

Separating the “Sinner” from the “Sin”: Religious Orientation and Prejudiced Behavior Toward Sexual Orientation and Promiscuous Sex

HEATHER K. MAK
JO-ANN TSANG

This study extends research on the relationship between religious orientation, sexual prejudice, and antipathy toward value-violating behaviors. If intrinsic religion leads individuals to “love the sinner but hate the sin,” homosexual sexually promiscuous targets should be treated similarly to heterosexual promiscuous targets. One hundred female introductory psychology students were provided the opportunity to help two students. They had no information about the first student. The second student disclosed through a note that she was gay or said nothing about sexual orientation, and further stated that she was sexually promiscuous or celibate. Participants scoring high in intrinsic religiousness helped the disclosing student less when she revealed she was sexually promiscuous, but did not help a gay discloser less than a straight discloser. High intrinsic scores seemed to be related to antipathy toward the value-violation, but not toward the gay person as an individual.

The phrase “Love the sinner, hate the sin” is popular in many religious circles. This saying has similarly engaged many in the psychological study of religion and prejudice (e.g., Bassett et al. 2002; Batson, Denton, and Vollmecke 2008; Batson et al. 1999, 2001; Goldfried and Miner 2002). Can people really love the “sinner” but hate the “sin?” Are some people better at this than others? Psychologists have been particularly interested in the applicability of this phrase to prejudice against gay men and lesbians. Some behavioral research has found that devout, intrinsically religious individuals are equally prejudiced against a gay person who engages in behavior that might violate religious values, and one who does not (Batson et al. 1999). Other self-report studies suggest that the intrinsically religious may treat gay people differently depending on the sexual activity of the gay person (Bassett et al. 2002; Fulton, Gorsuch, and Maynard 1999). Because a homosexual orientation might imply sexual behavior outside of the traditionally defined marriage relationship, it may be difficult to separate negative attitudes toward gay men and lesbians from negative attitudes toward extramarital sexual behavior. The present study extends this area of research by further examining the distinction between prejudice toward sexual orientation and negative attitudes toward sexual behavior. Specifically, we predict that if intrinsically religious individuals can “love the sinner but hate the sin,” they should treat homosexual sexually promiscuous persons in the same way they treat heterosexual sexually promiscuous persons.

Religiousness and Sexual Prejudice

Sexual prejudice is a negative attitude toward individuals based on sexual orientation, whether they are homosexual, bisexual, or heterosexual (Herek 2000). Religiousness is one important predictor of sexual prejudice. People who attend religious services more frequently and those who belong to conservative religious denominations report more sexual prejudice (Finlay and

Heather K. Mak was an undergraduate majoring in psychology at Baylor University. E-mail: makhk@umdnj.edu
Jo-Ann Tsang is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Psychology and Neuroscience, Baylor University.
Correspondence should be addressed to Jo-Ann Tsang, Department of Psychology and Neuroscience, One Bear Place 97334, Baylor University, Waco, TX 76798-7334. E-mail: JoAnn_Tsang@Baylor.edu

Walther 2003; Fisher et al. 1994) and are less likely to know someone who is gay or lesbian (Herek and Capitanio 1996).

Religious orientation is a critical variable in the relationship between religiousness and sexual prejudice. Although Allport (1966) originally theorized intrinsic religious orientation to be a more compassionate and tolerant way of being religious, empirical research has found intrinsic religiousness to be related to increased sexual prejudice (Batson et al. 1999; Duck and Hunsberger 1999; Fisher et al. 1994; Fulton et al. 1999; Herek 1987; Kirkpatrick 1993; McFarland 1989; Tsang and Rowatt 2007; Wilkinson 2004). In turn, extrinsic religious orientation, which Allport (1966) theorized to be a self-interested means to nonreligious ends, has often been found to be unrelated to sexual prejudice (Batson, Schoenrade, and Ventis 1993; Tsang and Rowatt 2007). Only quest religious orientation, which Batson conceptualized as a cognitively complex, open-minded religious motivation (Batson and Schoenrade 1991), has been found to be negatively related to sexual prejudice (Bassett et al. 2000, 2005; Batson et al. 1999; Fisher et al. 1994; Fulton et al. 1999; McFarland 1989).

Prejudice and Value-Violation

One possible contributor to sexual prejudice on the part of intrinsically religious individuals may be a value conflict between extramarital sexual activity and conservative religious views. Not surprisingly, religiousness is related to disapproval of sexual promiscuity and of sexual activity outside of traditional marriage (Bassett et al. 1999; Cochran et al. 2004; Haerich 1992; Rowatt and Schmitt 2003). This perceived value-violation may contribute to the relationship between religiousness and increased sexual prejudice. For example, Jackson and Esses (1997) found that people who scored high in religious fundamentalism evaluated social problems of groups that violated their values differently than they evaluated groups that did not violate values. Jackson and Esses found that participants high in religious fundamentalism reported that both gay men and lesbians and single mothers threatened their values, but that native Canadians and college students did not. Presumably, gay men and lesbians and single mothers violated fundamentalist values of keeping sexual activity exclusive to traditional marriage. Participants high in fundamentalism further held both gay men and lesbians and single mothers responsible for hypothetical employment problems and for the solutions to those problems, but they did not make this attribution of responsibility for the groups that did not violate their values. This suggests that for some religious people, sexual prejudice may be based on a perceived violation of religious values.

