

Haters Are Gonna Hate, Study Confirms

By Katy Waldman



McKayla Maroney (at the 2012 Olympics) hates taxidermy.

Photo by Thomas Coex/AFP/Getty Images

Haters really are going to hate. A new study published in the *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* corroborates the hip-hop and Internet truism that you just can't win with some people. (No word yet on whether playas gonna play or ballers gonna ball, but we'll probably find out soon. Researchers gonna research.)



KATY WALDMAN

Katy Waldman is a *Slate* staff writer.

In their paper “Attitudes Without Objects,” psychologists Justin Hepler and Dolores Albarracin show that **those who already hold a lot of negative views are more likely to react negatively to new stimuli**. The pair asked a group of 200 men and women to evaluate how they felt about various subjects, such as camping, health care, architecture, taxidermy, crossword puzzles, and Japan. They took note of the respondents who rated many of these unconnected prompts harshly (the haters). Then, a month later, they asked everyone to weigh in again to control for the possibility that the grumps were just in a bad mood the first time.

Advertisement

After marking the dependably hateful haters with a scarlet *H*, the researchers presented participants with information about a new product: the “Monahan LPI-800 Compact 2/3-Cubic-Foot 700-Watt Microwave Oven.” This elaborately titled microwave oven does not exist (except in Jack Donaghy's mind), but participants didn't know this and were given three glowing fake reviews and three dissatisfied fake reviews. While people who more or less liked taxidermy and crossword puzzles also liked the oven, the haters drenched their fake consumer surveys in haterade. They were also more likely to hate on recycling and vaccine shots. (To be fair, it's hard to be a ray of sunshine when you've got the measles.)

Hepler and Albarracin write:

If individuals differ in the general tendency to like versus dislike objects, an intriguing possibility is that attitudes toward independent objects may actually be related. So someone's attitude toward architecture may in fact tell us something about their attitude toward health care because both attitudes would be biased by a disposition to like or dislike stimuli.

In other words, although you may be as inoffensive as a Monahan LPI-800 Compact 2/3-Cubic-Foot 700-Watt Microwave Oven, some people will still think you're the worst. I leave it to **this prancing kitten** to determine whether such knowledge is liberating or depressing—and to you commenters to continue providing backup for this study's result every single day.

FOLLOW SLATE

SLATE ON [IPHONE](#) [ANDROID](#) [KINDLE](#)

[REPRINTS](#)

[ADVERTISE WITH US](#)

[ABOUT US](#)
[CONTACT US](#)
[WORK WITH US](#)
[FEEDBACK](#)
[CORRECTIONS](#)

[USER AGREEMENT](#)
[PRIVACY POLICY](#)
[FAQ](#)