GAY MEN AT WORK:
A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF WORKPLACE
ANTI-GAY VIOLENCE IN ST. JOHN'S,
NEWFOUNDLAND

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GAY MEN AT WORK:
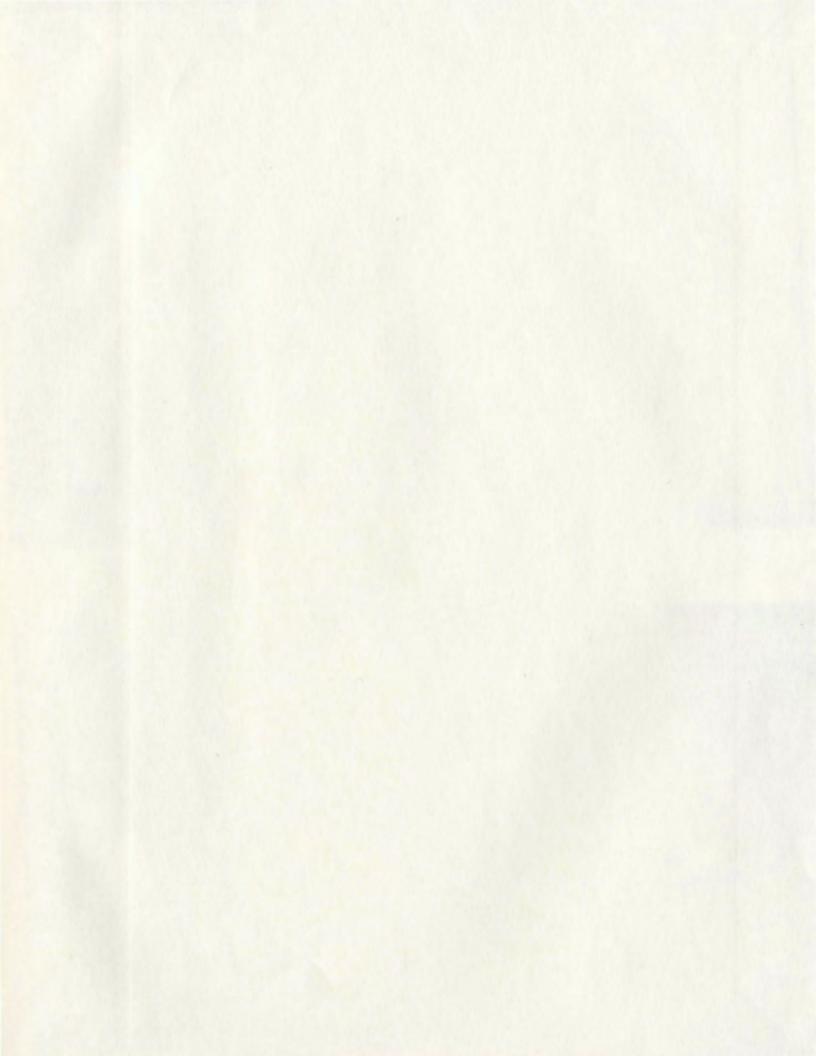A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF WORKPLACE ANTI-GAY VIOLENCE
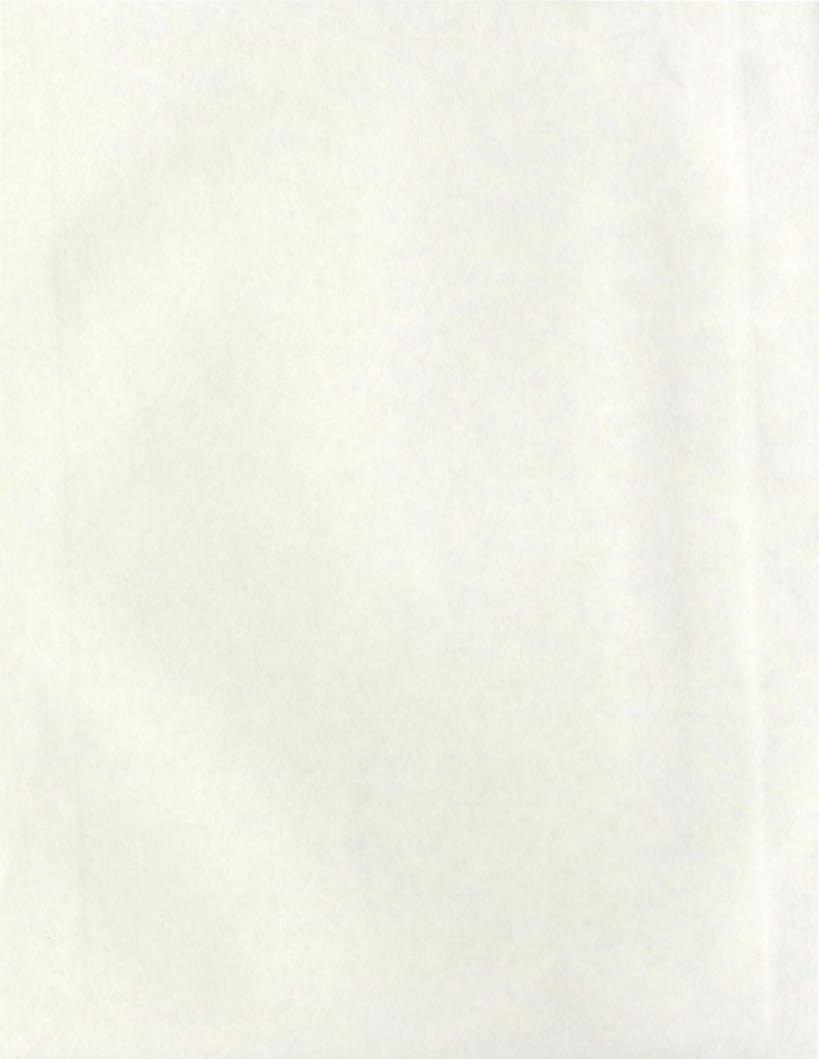IN ST. JOHN'S, NEWFOUDLAND

by

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<u>Abstract</u>

This research project explores the gay male experience with violence in paid employment in St. John's, Newfoundland. Researchers have paid scant attention to the range of violences in work organizations that are directed at gay men because of victims' sexual orientation. The literature on anti-gay violence tends to ignore or minimize the experiences of gay men in paid employment. This thesis is an attempt to help remedy this gap in knowledge.

Interviews were conducted with twenty-two, self-identified gay men. The sample was obtained in a non-random fashion. The research instrument consists of ninety-four open- and closed-ended questions. Respondents report personal experience with a variety of anti-gay violences in paid employment based on sexual orientation. These violent acts include verbal insults and epithets; threats of various sorts including death threats and threats of physical violence; physical assault and sexual assault. Respondents claiming personal experience with anti-gay violence also report negative mental health consequences: reports of fear, intimidation, anger and low self-esteem were common.

The author advances a complex theoretical model to explain and understand the social problem that is workplace anti-gay violence. It is argued that heterosexist sentiment, disclosure of sexual orientation, structural features of work organizations and power imbalances may interact and give rise to incidents of violence against gay men at work.

I also argue for a structural analysis of anti-gay violence in paid employment. The data suggest that incidents of anti-gay violence in work organizations are not random. A number of possible risk factors have been identified. These risk factors or correlates include employment in the hospitality-service industry, employment in mostly private sector workplaces, and employment in managerial positions.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Sexual orientation is crucially important to perceptions of discrimination on the basis of sexuality. Indeed, it would be of little relevance to ask someone who does not view themselves as gay, lesbian, or bisexual whether they have ever experienced discrimination because of their sexual orientation - Snape et al., 1995.

1.1: Statement of Research

This research project explores the experiences of a small, non-random sample of self-identified gay men (N=22) in St. John's, Newfoundland within the context of paid employment. These experiences come under the rubric known as anti-gay violence. For the purpose of this study, anti-gay violence includes the following behaviours: verbal abuse, including heterosexist remarks and epithets (e.g., faggot, queer); verbal threats and other anti-gay behaviours (e.g., threats of physical violence; threats to disclose one's sexual orientation; death threats; anonymous and threatening telephone calls; anti-gay graffiti; privacy invasion and property destruction or vandalism); physical assault (e.g., pushing, grabbing, kicking, slapping, hitting, punching and beatings); and sexual assault (e.g., any inappropriate touching and grabbing that is of a sexual nature). These violent behaviours are directed at gay men because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation. Indeed, many of these same behaviours have been categorized elsewhere as sexual harassment within the wider context of violence against women (see Fitzgerald, 1993; Koss et al., 1994). However, anti-gay violence may be differentiated from other forms of violence, such as sexual harassment, spousal abuse and child abuse, by virtue of the fact that gay men are victimized because they are, or are perceived to be, not

heterosexual. The term "anti-gay violence" emphasizes the salience of sexual orientation in directing acts of violence against gay men.

No study of workplace anti-gay violence has ever been undertaken in St. John's, Newfoundland. Hence, this project will shed more light on this serious social problem. The fact that very little is known about the range of violences that gay men may experience in paid employment contributes to the practical importance of this thesis. Much has been written about the sexual harassment of working women (Aggarwal, 1992a, 1992b; Backhouse and Cohen, 1978; Benecke and Dodge, 1992; Bravo and Cassedy, 1992; Collier, 1995; Fain and Anderton, 1987; Farley, 1978; Feary, 1994; Fitzgerald, 1993; Grzetic, Shrimpton and Skipton, 1996; Gutek, 1985; Kadar, 1988; Koss et al., 1994; Lach and Gwartney-Gibbs, 1993; Livingston, 1982; Lobel, 1993; MacKinnnon, 1979; Martin, 1984; Tangri et al., 1982; Wagner, 1992; Wigmore, 1995; Wishart, 1993) and the sexual harassment of women, in general (Brant and Too, 1994; Clair, 1994; Cleveland and Kerst, 1993; Davidson, 1991; Fitzgerald and Shullman, 1993; Greenlaw and Lee, 1995; Hanmer and Maynard, 1987; Herbert, 1992; Hoffmann, 1986; Johnson and Sacco, 1995; Meyer, 1981; Stockdale, 1993; Stockdale and Vaux, 1993; Till, 1980; Van Hyning, 1993; Vaux, 1993; Wise and Stanley, 1987). By comparison, relatively few empirical studies address the problem of anti-gay violence within the context of paid employment. Instead, researchers have been primarily concerned with documenting incidents of anti-gay violence in social settings other than the work environment; for example, in households, on the streets and in educational institutions

(Berrill, 1992; Cogan, 1996; Comstock, 1991; Croteau and Lark, 1995; D'Augelli, 1992; Dean, Wu and Martin, 1992; GALT, 1991; Greasley et al., 1986; Herek 1989, 1993; Herek and Berrill, 1992; Hunter, 1992; Kelner, 1983; Klinger, 1995; Otis and Skinner, 1996; Pilkington and D'Augelli, 1995; Slater, 1993; Snape et al., 1995; von Schulthess, 1992). Researchers have also turned their attention to the mental health consequences of anti-gay violence (Garnets, Herek and Levy, 1992; Otis and Skinner, 1996; Savin-Williams, 1994; Wertheimer, 1992) and to issues relating to disclosure of sexual orientation, otherwise known as "coming out" (Badgett, 1996; Ellis and Riggle, 1995; Olson, 1987; Schneider, 1986). There is also a growing literature on the gay male and/or lesbian experience with employment discrimination (see Badgett, 1996; Bell and Weinberg, 1978; Greasley et al., 1986; Hall, 1986; Levine, 1979; Levine and Leonard, 1984; Saghir and Robins, 1973; Snape et al., 1995; Williams and Weinberg, 1971; Weinberg and Williams, 1974). The thing to notice is that the wider literature on anti-gay violence tends to ignore or pay scant attention to the range of violences that gay men may experience in paid employment based on their sexual orientation. Likewise, job discrimination studies tend to neglect or explore only minimally issues of violence against gay men at work. Overall, workplace anti-gay violence is a neglected area of research in critical need of further inquiry.

Sexual orientation, like class, race, ethnicity, sex and gender, is a basis for social inequality both at work and in contemporary Western society at large. Social inequality based on sexual orientation is manifest in the differential treatment that gay men are

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sometimes subject to including acts of violence. In this thesis I will argue that: (1) gay men are at times subjected to a range of violences in paid employment based on their sexual orientation; (2) disclosure of sexual orientation either by self (voluntary disclosure), by others (involuntary disclosure), or both, puts one at an increased risk for acts of anti-gay violence at work; and (3) incidents of anti-gay violence may not be random; rather, where gay men are located in the labour market may make them a more or less likely target for acts of anti-gay violence. Workplace anti-gay violence cannot, indeed should not, be reduced to one monolithic correlate or cause. Such a position would betray the complexity of social life. I will argue that four factors contribute to the violence that gay men are sometimes subject to in paid employment: heterosexist sentiment, disclosure of sexual orientation, power imbalances and structural features of the work environment.

My thoughts and feelings on anti-gay violence have been greatly influenced by the work of Gregory M. Herek (1986, 1989, 1990). Herek argues that in order to understand the social problem that is anti-gay violence it is necessary to consider the social context in which these abusive behaviours occur. Herek posits that the social sphere is primarily *heterosexist*. In Herek's words, heterosexism is "an ideological system that denies, denigrates, and stigmatizes any nonheterosexual form of behavior, identity, relationship, or community" (1990: 316). Essentially, heterosexism "denotes prejudice in favor of heterosexual people and connotes prejudice against bisexual and, especially, homosexual people" (Jung and Smith, 1993: 13). At the very heart of heterosexist sentiment lies the

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conviction that heterosexuality is normative. This is otherwise known as

heteronormativity (Richardson, 1996) or *heterocentrism* (Jung and Smith, 1993).

"Heterocentrism leads to the conviction that heterosexuality is *the* normative form of

human sexuality. It is the measure by which all other sexual orientations are judged"

(Jung and Smith, 1993: 14; emphasis in original). It is my belief that heterosexist

sentiment may culminate in acts of violence against gay men in paid employment.

Disclosure of sexual orientation by self (voluntary disclosure), by others (involuntary

disclosure) or both, may put one at an increased risk for acts of violence at work based on

sexuality. Gay men who are "out" at work and those who have been "outed" are easily

identifiable targets for abuse. Anti-gay violence in paid employment may also stem from

power imbalances within work organizations. For example, power inequalities within

work environments may result in the sexual harassment of working women - especially

when the harasser is a superordinate, such as a manager or supervisor. Indeed, various

authors agree that the sexual harassment of working women represents an abuse of

organizational authority (Backhouse and Cohen, 1978; Collier, 1995; Gutek, 1985;

Kadar, 1988). In much the same way, power imbalances may culminate in acts of anti-

gay violence in paid employment.

Specific features of work organizations may create an environment that is conducive to

acts of violence against gay men. One's positioning in the labour market may vary along

any number of dimensions, including type of workplace organization, private and public

sector employment, and employment in management and non-management positions. These are but some of the possible correlates of workplace anti-gay violence.

In this thesis I am making the case for a structural analysis of workplace anti-gay violence. In writing about the sexual harassment of women, Tangri et al state "institutions may provide an opportunity structure that makes sexual harassment possible" (1982: 37; see also Fain and Anderton, 1987; Fitzgerald and Shullman, 1993; Hoffmann, 1986; Koss et al., 1994; Lach and Gwartney-Gibbs, 1993; Martin, 1984; Vaux, 1993). Research into the organizational/structural features that maintain and perpetuate workplace anti-gay violence is in its infancy. Researchers have largely ignored the structural correlates of workplace anti-gay violence. This thesis will help remedy some of these knowledge gaps.

1.2: The Scope of the Problem: Empirical Research on Anti-Gay Violence

Anti-gay violence is a ubiquitous social problem that impacts the lives of many gay men. The empirical evidence reveals that verbal abuse is one of the most, if not the most, prevalent forms of anti-gay violence. Consider the following studies. A non-random survey of 97 gay, lesbian and bisexual people residing in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador revealed, "68% have been called anti-gay or anti-lesbian names" (GALT, 1991: 1). A non-random study conducted for the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force in the United States (N=2074) found that 86% of male and female respondents report personal experience with anti-gay verbal abuse (Berrill, 1986; see also Herek, 1989).

Snape et al (1995) have conducted a random survey of gay men and lesbians (N=116) in Britain. Here, researchers were able to obtain a representative sample of the gay male, lesbian and heterosexual populations in a study of anti-gay/lesbian discrimination. These samples were selected from *The National Survey of Sexual Attitudes and Lifestyles*, a random sample survey that was conducted in 1990-92 (the reader is referred to Snape et al., 1995 for an in-depth description of the study design). The authors report that 43% of respondents have had insults shouted at them in public (Snape et al., 1995: 61; see also Berrill, 1992; Gross et al., 1988; Pilkington and D'Augelli, 1995). Studies conducted on American college and university campuses also show the pervasiveness of anti-gay verbal abuse. Sixty-five percent (65%) of male and female respondents (N=215) to the Yale Sexual Orientation Survey, a non-random study, report direct experience with verbal insults (Herek, 1986, 1989, 1993; see also Cavin, 1987; and D'Augelli, 1988, 1992).

The empirical literature also informs us that gay men, lesbians and bisexual people encounter **verbal threats** because of their sexual orientation. For example, a non-random survey conducted in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador has found that 35% of lesbian, gay and bisexual respondents (N=97) have been threatened with physical violence (GALT, 1991). A study conducted for the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force in the United States found that 44% of male and female respondents (N=2074) report personal experience with verbal threats (Berrill, 1986; see also Cavin, 1987; D'Augelli, 1988, 1992; Herek, 1989, 1993; Pilkington and D'Augelli, 1995). Finally, Berrill's

(1992) detailed overview of several American studies on anti-gay/lesbian violence reveals that the median percentage of respondents who have been threatened with violence is 44%.

The literature also indicates that gay men, lesbians and bisexual people experience vandalism or property damage based on their sexual orientation. Rates of victimization amongst male and female respondents in studies by Berrill (1986), D'Augelli (1988) and Cavin (1987) are 19%, 16% and 6%, respectively (also see D'Augelli, 1992; Gross et al., 1988; Herek, 1986, 1989, 1993; and Pilkington and D'Augelli, 1995).

Gay men, lesbian women and bisexual people also report personal experiences with physical and sexual abuse based on their sexual orientation. A survey of 97 lesbian, gay and bisexual people in Newfoundland and Labrador revealed that 19% have been physically assaulted and 10% have been raped or sexually assaulted because they are lesbian or gay (GALT, 1991). Snape et al (1995) found that 25% of their sample of 116 gay men and lesbians had been physically threatened or attacked. Nineteen percent (19%) of male and female respondents in a study conducted for the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (N=2074) in the United States had been hit, kicked or beaten (Berrill, 1986; also see Herek, 1989).

The qualitative literature provides numerous accounts of a range of anti-gay violences reported by gay men. Depictions of violence include verbal abuse including epithets,

jokes and remarks, threats of various sorts including threats of physical violence, sexual

assault and murder:

> "In Boston, a gay man leaving a local bar was attacked by three assailants who
> raped him with bottles, lighted matches, and other implements while repeatedly
> stating that 'this is what faggots deserve'" (National Gay and Lesbian Task Force
> (NGLTF), 1987 cited in Herek, 1989: 949).