Similarly, Fulton et al. (1999) explored whether sexual prejudice on the part of intrinsically religious individuals was due to perceived value violations. They found that high scores in intrinsic religious orientation were related to increased self-reported prejudice against sexually active gay individuals, but intrinsic scores showed a more tolerant relationship to self-reported social distance measures toward gay men and lesbians in general. Fulton et al. interpreted this to mean that intrinsically religious people were intolerant of homosexual behavior, which would violate religious values, but were tolerant toward gay men and lesbians as individuals.

Other research has used behavioral measures of helping to test whether religious people distinguish between a stigmatized out-group member and value-violating behavior. Behavioral measures have the advantage of being less affected by social desirability (e.g., Snyder et al. 1979) and tend to be more costly for participants than self-report measures, leading participant responses to be more genuine (e.g., Silverman 1974). For instance, Batson et al. (1999) used helping behavior to examine the relationship between intrinsic religiousness and prejudiced behavior toward gay men and lesbians. In their study, participants found out that another participant (the discloser) was gay or not gay. They were then told that they had an opportunity to perform two tasks that would win raffle tickets for the discloser or an unknown student. The discloser then indicated that he/she would either use the raffle prize in a way that was unrelated to homosexuality (visiting

grandparents) or in a way that promoted homosexuality (gay pride rally). Batson et al. found that participants who scored higher in intrinsic religiousness helped the homosexual discloser less than the heterosexual discloser regardless of whether or not the help promoted homosexuality. The researchers concluded that people who score high in intrinsic religiousness, whom Allport claimed had universal compassion, may not extend that compassion to gay men and lesbians.

One possible limitation of Batson et al.'s (1999) methodology is that it may not have fully separated the out-group member from the value-violation. For instance, the gay discloser who planned to visit her grandmother may have still been sexually active, which is a value-violation for those high in intrinsic religiousness. Though her visit to her grandmother itself was not a value-violation, it was possible that she might violate values in some other context, perhaps making intrinsically religious individuals reluctant to support her. Bassett and his colleagues have addressed this limitation by investigating Christian participants' reactions to gay people who are celibate versus gay people who are sexually active. Bassett et al. (2002) adopted a role-play version of Batson et al.'s (1999) methodology. In their study, the discloser indicated either that he/she was celibate and gay, sexually active and gay, or sexual orientation was not mentioned. Bassett et al. found that participants high in intrinsic religiousness reported that they would provide less help to sexually active gay targets who were planning to attend a gay pride rally compared to targets who were not identified as gay. There were no significant differences in helping a celibate gay person visit her grandmother's house, compared to targets who were not identified as gay. Because participants high in intrinsic religiousness helped the gay celibate target more than a gay sexually active target, it might be argued that the presentation of a gay celibate target more adequately distinguished between out-group member and value-violation, when compared to Batson et al.'s methodology. Bassett et al.'s intriguing results are unfortunately limited by the study's role-play methodology and its associated confound of self-presentation.

Bassett et al. (2005) employed behavioral measures to further test reactions to celibate and sexually active gay men and lesbians. They categorized Christian participants into three groups based on their acceptance of homosexuality: (1) those who *universally accepted* homosexuality reported being tolerant toward everyone regardless of their sexual orientation and sexual activity; (2) those who *selectively accepted* homosexuality only rejected the sexually active gay men and lesbians and were more tolerant toward celibate gay men and lesbians; and (3) those who *universally rejected* homosexuality reported rejecting both sexually active and celibate gay men and lesbians. Participants were then given \$20 to divide between themselves, the experiment, or a number of charities. The charities included a Christian church that had an open policy toward gay men and lesbians but encouraged celibacy, as well as a church that had an open policy toward gay men and lesbians and was accepting of homosexual behavior. Only the universally accepting participants gave money to the church that accepted gay persons and homosexual behavior. All three groups donated the most money to the church that accepted gay individuals but not behavior, suggesting that many participants distinguished between gay people and homosexual behaviors.

The Present Study

The present study builds on previous research in the area of sexual prejudice and value-violation. Previous studies have presented participants with a gay sexually active target, a gay celibate target, and a heterosexual celibate target (e.g., Bassett et al. 2005). We included an additional condition with a sexually active heterosexual target to better separate out-group membership from value-violation, and allow us to compare whether intrinsically religious participants view a sexually promiscuous gay person more negatively than they view a sexually promiscuous heterosexual person. A more negative reaction toward the promiscuous gay person would be indicative of sexual prejudice. If participants are truly able to differentiate between out-group membership and value-violating behavior, then both the gay target and the heterosexual target should be judged by their actions, not their sexual orientation.

Our method borrowed in part from Bassett and colleagues' methodology by presenting participants with gay or straight targets who violate religious values by being sexually promiscuous, or uphold values by refraining from sexual behavior. Because people might react differently to helping a gay-friendly institution versus an individual who is gay, we also borrowed from Batson and colleagues' methodology by providing participants with an opportunity to help an individual person in need.

Research examining behavioral reactions to sexually active and celibate individuals has not included the variable of intrinsic religious orientation (Bassett et al. 2000, 2005). Given previous research on the importance of religious orientation in the relationship between religiousness and prejudice (Batson et al. 1993), the present study examines the relationship between intrinsic religious orientation and a behavioral measure of sexual prejudice.

Predictions

If individuals high in intrinsic religiousness are prejudiced toward gay men and lesbians, they should help a homosexual target less compared to a heterosexual target, regardless of whether the target violates their values through sexual promiscuity. In contrast, if individuals high in intrinsic religiousness distinguish between out-group members and value-violating behaviors, they should help a sexually promiscuous target less compared to a celibate target, regardless of the target's sexual orientation.

