a harsher bail amount. This was also true when in-group identification was increased by manipulating the location in which the hate crime occurred to be more personally relevant to our population sample.

Although these studies do provide compelling evidence for derogation of others as a response to masculinity threat, the number of available male participants from which we could sample limits them. Due to the fact that the median sample age of this population was rather young, this could have exacerbated the defensive reactions to masculinity threat demonstrated in this study. An older population may in fact be less susceptible to compensatory responses to masculinity threat as older men may be more secure in their masculine identity. Replications of this study should attempt to diversify the sample population to represent a more holistic representation of men in general.

Another factor that may be influencing that results pattern demonstrated in this study is the fact that the population sample is from the southern United States. Research on culture of honor phenomenon suggests that men in the southern United States respond more defensively to threats than men from the northern United States (Cohen, Nisbett, Bowdle, & Schwarz, 1996). In light of this information, culture of honor may have been an influential variable affecting results demonstrated in this study.

Future directions for research should examine the effects of perspective taking (Ku, Wang & Galinsky, 2010) in relation to gender role assimilation. Men who receive a masculinity threat may in fact be assimilating to a gender role stereotype by conforming to a cultural expectation to derogate others as an overt assertion of masculinity. Overt displays of masculinity are often prized in modern America; previous research has demonstrated that masculinity is a concept that men feel they must consistently maintain

in order to be accepted as a man (Vandello et al., 2008).

The present research suggests that men who receive a masculinity threat will be more likely to derogate other individuals as a means of compensating for their own perceived loss of masculinity and will distance themselves from in-group members as a self protective mechanism. This compensatory responding in relation to masculinity threats should be further examined in additional studies. Future directions should examine anxiety and aggression in relation to masculinity threats by using physiological data such as impedance and heart rate. Previous research has examined the influence of gender stereotype activation in relation to psychological challenge and threat states (Vick, Seery, Blascovich, & Weisburch, 2008). This research could potentially be quite valuable in relation to psychophysiological explanations of anxious and aggressive responses to masculinity threat. Future directions should also examine compensatory behaviors via in-group derogation for other groups in which individuals are highly identified such as race or religion.

A final potential extension of masculinity threat research should examine the ways in which gay men respond to a masculinity threat. Gay men may not respond with the same vigor as straight men do when faced with a masculinity threat, presumably because gay men are often perceived as gender role violators (Bosson, Taylor, & Prewitt-Frelino, 2006). Revealing to a gay man that he does not fit a heteronormative value set would likely be less upsetting, resulting in less defensive reactions to a threat towards their masculinity. Including this demographic could provide a crucial extension to a previously neglected area of valuable research.

References

- Anderson, C. A., & Bushman, B. J. (2002). Human aggression. *Annual Review of Psychology, 53*, 27-51.
- Anderson, C. A., Carnagey, N. L., & Eubanks, J. (2003). Exposure to violent media: The effects of songs with violent lyrics on aggressive thoughts and feelings. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 84*, 960-971.
- Babl, J. D. (1979). Compensatory masculine responding as a function of sex role. *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology, 47*, 252-257.
- Batalha, L., Akrami, N., & Ekehammar, B. (2007). Outgroup favoritism: The role of power perception, gender, and conservatism. *Current Research in Social Psychology, 13*, 1-49.
- Bernat, J. A., Calhoun, K. S., Adams, H. E., & Zeichner, A. (2001). Homophobia and physical aggression toward homosexual and heterosexual individuals. *Journal of Abnormal Psychology, 110*, 179-187.
- Bosson, J. K., Taylor, J. N., Prewitt-Freilino, J. L. (2006). Gender role violations and identity misclassification: The roles of audience and actor variables. *Sex Roles, 55*, 13-24.
- Carnagey, N. L., & Anderson, C. A. (2005). The effects of reward and punishment in violent video games on aggressive affect, cognition, and behavior. *Psychological Science, 16*, 882-889.
- Cohen, D., Nisbett, R. E., Bowdle, B. F., & Schwarz, N. (1996). Insult, aggression, and the southern culture of honor: An 'experimental ethnography.' *Journal of*