> "I'd just gone into a cafe within the gay area . . . and somebody who was
> heterosexual was in there (I assume heterosexual anyway). And just took
> exception to the way I was dressed. I was dressed pretty normally so I don't know
> what it was. And started calling me, you know, 'Queer' . . . 'Arse-bandit', 'Shirt-
> lifter' - the whole lot" (Snape et al., 1995: 49).

> "Homophobic jokes made by a psychology faculty person in class; . . . a student
> sending a BITNET message providing a rationale for killing homosexuals; . . . a
> banner proclaiming 'help stop AIDS, kill a fag' . . . threatening phone calls to a
> lesbian and gay campus organization" (Slater, 1993: 186-187).

> "(I've) been pushed and called a faggot at two parties for dancing with my
> boyfriend" (Herek, 1993: 19).

> "In Bucks County, PA . . . two men were convicted of first-degree murder of a
> gay man. The victim was found dead with multiple stab wounds and his throat
> slit; his car had been set on fire" (Correll 1988; National Gay and Lesbian Task
> Force (NGLTF), 1988 cited in Herek, 1989: 949).

Overall, the empirical evidence clearly shows that anti-gay violence impacts the lives of

many gay men. The data, however, must be viewed with caution. With the exception of

one study - Snape et al., (1995) – all of the studies cited above have employed non-

random sampling techniques. The ability to make inferences and generalizations is

compromised whenever non-representative research methods are used (see Chapter 2:

Research Methodology). Hence, while it is true that gay men are victimized because of

their sexual orientation, for the most part the true extent of anti-gay violence has not been

determined.

Thus far, consideration has not been given to acts of anti-gay violence in paid employment. It has been necessary to draw on the larger literature on anti-gay violence for the simple fact that relatively few studies address the problem of anti-gay violence within work organizations. However, now that we have an appreciation for the larger picture it is time to focus on studies of workplace anti-gay violence. Again, it is important to keep in mind the limitations of the data due to the largely non-random nature of the various study designs. The reader will be provided with empirical data on workplace violence against gay men including research findings related to disclosure of sexual orientation and victims' reactions to abuse.

1.3: Empirical Research on Gay Men and Violence in Paid Employment

Relatively few empirical studies address the social problem of anti-gay violence within the context of paid employment. This is, in my opinion, an area in critical need of further sociological research. This section will provide a brief overview of the existing empirical research on workplace anti-gay violence, including quantitative and qualitative studies. The reader is advised that the majority of these studies have been conducted in the United States using non-probability sampling. Two of the surveys - Greasley et al., (1986) and Snape et al., (1995) - have been conducted on populations of gay men and lesbians in Britain. The survey by Snape et al., (1995) is unique in that the authors claim to have

acquired a random sample of the lesbian and gay male populations (N=116). Here, researchers found that the proportion of self-identified gays and lesbians claiming violence in the form of harassment at work was 21% or approximately 24 individuals (Snape et al., 1995: 61). Croteau and Lark (1995) conducted a study of lesbian, gay and bisexual student affairs professionals in the United States (N=174). The researchers found that 60% had been exposed to violence in the form of harassment on the job at least once during their working lives and 38% had experienced it on more than one occasion.

Croteau (1996) has reviewed nine published studies on the work experiences of lesbian women, gay men and bisexual people. He has found that the proportion of respondents reporting personal experience with informal discrimination at work is between 25% and 66%. Croteau's definition of informal discrimination includes harassment, verbal harassment, property damage and loss of credibility, acceptance or respect. The studies reviewed include Hall (1986), Griffin (1992), Woods and Harbeck (1992), Olson (1987), Croteau and Lark (1995), Croteau and von Destinon (1994), Levine and Leonard (1984), Schachar and Gilbert (1983) and Schneider (1986).

In contrast, Comstock (1991) concluded that physical acts of anti-gay and lesbian violence rarely occur in paid employment. In fact, a mere 6% of his total sample (N=157) report such victimization on the job (1991: 48, Table 2.12). Alternatively, 29% of respondents had been subjected to verbal harassment in their places of employment (Comstock, 1991: 142; Appendix A). Comstock reports that respondents claiming

personal experience with verbal abuse at work identified fellow employees, supervisors and managers as the perpetrators of this type of abuse (1991: 143; Appendix A). Studies also show that males comprise the vast majority of perpetrators of anti-gay/lesbian violence, especially acts of *physical* and *sexual* violence (Berrill, 1992; Comstock, 1991). The qualitative data provide glaring examples of the violence and ridicule that gay men are sometimes subject to in paid employment based on their sexual orientation. The following are excerpts taken from various studies:

"Graffiti appeared on the lift, 'Bill is gay', and things like that. I just ignored it" (Greasley et al, 1986: 26).

"The words fag, homo, and bugger were written and a 'condom covered with chocolate sauce' placed on the door" (Croteau and Lark, 1995: 194).

"I had this really bad experience from this one woman, she was really nasty. She called me 'a fuckin' queer' and 'all queers are child molestors'" (Greasley et al., 1986: 31).

"I was harassed by other staff members after I came out . . . They said insulting things to my face and tried to get me fired" (Croteau and Lark, 1995: 194).

The level of "openness" of sexual orientation mediates anti-gay violence in paid employment. Openly gay employees may be more prone to violence on the job as compared to their closeted counterparts. A growing body of literature supports this premise. A number of authors agree that voluntary and/or involuntary disclosure of sexual orientation may make one a more likely target for acts of anti-gay violence (Badgett, 1996; Comstock, 1991; Croteau 1996; Croteau and Lark, 1995; Croteau and von Destinon, 1994; D'Augelli, 1992; Levine, 1979; Olson, 1987; Pilkington and

D'Augelli, 1995; Schneider, 1986; Snape et al, 1995). One study reviewed by Comstock shows this to be the case. The study in question was conducted in Richmond, Virginia in 1983-84 (N=508). The findings are as follows: 43% of respondents who were "open to everyone" at work were victimized, followed by 40% of those who were "open to employer/supervisor," 36% who were "open to other lesbians/gay men," 34% who were "open to a select few," and 21% who were "open to no one" (see Table 2.18: 53). The findings led Comstock to conclude, "that among lesbians and gay men, frequency of assaults in the workplace varies according to the degree of disclosure of sexual orientation" (1991: 53; see Table 2.18 in particular).

Herek (1993) found that many of his respondents maintained secrecy about their sexuality in order to avoid violence (see also Snape et al., 1995). Concealment of one's homosexual orientation from fellow coworkers may allow one to avoid the experience of anti-gay violence. As Greasley et al put it, "some gay men may decide against coming out at work because of the trouble it could cause them" (1986: 24). This "trouble" can take the guise of anti-gay violence. In fact researchers have been successful in replicating the finding that many gay men, lesbians and bisexual people attempt to avoid violence at work by hiding their sexual orientation (Pilkington and D'Augelli, 1995).

Research also shows that exposure to anti-gay violence may impact negatively upon the victim(s). Fear, for example, is a typical reaction (see Croteau, 1996; D'Augelli, 1989, 1992; Herek, 1993; Pilkington and D'Augelli, 1995; Snape et al., 1995). Many victims

tend to suffer in silence and choose not to report the incident(s) to the proper officials or authorities (D'Augelli, 1989, 1992; Herek, 1993; Pilkington and D'Augelli, 1995; Snape et al., 1995). Reasons for not reporting incidents include fear of embarrassment and retaliation. Research also shows that some victims do not report incidents for fear of divulging their sexuality and the belief that complaining is futile (Snape et al., 1995). Other victims believe that the best strategy is to ignore the abuse when it is occurring:

> "You just ignore it - if you ignore it you're alright, you just ignore it."

> "You've got to learn to . . . to put a stop to it . . . There's different ways of doing it. A lot of it is just ignoring what they're saying. If you don't react then there's not much point for them to continue. So you actually learn to toughen yourself really."

> "Because you can't do anything about it, because you're up against the law . . . What can you do?" (Snape et al., 1995: 56).

Victims of anti-gay violence may also experience negative mental health consequences (Otis and Skinner, 1996; Savin-Williams, 1994). Otis and Skinner (1996) have investigated the effects of anti-gay victimization on 1067 lesbians and gay men in the southern United States. The authors determined that victimization might lead to headaches, increased agitation, sleep disturbances, increased drug use, uncontrollable crying and post-traumatic stress disorder (Otis and Skinner, 1996: 96).

1.4: __Plan of Thesis__

In this chapter I have presented empirical evidence, both quantitative and qualitative, to support the claim that gay men are vulnerable to a range of violences based on their actual or perceived sexual orientation. These violences include heterosexist comments, epithets, threats of various sorts, physical attack, sexual assault including rape, hate literature and even murder. Disclosure of sexual orientation, voluntary and/or involuntary, may make one a more visible and likely target for anti-gay abuses. Acts of anti-gay violence are not confined to any one social setting. Occurrences have been documented on the streets, on university and college campuses and within work organizations. However, one must also bear in mind that many incidents of anti-gay violence go unreported, especially if the victim is attempting to conceal his or her sexual identity from family, friends or coworkers (see Greasley, 1986). Feelings of shame, guilt and the fear of further violence may also decrease the likelihood that victims will come forward. Non-reporting of abusive incidents may be based on the belief that the proper officials or authorities will do little to address victims' concerns. The literature also reveals that violence may have a negative emotional impact upon victims. Headaches, increased stress and depression may result, among other symptoms.

Chapter two of the thesis offers a theoretical account that attempts to explain the social problem that is workplace anti-gay violence. In chapter three I provide details on methodological issues involved in the study of gay men including sampling difficulties and problems of definition. Information will be provided on the method of data collection, sample characteristics and biases, and personal reflections on conducting social research on workplace anti-gay violence. A brief overview of the data will also be provided. The data are presented in chapters four and five. Chapter four provides data on respondents' experiences, if any, with verbal abuse at work. A discussion of heterosexist remarks and epithets is included. Respondents' experience with threats and other anti-gay behaviours and physical/sexual anti-gay violence is the subject of chapter five. The problem of physical/sexual anti-gay violence is discussed briefly because so few respondents reported personal experience with this type of violence at work.

The experience of anti-gay violence will be examined by taking into consideration a number of possible correlates. These correlates of abuse include disclosure and non-disclosure of sexual orientation, type of workplace organization, private and public sector employment, and management and non-management employment. The task is to determine whether or not disclosure of sexual orientation, coupled with one's labour market positioning, puts one at an increased or decreased risk for anti-gay abuses in paid employment.

Chapter 2:   Theorizing Workplace Anti-Gay Violence

2.1:   Heterosexism: The Social Context of Anti-Gay Violence

Heterosexism is like the air that we breathe:
It is so ubiquitous that it is hardly noticeable - Gregory Herek, 1990.

The objective of this chapter is to construct a theory that offers an explanation as to why gay men sometimes encounter acts of anti-gay violence within the context of work organizations. As stated in the Introductory chapter, the complexity of social phenomena, including acts of anti-gay violence, cannot, indeed should not, be reduced to an over-arching monolithic cause. Reductionist accounts provide, at best, partial explanations. Complex social phenomena require complex explanations, not simplistic interpretations. This, I believe, is but one of the goals of responsible social research.

It is my contention that at least four factors contribute to the violence that gay men experience in paid employment based on their sexual orientation. These four factors include heterosexist sentiment, disclosure of sexual orientation, structural features of the work environment and power imbalances. Interaction amongst these correlates may give rise to anti-gay violence in paid employment.

In order to comprehend the violence that gay men sometimes face in paid employment and elsewhere it is necessary to examine the social context in which these abuses occur. Anti-gay violence occurs within a social context that more or less sanctions the

differential treatment of gay men based on their sexual orientation. This differential

treatment is manifest in acts of anti-gay violence. Anti-gay violence stems from a

heterosexist bias in our culture. Heterosexism is an ideology or belief system that "denies,

denigrates, and stigmatizes any nonheterosexual form of behavior, identity, relationship,

or community" (Herek, 1990: 316). Heterosexist attitudes and beliefs may culminate in

acts of violence against gay men, lesbians, bisexual people and the transgendered. As

Herek suggests, anti-gay violence "is a logical, albeit extreme, extension of the

heterosexism that pervades society" (1990: 316).

Heterosexism is embedded in the social structure. It is a belief system that is systemic in

our culture. Various socializing agents are responsible for perpetuating and maintaining

the heterosexism that pervades society. These include the family, religious authorities,

educational institutions and the media, among others (see Greasley et al., 1986: 32). The

medical establishment, psychiatry in particular, has also been implicated in this process.

The American Psychiatric Association considered homosexuality a mental illness up until

1973 (Jung and Smith, 1993: 19). The medicalization of homosexuality as a form of

mental illness provided the rationale for researchers' attempts to find a "cure." Thus, the

medical establishment was in large part responsible for propagating the myth that gays

and lesbians are "sick" individuals who were in need of treatment for their "condition."

Heterosexism creates the social conditions that make social inequality on the basis of

sexual orientation more or less acceptable. For instance, unlike homosexual relationships,

heterosexual partnerships tend to receive widespread public affirmation and support (see Herek, 1990). Take marriage for example. Marriage is by definition a heterosexual rite of passage. Gay men and lesbians cannot legally marry in Canada. The institution of marriage confers upon heterosexual couples' rights and privileges that are sometimes, if not always, denied gay and lesbian couples. These rights and privileges may include tax deductions, employee spousal benefits such as health and dental insurance and the right to call oneself a family. "The institutions of parenthood and the family are heterosexually identified" (Herek, 1990: 321). It is held by some - Christian fundamentalists, for example - that gay and lesbian partnerships are not families in the traditional sense even when there are children involved. There exists an ongoing legal and ethical debate as to the appropriateness of gay and lesbian parenting, including adoption. It is perceived in some quarters that children raised by gay or lesbian parents may "turn gay" or suffer the tortures of sexual abuse. Such myths serve to deny gay and lesbian partnerships and families the status, respect and support that heterosexual couples and families often take for granted. Taken to its logical yet extreme conclusion, heterosexist attitudes and beliefs may give rise to a range of violences against gay men at work and in other social spheres.

Heterosexism is a system of socially learned attitudes and beliefs wherein the superiority of heterosexuals over non-heterosexuals is upheld. Not one of us comes into this world believing that gay men and lesbians are sick, perverted and abnormal; rather, from a very early age in contemporary western societies children are socialized to believe that homosexuality is "wrong." At the same time the normalcy of heterosexuality is impressed

upon children as inevitable, moral and healthy. In time, most people learn to take these "truths" for granted.

Heterosexism has its basis in societal institutions, practice and customs. This is known as cultural heterosexism (Herek, 1990; see also Cogan, 1996). Individuals in our society, both women and men, internalize a repertoire of heterosexist attitudes and beliefs and sometimes act on these same convictions. This is referred to as psychological heterosexism (Herek, 1990; see also Cogan, 1996). While it is true that individual women and men are socialized to be heterosexist the "typical" gay-basher is male. Various scholars have concluded that males comprise the vast majority of perpetrators of anti-gay/lesbian violence, especially acts of physical and sexual violence (Berrill, 1992; Comstock, 1991; Connell, 1987). So, unlike females, males tend to commit the more brutal forms of anti-gay violence. Why is this the case? Why is it that males, and not females, tend to commit the more severe forms of anti-gay violence? In searching for an answer to this question I began to look more closely at the social construction of masculinity.

2.2:   The Social Construction of Hegemonic Masculinity

Heterosexist attitudes and beliefs have evolved from the ideologies of sexuality and gender (Herek, 1990). Heterosexuality and gender role conformity are linked. Hence, learning one's "appropriate" gender role; that is, masculinity in the case of males;

femininity in the case of females, also entails learning to be "straight." "*Gender* refers to the socially learned behaviors and expectations that are associated with the two sexes. Thus, whereas 'maleness' and 'femaleness' are biological facts, becoming a woman or becoming a man is a cultural process" (Andersen, 1993: 31; emphasis in original). However "natural" it may seem, gender does not fully derive from biological causes or necessities. As Herek states, "because they are learned at a very early age, the meanings attached to masculinity and femininity subsequently seem 'natural' rather than socially constructed" (1990: 322).

Masculinity and femininity are not monolithic social categories. Gender is bounded by both time and culture. Varying forms of masculinity and femininity have emerged throughout history, across cultures and even within cultures (see Cheng, 1996; Connell, 1987). Gender identity and expression is the product of a complex interplay of biological and environmental forces. Biology alone does not determine gender; rather, through the process of socialization gender is also learned. We can think of gender as a performance such that masculinity and femininity can be performed by either sex. As one author suggests, "masculinities need not be about the male sex. Masculinity can be and is performed by women," (Cheng, 1996: xii) and vice versa. We can say then that gender is not a constant. It is continually in flux.

There is a high premium placed on gender role conformity in our culture. Males and females are expected and encouraged to express "appropriate" gender role behaviours.

Males are expected to display masculine traits whereas females are expected to behave in a feminine fashion. Gay men and lesbians are perceived by some as violating gender role expectations - whether they do so or not is another matter. For example, "men labeled as homosexuals (are) perceived as more feminine, emotional, submissive, unconventional, and weaker" when compared to men labeled as not homosexual (Lehne, 1989: 423). In addition, lesbians "are stigmatized . . . as man-hating, butch, ugly, a danger to children and a threat to the family and hence the entire social fabric" (Bell and Valentine, 1995: 146). By violating gender norms, whether actual or not, gay men and lesbians may be vulnerable to acts of violence (see Bell and Valentine, 1995; Herek and Berrill, 1992).

Research findings indicate that males tend to harbour more anti-gay sentiments than do females (Kerns and Fine, 1994; Sears, 1997). As Connell states this "raises disturbing questions about the role of violence and homophobia in the construction of masculinity" (1987: 12). It must be emphasized that not all men are violent. Not all men beat their wives and children or commit acts of anti-gay violence. But some clearly do. Indeed, several authors contend that male violence against women - whether it is spousal abuse, sexual harassment or murder - is a serious social problem (Fitzgerald, 1993; Koss et al, 1994; Rich, 1980; Wise and Stanley; 1987). According to the literature, victims of family violence and sexual harassment are overwhelmingly female whereas males comprise the vast majority of perpetrators (Farley, 1978; Martin, 1984; Pryor et al., 1993; Stockdale, 1993; Wagner, 1992; Wise and Stanley, 1987). Hence, violence may figure prominently in the social construction of masculinity.

At any given time, however, there may arise a form of masculinity that is dominant.

Connell (1987) has labeled this dominant type *hegemonic masculinity*. The term

hegemony is attributed to Antonio Gramsci (1971). Hegemony, or what may loosely be

called "leadership," (Pollard and Liebeck, 1994: 370) is achieved through a combination

of political coercion and ideology, with an emphasis on the latter (see Abercrombie et al,

1994: 195). The development of hegemony as a concept may be traced to Karl Marx. In

The Communist Manifesto Marx writes, "the ruling ideas of each age have ever been the

ideas of its ruling class" (McLellan, 1988: 236). Essentially, hegemony is the "consent

given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life

by the dominant fundamental group" (Clair, 1994: 64). Thus, hegemony helps to achieve

social cohesion and order.

We can think of hegemonic masculinity then as "the maintenance of practices that

institutionalize men's dominance over women" (Connell, 1987: 185). Further,

"hegemonic masculinity is constructed in relation to women and to *subordinated*

masculinities" (Connell, 1987: 186; emphasis added). Hegemonic masculinity as it is

socially constructed also embodies the ideologies of heterosexuality and heterosexism:

> "The most important feature of contemporary hegemonic masculinity is that it is
> heterosexual, being closely connected to the institution of marriage; and a key
> form of subordinated masculinity is homosexual. This subordination involves
> both direct interactions and a kind of ideological warfare" (Connell, 1987: 186).