Although this study is primarily concerned with the relationship between intrinsic religious orientation and prejudice, we also measured extrinsic and quest religious orientations. Consistent with some previous research (Batson et al. 1993; Haerich 1992), we did not predict a relationship between extrinsic religious orientation and differential helping based either on target sexual orientation or sexual behavior. For example, Batson et al. (1993) found that extrinsic religious orientation was unrelated to sexual prejudice in a number of studies. In contrast, it was predicted that individuals high in quest religiousness would show more tolerance, and quest would thus be negatively related to differential helping based either on sexual orientation or sexual behavior because these do not violate the open-minded values of quest religious orientation (Batson et al. 2001, 2008).

METHOD

Participants were 100 female introductory psychology students at a moderately sized private religious university who participated as partial fulfillment of their course requirements. Only female participants were used because the experimenters were female and we wished to eliminate cross-gender self-presentation concerns (Jones and Pittman 1982). Two additional participants were omitted from the analysis because they did not report at least a moderate interest in religion (a score of 4 or higher in response to the question "How interested are you in religion?" [1 = *not at all interested*, 9 = *extremely interested*]). Seven additional participants were omitted because they expressed suspicion about the cover story of the experiment; two of these students were in the gay/celibate condition, three were in the gay/promiscuous condition, and two were in the straight/promiscuous condition. The methodology for this study modeled that of Batson et al. (1999) with the addition of an in-group/value-violation condition and with the value-violation changed from attendance at a gay rally to sexual promiscuity.

Participants were run singly. They were told that the study was about the effects of self-disclosure of personal information on task performance. It was explained that the participant and another same-sex student were taking part in this study together. Ostensibly, the other student had been randomly assigned to a Discloser role and the participant had been assigned to a Recipient role. At an earlier session the Discloser wrote two notes disclosing the most intimate, personal

information she felt comfortable disclosing under the circumstances. The first note was for general, personal information. The second note was for the Discloser to write about her thoughts and feelings about the tasks that the Recipient would perform. In reality, there was no Discloser, and notes were written in advance.

Participants were left with a sealed envelope containing the Discloser’s first note. This handwritten note contained hints about the sexual orientation and behavior of the Discloser. In half of the notes, the Discloser revealed that she was gay; the other notes did not mention sexual orientation. This comprised the out-group member manipulation (gay vs. straight). In addition, in half of the notes the Discloser implied that she engaged in sexually promiscuous behavior outside of marriage, whereas in the other notes, the Discloser stated that she was celibate. This comprised the value-violation manipulation (promiscuous vs. celibate). It was assumed that to most students at a religious university, a gay discloser would be perceived as an out-group member. It was further assumed that sexual promiscuity would be more of a value-violation to these students than would sexual abstinence.

In the gay/promiscuous condition, the note read:

I’m supposed to tell you something really personal and revealing, something I wouldn’t tell somebody else unless I knew them really well. I guess writing a note is better than face-to-face. Even though I was excited about coming to [University Name], one thing that worried me was that it seemed so huge. I was really afraid I would just get lost in the crowd and wouldn’t be able to get to know anyone well. To be really honest, I had a special reason for being worried. The reason is I’m gay. Last year I couldn’t have told anyone that, but now I can. I wasn’t sure how accepted my sexual orientation would be among [University] students. I didn’t make any friends at first and I was afraid that I would not find love either. I didn’t know what to expect of the dating situation when I first got here. I am looking for someone who can understand me, and doesn’t mind that I don’t want to stay tied down right now. I still think it is important to have an emotional and spiritual relationship with another person, but college is a place for experimenting and for me experimenting is sleeping around with lots of people. I was pretty lonely when I first got here, maybe because I was so scared. After a couple of weeks though, I started feeling a bit more at ease. Now I really like it here. I’ve met a lot of cool people and have some really great friends.

In the straight conditions, the note was identical except that the four sentences starting with “To be really honest” and ending with “I wasn’t sure how accepted my sexual orientation would be among [University] students” were omitted, removing any indication that the Discloser was gay. In the celibate conditions, the sentences starting with “I am looking for someone” and ending with “experimenting is sleeping around with lots of people” were omitted and replaced with the following:

I am looking for someone who can understand me and doesn’t mind that I choose to remain celibate. Even though I have decided to not have sex, I still think it is important to have an emotional and spiritual relationship with another person.

The experimenter was kept blind to the contents of the note until after the experimental session was over.

After reading the Discloser’s first note, the participant completed an impressions questionnaire. This questionnaire included a question that asked participants to rate their perceived similarity to the Discloser on a 1 to 7 scale (1 = *not at all similar*, 7 = *extremely similar*). This provided an indirect check of the out-group and value-violation manipulations.

Participants then received the task consequences information and the Discloser’s second note. They were told that every correct response on the upcoming tasks would earn a ticket good for a raffle with a \$50 prize. One task would earn tickets for the Discloser and the other for a student who was not participating in the study.

In the second note, participants learned what the Discloser wanted to do with the money if she were to win the raffle. Participants in all conditions received the same note in which the Discloser revealed she would use the money to visit her grandparents. The note read:

I was hoping that at least one of the tasks would have consequences for me because I could really use the \$50 right now. I've been saving every penny I can for weeks, which is hard for college student. I wanted to save enough money so that I can take a trip to New Jersey. My grandparents live there and I want to visit them for their 50th anniversary party. I wasn't sure I'd be able to save enough in time to go, but \$50 would sure help out a lot! I really want to go. The money would be great!

