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Review of Eskenazi et al. (2026)

William T. O'Donohue, University of Nevada, Reno, USA. E-mail: wto@unr.edu

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This is an important and well-thought-out series of two studies. I recommend it for publication with three minor revisions. First, they should discuss somewhere that even if speech is considered harmful it is still a separate question whether first amendment (legal), or free speech (moral), or academic freedom (pragmatic), would still permit it or not permit it. See O'Donohue & Fisher (2022), for example. Don't want readers to think harmful entails legitimate prohibition. Second, another question is what the outcomes are if someone uses harmful speech, assuming the prior question is settled in the direction that it should be prohibited. Should a person be expelled or fired, for example? Maybe this can be added to the discussion section.

The most serious limitation is that they never tested how harmful speech is only when it is directly personally relevant. For example, the word chick but only women rate it. Or. The word colored but only African Americans rate it. They need either to point this out as a significant limitation or run an analysis and report it. The Russians have a saying along the lines that other people's tears are easy to cope with. They do lump people into a group that is essentially discriminated against, but this is still lumpy and not as specific as the above.