These "direct interactions" include acts of anti-gay violence whereas "ideological warfare" is manifest in heterosexist attitudes and beliefs that condemn gay men as sick and morally deficient.

Hegemonic masculinity, as an ideal type, is produced within a normative context that is heterosexual and arises through nonsexual group interaction amongst young males. This nonsexual interaction, or "doing masculinity," is known as *homosociality* (see Bird, 1996). Through homosocial or nonsexual interaction, heterosexual males strive to prove their manliness to self and to others (Mac An Ghaill, 1994). As Thompson argues, "men who are insecure about their masculinity or who fear peer rejection for not being sufficiently masculine may use violence as a way to prove their manliness" (1992: 241-242; see also Comstock, 1991; Connell, 1989; Harrison et al., 1988; Herek, 1986). This male-perpetrated violence may be manifest in the sexual harassment of women, spousal abuse, rape and murder, and the range of anti-gay abuses from epithets to physical and sexual assault.

Males who resort to anti-gay violence may be asserting not only their masculinity but also their heterosexuality. Anti-gay violence may provide distance from potential homoerotic feelings and fantasies. In Herek's words, "heterosexual men reaffirm their male identity by attacking gay men" (1986: 567). Some straight men may win approval from other heterosexuals and increase their self-esteem by voicing or showing disapproval of "queers." Clearly, not all heterosexual males engage in acts of anti-gay

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violence; however, it may not be unreasonable to suggest that the majority of male perpetrators **identify** as heterosexual, even if they in fact secretly harbour a homosexual orientation.[1]

Homosociality, the performance of hegemonic masculinity, entails a distancing from "the feminine" and, by extension, from those characteristics considered homosexual. As Connell writes, "*hegemonic masculinity is aggressively heterosexual. It defines itself in part by a vehement rejection of homosexuality. This rejection very often takes violent forms . . . frequent bashings, and occasional murders*" (1989: 197, emphasis added; see Comstock, 1991: 47 for a discussion of gay and lesbian murder).

Other factors in interaction with heterosexist sentiment may give rise to acts of anti-gay violence. Disclosure of sexual orientation, whether voluntary or involuntary, occupies a prominent role in the structure of anti-gay violence. Disclosure may put one at an increased risk for anti-gay violence in paid employment and elsewhere. After all, the openly gay man and those suspected of being gay are more easily identifiable targets for a range of anti-gay abuses. However, not all gay men who report disclosure of sexual orientation are subjected to violence at work based on sexual orientation. (This fact is supported by data from the present study). Co-factors, other than or in tandem with disclosure of sexual orientation, may mediate the experience of anti-gay violence

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[1] It is also true that gay men and lesbians are sometimes victimized by other gay men and lesbians; same-sex domestic violence is but one example. Same-sex domestic violence is an important area of research; however, my interest here is in attempting to explain the range of violences directed at gay men because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation.

including structural features of the work environment. These factors will be considered next.

2.3: **The Workplace**

The social sphere is primarily a heterosexualized space. This also holds true for the workplace. As Burrell and Hearn state, "heterosexuality and heterosexual relations . . . are the dominant forms in most organizations" (1989: 21). In particular, it is *men's* heterosexuality that has traditionally been the dominant organizational form (Collinson and Collinson, 1989: 93). The truth of this statement is evident; for example, men's heterosexuality within organizations is expressed through the sexual harassment of working women (see Collinson and Collinson, 1989). As one author notes, "occupations and organizations traditionally have provided a homosocial context, an in-group devoid of women and femininity" (Cheng, 1996: xv; see also Kanter, 1977). To claim that the workplace is part of the wider heterosexualized social sphere is to imply that the culture of organizations is inherently heterosexist. Heterosexist beliefs, attitudes and practices encompass the entire social structure, including work organizations.

Research into the structural mechanisms that facilitate and indeed perpetuate workplace anti-gay violence is in its infancy. Indeed, "within organization theory there is now an increasing awareness that sexuality is a neglected but crucial issue" (Collinson and Collinson, 1989: 91). This neglect in the literature rests on the tacit assumption that

organizations are asexual. Sexuality in general, and homosexuality in particular, has long

been perceived as a private matter in Western societies. Sexuality has traditionally been

relegated and confined to the private sphere of the household. Sexuality, it is widely held,

has no place in public (organizational) life. However, as Gutek counters:

> "If sexuality is defined as private behaviour, then there is no reason for an
> organization (or organizational researchers) to be concerned with it. It is outside
> the scope of organizational behaviour. As nonorganizational behaviour, it need
> not be discussed, handled or even acknowledged: for all practical purposes, it is
> invisible" (1989: 57).

Clearly, however, sexuality does play itself out at work in the form of same-sex and

opposite-sex sexual harassment, sexist and heterosexist jokes and comments,

pornography, sexual assault, flirting and office romance. Evidently, leaving one's

sexuality "at home" is easier said than done. If the culture of the organization is asexual

then, by extension, organizational members are themselves asexual. However, such a

conception is absurd. Men and women are sexual beings and their sexuality and sexual

behaviours are reinforced, perpetuated and sometimes oppressed in any number of ways.

This oppression is manifest in the sexual harassment of working women and in episodes

of workplace anti-gay violence.

Sexuality has long been a concern of organizations at least since the advent of the

industrial revolution. In particular, organizational elites since that time have engaged in

what may best be described as the *desexualization of labour*. "Management has always

been concerned to protect production by eliminating any manifestations of sexuality from

the organization." Thus, "sexual activity within capitalist organizations has been treated as incompatible with and disruptive of production" (Collinson and Collinson, 1989: 92). For example, office romance may be seen as disruptive to production, and ultimately profit, in that it fuels gossip and thereby distracts organizational members from the tasks at hand. Likewise, attempts at the desexualization of labour is manifest in the practice of occupational sex segregation whereby certain segments of the economy are reserved almost exclusively for one or the other sex; for example, secretarial work and nursing in the case of females and construction and engineering in the case of males. So to claim that organizations are asexual is ludicrous. If anything, organizational elites have been concerned with controlling and eradicating sexuality and sexual behaviours from the workplace in the name of efficient production and profit.

Episodes of workplace anti-gay violence may not be random. As stated in the *Introduction*, gay men may be at an increased risk for anti-gay violence based on their positioning in the labour market. For instance, anti-gay violence may be more likely to occur in some types of organizations more than in others. The likelihood of experiencing anti-gay violence may vary according to one's position within the organization; that is, whether one is employed as a manager or a non-manager. This risk may also be mediated by whether one is employed in a private or public sector work organization. These *structures* of the work environment may make the occurrence of anti-gay violence more or less likely. Hence, I am making the case for a structural analysis of workplace anti-gay violence. This is one of the stated aims of this thesis.

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To date, researchers have not concerned themselves with identifying those workplace structures that may contribute to episodes of anti-gay violence. However, the literature on workplace violence against women informs us that "working with the 'public' is a key risk factor" (Wigmore, 1995: 330). In writing about women and workplace violence, Cleveland and Kerst observe, "coworkers are the most frequent perpetrator of sexual harassment in organizations" (1993: 55). Greasley's et al study of employment discrimination against gay men in London, U.K., revealed that "gay men often face insults and abuse from customers, clients and patients they work with" (1986: 30).

There exists a dearth of research into the other potential correlates of workplace anti-gay violence including management/non-management and private/public sector employment. With respect to the former, however, Rosabeth Moss Kanter wrote in her now classic study *Men and Women of the Corporation* (1977), that "social similarity" is valued within management circles. Managers occupy a privileged position within organizational culture. Managerial elites have a monopoly on planning and organizing the day-to-day operations of the organization. They are the decision-makers and within their ranks organizational authority is centralized. Kanter suggests that only certain "types" of people gain admission to the corridors of power. She writes, "managers tend to carefully guard power and privilege for those who fit in, for those they see as 'their kind'" (1977: 48). Management circles, then, may best be described as relatively homogeneous social groupings in which differences between and among members are shunned. In order to "fit in," managers must prove themselves trustworthy, dependable and loyal. There is an

emphasis on "outward" conformity, for example, in style of dress and appearance. Kanter suggests that among managers there is a subtle pressure to conform to the norms of heterosexuality. In short, heterosexuality is equated with success: "being a 'family man' was a clear sign of stability and maturity and was taken into account in promotion decisions" (1977: 104-105). For the manager who happens to be gay, being "not heterosexual" may be the most obvious sign of difference. It is this "difference" that may set gay managers apart from their heterosexual peers. As such, heterosexist ideology creates the social conditions by which gay men are not only as perceived as "other", but it also provides the rationale and justification for the differential treatment of gay men. When ideology becomes practice this differential treatment can, indeed does, take the form of anti-gay violence.

Gay men at work, as in other social settings, may be vulnerable to *tokenism*. Homosexuality is a master status in our culture. Thus, gay men may sometimes be treated as tokens; that is, as stereotypical representatives of their "kind" (Croteau and Lark, 1995; Kanter, 1977). Homosexuality is often equated with the "sexual." There exists the misguided perception that homosexuality is "all about sex." One of the more prominent myths of homosexuality is that gay men are promiscuous, sexual predators:

> "It seems to be commonly believed that gay men are constantly looking for sex 24 hours a day. As a result gay men find themselves suspected of having, or trying to procure all sorts of sexual liaisons, even at work. The suspicions and assumptions can affect the respect given to gay men by co-workers and employers" (Greasley et al., 1986: 29).

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Gay men are at times depicted as limp-wristed, lispy, emotional and sensitive creatures. Essentially, male homosexuality is frequently equated with "the feminine." This is the prevailing stereotype of the gay man, fallacious as it is. Gay men are oftentimes perceived as being sensitive – perhaps even expected to be – for that is the template of male homosexuality. Hence, even if individual gay men are not overly sensitive they may still be perceived and treated as if they are emotionally ill-equipped to handle the challenges of everyday life. Stereotypical images of the gay man as emotionally unstable and as sexual predator can spell disaster for the gay male employee, managers especially. Because sensitivity can sometimes translate into weakness, gay employees may be perceived as inept by superordinates and subordinates alike. Further, gay men who are perceived as sexual predators - whether employee or manager - may lack the respect of other organizational members and may not be taken seriously. Recall too that historically, organizational elites have been concerned with eradicating sexuality and sexual behaviours from work organizations in order to achieve increased production and profit. However, as we have seen, homosexuality as a master status is oftentimes equated with the "sexual." If homosexuality is "all about sex" and all gay men are sexual predators, then gay men are by their very presence disruptive to the capitalist enterprise. Such negative perceptions may leave gay men vulnerable to differential treatment at work in the form of anti-gay violence.

It is known that the culture of workplace organizations may help create the social conditions that allow for the occurrence or repression of workplace violence. For

example, the literature on the sexual harassment of working women suggests that *organizational norms* may contribute to a climate that is "friendly" to sexual harassment. Research shows that sexual harassment is most likely to occur in organizations that lend normative support to sexually harassing behaviours (Koss et al., 1994; Lach and Gwartney-Gibbs, 1993; Vaux, 1993). This normative support may take the form of "aggressive and sexist behaviour being the norm at work" and is manifest in "management attitudes, such as lack of support and dismissal of staff concerns, and prevalence of the attitude that violence is 'part of the job'" (Wigmore, 1995: 332-333). Normative support for workplace violence may aid in the creation of the "violent organization," an institution in which the sexual harassment of women, anti-gay violence and racism may be rampant.

Anti-gay violence may also stem from an abuse of organizational authority or power. Various scholars agree that the sexual harassment of women at work and elsewhere represents an abuse of power (Hoffman, 1986; Kadar, 1988; Martin, 1984). In much the same way, "power" may be used to theorize the process of workplace anti-gay violence. Coworkers and the general public lack formal authority in organizations whereas managers do not. Therefore, the power model may best be used to explain management initiated anti-gay violence that is directed at subordinate employees.

"Power" is a contested concept. In writing about the sexual harassment of women, Cleveland and Kerst argue that "the statement 'power is a key issue in sexual harassment'

is unacceptably vague, because the term 'power' has so many meanings" (1993: 50). Is power, as Max Weber suggests, "the probability that a person in a social relationship will be able to carry out his or her own will in the pursuit of goals of action, regardless of resistance"? (Abercrombie et al., 1994: 329). Or, is a Marxist interpretation more valid where, "power is regarded as a structural relationship, existing independently of the wills of individuals"? (Abercrombie et al., 1994: 330). In addition, is power synonymous with authority (i.e., legitimate power)? As Cleveland and Kerst suggest, power is all of these things and more: "power may be the result of societal, organizational, interpersonal, or individual factors" (1993: 50).

For the purpose of this study, power and organizational authority are interchangeable concepts. It is my contention that power differentials within work organizations may establish the conditions whereby superordinates, such as managers and supervisors, are able to abuse non-management types and other subordinate employees. Power is not equally distributed in organizations. Decisions, goals, procedures and policies are formulated at the top of the organizational hierarchy. This means that organizational power or authority is invested in a relatively few hands; namely, managers. As such, managers and other organizational elites, including supervisors and directors, may at times abuse their authority by committing acts of sexual harassment (see Tangri et al., 1982) and anti-gay violence.

2.4: <u>Summary</u>

Heterosexist sentiment may at times lead to acts of violence against gay men in paid employment. Heterosexist ideology is embedded in social institutions and practices and is transmitted from one generation to the next through the socialization process. Individual males and females are socialized to adopt a more or less heterosexist view of the world. However, violence figures most prominently in the social construction of masculinity and is evidence for the gendered nature of violence.

Heterosexist ideology provides the social context within which acts of anti-gay violence occur. And within that social context there are structural cofactors that may gave rise to violent incidents against gay men at work; these cofactors may operate independently or in concert. There exists a dearth of research into the workplace structures that facilitate and hinder violence against gay men. However, it is my contention that variations in the social location of gay men in the labour market may help explain the different risks for violence they face. Cofactors such as the types of organizations in which gay men work (e.g., retail, hospitality-service, government), employment in management and non-management positions, and employment within the broader private and public sectors may facilitate or hinder occurrences of anti-gay violence. Hence, it can be said that workplace anti-gay violence is not a random phenomenon. The interaction of various workplace structures, organizational power imbalances, and disclosure of sexual orientation coupled with heterosexist sentiment makes the occurrence of anti-gay

violence all the more likely. This statement is supported by the research findings described in chapter 4 where respondents' experiences with verbal abuse are discussed. As the data will show, heterosexist comments and anti-gay epithets have been prolific in respondents' places of employment. The findings also reveal the negative mental health consequences of such abuse including feelings of inferiority, shame, anger and fear for one's physical safety. However, before analyzing the results of the research, the research methodology will be explained; that is the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

3.1: Methodological Issues in the Study of Gay Men

The first part of this chapter deals with methodological issues in the study of gay men, including problems of definition and sampling difficulties. This will be followed with a description of the data collection methods, sample characteristics, data overview, and lastly a section on sampling bias.

This first section is devoted to what may be termed "the definitional dilemma" in gay and lesbian studies. Attempts to define the words *homosexuality, homosexual, gay*, etc., are riddled with difficulties closely related to methodological issues in the study of gay men. This concern with definitions is evident in the work of Donovan who asks "to study gays and lesbians is to study whom?" (1992: 27; see also Cass, 1984). Donovan argues for the necessity of a universal definition of *homosexuality, homosexual*, and *gay* for two reasons. First, definition would provide the researcher with a "frame of reference." This set of guidelines or principles could then be used to identify, with confidence, the population of gay men to sample for inclusion in a given research project. Second, according to Donovan, a universal definition is required so as to better compare different studies of gay men. As Donovan states, "critical to the process are first to define the boundaries of the category (structuring the universe), and second to identify all members of the category (populating the universe)" (1992: 28). It is obvious that Donovan has in

mind a particular project. In short, he is most concerned with generalization, also known as external validity.

The nature of the research project dictates, to a large extent, the sampling procedure to be used. Due to the difficulty inherent in specifying the population of gay men in St. John's, because there exists no list or sampling frame (e.g., census) of this population, I was forced to rely on non-probability sampling techniques. As such, this research project will forgo generalization in favour of exploration. "Random sampling is the ideal method to choose subjects when the goal is to generalize about a larger population" (Donovan, 1992: 28). The ability to draw inferences from a representative sample to a larger target population is the obvious strength of random sampling. Yet, non-probability sampling also has its strengths. For example, such a technique may serve as a "launching pad" for more detailed inquiry (see Croteau, 1996).

Attaining external validity in research on gay men has proven most difficult (Greasley et al., 1986). Because there typically exists no sampling frame of the gay population, researchers have tended to acquire sample subjects from gay bars, gay organizations and friendship networks (e.g., Greasley, 1986; Harry and DeVall, 1978; von Schulthess, 1992). Such "convenience," or non-probability sampling may best be described as *nonrepresentative* in that the sample of gay men selected for study may not fully represent the larger population of gay men. This makes generalization (i.e., inductive inferences about the target population based on sample findings) difficult, if not

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impossible. It also makes difficult the comparison of research findings from different studies of gay men. It is assumed that this dilemma with generalization can be circumvented by a universally acceptable definition of *homosexuality, homosexual and gay.* As Donovan puts it, "the comforting assumption has been that if members of this population could only be more exhaustively "catalogued," samples would be more random, subjects more representative, and results more generalizable" (1992: 28).

Attempts at defining *homosexuality, homosexual and gay* presuppose that these terms are in some way distinct. This may indeed be the case. For Donovan, "*homosexual* describes an informed pattern of activity - as opposed to *homosexuality*, which references the sexual activity alone - and not an identity. *Gay*, on the other hand, is an identity shared by a subset of (perhaps mostly Western) homosexuals" (Donovan, 1992: 42; emphasis in original). One may engage in "homosexual sex" and not adopt a homosexual identity. For example, in the classic study *Tea Room Trade* (1971), researcher Laud Humphreys discovered that many men who engaged in impersonal sex with other men in public restrooms (i.e., tea rooms) considered themselves heterosexual. Homosexual identity and homosexual behaviour, therefore, are not synonymous (see Cass, 1984: 113). In addition, one may be homosexual without ever having engaged in "homosexual sex."

Complicating matters is the fact that not all gays consider themselves homosexual (Donovan, 1992). For instance, some see *homosexual* as a medical label and prefer the term *gay* instead. The term *gay* is not merely a rejection of the homosexual label; rather,

it represents the struggle by gays to define themselves on their own terms. Yet, the term *gay* is also problematic, especially for women. Whereas some women prefer *gay* others prefer *lesbian*, with *gay* reserved for men only. To overcome this difficulty a "new" word, *queer*, has arrived on the scene. The *queer* label is used to describe both gay men and lesbians. A term appropriated from the dominant, heterosexual culture, the *queer* label is shed of its negative connotations and is instead used by gay men and lesbians to portray their *queerness* in a positive light.