This second note functioned to establish a need on the part of the Discloser.

After reading the second note, participants were presented with two paper-and-pencil number-circling tasks simultaneously for two minutes. Participants were reminded that correct answers on one task would earn raffle tickets for the Discloser, and correct answers on the other task would earn raffle tickets for an unknown student. The tasks involved working from left to right, line by line through rows of numbers and circling all instances of 13 and 47. The numbers on the tasks were different to prevent copying. Participants were given two minutes to complete both tasks and could divide the time however they chose. The participant received no raffle tickets herself for performing either task. The proportion of correct responses the participant earned on the task that benefited the Discloser compared to the total number of correct responses was the dependent variable.

Participants were then provided a reaction questionnaire that contained questions regarding thoughts about the task, and religious scale measurements. The religious scales used were the measure of religious interest, Allport and Ross's (1967) measure of intrinsic ($\alpha = 0.87$) and extrinsic ($\alpha = 0.77$) religious orientation, and Batson and Schoenrade's (1991) measure of quest religious orientation ($\alpha = 0.78$). Participants responded to these questions on a 1–9 Likert-type scale (1 = *Not at all/Strongly Disagree*, 9 = *Extremely/Strongly Agree*).

Participants were debriefed at the close of the experiment. During the postexperimental interview participants were carefully probed for suspicion and the experimenter fully explained the experimental procedure to participants, including the reasons for deception, using guidelines from Aronson et al. (1990). No participant seemed distressed by the experimental methods, and all seemed to understand the reasons for deception.

RESULTS

Manipulations Checks

The effectiveness of the experimental manipulations was tested by asking participants about the Discloser's perceived similarity to themselves.¹ A 2 (gay vs. straight) \times 2 (promiscuous vs. celibate) ANOVA showed both a main effect for target out-group status ($F[1, 96] = 13.73$, $p < 0.001$) and for target behavior ($F[1, 96] = 24.72$, $p < 0.001$). These main effects were qualified by a significant interaction between out-group status and target behavior ($F[1, 96] = 4.64$, $p < 0.05$). Participants in the straight/celibate condition stated that the Discloser was more similar to themselves ($M = 5.22$ on the 1–7 scale), compared to participants in the other three conditions, gay/celibate, gay/promiscuous, and straight/promiscuous ($M_s = 3.23, 2.27$, and 2.80 , respectively). Planned comparisons showed this difference was statistically significant, $t(96) = -6.43$, $p < 0.001$ (significance tests are two-tailed unless otherwise indicated). Participants perceived themselves to be different from a gay and/or sexually promiscuous discloser and most similar to a straight and celibate discloser.

Descriptive Statistics

Participants scored higher on the intrinsic scale than on the extrinsic and quest scales. Table 1 presents descriptive statistics for the religious orientation scales. Compared with previously published mean scores from other undergraduate populations (Batson et al. 1993), participants'

TABLE 1
DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS FOR MAJOR STUDY SCALES

Scale	Mean	SD	N
Overall helping	0.75	0.30	100
Intrinsic religious orientation	6.25	1.58	97
Extrinsic religious orientation	3.93	1.18	94
Quest religious orientation	4.84	1.22	98

scores appeared higher than average on the intrinsic scale and lower than average on the extrinsic scale. This is most likely due to the fact that the current sample was from a religious university. Previous research has found that participants from religiously conservative populations tend to show a negative relationship between intrinsic and extrinsic religious orientations (Donahue 1985); accordingly, we found in our sample that the intrinsic scale was negatively correlated with the extrinsic ($r = -.24, p < 0.05$) and quest scales ($r = -.31, p < 0.01$).

Help for the Discloser

How much help were participants willing to give to the Discloser? In general, participants helped the Discloser more than they helped the unknown student. The mean proportion of combinations correctly circled for the Discloser compared to the total number of circled responses was 0.75. This higher overall mean proportion was not surprising: participants were more willing to help the person they knew something about and who had expressed a need for the money.

The amount of help participants were willing to give to the Discloser varied by condition. Table 2 presents the mean proportion of help given to the Discloser in each of the four conditions. A 2 (gay vs. straight) \times 2 (promiscuous vs. celibate) ANOVA showed a marginally significant main effect for target behavior ($F[1,96] = 3.68, p = 0.06$). Promiscuous disclosers were helped slightly less than were celibate disclosers. Participants did not help a gay discloser any less than a straight discloser ($F[1,96] = 1.20, p = 0.28$) and they did not differentiate between a gay and straight promiscuous discloser, $t(44.53) = 0.97, p = 0.34$. In general, participants seemed slightly more likely to help a celibate discloser than a sexually promiscuous discloser, regardless of the Discloser's sexual orientation.

Helping in Each Condition by Those High and Low in Intrinsic Religiousness

In general, intrinsic religiousness was negatively correlated with helping the Discloser over an unknown participant ($r = -0.23, p < 0.05$). Looking specifically at target out-group status

TABLE 2
MEANS OF HELPING AS A FUNCTION OF SEXUAL ORIENTATION
AND SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

Out-Group Condition	Value-Violation Condition		
	Celibate	Promiscuous	Combined
Gay	0.82 (26)	0.73 (22)	0.78 (48)
Straight	0.78 (27)	0.64 (25)	0.71 (52)
Combined	0.80 (53)	0.68 (47)	0.75 (100)

Note: Numbers in parentheses are the number of participants in each cell.

