

# Homophobic Scientist Dumped From Oil Spill Team

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Astrophysics professor Jonathan Katz is no longer part of a team of scientists the Energy Department assembled to tackle the Gulf of Mexico oil spill, [Metro Weekly](#) reports. In a 1999 [essay](#), Katz blamed “sodomites” and intravenous drug users for the AIDS-related deaths of innocent people.

On May 12, Energy Secretary Steven Chu announced an elite team of five scientists tapped to help deal with BP’s leaking oil well. Shortly after, news surfaced that Katz authored an essay titled “In Defense of Homophobia,” which he posted on his website at Washington University at St. Louis.

Bloggers, led by John Aravosis at AmericaBlog, circulated a petition asking President Obama to fire Katz. But criticism wasn’t uniform. Even some openly gay readers commented that Katz’s opinions on homosexuality should be viewed independent of his scientific knowledge.

On May 17, an Energy Department spokesperson said Katz was no longer involved in the group’s efforts to stop the oil spill and that the department was not aware of Katz’s writings when it sought his help.

In his essay, Katz lays out what he claims are religious and rational reasons for homophobia. He blames the AIDS-related deaths of innocent children and straight people “on the hands of the homosexuals and intravenous drug abusers who poisoned the blood supply. These people died so the sodomites could feel good about themselves.”

He then concludes: “Experience with HIV shows that the environments of homosexual promiscuity and intravenous drug abuse can readily turn a single infection into an epidemic.”