Defining what it means to be homosexual and/or gay may prove to be an overly ambitious project. As Cass argues, defining "the 'homosexual' is problematic because "identity may vary on any number of dimensions. There are a myriad of meanings that individuals can include in their perceptions of themselves as 'a homosexual'" (1984: 116). Thus, attempts to set definitional limits to the words *homosexual, homosexuality, gay and lesbian* are necessarily exclusionary. "Although these definitions are designed to maximize inclusion, some cases will inevitably fall outside their scope, no matter how they are formed, due to the open texture of empirical concepts" (Donovan, 1992: 38). It is futile, therefore, to define these concepts with any precision. This statement underscores the sheer complexity of homosexual identity. As noted by Cass, "there is no such thing as a single homosexual identity. Rather, its nature may vary from person to person, from situation to situation, and from period to period" (1984: 111). The homosexual identity, then, may be perceived as multiple, fluid and the product of specific socio-

historical forces: "identity is a socially constructed concept and is therefore time- and culture-bound" (Coleman, 1987: 17).

For the purposes of this study it is reasonable to allow gay men to define for themselves who they are. In fact, research has been conducted where study subjects have been self-identified gays and lesbians (see van den Boogaard, 1988; Snape et al., 1995). As a researcher, I believe that I have no right to "squeeze" gay men into my own, or any other, definition of homosexuality. It is for these reasons that the sample for this project consists of *self-identified* gay men. As noted earlier, definitions of homosexuality are necessarily exclusionary. That is, not everyone will "fit" a given definition of homosexuality because sexual identities are multiple and fluid. There is, in other words, no single or unitary gay identity. Moreover, there exists a double standard in attempts to define "the homosexual." As Carole Vance put it, "why should lesbians and gays have a developed consciousness that their sexual identities have been 'constructed,' when heterosexuals do not?" (1988: 29). The call to "deconstruct heterosexuality first . . . I'll deconstruct when they deconstruct" (Vance, 1988: 29) calls attention to the fact that attempts to define "the heterosexual" have generated little interest in sociology and other disciplines when compared to the rigorous efforts to define "the homosexual." Homosexuality, as a "thing" to be studied, reinforces commonly held stereotypes of gay men and lesbians as peculiar, anomalous and abnormal. By comparison, the relative disinterest in the etiology of heterosexuality seems to rest on the tacit assumption that since heterosexuality is the "norm" it is beyond the scope of critical inquiry.

The decision to omit from this study the experiences of lesbians in paid employment was not made lightly and came after much contemplation. First, would lesbian victims of violence feel comfortable disclosing their experiences to a male researcher? Perhaps not for as the literature suggests perpetrators of anti-gay and lesbian violence are overwhelmingly male (Berrill, 1992; Comstock, 1991).[2] Second, there is the finding that gay men are more likely than lesbians to experience workplace violence (Comstock, 1991; Snape et al., 1995). Finally, the literature suggests that it may oftentimes be difficult to make the distinction between anti-lesbian violence and violence against women in general (see von Schulthess, 1992: 73). Thus, "without explicit verbal indication by the perpetrator, lesbian victims may not know whether an incident is sexist or heterosexist or both" (Berrill, 1992: 28).[3] It is for these reasons that I have decided to concentrate exclusively on the experiences of gay men in the workplace. However, the reader should be advised that relatively few empirical studies address the subject of anti-lesbian violence, especially in the area of paid employment (see von Schulthess, 1992 for a discussion of anti-lesbian street violence). Anti-lesbian violence remains, therefore, an

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[2] The assertion that lesbian victims of violence would be uncomfortable disclosing their experiences to a male researcher is open to debate (see Currie and MacLean, 1997). It is also the case that male researchers have been successful in interviewing female victims of violence (see Websdale, 1998). Perhaps the training one receives as a researcher is more important than one's sex in conducting sensitive social research.

[3] It is also the case that female victims of anti-lesbian violence may in fact know they were victimized because of their sexual orientation (see Dekeserdy, 1999).

under- researched yet important area for more detailed sociological inquiry.

3.2: Description of Data Collection Methods

A total of twenty-seven, self-identified gay men were asked to take part in the study.

However, five out of the twenty-seven refused to participate. Of those who declined to be

interviewed, two expressed fears of retaliation, including firing, if their employers

discovered their sexual orientation. Contact could not be re-established with two other

potential respondents. And finally, one gay man who refused to participate stated that a

previous experience had compromised his trust in research studies. Hence, the sample for

this research project consists of twenty-two (N=22), self-identified gay men. All twenty-

two study participants reside and have held employment within the St. John's

metropolitan area.

In an effort to locate participants willing to partake in the study I devised the following

"request for study subjects" advertisement:

> Volunteers required for a study of the life experiences of gay males in paid
> employment in St. John's, NF. All gay men with employment experience are
> encouraged to respond. Confidentiality assured. Interested? Want to know more?
> Call _____. Or e-mail _____.

The above advertisement was posted in the office of The AIDS Committee of Newfoundland and Labrador and in the lobby of The Zone, a nightclub for gays and lesbians in St. John's, Newfoundland. In addition, the "request for study subjects" was advertised (1) on the Internet news groups 'Mun.Announce' and 'NF.General'; (2) in the October 1997 edition of Wayves Magazine, a gay and lesbian newsletter published in Halifax, Nova Scotia and distributed throughout Atlantic Canada; and (3) in two newsletters by the AIDS Committee of Newfoundland and Labrador. I also gave an oral presentation to Newfoundland Gays and Lesbians for Equality (NGALE), a social activist organization for gays and lesbians, in order to gain their support for the project. When all else failed I simply asked gay men to participate in the study. Table 3.1 shows the number of respondents who agreed to participate in the study and the manner in which they were first contacted.

Table 3.1: <u>Method of First Contact with Potential Respondents</u>

Method of Contact	Number of Respondents
AIDS Committee of NF & Labrador	0
Zone (Advertisement)	2
Internet Newsgroups (Advertisement)	5
Wayves Magazine (Advertisement)	0
AIDS Committee of NF & Labrador Newsletters	0
NGALE	2
Word of Mouth	13
Total	**22**

Obviously, some methods of contact were more successful than others. The most successful means of contacting respondents was by word of mouth. Thirteen respondents - over half the sample - were contacted this way. Advertisements placed on Internet newsgroups were the second most successful way of reaching potential respondents: five informants were contacted in this manner. Finally, two respondents each were contacted through NGALE and the Zone. The least successful way of reaching prospective informants was through advertisements placed in Wayves Magazine, in the newsletters of the AIDS Committee of Newfoundland and Labrador, and in the office of this Committee: not one respondent was contacted through these three methods.

The data for the research project were collected by utilizing a semi-structured interview (see Appendix A). The interview schedule consists of ninety-four open- and closed-ended questions. The benefit of the semi-structured interview is that it allows the researcher to pose in-depth, probing questions. The result is usually, but not always, an interview that is rich in both detail and description. The nature of the semi-structured interview also helps to establish a less formal atmosphere between interviewer and respondent. In such an environment both interviewer and respondent are able to relax and the interview becomes more conversational. This relaxed, conversational atmosphere must be tempered with the knowledge that for some gay men, especially those who have experienced anti-gay violence, the interview can be an extremely stressful experience. In a very real way, I, as the researcher, was asking victims'/survivors' of anti-gay violence to relive their pain. The truth of this statement became apparent when, in the course of the interview,

one respondent became visibly upset. I immediately stopped the interview and resumed our "conversation" some time later, at his request. Researchers of anti-gay violence ought to be aware that respondents may become upset during the interview process. It is a tremendous feat to retell one's experience with anti-gay violence, and because we are asking victims/survivors of anti-gay violence to relive the pain of their experiences it is incumbent that, as researchers and fellow human beings, we show compassion, understanding and respect.

The interview schedule was subjected to two pre-tests with self-identified gay men. The pre-tests were conducted to ascertain respondents' understanding of the questions asked (e.g., were the questions confusing or clear?); their interpretation of the questions asked; and thoughts on the interview process. Feedback was also solicited from respondents on items of importance not covered in the interview with a view to possibly including such items in the interview process. The lone issue raised came after the first pre-test and concerned the way in which the interview schedule was organized. The respondent felt that employment histories should be thoroughly investigated *before* launching into the body of the interview. His comments were acted upon and the interview schedule was rearranged accordingly. The *content* of the interview was not altered in any way. Therefore, the two pre-test interviews are included as part of the data.

The place and time of the interview were left to respondents' discretion. Interviews were conducted either in my own home or respondents' place of residence. Prior to the

interview, participants were asked to read and sign, in my presence, an interviewee release form (see Appendix B). The release form provided respondents with information about the researcher, the research project, its objectives and the conditions under which the interview would be conducted. Participants were asked to carefully read the release form and sign it if they agreed to take part in the study. All twenty-two interviews were tape-recorded with the respondents' permission. The cassette tapes have been coded to ensure informant anonymity. The codes are kept in a master document, which the researcher alone has access to. The researcher transcribed the taped interviews by listening carefully to the interviews on an audio cassette player and then entering (typing) the subjects' responses into a computer. The duration of the interviews varied greatly from thirty minutes to over three hours. Obviously, the length of the interview was determined by how much respondents had to say. Detailed employment histories were obtained from study participants and in several cases respondents recounted employment with several different workplaces in the St. John's metropolitan area. The names of study participants have been changed in the thesis so as to ensure respondent confidentiality. Hence, aliases will be used instead of respondents' real names.

During the interviews, informants were questioned about their experiences, if any, with anti-gay violence in paid employment based on sexual orientation. Respondents were asked about their reactions, if any, to acts of anti-gay violence at work and whether or not incidents were reported to the proper officials or authorities. Respondents were asked to reveal whether or not they, or someone else, had disclosed their sexual orientation to

coworkers and/or management in their places of employment. Finally, demographic data were obtained from study participants.

3.3: Sample Characteristics

St. John's is the capital of Newfoundland and Labrador. The ministries and offices of the provincial government, the legislature, crown corporations and major utilities are located in the city as are a number of federal government departments and offices. Several post-secondary educational institutions are also situated in St. John's including the main campus of Memorial University. The city also houses a number of health care facilities, such as hospitals and nursing homes, as well as hotels, restaurants and retail outlets. Other major employers include the oil and high-tech industries. And in recent years, St. John's, indeed the province as a whole, has become one of Canada's premier tourist destinations.

St. John's is a city that may be described as having a large service sector and a smaller industrial base. Historically, the city's economy has relied heavily on the fisheries. However, this dependence has eroded in recent decades due in large part to the collapse of the cod fisheries and subsequent moratorium imposed by the federal government in the early 1990s. This shift in recent decades from resource-based industries to service sector employment is reflected in the data. For example, the more traditional occupations and workplaces such as mining, the fishery and construction are not represented in the sample. In fact, none of the twenty-two study participants report employment experience

in these more traditional employment sectors. Instead, respondents' entire employment histories reveal a primary involvement with service sector employment. It may be that the more traditional occupations and workplaces such as mining, the fishery and construction are not represented in the sample because these work environments tend to be male-dominated and therefore intolerant of gay men and women. Table 3.2 provides data on respondents' employment status at the time of the interviews.

Table 3.2: <u>**Respondents' Employment Status at Time of Data Collection**</u>

Employment Sector	Number of Respondents
Hospitality/Service (hotels and restaurants)	5
Health Care (nursing and medicine)	4
Public Service (crown, government and law enforcement agencies)	4
Post-Secondary Education (non-teaching)	3
Self-Employed (finance and retail)	3
Other (computer and retail)	2
Unemployed	1
Total	22

At the time of data collection, 5 respondents were employed in the hospitality-service industry, which includes hotels and restaurants. A further 4 respondents each were employed in health care institutions and in the public service. Three respondents were employed in non-teaching positions in post-secondary educational institutions; three others report self-employment; two respondents report employment in the "other" category, which includes employment in the computer and retail industries; and, one informant was unemployed at the time of data collection.

The data reveal that study participants are moderately- to well-educated. As Table 3.3 shows, most respondents have completed some form of post-secondary education and/or training.

Table 3.3: <u>Respondents Reported Education Levels</u>

Level of Education	Number of Respondents
College (technical, vocational, trades)	12
University (undergraduate)	6
Post-Graduate Studies (MA, MSc, MD)	3
Incomplete Post-Secondary	1
Total	**22**

Over half the sample, 12 subjects or 55%, have completed their programmes of study at a private or publicly owned college (e.g., technical schools, vocational schools, trades schools). Slightly fewer subjects, 9, have attended university. Of this number, 6 have earned one or more undergraduate degrees and 3 respondents have completed post-graduate degrees. Only 1 respondent reports an incomplete post-secondary education.

The research findings also show that income levels varied widely amongst the study participants. The data are recorded in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4: <u>Respondents Reported Income Levels in Canadian Dollars</u>

Income Levels (Canadian Dollars)	Number of Respondents
0 - $14,999	5
$15,000 - $24,999	3
$25,000 - $34,999	8
$35,000 - $44,999	3
$45,000 +	3
Total	**22**

The median annual income reported is between $25,000 and $34,999. "Poverty wages" are reported by nearly one-quarter of the sample. As the data show, 5 respondents report earnings of less than $15,000 per year. Three other informants report slightly better incomes of between $15,000 and $24,999. Higher incomes of $35,000 per year or more are reported by a total of 6 respondents. Three of these respondents report earnings of between $35,000 and $44,999 and 3 others report annual earnings equal to or more than $45,000.

Finally, Table 3.5 provides data on respondents' reported age categories.

Table 3.5: <u>Respondents' Reported Age Categories in Years</u>

Age Category of Respondent	Number of Respondents
20 – 24 Years	2
25 – 29 Years	3
30 – 34 Years	7
35 – 39 Years	6
40 – 44 Years	2
45 + Years	2
Total	**22**

Well over half the sample, 13 respondents, were in their 30s at the time of data collection: 7 respondents were between the ages of 30 and 34 and 6 others were between the ages of 35 and 39. Five respondents were in their 20s at the time of the interviews. Of this number, 2 fell in the 20-24 age category and 3 others were between the ages of 25 and 29. Lastly, only 4 respondents were in their 40s at the time of data collection. Two of these were between the ages of 40 and 44 and 2 others fell in the 45-years-plus age category.

3.4: <u>Overview of the Data</u>

Gay men encounter a range of abuses in paid employment based on their sexual orientation. These abusive behaviours include heterosexist remarks, epithets, threats and other anti-gay behaviours, and physical/sexual violence. Respondents have identified at least 45 incidents in which they claim personal experience with some form of abusive behaviour at work. The data are provided in Table 3.6. The reader is advised that behaviours and/or experiences count as anti-gay violence only if respondents perceived them as such.

Table 3.6: <u>Number of Reported Incidents of Workplace Anti-Gay Remarks, Epithets, Threats and Other Anti-Gay Behaviours, and Physical/Sexual Violence in St. John's, NF.</u>

Type of Anti-Gay Behaviour	Number of Reported Incidents
Heterosexist Remarks	21
Epithets	11
Threats & Other Anti-Gay Behaviours	8
Physical and/or Sexual Abuse	5
TOTAL	45

Heterosexist remarks are the most common form of reported abuse. Examples of heterosexist remarks from the data include such questions as, "How come you don't have a girlfriend?" and, "How come you're not married?" Twenty-one of the 22 respondents interviewed report direct experience with heterosexist remarks at work. The number of actual incidents of heterosexist language is too numerous to mention given that many informants report lengthy employment histories. What can be ascertained from the data is that the vast majority of informants - 21 in all - have encountered heterosexist comments throughout many of their workplaces in the St. John's labour market. Hence, heterosexist language is by far the most common form of abuse as reported and experienced by respondents in their places of employment.

Epithets are the second most common form of abuse with which respondents report personal experience. Anti-gay epithets include such derogatory labels as "fag" and "queer." There have been 11 incidents in which respondents report direct experience with

epithets at work. Respondents have also reported experience with a range of abusive behaviours that have been categorized as threats and other anti-gay behaviours [4]. Threats include threats of physical violence, death threats, threats to disclose one's sexual orientation or "outing", threatening and anonymous telephone calls, anti-gay graffiti, privacy invasion and property destruction or vandalism. There have been eight incidents of anti-gay threats in respondents' places of employment.

Informants also report direct encounters with physical and sexual violence in paid employment. Anti-gay physical violence includes such behaviours as pushing, grabbing, kicking, slapping, hitting, punching and beatings. Anti-gay sexual violence involves any inappropriate touching and grabbing that is of a sexual nature. Respondents report a total of five incidents in which they have experienced physical and/or sexual violence in their places of employment.

In the chapters to follow, the experience of workplace anti-gay violence will be examined by taking into account the possible mediating effects of disclosure and non-disclosure of sexual orientation. The goal here is to determine whether or not disclosure of sexual orientation put respondents at an increased risk for anti-gay abuses in their places of employment. The experience of anti-gay violence will also be analyzed by taking into consideration a number of organizational variables. During the interviews respondents were asked about the nature of the organizations in which they have been employed. In

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[4] Hereafter abbreviated as "threats".

addition, informants were asked to classify their workplaces as either in the private or public sector. Data were obtained on informants' occupational positions within their work environments; that is, whether they were employed in management or non-management jobs. At the time of writing I could find no previous Canadian, British or American research that addressed the structural correlates of workplace anti-gay violence. Hence, the goal here is to determine whether or not the experience of anti-gay violence varies according to respondents' labour market position. Several key questions will be explored. For example, are gay men at an increased risk for anti-gay abuses in certain types of workplaces moreso than in others? Is this risk greater in private or public sector employment? Are non-managers more or less likely than managers to experience workplace anti-gay abuses? This thesis seeks to provide answers to these important questions.

The reader should know that some respondents report lengthy employment histories encompassing a variety of occupations and workplaces. It is also important to realize that with the exception of heterosexist remarks the data reflect the total number of incidents of anti-gay violence ever experienced by respondents in the St. John's and area labour market. Indeed, several respondents report more than one personal encounter with anti-gay abuse in their place(s) of employment. Because of this, the reader will notice that incident numbers do not always add up to twenty-two, which is the size of the sample.

Numbers do not always add to twenty-two for another very important reason: the manner in which the data are organized. Data organization and presentation is always at the discretion of the researcher and is in many ways an arbitrary endeavour. Often, the nature of the data will dictate the most logical method of organization and analysis. It is my belief that in order to better understand the social phenomenon that is anti-gay violence it is necessary to examine those workplaces in which incidents of anti-gay violence have and have not occurred. Hence, those workplaces identified as violent (i.e., abusive) toward gay men will be compared to those work organizations for which no incidents of anti-gay violence (i.e., non-abusive) have been reported. Moreover, whereas the latter, non-abusive workplaces are a constant number (N=12), the former, abusive workplaces are not. This fact gives rise to the fluctuation in totals across the data set. Consider, for example, the data on threats and other anti-gay behaviours (Chapter 5). Here, comparisons are made between the total number of workplaces where threatening incidents occurred – eight in all – and the total number of workplaces where threatening incidents did not occur (12), for a total of 20 workplaces in which anti-gay threats have and have not occurred. To reiterate, non-abusive workplaces are those work environments for which respondents report no direct experience with anti-gay violence with the exception of heterosexist remarks. Incidents of heterosexist remarks and/or jokes are not included in the comparative analysis of "abusive" and "non-abusive" work organizations because they occur in virtually every single work organization.

Those non-abusive workplaces for which respondents report the longest tenure will be used as a comparison since, it is argued, the longer one's tenure in a particular workplace the more likely it is that one will experience some form of anti-gay violence. For example, the longer one spends in a particular job the easier it may be to "come out" or voluntarily disclose one's sexual orientation to coworkers and/or management. Involuntary disclosure of one's sexual orientation, also known as "outing," has also been known to occur in workplace organizations. Disclosure of sexual orientation, voluntary or involuntary, may put gay men at an increased risk for anti-gay violence at work.