TABLE 3
MEAN PROPORTION OF HELP FOR THE DISCLOSER BY PARTICIPANTS HIGH AND LOW IN INTRINSIC RELIGIOUS ORIENTATION

Out-Group Condition	Value-Violation Condition		
	Celibate	Promiscuous	Combined
High Intrinsic			
Gay	0.73 (10)	0.62 (13)	0.67 (23)
Straight	0.76 (14)	0.54 (15)	0.65 (29)
Combined	0.75 (24)	0.58 (28)	0.66 (52)
Low Intrinsic			
Gay	0.87 (16)	0.86 (7)	0.87 (23)
Straight	0.83 (12)	0.78 (10)	0.81 (22)
Combined	0.85 (28)	0.82 (17)	0.84 (45)

Note: Median for the intrinsic scale = 6.44. Numbers in parentheses are the number of participants in each cell.

and behavior, high scores on the intrinsic scale were related to helping the promiscuous discloser slightly less. Table 3 shows the mean proportion of help given to the Discloser in each experimental condition by participants scoring above and below the median on the intrinsic scale (median = 6.44). A 2 (gay vs. straight) \times 2 (promiscuous vs. celibate) \times 2 (high vs. low intrinsic) ANOVA showed a significant main effect for intrinsic religious orientation. Participants who scored higher on the intrinsic scale helped the Discloser less compared to participants who scored lower in intrinsic religion ($F [1,89] = 7.76, p < 0.01$). Planned comparisons for participants above the median on the intrinsic scale revealed that help given to the Discloser was marginally lower in the promiscuous compared to the celibate value-violation conditions, $t(48) = 1.85, p = 0.07$. These participants did not help a gay promiscuous discloser any less than a straight promiscuous discloser, $t(48) = 0.68, p = 0.50$. Thus, high scores on the intrinsic scale seemed to be associated with being able to distinguish between out-group membership and value-violating behaviors. Planned comparisons for participants below the median on the intrinsic scale revealed no significant effects for value-violation, or between gay and straight promiscuous disclosers, $ps > 0.46$. Low scores on the intrinsic scale were not associated with differentiating between sexual orientation and value-violation. Comparing high and low intrinsic scores in the gay/promiscuous condition, those scoring below the median on the intrinsic scale helped the Discloser marginally more, compared to help given by those scoring above the median on the intrinsic scale ($t[18] = 1.79, p = 0.09$). When faced with a gay, sexually promiscuous discloser, participants scoring high in intrinsic religiousness tended to help slightly less compared to those who scored low in intrinsic religiousness.

Helping in Each Condition by Those High and Low in Extrinsic Religiousness

Extrinsic religiousness was also negatively correlated with helping the Discloser over an unknown student, although this effect was only marginal ($r = -0.18, p = 0.09$). Previous research has shown extrinsic religiousness to be unrelated to antipathy based specifically on sexual orientation or sexual activity. Table 4 presents the mean proportion of help given to the Discloser in each experimental condition by participants scoring above and below the median on the extrinsic scale (median = 3.77). A 2 (gay vs. straight) \times 2 (promiscuous vs. celibate) \times 2 (high vs. low extrinsic) ANOVA showed main effects for target behavior ($F [1,86] = 5.31, p < 0.05$) as

TABLE 4
MEAN PROPORTION OF HELP FOR THE DISCLOSER BY PARTICIPANTS HIGH
AND LOW IN EXTRINSIC RELIGIOUS ORIENTATION

Out-Group Condition	Value-Violation Condition		
	Celibate	Promiscuous	Combined
High Extrinsic			
Gay	0.77 (13)	0.57 (5)	0.71 (18)
Straight	0.81 (13)	0.56 (16)	0.67 (29)
Combined	0.79 (26)	0.56 (21)	0.69 (47)
Low Extrinsic			
Gay	0.91 (12)	0.76 (15)	0.82 (27)
Straight	0.78 (13)	0.78 (7)	0.78 (20)
Combined	0.84 (25)	0.76 (22)	0.80 (47)

Note: Median for the extrinsic scale = 3.77. Numbers in parentheses are the number of participants in each cell.

well as extrinsic religious orientation ($F [1, 86] = 4.04, p < 0.01$). Participants were more likely to help the Discloser if she was celibate than if she was promiscuous. Participants who scored lower in extrinsic religiousness were more likely to help the Discloser compared to participants who scored higher on extrinsic religiousness. Planned comparisons for participants above the median on extrinsic religiousness revealed that participants who scored high in extrinsic religiousness were more likely to help a discloser who was celibate rather than sexually promiscuous, $t (40.74) = 2.88, p < 0.01$. These participants did not help a gay promiscuous discloser any less than a straight promiscuous discloser, $t(19) = -0.003, p = 0.98$. Low extrinsic scores were not significantly related to differential helping based on sexual orientation or value-violating sexual behavior ($ps > 0.15$). Similarly to intrinsic religiousness, high scores on the extrinsic scale were associated with distinguishing between out-group membership and value-violating behaviors.