- Personality and Social Psychology*, 70, 945-960.
- Cohn, A. M., Seibert, A., & Zeichner, A. (2009). The role of restrictive emotionality, trait anger, and masculinity threat in men's perpetration of physical aggression. *Psychology of Men & Masculinity*, 10, 218-224.
- Efferson, C. Lalive, R., & Fehr, E. (2008). The coevolution of cultural groups and ingroup favoritism. *Science*, 321, 1844-1849.
- Gilder, G. (1969). Retrieved from <http://thinkexist.com/quotes/georgegilder>
- Glasford, D. E., Dovidio, J. F., & Pratto, F. (2009). I continue to feel so good about us: In-group identification and the use of social-identity enhancing strategies to reduce intragroup dissonance. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 35, 415-427.
- Glick, P., Gangl, C., Gibb, S., Klumpner, S., & Weinberg, E. (2007). Defensive reactions to masculinity threat: More negative affect toward effeminate (but not masculine) gay men. *Sex Roles*, 57, 55-59.
- Herek, G. M. (1984). Attitudes towards lesbians and gay men: A factor analytic study. *Journal of Homosexuality*,
- Hutchison, P., Abrams, D., Guitierrez, R., & Viki, G. T. (2008). Getting rid of the bad ones: The relationship between group identification, deviant derogation, and identity maintenance. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 44, 874-881.
- Jost, J. T., & Banaji, M. R. (1994). The role of stereotyping in system-justification and the production of false consciousness. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 33, 1-27.
- Ku, G. K., Wang, C. S., & Galinsky, A. D. (2010). Perception through a perspective-

- taking lens: Differential effects on judgment and behavior. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 46, 792-798.
- McGregor, I., Haji, R., & Kang, S. J. (2008). Can ingroup affirmation relieve outgroup derogation? *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 57, 1395-1401.
- Moore, T., & Stuart, G. (2004). Effects of Masculine Gender Role Stress on Men's Cognitive, Affective, Physiological, and Aggressive Responses to Intimate Conflict Situations. *Psychology of Men & Masculinity*, 5, 132-142.
- Olson, M. A., Crawford, M. T., & Devlin, W. (2009). Evidence for the underestimation of implicit in-group favoritism among low-status groups. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 45, 1111-1116.
- Pinto, I. R., Marques, J. M., Levine, J. M., & Abrams, D. (2010). Membership status and subjective group dynamics: Who triggers the black sheep effect? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 99, 107-119.
- Plumm, K. M., Terrance, C. A., Henderson, V. R., & Ellingson, H. (2010). Victim blame in a hate crime motivated by sexual orientation. *Journal of Homosexuality*, 57, 267-286.
- Prewitt-Freilino, J. L. (2008). Defending the self against identity misclassification. *Self and Identity*, 7, 168-183.
- Rudman, L. A., & Fairchild, K. (2004). Reactions to counterstereotypic behavior: The role of backlash in cultural stereotype maintenance. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 87, 157-176.
- Savani, K., Stephens, N. M., & Markus, H. R. (2011). The unanticipated interpersonal and societal consequences of choice: Victim blaming and reduced support for the

- public good. *Psychological Science*, 22, 795-802.
- Schmitt, M. T., & Branscombe, N. R. (2001). The good, the bad, and the manly: Threats to one's prototypicality and evaluations of fellow in-group members. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 37, 510-517.
- Sherman, D. K., Klinas, Z., Major, B., Kim, H.S., & Prenovost, M. (2007). The group as a resource: Reducing biased attributions for group success and failure via group affirmation. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 33, 1100-1112.
- Stoudt, B. G. (2006). You're either in or you're out: School violence, peer discipline, and the (re)production of hegemonic masculinity. *Men and Masculinities*, 8, 273-287.
- Thoman, D. B., White, P. H., Yamawaki, N., & Koishi, H. (2008). Variations of gender-math stereotype content affect women's vulnerability to stereotype threat. *Sex Roles*, 58, 702-712.
- Vandello, J. A., Bosson, J. K., Cohen, D., Burnaford, R. M., & Weaver, J. R. (2008). Precarious manhood. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 95, (1325-1339).
- Vanhooissen, T. & Van Overwalle, F. (2010). Me or not me as source of ingroup favoritism and outgroup derogation: A connectionist perspective. *Social Cognition*, 28, 84-109.
- Vick, B. S., Seery, M. D., Blascovich, J. & Weisbuch, M. (2008). The effect of gender stereotype activation on challenge and threat motivational states. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology*, 44, 624-630.
- Workman, J. E., & Freeburg, E. W. (1999). An examination of date rape, victim dress, and perceiver variables within the context of attribution theory. *Sex Roles*, 41,