Each of the data chapters will contain information on the perpetrators of anti-gay violence as identified by respondents. Respondents' personal experiences with workplace anti-gay violence will be provided throughout. These accounts will take the form of the vignette. This approach will give voice to respondents' personal experience with a range of anti-gay behaviours. Due to the non-random nature of the study design and the small sample size (N=22) it is not feasible to draw definitive conclusions about the data. Therefore, the reader is reminded that the discussion that follows is somewhat limited in its scope and is restricted to the experiences of the study participants.

3.5: Sample Biases

The sample contains a number of biases that are directly related to the method of contacting potential respondents. As previously discussed, the research method employed

in this project is non-random in nature. The sample of twenty-two gay men obtained for this study does not, indeed cannot, fully represent the larger population of gay men in St. John's, Newfoundland. Hence, the major limitation of this study is that it cannot tell us anything definitive about this larger population of gay men.

A number of sample biases may be attributed to the non-random nature of the study design. The sample over-represents the views of white, young, moderately- to well-educated gay men working in the service economy. No people of colour are represented in the sample. This, however, is not surprising given that the population of St. John's, indeed the entire province of Newfoundland and Labrador, is overwhelmingly caucasian.

Second, the data show that at the time of data collection the majority of respondents - 18 in all - were younger than age thirty-nine. Younger, as opposed to older, respondents may have been more willing to participate in the study because of the increasing social acceptance of homosexuality. From a historical perspective, it is relatively easier, but by no means entirely unproblematic, for younger gay men to come out of the closet now as compared to as recently as twenty years ago. Hence, as a group, younger gay men may be more comfortable with their own sexuality and with discussing issues of homosexuality.

Third, the vast majority of informants have completed some form of post-secondary education and/or training. Fourth, none of the respondents have reported employment experience outside the service economy, that is, in the more traditional occupations and

workplaces such as mining, the fishery and construction. Finally, the sample over-represents the views of gay men who are at the very least selectively, if not completely, open about their sexual orientation. For example, some of the study participants report being open about their sexuality in most all social spheres including the workplace. Still others report being secretive about their sexual orientation at work but "open" with friends and family outside their places of employment. However, all study participants were sufficiently comfortable with their sexual orientation to participate in the research project.

Overall, the data do not fully capture or represent the views of (1) gay men of colour; (2) gay men beyond the age of thirty-nine; (2) gay men lacking in post-secondary education and/or training; (3) gay men working in the more manual occupations and industries such as fishing, mining and construction; and, (4) gay men who, for whatever reason, are "in the closet" and are not "open" about their sexuality. It is important to keep these limitations in mind when reviewing the data. It is also important to realize that the findings in this thesis are based on the thoughts, opinions and experiences of a very small group of individuals - twenty-two in all. As such, the data in this thesis are somewhat limited in scope and are not intended to reflect the work experiences of gay men everywhere.

Chapter 4: Gay Men and Verbal Abuse: The Language of Anti-Gay Violence

Language is not immaterial to the experience of oppression. Far from it. Language too has its violence. Anyone who has ever been called a faggot or a dyke knows this - Ann Pellegrini, 1992.

One (male) staff member said we should be assisting people who are gay to complete suicide. (Health Care worker)

He'd walk past the (office) and he'd look in at me and he'd snicker and he'd call out, "faggot." (Employee of a Post-Secondary Educational Institution)

4.1: Introduction:

Faggot. Dyke. This is the language of anti-gay violence. Derogatory words such as these are primarily used by members of the majority, heterosexual community to persecute those of us who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered. The language of anti-gay violence informs the gay man of how others perceive him. To be derogatorily labelled as a *fag* by another person or persons tells the gay man that he is perceived as being different, contemptible and deserving of ridicule and perhaps punishment for refusing to conform to the heterosexual lifestyle. Epithets express violence in that this form of abusive language can play on the emotions of the gay man. He may feel humiliated, angered, powerless, insulted and in fear for his physical well-being. The use of epithets is a violent act because such practices communicate to the gay man the threat and possibility of physical violence.

Epithets are perhaps the most pernicious form of verbal abuse that gay men encounter at work. There is, however, another form of anti-gay verbal abuse that may be less severe in its manifestation but perhaps no less harmful in its consequences: heterosexist comments. Some people may perceive remarks, comments and jokes that target gay men as less threatening than epithets. Likewise, in some workplaces, heterosexist language may be perceived as acceptable conversation. Such discourse may become normalized in certain work organizations and become more or less routinely accepted in workplace social relations. Therefore, there may be disagreement as to whether this type of verbal behaviour constitutes abuse at all. We must remember, however, that heterosexist remarks and jokes, like epithets, effectively single out gay men, lesbians, bisexuals and the transgendered as social groups deserving of ridicule and differential treatment based on their sexual and/or gender orientation. Oftentimes, such language has the effect of reminding gay men and other sexual minorities that they are not like the heterosexual majority. Like epithets, heterosexist remarks and jokes serve to inform the gay man of how he is perceived by others - as different, as "other", as a representative of the out-group called homosexual. The use of anti-gay language, epithets in particular, signals to the gay man that he is in hostile company. The research findings paint a dismal picture of respondents' experiences with anti-gay verbal abuse in their places of employment. Many of the study participants report prior experience with this form of open hostility at work. In general, verbal abuse has been widespread in respondents' work histories in St. John's, NF.

The data on verbal abuse is organized in the following fashion. The reader will first be presented with the research findings on heterosexist remarks and jokes in respondents' places of employment. Overall, the majority of subjects - 21 out of 22 - have experienced heterosexist remarks and jokes throughout their employment histories in St. John's, although some individuals have experienced it more frequently than others have. Thus, the data show virtually no variation in the general experience of heterosexist language. The best that may be said is that virtually all 22 respondents have first-hand knowledge of heterosexist language in the form of jokes and remarks throughout their work histories. An exhaustive discussion of heterosexist comments and organizational variables would provide much in the way of "findings" but would contribute little to our understanding of this social phenomenon. It is for this reason that the discussion of heterosexist remarks and jokes will be limited to an analysis of the effects of disclosure and non-disclosure of sexual orientation in the experience of this type of verbal abuse.

The findings on epithets will be presented somewhat differently. Since there is much more variation in the data on anti-gay epithets it is necessary to discuss both the possible mediating effects of disclosure and non-disclosure of sexual orientation and also organizational variables, including type of workplace organization, private and public sector employment and management and non-management positions. The section will conclude with a discussion of the perpetrators of anti-gay epithets at work.

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4.2: Anti-Gay Remarks and Disclosure/Non-Disclosure of Sexual Orientation

Verbal anti-gay violence consists of heterosexist remarks and/or jokes, and epithets. Both of these categories may be brought under the rubric known as 'verbal abuse.' However, in order to provide clarity and precision a distinction will be made between 'heterosexist remarks and/or jokes' and 'epithets.' The more general term 'verbal abuse' includes both forms of anti-gay language. From time to time reference will be made to 'severe verbal abuse.' This term may be equated with epithets only.

Verbal abuse has been prevalent in the working lives of many of the interviewees. In fact, according to the data, verbal abuse is the most common form of anti-gay violence that respondents experienced. Table 4.1 provides a breakdown by disclosure and non-disclosure of sexual preference of the respondents who claim experience and no experience with one form of verbal abuse; namely, heterosexist remarks.

Table 4.1: **Number of Respondents Reporting Experience/No Experience with Anti-Gay Remarks in St. John's by Disclosure/Non-Disclosure of Sexual Orientation**

	Remarks/Jokes	No Remarks/Jokes	Total
Disclosure	13	1	14
Non-Disclosure	8	0	8
Total	21	1	22

Of the 22 gay men interviewed, 21 (approximately 95% of the sample) say they have experienced heterosexist remarks and/or jokes at one time or another in their places of

employment. Only one informant (5% of the sample) says he is unable to pinpoint a specific episode of heterosexist remarks and/or jokes in any of his workplaces in St. John's. However, this same informant claims that he has encountered verbal abuse, including heterosexist remarks and/or jokes and epithets, while in the employ of an organization that is located outside St. John's elsewhere in Newfoundland. In general, a majority of the respondents who have experienced heterosexist remarks and/or jokes say they have encountered this type of verbal abuse on more than one occasion.

The findings reveal that exposure to heterosexist remarks and/or jokes need not correlate with disclosure of one's homosexual identity. As Table 4.1 indicates, of the 21 respondents who have experienced this type of verbal abuse at work, 13 (62%) had disclosed their sexual orientation and 8 (38%) had not. The lone respondent who claims no exposure to heterosexist remarks and/or jokes indicates that he had disclosed his sexual orientation in his place of employment. Overall, the findings on heterosexist remarks and/or jokes reveal that anti-gay comments and jokes at work need not target any one gay man in particular; rather, such abusive language may be generalized and directed at gay men as a social group. Hence, the gay man as an individual and gay men as a collective, as the generalized "other," may both be the targets for heterosexist remarks and/or jokes at work.

Vignette: The Experience of Heterosexist Remarks and/or Jokes at Work

The following is a sampling of statements regarding heterosexist remarks and/or jokes as related and experienced by respondents in their places of employment. These excerpts provide insight into the experience of heterosexist remarks and/or jokes and respondents' reactions to this form of verbal abuse.

"On at least two occasions when a Melissa Etheridge song came on the radio a coworker did make an anti-gay comment to the effect of, 'Oh, that dyke. I don't want to hear that music.' And (she) changed the station on the radio. Not being 'out' I would just sort of brush it off. But it would bother me internally to know that a coworker would have those feelings. I felt if I did anything much more than that I would end up 'outing' myself in the workplace which, given (her) opinion of gay culture, I don't think would be a good idea." (Computer Industry worker)

"(There was an) incident where a (client) came in who was gay. One (male) staff member said something derogatory, well almost to the point that we should be assisting people who are gay to complete suicide; that they were basically a detriment to society and they cause problems moreso than anything else." (Health Care worker)

"One of my fellow coworkers was involved with a very right-wing Christian group here in St. John's. There was another staff member. He said some negative things about this individual because he felt that he was gay. And he is gay. And my coworker said some negative things about this other person, which made me feel very uncomfortable because here I am working with him constantly on a daily basis. I felt very uncomfortable. I have to work with this person every day and what happens if he ever finds out that I'm gay? How will he look upon me? I don't give a shit anymore actually. It doesn't make any difference." (Health Care worker)

"She (i.e., female coworker) made one remark about Richard the Lionheart saying that when she was a child she looked upon him as being a hero. And she was just really turned off by him eventually. And I said, well why was that? She said she'd learned that he was gay. And she just lost all respect for him." (Health Care worker)

"And it seemed like it was an everyday occurrence. 'How come you don't have a girlfriend? Why don't you screw this nice young part-time girl that you just hired? She's cute. She hasn't got a boyfriend. How come you're not married? And, anything that we should know about?' And this would be in front of other staff, in front of customers. And it was relentless to the point where I complained to my supervisor about it. There were lots of gay jokes and fag jokes. Some I laughed at. I never told her to stop telling them because I didn't want to seem like I was protesting too much." (Manager of a Retail Store relating comments made by a female assistant manager)

"Where possible he'd allude to me being different. He'd often make a joke about me liking audiences when I'm having sex. Anytime that the conversations would be of a sexual nature at work and there'd be a bunch of managers around he would always take it to the level of if there was anything kinky or strange or bizarre or involved more than one partner, an audience or kinky sex, I would often be brought into the conversation as being the one that was different and most likely to engage in these type of things. I guess he felt that he could say whatever was on his mind and felt that he could make light of my lifestyle. There are other gay men in the company. And he would often connect us as being all the same and needing to be dealt with or handled with care other than a straight male because we were different. What I found escalated was his constant reference to me being over-sensitive or too sensitive or hyper-sensitive." (Manager in the Hospitality-Service Sector relating comments made by his immediate male supervisor)

The preceding excerpts from the interviews are indicative of a heterosexist bias that is systemic in our culture. The qualitative literature on anti-gay/lesbian violence in paid employment provides similar examples (see Croteau and Lark, 1995; Greasley et al., 1986; McCreanor, 1996; Slater, 1993; Snape et al., 1995). Imbedded in such interrogating questions as, "How come you don't have a girlfriend?" and, "How come you're not married?" is the assumption that everyone is, or ought to be, heterosexual. At best, value judgements equate the gay "lifestyle" with sex and depict gay men as not deserving of respect. At worst, gay men are perceived as pariahs and not worthy of living.

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Periodically, expressions of heterosexist sentiment appear in the public realm. And at times, such public expressions are cloaked in religious rhetoric. Consider the following examples. The first of these appeared as a letter to the editor of the *Express Newspaper*. In it, the writer implies that homosexuals are less than human and that homosexuality poses a threat to civilized society. At the same time, the author equates heterosexuality with normalcy and Godliness.

> "I do consider the homosexual lifestyle to be against God's design for humanity . . . This lifestyle choice is not in accordance with the Creator's design for humankind. Perhaps the homosexual individual is unable in and of him/herself to change, but this transformation is possible through our supernatural creator, God, who desires for us to be as He created each one of us to be. (For those who do not believe in the Bible, common sense tells us that man and woman are made in such a way that they "fit" together in sexual union . . .). I believe society in general does not want to embrace a lifestyle that, if taken to its extreme, would result in the end of the family and society as a whole" (*Express Newspaper*, 1998).

Heterosexist ideology has its roots in religious dogma and teaching. Historically, the Roman Catholic Church has condemned homosexuality and homosexuals while condoning the differential treatment of non-heterosexuals on the basis of sexual orientation. For example, in 1996, Saints Peter and Paul Parish, Bay Bulls issued a church bulletin that denounced homosexuality and sanctioned the "rightful discrimination" against gay men and lesbians. Bay Bulls is located near St. John's, Newfoundland. The Roman Catholic Church bulletin was an attack on the Newfoundland government's plan to amend the Human Rights Code to prohibit discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation. The amendment to the code was achieved in December 1997 during the final stages of data collection. The bulletin reads as follows:

"Fair warning has been given you by our government that, during the next sitting of the House of Assembly, they will introduce into the Human Rights Code protection from discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation, as Ottawa did in April. So you have time to object to the government, or to Labour Minister Kevin Aylward who announced this. The orientation or inclination towards bodily union between two men or two women is evidently a disorder in human nature, and it results from Original Sin. It can and must be controlled and conquered with God's supernatural help, through his sacraments prayerfully received. People with this tendency deserve respect as persons, especially if they are fighting against it. But giving in to it, and living that way, is morally wrong, against God's plan in nature, as our human reason sees clearly. Rather than a human right, it is an inhuman wrong, and it is the root cause of AIDS. You should not be forced to rent your apartment to such a couple, or accept them as teachers for your children. There is such a thing as *rightful discrimination* in some matters; you must protect the morals and health of your family. But you will have no protection if the government passes this legislation, approving and encouraging the sinful lifestyle of sodomy. We pray: 'God guard thee, Newfoundland.' But we must also act" (Saints Peter and Paul Parish, Church Bulletin, 1996; emphasis added).

It is no small wonder that gay men feel uncomfortable when confronted with such hostile discourse or that some of us make the conscious choice to remain "in the closet." Remaining "in the closet" may be viewed as a survival tactic for it allows gay men to disassociate from the homosexual label and avoid possible negative sanctions based on their sexual orientation. Oftentimes, the result is that gay men actively attempt to avoid "outing" themselves. Heterosexist ideology creates the social conditions whereby gay men are condemned, ridiculed, ostracized and subjected to any number of violences because they are gay. It also produces a social climate in which gay men are encouraged to retreat into the closet and hide the truth of their sexual selves in order to avoid that which they fear: anti-gay violence. True, in recent decades, increasing numbers of gay men have refused to live their lives relegated to the confines of the "closet" and have decided to "come out" and challenge the heterosexual status quo. However, for many gay

men - who knows how many - the closet is a day to day reality. It will remain so as long as heterosexism goes unchallenged.

4.3: Anti-Gay Epithets and Disclosure/Non-Disclosure of Sexual Orientation

A comparatively small but growing literature has consistently shown that gay, lesbian and bisexual people experience verbal abuse in a variety of social contexts because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation. This abuse has been well documented (see Berrill, 1992; Cogan, 1996; Comstock, 1991; Croteau, 1996; Croteau and Lark, 1995; D'Augelli, 1989, 1992; GALT, 1991; Greasley et al., 1986; Herek 1989 and 1993; Herek and Berrill, 1992; Levine and Leonard, 1984; Otis and Skinner, 1996; Pilkington and D'Augelli, 1995; Savin-Williams, 1994; Slater, 1993; Snape et al., 1995; von Schulthess, 1992). Table 4.2 provides data on the number of reported incidents of anti-gay epithets classified by disclosure and non-disclosure of sexual orientation.

Table 4.2: **Comparison of Presence/Absence of Workplace Epithets in St. John's by Disclosure/Non-Disclosure of Sexual Orientation** [5]

	Anti-Gay Epithets	No Anti-Gay Epithets	Total
Disclosure	11	4	15
Non-Disclosure	0	8	8
Total	11	12	23

[5] Numbers do not add to 22 since some respondent's report more than one experience with epithets in their places of employment.

Respondents report a total of 11 incidents in which they have experienced epithets at work. It is important to realize that all respondents who claim experience with epithets at work also report exposure to heterosexist comments. The data reveal that epithets do not occur in the absence of heterosexist remarks and/or jokes. This is an interesting finding for it suggests that heterosexist language and epithets "hang together." It may be that comments and jokes that target, ridicule and attack gay men contribute to a climate in which epithets are likely to surface. As such, heterosexist language in the form of remarks and/or jokes may provide the social conditions and context that permit the occurrence of the more severe forms of verbal abuse.

Research has shown that voluntary and/or involuntary disclosure of sexual orientation may make one a more likely target for acts of anti-gay violence (Badgett, 1996; Comstock, 1991; Croteau 1996; Croteau and Lark, 1995; Croteau and von Destinon, 1994; D'Augelli, 1992; Levine, 1979; Olson, 1987; Pilkington and D'Augelli, 1995; Schneider, 1986; Snape et al, 1995). Findings from the present research are consistent with the literature. The data show that disclosure of sexual orientation correlates with the experience of anti-gay epithets at work. As Table 4.2 reveals, respondents report 11 separate incidents in which they claim direct experience with epithets at work. Respondents also state that their sexual orientation was either known or suspected. No respondent reported exposure to severe verbal abuse where sexual orientation had not been disclosed. Informants reporting no experience with epithets at work were twice as likely to report nondisclosure of sexual orientation. In all, 12 respondents report no

experience with epithets in their places of employment. Of this number, only 4 had disclosed their sexual identities while 8 had not.

Overall, the data reveal that respondents reporting non-disclosure of sexual orientation were least likely to encounter severe verbal abuse at work. The group most likely to report anti-gay epithets were those who report disclosure of sexual orientation. This is evidence that disclosure of one's homosexual identity at work is associated with the experience of the more severe forms of verbal anti-gay violence. Thus, it would seem that informants who have experienced anti-gay epithets at work have been targeted for severe verbal abuse because they have disclosed or had it disclosed that they are gay men.