Helping in Each Condition by Those High and Low in Quest Religiousness

In contrast to the intrinsic and extrinsic scales, the high scores on quest scale were positively related to helping the Discloser over an unknown student ($r = 0.20, p < 0.05$). Regarding discloser out-group status and behavior, quest religiousness was predicted to demonstrate tolerance in all conditions because sexual orientation and sexual behavior did not violate quest values. Table 5 presents the mean proportion of help given to the Discloser in each experimental condition by participants scoring above and below the median on the quest scale (median = 4.79). A 2 (gay vs. straight) \times 2 (promiscuous vs. celibate) \times 2 (high vs. low quest) ANOVA did not produce any significant effects, $ps > 0.11$. Planned comparisons on participants scoring above and below the median on the quest scale also did not find any significant relationships, $ps > 0.15$.

Justifying Not Helping the Discloser

What were some of the reasons given for helping the Discloser less? Participants were asked an open-ended question on the task reaction questionnaire about why they divided their time on the tasks the way that they did. Research assistants coded the responses into one of four categories: (1) participant stated that she did not agree with the Discloser’s values (mentioned having a problem with promiscuity and/or homosexual orientation); (2) participant mentioned

TABLE 5
MEAN PROPORTION OF HELP FOR THE DISCLOSER BY PARTICIPANTS HIGH
AND LOW IN QUEST RELIGIOUS ORIENTATION

Out-Group Condition	Value-Violation Condition		
	Celibate	Promiscuous	Combined
High Quest			
Gay	0.85 (13)	0.77 (10)	0.82 (23)
Straight	0.82 (14)	0.67 (12)	0.75 (26)
Combined	0.84 (27)	0.71 (22)	0.78 (49)
Low Quest			
Gay	0.79 (13)	0.70 (12)	0.75 (25)
Straight	0.70 (11)	0.61 (13)	0.65 (24)
Combined	0.74 (24)	0.66 (25)	0.70 (49)

Note: Median for the quest scale = 4.79. Numbers in parentheses are the number of participants in each cell.

that she wanted to help the Discloser because of her need; (3) participant stated that she wanted to be fair and help both the Discloser and the unknown student equally; and (4) participant mentioned some other reason, such as losing track of time, or working on only one task to be more efficient. Only six participants directly noted that they disagreed with the Discloser regarding her sexual promiscuity or sexual orientation. One participant was in the gay/celibate condition, three were in the gay/promiscuous condition, and two were in the straight/promiscuous condition. The remaining 94 responses were categorized into the other three categories: 48 participants stated that they knew something about the Discloser's need and wanted to help her, 27 participants stated that they wanted to be fair, and 19 gave other reasons such as losing track of time.

We examined more closely the 75 participants who stated either that they were motivated to help the Discloser, or to be fair. Reports of wanting to be fair were significantly negatively correlated with helping the Discloser in the gay/celibate ($r = -0.75, p < 0.001, N = 25$), gay/promiscuous ($r = -0.87, p < 0.001, N = 14$), straight/celibate ($r = -0.80, p < 0.001, N = 20$), and straight/promiscuous ($r = -0.62, p < 0.05, N = 16$) conditions. Participants who stated that they divided their time in order to be fair did in fact seem to divide their time equally between the two tasks, with the mean proportion of correct responses for the Discloser close to even, $M = 0.53, SD = 0.16$. In contrast, participants who stated that they divided their time because they knew something about the Discloser and her need spent the vast majority of their time on the task that would help the Discloser, $M = 0.93, SD = 0.17$. Participants' self-reported motives paralleled their helping behavior. Because we did not make any *a priori* predictions as to how participants would respond, these results, though interesting, are only speculative. Yet, the pattern of responses is consistent with previous research (Batson et al. 1999): the vast majority of participants who helped the Discloser less interpreted their behavior as a stand for equality rather than a stand against promiscuous sex or homosexual orientation.

DISCUSSION

When it comes to sexual orientation, is intrinsic religiousness related to "hating the sin but loving the sinner," or do intrinsically religious people exhibit sexual prejudice toward gay persons, regardless of their behavior? High-intrinsic participants did not differentiate between a

gay sexually promiscuous and straight sexually promiscuous discloser in their helping behavior. Instead, people who scored high in intrinsic religiousness (as well as those high in extrinsic religiousness) helped targets slightly less when those targets were sexually promiscuous, regardless of the sexual orientation of the target. This fair treatment of value-violating individuals regardless of their sexual orientation would appear to be tolerant rather than prejudiced. These results corroborate research showing that intrinsically religious participants report making a distinction between sexually active and celibate gay individuals, reporting prejudice against only the former (Bassett et al. 2002; Fulton et al. 1999). The present study demonstrated that these negative attitudes toward sexually promiscuous gay individuals are also felt toward sexually promiscuous heterosexual individuals (cf. Wilkinson and Roys 2005), and that these effects are not limited to self-reports but extend to behavioral indicators of antipathy.

In contrast, our results were inconsistent with Batson et al. (1999), who found that high scores in intrinsic, as well as extrinsic, religious orientation were related to helping a discloser less when the Discloser was gay. Compared with Batson et al., our manipulations may have made a clearer distinction between out-group membership and value-violating behavior. Batson et al. employed a value-violation of attendance at a gay pride rally versus visiting a grandmother's house, whereas the present study's value-violation was sexual promiscuity versus sexual abstinence. A discloser who planned to visit her grandmother's house could still engage in value-violating behaviors, such as sexual activity, in other situations. In contrast, the present study used a gay/celibate condition in which there was presumably no sexual orientation-related value-violating behavior occurring. Our study sample also differed from Batson et al.'s sample, and this too may explain the discrepancy in results. Batson and colleagues' research on tolerance for out-group members and value-violations has typically been conducted at a large, public university (Batson et al. 1999, 2001, 2008). In contrast, our experiment was conducted at a smaller, private religious university.