261-277.

Appendix A
Cultural Knowledge Exam

1) What is Anfernee Hardaway's nickname?

Penny

Doc

2) A dime is what kind of play in football?

Defensive

Offensive

3) What is the name of the Carolina NHL team?

Thrashers

Hurricanes

4) What team did Bob Gibson pitch for as a Cy Young award winner in 1970?

Cardinals

Yankees

5) In 1982, who won the Super Bowl's MVP award?

Joe Namath

Joe Montana

The next trials will show pictures of cars or motorcycles that you must identify.



6) Identify the vehicle above

Lamborghini

Ferrari



7) Identify the vehicle above

Porsche

Mazda



8) Identify the motorcycle above

Honda

Suzuki

9) What is the exhaust of a motorcycle engine turning at 8000 RPMs?

4000 RPMs

8000 RPMs

10) What should you do to help an engine produce more power?

Inject the fuel

Reduce displacement

11) In nature, what is the best analogy for a spark plug?

Solar fire

Lightening

12) Karate originated in martial arts and was developed where?

Japan

China

13) Soldiers in WWII often used what type of guns?

Gatling

Tommy

14) The groove inside the barrel of a revolver is:

Spiraled

Smooth

15) What is the compressed force behind BB guns?

Gas

Air

16) Who were the first people to use primitive flamethrowers in battle?

Greeks

Turks

Identify the machine gun seen here:



17) The machine gun is a:

M240G

M16A2

18) What is the material used between bathroom tiles called?

Spackling

Grout

19) What do you ask for if you need to replace the tank ball in the toilet?

Flapper

Ball cock

20) What is the paste used for soldering joints?

Gel

Flux

21) When choosing insulation, the R-value should be:

High

Low

22) What year did Hugh Hefner first publish Playboy magazine?

1963

1953

23) Arnold Schwarzenegger killed more people in what film?

True Lies

Total Recall

24) After shooting a deer, bear, elk, or turkey, what must you attach?

Kill tag

ID tag

25) When hunting in Oklahoma, what is the required amount of Hunter's Orange that is to be worn?

250 square inches

400 square inches

26) By Olympic rules, how much do boxing gloves for all weight classes weigh?

12 ounces

10 ounces

27) When punching someone, how should you aim your fist?

A foot beyond the optical target

Directly at the target

28) When punching someone, where does the majority of the force come from?

The speed of your fist

Your upper arm and shoulder

29) What is the best way to deflect a punch?

Use the forearm to block it

Use hand to catch it

30) When ramming a car to disable it, where should you aim?

Rear passenger's tire

Front driver's tire

Appendix B

Word Stem Completion

KI__

GU__

BLO__

__CLUDE

_UNCH

__RDER

B_T_LE

STRE__

__SET

_EAK

_OTHER

SHA_E

LO_ER

Appendix C

Directions: Please evaluate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the following statements.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Somewhat disagree
- Neutral
- Somewhat agree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

1. Male homosexual couples should be allowed to adopt children the same as heterosexual couples
2. I think male homosexuals are disgusting
3. Male homosexuals should not be allowed to teach school
4. Male homosexuality is a perversion
5. Male homosexuality is a natural expression of sexuality in men
6. If a man has homosexual feelings, he should do everything he can to overcome them

7. I would not be too upset if I learned that my son were a homosexual

8. Sex between two men is just plain wrong

9. The idea of male homosexual marriages seems ridiculous to me

10. Male homosexuality is merely a different kind of lifestyle that should not be condemned