Vignette: The Experience of Anti-Gay Epithets at Work

The reality is that gay men who disclose their sexual orientation at work are at risk for anti-gay violence including verbal abuse. Such is the case with Steve[6]. At the time of our meeting, Steve was employed in the hospitality-service sector in St. John's. Steve says that he chose to disclose his sexual orientation at work and that it is well known in the workplace that he is a gay man. Steve has been the target for severe verbal abuse in his place of employment. The perpetrator is a male co-worker. The following is a brief excerpt of the interview with Steve where he details the abuse and how it has affected him.

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[6] Not his real name.

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JC: And what would this person say to you on the job?

Steve: Well, probably like saying, "fag" or "What are you doing faggot?" I think it was more the male-domineering part of his personality. Like, how he saw himself and didn't see other males. I think he felt threatened because I was gay. I was around him and he wouldn't want me near him. It was disturbing because I felt like my rights were being violated as a human being. It would sadden me. It would really upset me because I felt that my rights were violated.

4.4: Anti-Gay Epithets and Type of Workplace Organization

There has been no systematic analysis in the literature to date of the range of work

organizations in which gay men encounter acts of verbal violence based on their sexual

orientation. Here, the literature is noticeably silent. Are gay men more or less likely to

experience acts of anti-gay violence in specific workplaces? If yes, which would those

work environments be? These questions helped drive the present research. The sparse

literature that does exist (for an overview see Croteau, 1996) tends to focus on gay and/or

lesbian and/or bisexual educators (Croteau and Lark, 1995; Croteau and von Destinon,

1994; Griffin, 1992; Olson, 1987; Woods and Harbeck, 1992); lesbian women in

corporations (Hall, 1986); lesbian women in various occupations (Levine and Leonard,

1984; Schachar and Gilbert, 1983; Schneider, 1986); and anti-gay/lesbian violence and/or

discrimination without reference to any particular work organization (Badgett, 1996; Bell

and Weinberg, 1978; Comstock, 1991; Greasley et al., 1986; Hall, 1986; Harry and

DeVall, 1978; Levine, 1979; Levine and Leonard, 1984; Pilkington and D'Augelli, 1995;

Saghir and Robins, 1973; Snape et al., 1995; Williams and Weinberg, 1971; Weinberg

and Williams, 1974).

Respondents have identified a variety of work organizations, in which epithets have and have not occurred. These work environments have been organized under six different categories. These categories include the hospitality-service industry, health care institutions, educational institutions, retail establishments, the public sector and "other." Respondents have identified 11 separate work environments in which they have encountered episodes of severe verbal abuse and 12 workplaces in which they have not. The number of work organizations, in which severe verbal abuse has and has not occurred, is detailed in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: **Comparison of Incidents/Non-Incidents of Epithets in St. John's by Type of Workplace Organization**

Type of Workplace Organization	Epithets	No Epithets	Total
Hospitality/Service (hotels/restaurants)	5	1	6
Health (nursing/medicine)	2	2	4
Education (post-secondary, non-teaching)	2	1	3
Retail	1	1	2
Public Sector (crown, government and law enforcement agencies)	0	5	5
Other (non-profit, computer, unskilled labour)	1	2	3
Total	**11**	12	23

Respondents encountered severe verbal abuse in some organizations moreso than in others. In fact, the data reveal that workplaces in the hospitality-service and public sectors pose a high and low risk, respectively, in the experience of anti-gay epithets. Informants report employment in six workplaces within the hospitality-service industry and epithets have been reported in five of these work environments. By comparison, none

of the five respondents reporting employment in public sector work environments report encounters with epithets in their places of employment.

Vignette: The Experience of Anti-Gay Epithets at Work

As the data reveal, incidents of severe verbal abuse occurred most frequently in the hospitality-service industry. Daniel's[7] story illustrates the experience of anti-gay epithets in this sector of the labour market. I interviewed Daniel in his home about three weeks before the 1997 Christmas season. Ironically, the incident of severe verbal abuse that he relates occurred at a staff Christmas party some years previously. Daniel says the perpetrators were two, young males intent on having "fun."

Daniel: It was just that one incident at the Christmas party. A couple of (female employees), their boyfriends were saying things. Everybody that I work with knows that I'm gay and that's it. I don't care if they like it or they don't. I mean, that's the way it is. But these couple of young fellows were there. They were saying things and pointing and everything else. You know, singing out "faggot" and "queer" across the dance floor.

JC: What, in your opinion, precipitated the event?

Daniel: Just the fact they knew that I was gay, that's all. They were having a few drinks and they didn't care. That's the only thing I can see. I really don't know other than that. I mean, it's not like I was over to their table chatting them up or whatever. It's just something that they felt like they wanted to do just for a bit of fun.

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[7] Not his real name.

4.5: <u>Anti-Gay Epithets and Public/Private Sector Employment</u>

Researchers have yet to address whether or not gay men, and other sexual minority groups, are more or less prone to experience anti-gay abuses in the private or public sectors. The private sector includes workplaces in the hospitality-service, retail and computer industries and unskilled labour. The public sector includes crown corporations, government agencies and departments, law enforcement agencies, health care and educational institutions.

Table 4.4: <u>Comparison of Presence/Absence of Epithets in St. John's by Public/Private Sector Employment</u>

	Epithets	No Epithets	Total
Private Sector	7	4	11
Public Sector	4	8	12
Total	11	12	23

Table 4.4 shows the number of private and public sector workplaces in which respondents report experience and no experience with anti-gay epithets. Respondents reporting private sector employment were more likely than not to claim encounters with epithets at work. Respondents report employment in 11 private sector workplaces. The data show that epithets have occurred in 7 of these work organizations. Alternatively, informants reporting employment in the public sector were twice as likely to report no experience with epithets. Respondents report an absence of epithets in 8 of the 12 public

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sector work organizations for which employment is reported. Reports of epithets in the public sector are limited to 4 of the 12 or one-third of workplaces.

The data lead one to conclude that the risk of experiencing anti-gay epithets may be highest in private industry and lowest in public sector workplaces. This is not to suggest that severe verbal abuse does not occur in the public sector for the evidence proves otherwise. What is being suggested is that gay men may be more likely to encounter epithets in private industry as compared to public sector work environments.

Vignette: The Experience of Anti-Gay Epithets at Work

The research findings lead one to the conclusion that, when compared to public sector employment, employment in private industry may prove more problematic for gay men. Gay men may be more likely to encounter epithets in the private sector. The risk may be lessened, but not entirely absent, in the public sector. Ben's[8] encounter with severe anti-gay epithets occurred in a retail establishment in St. John's, a private sector workplace. Ben describes the perpetrator as a male "friend" who was aware that Ben is gay.

"I did have (a friend) - someone that I know - at one time tell a customer, "Don't buy from him. He's a fag." He would come in at work and say to my boss, "You know that fellow working down there is a fag. Did you know that? He's a dicky-licker." He told the people that were working at the store that I was a fag and that they shouldn't be socializing with me or working with me and this kind of stuff. And when he used to come in to the store I used to break down to tears."

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[8] Not his real name.

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4.6: Anti-Gay Epithets and Management/Non-Management Employment:

Studies that address the problem of workplace anti-gay violence have paid no attention to the experiences of managers compared to non-managers. This too is a neglected area of research. The present study reveals that respondents have experienced anti-gay epithets while employed in both management and non-management positions. The data are presented in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: **Comparison of Presence/Absence of Epithets in St. John's by Management/Non-Management Employment**

	Epithets	No Epithets	Total
Management	5	3	8
Non-Management	6	9	15
Total	11	12	23

Managers, as a group, were more likely to report encounters with epithets than not. Of the 8 respondents reporting employment in managerial positions, 5 claim personal experience with severe verbal abuse and 3 do not. Amongst non-managers the opposite is true. Here, only 6 out of the 15 respondents report exposure to anti-gay epithets while 9 of the 15 report no such abuse. The data also reveal that managers in private industry were more likely to report experience with epithets as compared to public sector managers.

Overall, the data lead one to conclude that managerial personnel, public sector managers especially, are not exempt from the experience of severe anti-gay verbal abuse at work. This is an important finding for it demonstrates that despite their location in the organizational hierarchy - a location that is imbued with authority, privilege and status - managers who happen to be gay may at times be singled out for differential treatment in the form of epithets, and other forms of anti-gay abuse, because they are gay men.

Vignette: The Experience of Anti-Gay Epithets at Work

Gay men may be the targets for severe verbal abuse in their places of employment irrespective of their position within the organizational hierarchy. Claude's[9] experience with anti-gay epithets occurred while he was an assistant manager in a post-secondary educational institution. There were two separate and unrelated incidents. In the first incident the perpetrator was a female instructor and in the second the abuser was a male student.

"She wanted me to carry out a request. What it was basically was access for students after-hours in the building. And it was denied. I couldn't grant it because it was gonna be unsupervised. She just looked at me and said, "You're nothing but a queer anyhow." She turned her back and walked away and I said, "Fuck you too." It happened to me twice. The other one was with a (male) student. "Fag" was the term he used. He wanted access to the gymnasium and the gymnasium was booked at that point in time (so) I denied him. He was in my office. He called me a fag."

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[9] Not his real name.

4.7: Perpetrators of Anti-Gay Epithets at Work

The perpetrators of anti-gay epithets are a diverse group and include both organizational and non-organizational members. An organizational member is any individual who is employed by the organization in question; examples include managers and coworkers. Alternatively, a non-organizational member is any individual who is not in the employ of the organization; examples include clients (customers and guests), students and friends. Respondents reporting experience with epithets in their places of employment were asked to identify the perpetrator(s) of this type of abuse. The data are presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6: **Perpetrators of Workplace Anti-Gay Epithets as Identified by Respondents in St. John's**

	Managers	Coworkers	Clients	Other	Total
Male	1	6	2	5	14
Female	0	3	2	2	7
Total	1	9	4	7	21

The research findings indicate that the perpetrators of workplace epithets may be classified under one of four general headings or categories: managers, coworkers, clients and "other." Students, friends and anonymous telephone callers are included in the latter category. Respondents have identified *at least* 21 perpetrators of anti-gay epithets in their places of employment. I say "at least" because at times respondents would identify their perpetrators as coworkers, clients or anonymous telephone callers without specifying

exactly how many perpetrators there were. Hence, it would be a mistake to say that respondents have identified a total of 21 perpetrators of anti-gay epithets. That would be an underestimation. What is certain is that respondents have identified *at least* 21 perpetrators of anti-gay epithets at work, and that is the figure that will be used for data analysis.

Of the 21 perpetrators, 14 (67%) are male and 7 (33%) are female. The data reveal that severe verbal abuse at work is most likely to be perpetrated by male coworkers. This is not an unexpected finding for as the literature suggests perpetrators of anti-gay violence are overwhelmingly male (see Berrill 1992; Comstock, 1991; Connell, 1987; Herek and Berrill, 1992). According to the respondents, at least 14 males have voiced epithets in their places of employment, and of this number 6 have been identified as coworkers. The category "male other" is the second most likely group to engage in severe verbal abuse with 5 out of the 14 taking part in such behaviour. The groups least likely to voice anti-gay epithets amongst males include clients and managers. Amongst females, "coworkers" are also the group most likely to engage in severe verbal abuse at work. Respondents have identified 3 out of the 7 female perpetrators as fellow coworkers.

Vignette: The Experience of Anti-Gay Epithets at Work

Justin's[10] experience with anti-gay epithets at work occurred during his employ with an

educational institution in St. John's, NF. Justin describes the perpetrator as a male

student.

"I remember a young gentleman. He'd walk past the (office) and he'd look in at me and
he'd snicker and he'd call out, 'faggot,' or 'hey bugger wanna suck my cock?' Stuff like
this. I had him removed from the building by security. It was disruptive to the workplace,
you know. And I was the only person in the office at the time."

JC: Have you ever feared for your safety in your place(s) of employment because you are
a gay man?

Justin: Just the one incident where the male student walked back and forth in front of the
desk and was calling out stuff to me. That's why I had him removed from the building.
And that, plus the fact that he was being disruptive. It was getting close to closing time. It
was dark outside. I had to walk alone to a bus stop.

Respondents have also identified clients as the perpetrators of workplace anti-gay

epithets. Wallace[11] is one of these subjects. Wallace is a front-line, health care worker

employed in a large health care institution in St. John's, NF. He claims to have

experienced two separate incidents of severe verbal abuse in this work organization. In

both cases the perpetrators were clients, one female and the other male.

Wallace: The first event regarded a lady who was brought into the (workplace) by her
daughter. (This lady) was very verbally abusive and aggressive and demanded that her
mother be taken care of immediately and that we should stop everything we're doing and
tend to her. When things weren't moving quickly enough for her, (she) became verbally

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[10] Not his real name.
[11] Not his real name.

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abusive (and) called me a "fucking faggot." I told her that if she continued with this behaviour and this language - the verbal abuse - she would be removed from the premises. That was episode one. A male (client) approximately twenty-five years of age called me an idiot and a "fucking faggot." His parents were informed that this kind of abuse would not be tolerated and that if necessary and if it continued he could be charged by the police. A couple of hours later he did come to me and apologize. And that was the extent of that situation.

JC: How did you react?

Wallace: Emotionally, internally for me it's degrading. You feel degraded. Not so much because I'm gay but because of the fact that I think in their frustration that things are not moving so quickly that the only dig that they could get in at me, being male, and whether they perceived me as being gay or not, was to say "fag." And I think that they think that they can hurt you - any man, I think, basically by saying that. But to say it to me in a derogatory fashion makes me very angry. It gives you a degrading sense. It's not good for your self-esteem. It makes me angry. Very angry.

4.8: Summary

It should come as no surprise that gay men at times encounter verbal abuse in paid employment simply because they are gay. Those of us who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered know this to be true. This verbal abuse may be directed at gay men as a collectivity - as in the case of a coworker who derides homosexuals in general - and it may also be directed at the gay man as an individual and take the form of derogatory remarks and/or epithets. Either way, the result is often the same. Anti-gay verbal abuse, epithets especially, often strike fear into the hearts of gay men. Epithets are most pernicious for inherent in this type of anti-gay language lies the threat and possibility of physical violence.

In this chapter I have attempted to provide the reader with a systematic analysis of the factors that contribute to verbal abuse in paid employment. A number of possible risk factors have been considered including disclosure and non-disclosure of sexual orientation and various organizational variables. Findings were also presented on the perpetrators of severe verbal abuse. In general, the study findings point to a number of potential factors in the experience of anti-gay epithets at work. The research findings point to the systemic nature of workplace anti-gay verbal abuse. Acts of severe verbal abuse at work are not random. Where gay men are located in the labour market affects their risk of experiencing anti-gay epithets. As the data show, the majority of incidents of severe verbal abuse have occurred in private sector workplaces and in the hospitality-service sector in particular. By comparison, subjects employed in public sector work environments report no experience with anti-gay epithets at work. Like non-managers, managers too report exposure to severe verbal abuse. In fact, as a group, managers were more likely to report experience with epithets than not. And finally, the data reveal that when compared to female perpetrators, males commit more acts of severe verbal abuse at work.

The findings on verbal abuse must be interpreted with caution due to the non-random nature of the study design and relatively small sample size. However, it is abundantly clear that voluntary and involuntary disclosure of sexual orientation is an important mediating factor in the experience of anti-gay verbal abuse. As we have seen, only those respondents whose sexual identities were either known or revealed encountered epithets

at work. This finding provides clear evidence for the position that informants were

verbally abused because they are gay men.

Chapter 5: Threats and Other Anti-Gay Behaviours

I've had people threaten to slash my throat and kick the shit out of me. Callers have told

me to beware of dark alleys and don't go to the parking garage alone.

Others have said, I know where you live.

- Manager in the Hospitality-Service Industry -

5.1: Introduction

A growing body of evidence shows that gay men, lesbians and bisexual people

sometimes receive threats of various sorts, including threats of physical violence, because

of their actual or perceived homosexual orientation (see Berrill, 1992; Cogan, 1996;

D'Augelli, 1989, 1992; GALT, 1991; Herek, 1989, 1993; Herek and Berrill, 1992; Otis

and Skinner, 1996; Pilkington and D'Augelli, 1995; Savin-Williams, 1994; Slater, 1993;

Snape et al., 1995; von Schulthess, 1992). Reports also show that gay men, lesbians and

bisexual people are sometimes targeted with anti-gay graffiti (Croteau and Lark, 1995;

Greasley et al., 1986; Snape et al., 1995) and property damage or vandalism (Berrill,

1992; Cogan, 1996; Croteau. 1996; D'Augelli, 1989, 1992; Herek, 1989, 1993; Herek

and Berrill, 1992; Levine and Leonard, 1984; Otis and Skinner, 1996; Pilkington and

D'Augelli, 1995). Study participants have reported direct experience with a range of

behaviours that have been categorized as threats and other anti-gay behaviours.[12]

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[12] Hereafter abbreviated as "threats."

Threats encompass the following behaviours as identified by respondents: threats of physical violence; death threats; threats to disclose one's sexual orientation; anonymous and threatening phone calls; anti-gay graffiti; privacy invasion and property damage or vandalism. This category of behaviours is second in occurrence only to that of verbal abuse.

5.2: Anti-Gay Threats and Disclosure/Non-Disclosure of Sexual Orientation

Relatively few respondents report personal encounters with anti-gay threats in their places of employment. In all, six respondents claim experience with threats at work. These six respondents have identified eight incidents in which they claim to have encountered this type of anti-gay behaviour. Various authors agree that disclosure of sexual orientation may put one at an increased risk for acts of anti-gay violence (see Badgett, 1996; Comstock, 1991; Croteau 1996; Croteau and Lark, 1995; Croteau and von Destinon, 1994; D'Augelli, 1992; Levine, 1979; Olson, 1987; Pilkington and D'Augelli, 1995; Schneider, 1986; Snape et al, 1995). The data support this conclusion. The research findings reveal that disclosure of sexual orientation correlates positively with the experience of anti-gay threats in respondents' places of employment. The reader is referred to Table 5.1.

Table 5.1: **Comparison of Presence/Absence of Workplace Threats in St. John's by Disclosure Non/Disclosure of Sexual Orientation:**

	Threats	No Threats	Total
Disclosure	8	4	12
Non-Disclosure	0	8	8
Total	8	12	20

According to the data, all eight respondents who reported experience with threats at work also reported disclosure of their sexual orientation. No respondent reporting non-disclosure encountered anti-gay threats at work. The findings show that disclosure of sexual orientation mediates the experience of anti-gay threats in respondents' places of employment. These findings lead one to conclude that, for the most part, respondents reporting experience with threats at work were targeted for this form of abuse because they are gay men.

Vignette: The Experience of Anti-Gay Threats at Work

Sean[13] is one of the study participants who reports personal experience with anti-gay threats at work and disclosure of sexual orientation. Sean claims he was threatened with physical violence while crossing a picket line in the midst of a labour dispute. He describes the perpetrator as a male coworker who also voiced anti-gay epithets:

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[13] Not his real name.