In contrast to those scoring high in intrinsic religiousness, participants low in intrinsic religiousness in our study may have gone out of their way to help the gay promiscuous individual. This may have been because, for people low in intrinsic religiousness, sexual activity was not a value-violation. Additionally, anecdotal evidence suggests that some participants in our study may have helped the gay discloser in part because they felt sorry for her, given the location of the study. During the postexperimental interview, several participants spontaneously mentioned that they recognized how hard it would be for a gay person to "come out" at a Christian university. They noted that they felt bad that the Discloser was having such a difficult time adjusting to college life and, therefore, they decided to help her more. In support of this idea, research on pro-social behavior has shown that empathy is related to altruistic helping (Batson 1991). Perhaps participants low in intrinsic religiousness felt more empathy for the gay promiscuous discloser, causing them to help her more, whereas participants high in intrinsic religiousness did not feel empathy for a discloser who violated their values. Future studies might investigate feelings of empathy toward a discloser in an attempt to see if empathy affects distinctions people make between out-group membership and value-violating behavior.

One interesting aspect of the method used in the present study and in Batson and colleagues' corresponding research (Batson et al. 1999, 2001, 2008) is that participants always had an opportunity to show helping behavior, whether they were exhibiting prejudice or not. Participants faced with a sexually promiscuous discloser did not refuse to help; they simply helped her less than they helped an unknown student. This methodological point becomes important when looking at the correlations in the present study that showed that intrinsic religiousness was negatively associated with helping the Discloser, whereas quest religiousness was positively associated. These correlations may be related to findings that intrinsic religious orientation is related to the pro-social motivation of wanting to appear helpful, whereas quest religious orientation may be related to the altruistic motivation of concern for the welfare of the person in need (Batson et al. 1993).

The present study had a number of potentially limiting features. First, these results may not be generalizable to all populations. As previously mentioned, the research sample was limited to undergraduate introductory psychology students at a relatively small, private religious university. Results may have been different if it was conducted at a larger, public university or in a nonuniversity setting (Bassett et al. 2002). Additionally, this study only recruited female participants. There may be some gender differences in sexual prejudice (Kite and Whitley 1996) that were not uncovered due to the lack of male participants. Similarly, society holds a double standard toward sexually promiscuous women. Promiscuous women are often judged more negatively than promiscuous men. Results may have differed if male participants and promiscuous male targets were included. This study also looked specifically at the issue of sexual prejudice. Further research is needed to see if intrinsic religiousness is related to differentiating between value-violations and group membership with out-groups other than gay people.

Implications of Antipathy Toward Value-Violating Behavior

Implicit in much discussion of prejudice toward out-groups and antipathy toward value-violating behavior is the assumption that antipathy toward value-violations is more justified than prejudice toward an out-group. For example, Fulton et al. noted that “an expressed value difference does not immediately imply prejudice” (1999:14). Further, Batson et al. (2001, 2008) concluded that, because quest orientation is associated with helping an out-group member as long as that out-group member does not violate quest values, quest is associated with a broad form of compassion. Many researchers in the psychology of religion, and probably much of the general public, seem to believe that antipathy toward value-violations is qualitatively different from and more acceptable than prejudice.

To the extent that the distinction between out-group membership and value-violating behavior is associated with more tolerant behaviors toward certain out-group members, this does represent an improvement over blatant out-group prejudice. However, antipathy toward individuals engaging in value-violating behaviors can still have serious consequences on the societal level. For example, antipathy toward homosexual behavior in America has led to laws that deem gay marriage illegal. For many sexually abstinent heterosexual people, celibacy is a temporary commitment that ceases upon marriage. In contrast, if a gay person were to pledge sexual abstinence outside of legal marriage, her abstinence would be permanent.² In order to uphold intrinsically religious values, a gay person would have to deny herself sexual fulfillment in a committed relationship to which many heterosexual people feel themselves entitled. “Love the sinner, but hate the sin” might be seen instead as “Love only sinners who conform to our worldview.”

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The authors thank Dan Batson for his assistance with the materials for this study, and Wade Rowatt and Tom O'ffit for their helpful comments on a previous version of this article. We also thank Erin Schrader and Blanca Velazquez for their assistance with data collection for this study. This article is based on an undergraduate honors thesis completed by the first author.

NOTES

1. For 78 of the experiment participants, the similarity question consisted of the following item: “How similar to your own values do you think this person is?” For the remaining 22 participants, the similarity question was a more straightforward: “How similar are you to this person?” Analyses using only the 78 participants with the similar values question paralleled the results using all participants, with the exception that the interaction term was only marginally significant, $F(1,74) = 2.78, p = 0.10$.
2. The authors thank Tom O'ffit for raising this issue.