"There was a strike several years ago and strikes can be fairly nasty anyway. And I belonged to one union. And my union was not on strike and this other union was on strike. There were a number of individuals who said derogatory things towards me because I'm gay or they thought that I was gay. At that time I had to cross the picket line. I had no choice. I was under court order to go in. There was one person in particular who was really antagonistic. And he was making the move towards me and one person was saying, "Hold back!" "It's not right!" A couple of people held him back. It escalated to the point that this one particular individual was starting to threaten me physically and then was making a move towards me. And I think he would've hit me but there was another person (who) kept him from doing that. But I felt very threatened, very unsafe at that time. And I think if the other person hadn't (been) there to calm him down I probably would've been struck. And that was the first time I felt really uncomfortable at work because of my sexual orientation."

JC: And he was calling you a "fag?"

Sean: Yes, plus the fact it was a strike, you know, "scab" and all this sort of thing. I felt I was targeted because, not only was I going to work crossing their picket line, but also because I was gay and therefore I was a more likely target because of that. And I would feel the same way if we had a strike tomorrow. I think I would feel even more insecure because I am quite "out" at work now. It's well known where I work that I'm gay. I don't think I could feel comfortable going in (the workplace) in a strike situation if people know me and know that I'm gay because I think they would use it against me. I feel strongly that they would.

5.3: Anti-Gay Threats and Type of Workplace Organization

Informants were most likely to report encounters with anti-gay threats in the hospitality-service sector and least likely to report such abuse in workplaces located in the public sector. The data are provided in Table 5.2.

Table 5.2: **Comparison of Presence/Absence of Threats in St. John's by Type of Workplace Organization**

Type of Workplace Organization	Threats	No Threats	Total
Hospitality/Service (hotels/restaurants)	5	1	6
Health (nursing & medicine)	1	2	3
Education (post-secondary, non-teaching positions)	0	1	1
Retail	2	1	3
Public Sector (crown, government and law enforcement agencies)	0	5	5
Other (non-profit, computer, unskilled labour)	0	2	2
Total	8	12	20

Informants report employment within six workplaces in the hospitality service industry; and in five of the six (83%) respondents say they have been threatened because they are gay men. By comparison, all five respondents reporting employment in the public sector reported no encounters with anti-gay threats at work. Consider also that the hospitality service industry accounts for five out of the eight or 62.5% of all reported incidents of anti-gay threats. The results are clear: respondents were most likely to be threatened because they are gay in the hospitality service industry. The risk of such abuse was absent in public sector workplaces.

Vignette: The Experience of Anti-Gay Threats at Work

Respondents reporting employment in the hospitality-service industry were at an elevated risk for experiencing anti-gay threats. This trend is evident in the data. Claude is one of

the informants reporting employment experience in the hospitality-service sector. He also

reports personal experience with anti-gay threats at work. The threats experienced by

Claude were quite severe and included both death threats and threats to do physical harm.

Claude has identified the perpetrators as anonymous male and female telephone callers.

He says the perpetrators also resorted to using epithets and other abusive language.

Claude: Oh, God. I've lost count in regards of the amount of calls I've had. I've had
people threaten to slash my throat and kick the shit out of me. Callers have told me to
beware of dark alleys and don't go to the parking garage alone. Others have said I know
where you live.

JC: Who would make these phone calls?

Claude: I have no idea.

JC: You'd get them at work?

Claude: Yes.

JC: Would they use words like "queer", "fag"?

Claude: Oh yeah. Like, you faggot or you pansy, queer, cocksucker.

5.4: Anti-Gay Threats and Public/Private Sector Employment

Findings from the present study reveal that the majority of reported encounters with anti-

gay threats have occurred in private industry. The data are presented in Table 5.3.

Table 5.3: <u>Comparison of Presence/Absence of Threats in St. John's by</u>
<u>Public/Private Sector Workplaces</u>

	Threats	No Threats	Total
Private Sector	7	4	11
Public Sector	1	8	9
Total	8	12	20

Respondents report employment in 11 private sector workplaces. Encounters with anti-gay threats have been reported for 7 of these 11 workplaces. The data reveal that threats against gay men were far less likely to occur in public sector institutions. Informants report employment in nine public sector organizations. In eight of the nine respondents report no encounters with threats based on sexual orientation. Only one incident of anti-gay threats was reported to have occurred in a public sector work environment. Overall, the data clearly show that informants were at a greater risk for anti-gay threats in private industry. The possibility of such abuse was greatly diminished in the public sector.

An explanation for this trend may lay in the social organization of work. It may be, for example, that the public sector workplaces included in this study have well-defined, visible and enforceable policies that prohibit workplace violence and provide mechanisms for redress if and when violent incidents occur. The very presence of policies that forbid workplace violence may act as a strong deterrent to those who would otherwise engage in such behaviours. It may very well be that some private sector workplaces either have not adopted anti-violence policies or have policies that are weak

in content and practical application. Coupled with official policy initiatives, education is another key factor in the prevention of workplace violence. Public sector unions are at the forefront in educating workers about what constitutes workplace violence, the causes of violence, violence prevention and workers' rights. Indeed, unions across Canada have been successful in negotiating collective agreements that strictly forbid workplace violence while providing workers with methods of dispute resolution in situations where violence erupts. Many private sector work organizations in Canada remain non-unionized. In the absence of union pressure to positively address issues of workplace violence some private sector employers may be unwilling to positively address the issue and instead adopt the perception that violence is merely part of the job.

Vignette: The Experience of Anti-Gay Threats at Work

Privately owned businesses may provide a more fertile ground for the occurrence of anti-gay threats in paid employment. By contrast, public sector work environments may provide a climate that is perhaps more unfavourable for such abuses to arise. Claude has been employed as a senior level manager in the hospitality-service sector in a private sector workplace in St. John's. He claims that he has been threatened with physical violence in his place of employment. He also says the perpetrator threatened to disclose his sexual orientation or "out" him at work. Claude describes the perpetrator as a male guest and acquaintance who was aware that Claude is a gay man.

Claude: (One) threat was (made by) a guest. He asked to speak with (me). He wanted me to do certain gestures on that particular day, a sexual act – oral sex. And (if) I did not do so he was going to expose me to the management of the corporation.

JC: "Out you," in other words?

Claude: Yes.

JC: What happened?

Claude: I threw him out and called the cops.

JC: Did he threaten you with physical violence?

Claude: Yes.

JC: What did he say?

Claude: "Don't walk in dark alleys." "Watch your back when you leave here in the night time."

5.5: Threats and Other Anti-Gay Behaviours and Management/Non-Management Positions

One's occupational position, in terms of where one is located in a given organizational hierarchy, may put one at an increased or decreased risk for anti-gay threats. Data from the present study show that respondents reporting employment in management positions were most susceptible to anti-gay threats in their places of employment. The data are provided in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4: <u>Comparison of Presence/Absence of Workplace Threats in St. John's by Management/Non-Management Employment</u>

	Threats	No Threats	Total
Management	5	3	8
Non-Management	3	9	12
Total	8	12	20

Respondents have been employed in management positions within eight separate workplaces. In five of these work organizations respondents have met with anti-gay threats. Respondents employed in non-management jobs were less likely to report anti-gay threats at work. No threats are reported for 9 out of the 12 workplaces where non-managers have been employed. Respondents employed as non-managers report anti-gay threats for 3 workplaces only. Overall, the data indicate that gay men employed as managers may be at an increased risk for anti-gay threats in their places of employment. This risk is present but is not as pronounced amongst respondents reporting employment in non-managerial positions.

The fact that managers, who happen to be gay men, are sometimes subjected to anti-gay threats is proof of heterosexism at work. One of the themes that emerges from the interview data is that gay men are not deserving of respect simply because they are gay men. This lack of respect may derive from false and stereotypical assumptions that equate male homosexuality primarily with sex, sexual predation and paedophilia. Coworkers and fellow managers subject gay male managers to all sorts of anti-gay behaviours simply

because they can. Heterosexist sentiment provides the "rationale" and normalization for the negative sanction of male homosexuality. Inherent to heterosexism is the belief that it is socially acceptable to punish gay men simply because they are gay and/or because they refuse to adopt the heterosexual lifestyle. It is for these reasons that people who adopt a more or less rigid heterosexist belief system may have little difficulty demonstrating open contempt, perhaps even hostility, for gay men, even when the target is a manager.

Vignette: The Experience of Anti-Gay Threats at Work

Respondents reporting employment as managers in their places of employment were somewhat more likely than non-managers to report personal encounters with anti-gay threats. Tony[14] has held a senior management position in the hospitality-service sector in St. John's, NF. His experience with threats has taken the form of anti-gay graffiti.

JC: I know this is probably very difficult for you to talk about. But can you give me an example of what was written on the bathroom walls?

Tony: One was a simple statement of me performing oral sex, basically saying that I blow (an employee) and then he blows me for favours. And it was as bold as it could be. There was a poem written. It was geared at management and a good section of it was talking about me and anal sex.

JC: What was done about that? How long was the graffiti there?

Tony: It was there for quite a period of time. It's happened at different times.

JC: Was this a public washroom or an employee washroom?

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[14] Not his real name.

Tony: It was an employee washroom. I wouldn't necessarily know how long these things were on the walls. I would always be the last one to know and I wouldn't know how long they were there.

JC: Who was doing this?

Tony: Staff.

JC: Was anyone ever reprimanded or caught?

Tony: No. It was never investigated. There was never an attempt to find out who was doing these things. It was deemed as typical behaviour of disgruntled staff in a unionized environment. And where I held a senior management position it was to be expected that these things would happen, which I was not naive to. It was a reality of working there. It's also a given that it should be removed immediately which was never actually done.

Like managers, respondents employed as non-managers also report personal experience

with anti-gay threats in paid employment. One of these informants is Daniel. Daniel says

a personal possession of his was defaced while he was employed in the hospitality-

service industry in St. John's. He describes the experience as upsetting.

Daniel: I left my jacket in the office and it had my name-tag on it. And when I went to work the next day somebody had scraped "fag" into it. I didn't notice it first. One of my coworkers brought it to my attention cause I just took the jacket and put it on and went about my work. And one of my coworkers said to me, "You got to take that name-tag off." I said, "Why?" She showed me and I took it off. It was upsetting. It was bothersome that somebody would do that. It did bother me at the time.

JC: Did you find out who did it?

Daniel: No. You'll never find out who did it.

5.6: Perpetrators of Anti-Gay Threats at Work

Research has revealed that males, not females, are the most likely perpetrators of anti-gay violence (Berrill, 1992; Comstock, 1991; Connell, 1987; Herek and Berrill, 1992). Findings from the present study reveal that in the vast majority of cases males were the perpetrators of workplace anti-gay threats. Respondents have identified 10 perpetrators of anti-gay threats in their places of employment. Eight of the 10 perpetrators were identified as male and 2 of the 10 were identified as female. Amongst the males, "coworkers" are the most likely perpetrators of threats and other anti-gay behaviours. Four of the eight male perpetrators fall within this category. Male "other" and male clients account for three and one reported incidents, respectively. According to the respondents, male managers did not engage in anti-gay threats at work. Moreover, noticeably fewer females have engaged in this form of abusive behaviour, only two in total. Overall, males were four times more likely than females to engage in anti-gay threats in respondents' places of employment.

5.7   A Word on Physical/Sexual Anti-Gay Violence

Prior to providing some concluding comments I would first like to briefly discuss the experience of physical/sexual anti-gay violence at work. The literature reveals that gay men, lesbians and bisexual people are sometimes physically assaulted and/or sexually assaulted because of their actual or perceived sexual orientation. For the purpose of this

study, physical anti-gay violence was defined as pushing, grabbing, kicking, slapping, hitting, punching and beatings. Sexual anti-gay violence includes any inappropriate touching and grabbing that is of a sexual nature. These behaviours, physical and sexual anti-gay violence, are directed at gay men because they are, or are perceived to be, not heterosexual.

Relatively few respondents, four in total, report having been subjected to physical/sexual anti-gay violence. In all, these four respondents reported 5 incidents of physical/sexual anti-gay violence. Four of the 5 incidents occurred within respondents' places of employment. One assault did not occur within the physical confines of the work environment; however, management reprimanded the perpetrator of the assault, a male coworker.

It is difficult to provide any in-depth analysis of this form of violence given the relatively few cases involved. Nevertheless, it is worthwhile to consider that all respondents who reported personal experience with physical/sexual anti-gay violence at work also report disclosure of sexual orientation. And however relatively rare it may be in paid employment physical/sexual anti-gay violence is perhaps the most damaging form of abuse that gay men encounter. Respondents' personal accounts, recounted below, reveal that this type of violence exacts a heavy physical and emotional toll in terms of personal injury, fear, intimidation and embarrassment.

"I was inappropriately touched one time. He was one of the managers. He knew that I was gay. He grabbed my crotch. I was just standing at the (cash register). He just put his hand on my crotch and grabbed me." (Steve)

"He attacked me one day outside of work. A few punches were thrown. (I received) a couple of bruises. I was worried - you know, scared. I didn't know what he was gonna do. Once he started and went that far you didn't know what he was capable of. I didn't know what to do." (Daniel)

"He even gave me punches and stuff in the store. I had to type, to use my hands on a keyboard, and he's punched me so hard sometimes I couldn't use my hands the next day. I would actually break down in tears and start to cry. I was always afraid that this guy was gonna pound the shit outta me. He used to wait outside when I'd get off work and I'd be afraid to leave. Finally I started carrying a stick with me when I went to work. It was an iron bar. And I used to take that to work with me." (Ben)

"We were looking at boxes in the stockroom. And he passed me a box and said, "Here, put this up on the top shelf." So I got up on the ladder and I reached my hands over my head to put the box up on the top shelf and as I done that he wrapped his arms around me and put his hand down in my pocket. And I got such a fright I just about fell off the ladder." (Alex)[15]

Respondents who have experienced physical/sexual anti-gay violence in their places of employment have identified other males as the perpetrators of this form of abuse. These findings are consistent with the literature in that when acts of physical/sexual violence are committed it is males, not females, who are the most likely perpetrators (Berrill 1992; Comstock, 1991; Herek and Berrill, 1992; Klinger, 1995). The research findings clearly reveal that the work environment can be a very hostile and dangerous social sphere for the openly gay man. It ought not to be. No one should have to be subjected to violence at work because of his or her actual or perceived sexual orientation.

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[15] Not his real name.

5.8 <u>Summary</u>

Findings from the present study leave little doubt that respondents were targeted with anti-gay threats at work because they are gay men. The data also reveal that anti-gay threats were most likely to occur in the hospitality service industry and least likely to occur in public sector workplaces. Respondents were at an increased risk of experiencing anti-gay threats in private industry; this risk was minimal in the public sector. Respondents employed as managers were more likely than those employed as non-managers to experience anti-gay threats at work. And finally, the data clearly show that overall males, moreso than females, are more likely to give voice to anti-gay threats in paid employment.

The workplace can be a dangerous place for those of us who identify as gay men. To be threatened with physical violence – even death – because one is gay is highly disturbing. Incidents such as these ought to be taken seriously. People have been murdered at work. And as the highly publicized murder of Matthew Shepard shows, gay men are sometimes brutally killed because they are gay. The data also reveal that gay men may be targeted with graffiti, personal property damage and privacy invasion. These behaviours are perhaps not as threatening as say death threats or threats of physical violence; however, anti-gay graffiti, vandalism and privacy invasion ought not to be passed off as insignificant for such abuse constitutes open hostility towards gay men.

Chapter 6: Conclusion

In Chapter One I provided several hypotheses to explain the range of anti-gay violences that gay men sometimes encounter in work organizations. I first started from the premise that gay men are in fact subjected to acts of anti-gay violence in paid employment based on their sexual orientation. That premise is supported by the thesis findings and from research generated elsewhere.

I also put forth the supposition that disclosure of sexual orientation, voluntary and involuntary, may put one at an increased risk for acts of workplace anti-gay violence. This indeed appears to be the case. Based on findings from the present study, and elsewhere, it is clear that "coming out", being "outed" by others, or both, increases the likelihood that one will encounter anti-gay violence at work. After all, openly gay men, and those suspected of being gay, are easily identifiable targets for abuse based on sexual orientation.

In attempting to explain and understand the social phenomenon that is workplace anti-gay violence I also put forth the idea that the social sphere is heterocentric. It is within this heterosexualized space that gay men conduct their daily lives knowing that at any time they may be subjected to ridicule, taunts, epithets, threats, beatings and even death because they are gay. Intolerance, not acceptance, is inherent in heterosexism. It is this

intolerance that is manifest in the range of anti-gay violences that are discussed in this thesis and in research conducted elsewhere.

Power, as a concept, can also be used to explain workplace anti-gay violence, whether it is the organizational power of a manager to harass and intimidate subordinate employees or the social power that comes with being heterosexual. Heterosexuality is imbued with power because it is often linked to morality, physical and mental health, nature and procreation whereas homosexuality, for the most part, is not. In essence, heterosexuality is viewed by the majority of people, some gay men and lesbians included, as the superior form of human sexuality. (Over the years I have encountered a number of gay men who have openly stated that they would "turn straight" if they could). Power, in whatever form it takes, can be abused, and when it is abused within this context the result is anti-gay violence.

I also inferred that structural features of the work environment might make one a more or less likely target for anti-gay abuses. Structural analyses of workplace anti-gay violence are based on the assumption that violence is not random; rather, where gay men are located in the labour market may make them a more or less likely target for abusive acts based on sexual orientation. The non-random nature of workplace anti-gay violence points to the existence of risk factors that may contribute to violent episodes. Several of these risk factors have emerged based on findings from the present research:

- Employment in mostly private sector work organizations and the hospitality-service industry in particular, which includes hotels and restaurants.

Although anti-gay abuses have been reported for most types of work organizations for which data are available, overall the hospitality-service industry stands out as the employment sector in which respondents were most likely to experience abuse based on sexual orientation. At the other extreme, public sector work organizations posed the least risk for acts of anti-gay violence.

- Employment in management positions.

Overall, the data reveal that openly gay managers were more likely than non-managers to report first-hand experience with anti-gay epithets and threats in paid employment. Openly gay managers also reported experience with physical/sexual anti-gay violence although non-managers reported the majority of incidents. This the most intriguing finding to emerge from the data and warrants further investigation.

- Working with the public.

The data indicate that gay men are susceptible to incidents of anti-gay violence in workplaces that require interaction with the general public. The hospitality-service industry is a prime example.

The ways in which work is organized may facilitate or inhibit incidents of anti-gay violence. Prevention of violence at work may be fostered by (1) the presence and enforcement of organizational policies that condemn any and all abusive behaviours; (2) complaint mechanisms that allow victims to seek redress; and (3) programmes designed to educate organizational members about unacceptable workplace behaviours. Such initiatives undoubtedly influence the norms of workplace organizations. Institutional policies, procedures and educational initiatives aimed at preventing and combating workplace abuses demonstrate a commitment to a violence-free work environment. This commitment may be strongest in public sector, as opposed to private sector, work organizations. As the data reveal, the overall risk of experiencing anti-gay violence was lowest in public sector work environments.

The fact that incidents of anti-gay violence were far more likely to occur in private as opposed to public sector workplaces points to fundamental differences in the social organization of these two employment sectors. These differences may be structural (e.g., workplace policies and procedures) and/or cultural (e.g., organizational norms). Structural and cultural features of workplace organizations may facilitate or inhibit the occurrence of violence based on sexual orientation. For example, according to the literature on the sexual harassment of working women, "the presence and accessibility of formal and informal organizational procedures . . . appears to decrease the incidents of sexual harassment" (Lach and Gwartney-Gibbs, 1993: 109). Formal workplace responses

to sexual harassment, and workplace violence in general, include policy initiatives that prohibit such abusive behaviours and complaint mechanisms that allow victims to seek redress. Informal responses include confronting the perpetrator of abuse, conciliation and writing the perpetrator a letter of complaint. It may very well be that public sector workplaces (e.g., crown corporations, government agencies and departments, law enforcement agencies, health care facilities, post-secondary educational institutions) are far less likely than privately owned businesses (hotels and restaurants, retail establishments, non-profit organizations, the high-tech sector) to tolerate incidents of workplace violence, including the sexual harassment of working women and acts of anti-gay violence. Moreover, public sector work organizations are perhaps more likely to have clearly stated and visible policies that condemn and prohibit workplace violence while at the same time providing victims with both formal and informal means of combating the abuse.

This line of thinking is not based on conjecture. All federal and provincial government workplaces in Canada (including Crown agencies and corporations regulated by government) are required by law to establish policy that explicitly forbids workplace violence; namely, sexual harassment (Aggarwal, 1992b). The Canada Labour Code has imposed an additional ban on harassment in employment that falls under federal jurisdiction such as banking, communications and, transportation, among others (Aggarwal, 1992b). The Newfoundland Human Rights Act provides provincial government employees in Newfoundland protection from harassment. The prohibitions

found in the Act apply not only to civil servants, but also to employees of Crown agencies and departments. The Supreme Court of Canada has ruled that, "the Canadian Human Rights Act (for that matter all human rights statutes) imposes a statutory duty on employers to provide a safe and healthy work environment (free of sexual harassment)" (Aggarwal 1992b: 88-89). In effect, the Supreme Court's ruling affects all employers in Canada. However, unlike the public sector, privately-owned and operated firms in Canada are not *legally* required to implement policy that prohibits workplace harassment. Hence, public sector work organizations and their members are perhaps better informed, prepared and equipped to handle incidents of workplace violence if and when such abuses occur. There may also be less tolerance for acts of violence in the public sector given the requirements of the law. The result may be that incidents of anti-gay violence, and the sexual harassment of women, are perhaps far less likely to occur in public sector work organizations as compared to private sector work environments.

The very existence, or lack of, policy interventions by governments and employers to combat workplace violence may ultimately affect the culture of work organizations. To illustrate further, employees, to a greater or lesser extent, tend to take their cues from management. Organizational elites may choose one of two options when workplace violence occurs. Management can tolerate the behaviours and allow the abuses to continue. Or, it can deal swiftly and harshly with the perpetrators of abuse (e.g., by firing the perpetrator). These two alternatives convey strong but different messages to organizational members. The latter sends the signal that workplace violence is

unacceptable and that the penalties for such behaviours are high. The former option, to do nothing, gives employees the licence to commit such abuses and avoid retribution.

A final risk factor that emerges from the data relates directly to the gendered nature of violence. The findings reveal that when incidents of workplace anti-gay violence occur chances are the perpetrator will be male. This finding is consistent with the literature in that males are more likely than females to harbour negative views of gay men *and* to engage in anti-gay behaviours.

The perpetrators of workplace anti-gay violence are a diverse group and include customers, guests, students, friends, anonymous telephone callers, coworkers and managers. The fact that individuals with different social roles, statuses and backgrounds engage in anti-gay behaviours is proof of the pervasive nature of heterosexism. Those individuals who take it upon themselves to voice heterosexist comments and/or epithets, threaten, and attack gay men based on sexual orientation, perhaps believe that it is their "right" to punish those who are not heterosexual. Still others may engage in such abusive behaviours simply because they can, with little or no fear of retribution. The potential risks associated with violence at work and in other social settings may do little to deter those who engage in such behaviours; for example, coworkers and managers may put their jobs in jeopardy; students may face expulsion; and, assailants may face criminal charges. Still, as the data show, some individuals are willing to run the risk and openly demonstrate their contempt for gay men.

Even friends and acquaintances may take it upon themselves to torment and harass gay men in their places of employment. While the data indicate that this phenomenon may not be prolific, at least amongst the respondents, it does suggest that workplace anti-gay violence may be part of a larger and more general pattern of abuse that extends beyond the confines of the work environment. Abuse from disgruntled friends, family members and partners may extend beyond the household, the street and other social spheres to infiltrate the gay man's place of employment. Such a situation not only affects the intended victim but it also negatively impacts other organizational members (i.e., staff and management) and non-management (i.e., clients and guests) who may inadvertently witness the abuse and get in harm's way. Employers and employees ought to be aware of this phenomenon and institute guidelines to ensure the safety of the intended victim(s), employees, clients and guests. This is not a trivial suggestion. It is common knowledge that the potential for violence and danger exists in paid employment. People are seriously injured, even murdered, at work. This fact should not be lost on employers, unions and policy-makers in their attempt to prevent all types of abuse in work organizations.

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Appendix A

Interview Schedule:

Section A: Employment History/Demographic Questions

1. Are you presently employed? If yes, what is your present job? How long have you been employed there? Please indicate dates if possible.

2. What is the nature of the organization in which you are presently employed?

3. Are you presently employed on a full-time, part-time or casual basis?

4. What are your days and hours of work?

5. Approximately how many people are employed in the organization?

6. Would you say the organization is male-dominated, female-dominated or employs relatively equal numbers of males and females?

7. Is the organization public or private sector?

8. Is the organization unionized?

9. What is your approximate annual income?

(Questions 10-18 pertain to previous employment)

10. What is your previous job(s)?

11. For your previous job(s) please indicate the nature of the organization in which you were employed.

12. For your previous job(s) please indicate your length of employment, with dates, if possible.

13. For your previous job(s) please indicate if you were employed on a full-time, part-time or casual basis.

14. For your previous job(s) please indicate your days and hours of work.

15. For your previous job(s) please indicate the approximate numbers of employees.

16. For your previous job(s) please indicate if the organization was male-dominated, female-dominated or employed relatively equal numbers of males and females.

17. For your previous job(s) please indicate if the organization was public or private sector.

18. For your previous job(s) please indicate if the organization was unionized.

19. In total, about how many years have you been employed?

20. Have you successfully completed high school? If not, please indicate the highest grade completed.

21. Do you have any post-secondary education or training? For example, have you ever attended university, trade/vocational school or a private college? Did you successfully complete your course of study?

22. Do you hold a degree/diploma/certificate from a recognized university, trade/vocational school or private college?

23. Given your level of education do you think that your are underqualified or overqualified for the job that you presently hold? What about those jobs that you have held previously?

24. To which age category do you presently belong (15-19; 20-24; 25-29; 30-34; 35-39; 40-44; 45-49; 50-54; 55+)?

Section B1: Employment Discrimination

25. Have you ever been denied employment because an employer presumed, or in fact knew, you to be a gay man? If yes, please indicate the nature of the organization(s) and position(s) applied for. (Note - may need to probe further).

26. How do you know that you were denied the position(s) based on your sexual preference?

27. What, if any, were the reasons given for the refusal to hire?

28. Did you in any way indicate your sexual preference to the employer(s) (e.g., on the job application, in manner of dress, in conversation, etc.)?

29. Have you ever been denied a promotion because an employer(s) presumed, or in fact knew, you to be a gay man? If yes, what was your position within the

organization(s)? Please indicate the nature of the position(s) applied for. What was the nature of the organization(s)?

30. Have you ever been denied a pay raise because an employer(s) presumed, or in fact knew, you to be a gay man? If yes, what was your position within the organization(s)? What was the nature of the organization(s)?

31. How do you know that you were denied the promotion(s)/pay raise(s) based on your sexual preference?

32. What, if any, were the reasons given for the denial of promotion(s)/pay raise(s)?

33. Have you ever been denied a promotion(s)/pay raise(s) more than once based on your sexual preference? If yes, how many times?

34. Have you ever been fired from a job or received an unfair work evaluation because an employer presumed, or in fact knew, you to be a gay man? If yes, please indicate the nature of the organization(s) and the position(s) you held.

35. How do you know that you were fired/unfairly evaluated based on your sexual preference?

36. What, if any, were the reasons given for the firing(s)/unfair evaluation(s)?

37. Have you been fired/unfairly evaluated more than once based on your sexual preference? If yes, how many times?

38. Are same-sex benefits available at your place(s) of employment? For example, could your partner, or potential partner, be covered under your employer's health and dental plans?

39. Have you experienced any other forms of workplace discrimination that you would like to tell me about? (Probe - note that discrimination may occur at office parties, seminars, conferences that may or may not be held within the confines of the organization).

Section B2: Verbal Anti-Gay Violence

40. Have you ever been called a fag, queer, or any other anti-gay epithet either in your present or past place(s) of employment? If yes, please indicate the nature of the workplace(s) in which you experienced verbal anti-gay violence and the position(s) you held.

41. In the organization(s) where you experienced verbal anti-gay violence who was the perpetrator(s) of this verbal abuse (e.g., male or female manager, supervisor, coworker, subordinate employee, client, patron, etc.)?

42. For the organization(s) in which you experienced verbal anti-gay violence what, in your opinion, precipitated the event(s)? How did you react?

43. In the organization(s) where you experienced verbal anti-gay violence approximately how many times would you say such name-calling occurred? Once? Twice? On several occasions?

44. Have you ever overheard anti-gay remarks, such as jokes, either in your present or past place(s) of employment?

45. Have such jokes or anti-gay remarks ever been directed at you? If yes, please indicate the nature of the workplace(s), including the position(s) you held, in which these jokes or anti-gay remarks occurred.

46. In the organization(s) where such jokes or anti-gay remarks occurred who was the perpetrator(s) (e.g., male or female manager, supervisor, coworker, subordinate employee, client, patron, etc.)?

47. How did you react to the occurrence of such jokes or anti-gay remarks?

48. How often would you say such jokes or anti-gay remarks occurred? Once? Twice? On several occasions?

49. Have you experienced any other forms of verbal anti-gay violence that you would like to tell me about? (Probe - note that verbal anti-gay violence may occur at office parties, seminars, conferences that may or may not be held within the confines of the organization).

Section B3: Physical/Sexual Anti-Gay Violence

50. Have you ever been physically assaulted (e.g., pushed, grabbed, kicked, slapped, hit, punched, beaten) either in your present or past place(s) of employment because you are a gay man? If yes, please indicate the nature of the organization(s), and the position(s) you held, in which you experienced physical anti-gay violence.

51. How do you know you were physically assaulted because you are gay?

52. Did the perpetrator(s) insult you verbally during the attack (e.g., call you a fag, queer, etc.)?

53. Who was the perpetrator(s) (e.g., male or female manager, supervisor, coworker, subordinate employee, client, patron, etc.)?

54. What was the nature of your injury or injuries?

55. How often would you say you experienced physical anti-gay violence in your places(s) of employment? Once? Twice? On several occasions?

56. Have you ever been sexually assaulted (e.g., inappropriately touched or grabbed; raped; etc.) either in your present or past place(s) of employment because you are a gay man? If yes, please indicate the nature of the organization(s), and the position(s) you held, in which the sexual assault(s) occurred.

57. Who was the perpetrator(s) (e.g., male or female manager, supervisor, coworker, subordinate employee, client, patron, etc.)?

58. How did you react?

59. How often would you say you experienced sexual assault in your places(s) of employment? Once? Twice? On several occasions?

60. Have you ever been hit with an object or assaulted with a weapon either in your present or past place(s) of employment because you are a gay man? If yes, please explain what these objects and/or weapons were.

61. Please indicate the nature of the organization(s), and the position(s) you held, in which you had been either hit with an object or assaulted with a weapon.

62. Who was the perpetrator(s) (e.g., male or female manager, supervisor, coworker, subordinate employee, client, patron, etc.)?

63. How did you react?

64. How often would you say you were hit with an object or assaulted with a weapon in your places(s) of employment? Once? Twice? On several occasions?

65. Have you experienced any other forms of physical anti-gay violence that you would like to tell me about? (Probe - note that physical anti-gay violence may occur at office parties, seminars, conferences that may or may not be held within the confines of the organization).

Section B4: Psychological Anti-Gay Violence

66. Have you ever experienced psychological abuse either in your present or past place(s) of employment (e.g., threats of physical violence; verbally abusive phone calls; etc.) because you are a gay man? If yes, please indicate the nature of the organization(s), and the position(s) you held, in which you experienced psychological anti-gay violence.

67. Who was the perpetrator(s) (e.g., male or female manager, supervisor, coworker, subordinate employee, client, patron, unknown, etc.)?

68. How often would you say you experienced psychological abuse in your place(s) of employment? Once? Twice? On several occasions?

69. Have you ever feared for your safety in your place(s) of employment because you are a gay man? If yes, please indicate the nature of the organization(s), and the position(s) you held, in which you feared for your safety.

70. Has any person in your place(s) of employment ever used your sexual preference against you? For example, has a manager or supervisor ever threatened to reveal your sexual preference to others if you refused to comply with his/her demands (e.g., an increased workload; tasks not related to your job; sexual favours)? If yes, please indicate the nature of the organization(s), and the position(s) you held, in which your sexual preference was used against you.

71. Similarly, have you ever been put in this predicament by coworkers, subordinate employees, clients, patrons, etc., in your place(s) of employment? If yes, please indicate the nature of the organization(s), and the position(s) you held, in which your sexual preference was used against you.

72. How often would you say such threats occurred in your place(s) of employment? Once? Twice? On several occasions? Please indicate the nature of the organizations.

73. Have you experienced any other forms of psychological anti-gay violence that you would like to tell me about? (Probe - note that psychological anti-gay violence may occur at office parties, seminars, conferences that may or may not be held within the confines of the organization).

74. Do you believe there is a link between discrimination based on your sexual preference and episodes of anti-gay violence in your place(s) of employment? For example, in your experience did acts of discrimination against you escalate into instances of anti-gay violence? If yes, please indicate the nature of the

organization(s), and the position(s) you held, in which you believe this to be the case. (Note - may require further probing).

Section B5: Degree of Openness of Sexual Orientation

75.　Are you "open" about your sexual preference (i.e., out of the closet) to everyone in your place(s) of employment? If no, who are you not "open" to (e.g., male or female manager, supervisor, coworkers, subordinate employees, clients, patrons, etc.)? Please indicate the nature of the organization(s) and position(s) held.

76.　If you are "open" to no-one in your place(s) of employment, or "open" to a select few, please explain why this is the case (e.g. fear of losing one's job?).

77.　Overall, would you say that your being "open" in your place(s) of employment has been a positive or negative experience?

78.　In previous work environments have you been "open" or "closeted" about your sexual preference? Please indicate the nature of the organization(s) and position(s) held.

79.　If you are "out of the closet" to everyone or only a select few in your place(s) of employment, how did this come to be? Was your "coming out" a personal choice or were you "outed" by someone else in your place(s) of employment? Please indicate the nature of the organization(s) and position(s) held.

80.　If you have "come out" or been "outed" in your place(s) of employment how did others (e.g., male or female manager, supervisor, coworkers, subordinate employees, etc.) react toward you? For example, did attitudes toward you change? If so, in what ways? (May need to probe here).

81.　Has the possibility or occurrence of discrimination and/or anti-gay violence in your place(s) of employment affected in any way how you yourself act or behave? (Probing question).

82.　For example, have you modified your style of dress including jewellery, language, mannerisms, body gestures, etc.? If yes, how does this make you feel?

83.　Have you ever taken a self-defense class because you have experienced, or feared, discrimination and/or anti-gay violence in your place(s) of employment?

84.　If there are other gays/lesbians in your place(s) of employment do you avoid fraternizing with them in the workplace? If yes, why?

85. Would you say that you try to "pass as straight" in your place(s) of employment in order to avoid discrimination and/or anti-gay violence? If yes, please indicate how. How does this behaviour make you feel?

86. Have you ever not applied for certain jobs because you feared discrimination and/or anti-gay violence? If yes, please indicate what those jobs were.

Section C:

The following questions relate to those workplaces where you have experienced discrimination and/or anti-gay violence:

87. Is the organization(s) unionized?

88. If yes, were grievance procedures available to victims of anti-gay discrimination and/or violence? If so, please indicate the organization(s) where such procedures were available.

89. Did you yourself avail of the grievance process? If yes, please explain your experience with the process and resulting outcome. If no, please explain the reason(s) why you chose not to avail of the grievance process.

90. Did the management of the organization(s) provide victims with alternate means of combating anti-gay discrimination and/or violence? For example, did the organization(s) have a visible and clearly defined policy condemning such behaviours? Please specify the organizations.

91. If yes, did the policy(ies) allow victims to file a complaint(s) against the perpetrator(s)? Did you yourself avail of this process? If yes, please explain your experience with the process and resulting outcome. If no, please explain the reason(s) why you chose not to avail of the process.

92. Upon experiencing workplace anti-gay discrimination and/or violence did you file a complaint with either the Newfoundland or the Canadian Human Rights Commissions? If yes, please explain your experience with the process and resulting outcome. If no, please explain the reason(s) why you chose not to avail of the process. Which organization(s) was involved?

93. Did criminal charges result against any of those who committed acts of anti-gay violence and/or discrimination against you? If yes, please explain what those charges were. What was the outcome? Which organization(s) was involved?

94. Would you recommend other gay men take action and if so what kind of action?

Interviewee Release Form

"An Exploratory Study of Workplace Anti-Gay Violence Against Self-Identified Gay Males in St. John's, Newfoundland."

The purpose of this form is to give you information about the research project, its objectives and the conditions under which the interview will be conducted. I request that you read this form carefully and sign it if you agree to participate in this project.

First, however, I would like to give you a little information about myself and the research project. My name is Joseph Courtney. I am a graduate student in sociology at Memorial University of Newfoundland, St. John's. This project is a requirement for my master's thesis and is funded by the Institute of Social and Economic Research. The primary objective of this study is to explore gay mens' experiences with anti-gay violence within the context of paid employment.

For the purpose of this study, anti-gay violence includes the following behaviours: verbal abuse, including heterosexist remarks and/or jokes and epithets (e.g., faggot, queer); verbal threats and other anti-gay behaviours (e.g., threats of physical violence; threats to disclose one's sexual orientation; death threats; anonymous and threatening telephone calls; anti-gay graffiti; privacy invasion and property destruction or vandalism); physical

assault (e.g., pushing, grabbing, kicking, slapping, hitting, punching and beatings); and, sexual assault (e.g., any inappropriate touching and grabbing that is of a sexual nature and rape). These violent behaviours are directed at gay men because of their actual or perceived homosexual orientation. To my knowledge there exists no research into workplace anti-gay violence in St. John's, Newfoundland. It is hoped, therefore, that this research project will help increase awareness and understanding of this serious social problem while providing informed recommendations for change.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to answer questions and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time. Please feel free to offer comments and suggestions on topics covered in the interview and on issues not covered that you think may be relevant. With your permission I prefer to tape record the interview to ensure accuracy of information. However, because this topic is of such a sensitive nature, you may request that I turn the tape recorder off anytime during the interview. The interview will be subject to strict confidentiality. It is my responsibility, therefore, to ensure the protection of both your identity and answers to the questions you provide. Once the thesis has received formal approval, and at your request, the cassette tape will either be handed over to you or destroyed. You may also choose to allow me to retain the cassette tape for my exclusive use. I would be grateful if you would sign this form to show that you are aware of its contents. Your assistance in this project is very much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Joseph Courtney, M.A. Candidate

Department of Sociology

I, _____ , hereby agree to take part in the aforementioned

project.

(Signature) _____   Date _____