REFERENCES

- Allport, G. W. 1966. The religious context of prejudice. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 5(3):448–51.
- Allport, G. W. and J. M. Ross. 1967. Personal religious orientation and prejudice. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 5(4):432–43.
- Aronson, E., P. C. Ellsworth, J. M. Carlsmith, and M. H. Gonzales. 1990. *Methods of research in social psychology*, 2nd ed. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Bassett, R. L., D. Baldwin, J. Tammara, D. Mackmer, C. Mundig, A. Wareing, and D. Tschorke. 2002. Reconsidering intrinsic religion as a source of universal compassion. *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 30(2):131–43.
- Bassett, R. L., E. Hodak, J. Allen, D. Bartos, J. Grastorf, L. Sittig, and J. Strong. 2000. Homonegative Christians: Loving the sinner but hating the sin. *Journal of Psychology and Christianity* 19(3):258–69.
- Bassett, R. L., R., Kirnan, M. Hill, and A. Schultz. 2005. SOAP: Validating the sexual orientation and practices scale. *Journal of Psychology and Christianity* 24(2):165–75.
- Bassett, R. L., H. L. Smith, R. J. Newell, and A. H. Richards. 1999. Thou shalt not like sex: Taking another look at religiousness and sexual attitudes. *Journal of Psychology and Christianity* 18(3):205–16.
- Batson, C. D. 1991. *The altruism question*. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Batson, C. D., D. M. Denton, and J. T. Vollmecke. 2008. Quest religion, anti-fundamentalism, and limited versus universal compassion. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 47(1):135–45.
- Batson, C. D., S. H. Eidelman, S. L. Higley, and S. A. Russell. 2001. "And who is my neighbor?" II : Quest religion as a source of universal compassion. *Journal for Scientific Study of Religion* 40(1):39–50.
- Batson, C. D., R. B. Floyd, J. M. Meyer, and A. L. Winner. 1999. "And who is my neighbor?" Intrinsic religion as a source of universal compassion. *Journal for Scientific Study of Religion* 38(4):445–57.
- Batson, C. D. and P. A. Schoenrade. 1991. Measuring religion as quest: II. Reliability concerns. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 30(4):430–47.
- Batson, C. D., P. A. Schoenrade, and W. L. Ventis. 1993. *Religion and the individual*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Cochran, J. K., M. B. Chamlin, L. Beeghley, and M. Fenwick. 2004. Religion, religiosity, and nonmarital sexual conduct: An application of reference group theory. *Sociological Inquiry* 74(1):102–27.
- Donahue, M. J. 1985. Intrinsic and extrinsic religiousness: Review and meta-analysis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 48(2):400–19.
- Duck, R. J. and B. Hunsberger. 1999. Religious orientation and prejudice: The role of religious proscription, right-wing authoritarianism and social desirability. *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion* 9(3):157–79.
- Finlay, B. and C. S. Walther. 2003. The relation of religious affiliation, service attendance, and other factors to homophobic attitudes among university students. *Review of Religious Research* 44(4):370–93.
- Fisher, R. D., D. Derison, C. F. Polley III, J. Cadman, and D. Johnston. 1994. Religiousness, religious orientation, and attitudes toward gays and lesbians. *Journal of Applied Social Psychology* 24(7):614–30.
- Fulton, A. S., R. L. Gorsuch, and E. A. Maynard. 1999. Religious orientation, antihomosexual sentiment, and fundamentalism among Christians. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 38(1):14–22.
- Goldfried, J. and M. Miner. 2002. Quest religion and the problem of limited compassion. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 41(4):685–95.
- Haerich, P. 1992. Premarital sexual permissiveness and religious orientation: A preliminary investigation. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 31(3):361–65.
- Herek, G. M. 1987. Religion and prejudice: A comparison of racial and sexual attitudes. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 13(1):34–44.
- . 2000. The psychology of sexual prejudice. *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 9(1):19–22.
- Herek, G. M. and J. P. Capitano. 1996. "Some of my best friends": Intergroup contact, concealable stigma, and heterosexuals' attitudes toward gay men and lesbians. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 22(4):412–24.
- Jackson, L. M. and V. M. Esses. 1997. Of scripture and ascription: The relation between religious fundamentalism and intergroup helping. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 23(8):893–906.
- Jones, E. E. and T. S. Pittman. 1982. Toward a general theory of strategic self-presentation. In *Psychological perspectives on the self*, edited by Jerry Suls, pp. 231–62. Hillsdale, NJ: Erlbaum.
- Kirkpatrick, L. A. 1993. Fundamentalism, Christian orthodoxy, and intrinsic religious orientation as predictors of discriminatory attitudes. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 32(3):256–68.
- Kite, M. E. and B. E. Whitley. 1996. Sex differences in attitudes toward homosexual persons, behaviors, and civil rights: A meta-analysis. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 22(4):336–53.
- McFarland, S. G. 1989. Religious orientations and the targets of discrimination. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 28(3):324–36.
- Rowatt, W. C. and D. Schmitt. 2003. Associations between religious orientation and varieties of sexual experience. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 42(3):455–65.
- Silverman, B. I. 1974. Consequences, racial discrimination, and the principle of belief congruence. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 29(4):497–508.

- Snyder, M. L., R. E. Kleck, A. Strenta, and S. J. Mentzer. 1979. Avoidance of the handicapped: An attributional ambiguity analysis. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 37(12):2297–2306.
- Tsang, J. and W. C. Rowatt. 2007. The relationship between religious orientation, right-wing authoritarianism, and implicit attitudes toward lesbians and gay men. *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion* 17(2):99–120.
- Wilkinson, W. W. 2004. Religiosity, authoritarianism, and homophobia: A multidimensional approach. *International Journal for the Psychology of Religion* 14(1):55–67.
- Wilkinson, W. W. and A. C. Roys. 2005. The components of sexual orientation, religiosity, and heterosexual's impressions of gay men and lesbians. *Journal of Social Psychology*, 145(1):65–83.