Homosexuality Essay, Research Paper

Homosexuality- The Major Cause of Homosexuality

The origins of human sexuality and homosexuality in particular have puzzled philosophers, theologians and ordinary people for thousands of years. In scatter cultures, homosexuals have been regarded as a normal part of life, however, same sex attraction to most cultures have been treated as an unforgivable sin or a terrible crime. Many psychologists and psychiatrist had attempted to ?treat and counsel? the homosexuals. In our social norm, male attracts to female and female attracts to male. To everyone this is a natural and biological urge. However, there is a significant minority who attracts to their own sex. It?s about five percent of the population in the world. There are many opposing viewpoints of whether it derives from variation in our genes or our physiology, from the intricacies of our personal history or from convergence of these? Is it for that matter a choice rather than a compulsion? Chances are no one factor or study can alone explicate and clarify the human sexual orientation. However, there are evidences that prove being gay is not a choice. The nature of homosexuality primarily comes from one?s biological sexual orientation and the environment is just a source to bring forth or repress the behavior

Many researchers and scientists have long search for the distinguishable brain structures, the biochemistry in the human brains to differentiate the differences to classify between the two obvious sexes we now have in our society, male and female. Such sex differentiation of the brain?s structure is called sexual dimorphism. . (LeVay/ Hamer 22)

The first significant observation of sexual dimorphism performed in an animal laboratory. Roger A. Gorski, a professor at University of California, Los Angeles, conducted an experiment on rats. In 1978, Gorski examined the rat?s hypothalamus, a region at the base of its brain that is involved in instinctive behaviors and regulation of metabolism. He discovered there is a group on front of the hypothalamus is several times larger in millimeter of the male rats compared to the female rats. The cell group is very small but it could be easily observed on a stained slice when being viewed under a microscope. More interestingly, Gorski?s finding applied to the sexual orientation between males and females. That particular group of cell is known as the medial preoptic are has been involved in the sexual behaviors typically displayed in males. For instance, if there is a male rat has a injury medial preoptic area, he apparently couldn?t indifferent to sex with another female. From the study of Gorski and his co-workers, we now know the androgen is the typical male hormone and the estrogen is the female hormone played a major role in bring about dimorphism during the fetus development. (LeVay/Hamer 23)

Another finding also involved with Gorski and his colleagues at U.C.L.A, especially with his student, Dr. Laura S. Allen. They also found the dimorphic structure in the human brain. A cell group named INAH3, shorten for the third interstitial nucleus of the anterior hypothalamus, in the medial preoptic region of the hypothalamus is about three times larger in men that in women. (LeVay/Hamer 23)

Animal studies make available a good deal of evidence for biological basis of disease, but in this case, sexual orientation. Through a careful exploitation of hormone level on rats, Gorski as been able to produce male rodents that demonstrate feminine behavior and injected into the female fetus that develop with the male fetus and it appear to be masculine because of the male testosterone. They also look and act more like males. In addition, they are less attractive to male mice (Gorman 60)

Related to Gorski and Allen?s study, Simon LeVay, a British biologist and neurologist at San Diego Salk Institute, who is also gay, performed another study for Biological Studies, in 1990. LeVay decided to check whether INAH3 or some other cell group in the medial preoptic area varies in size with sexual orientation as well as with sex. LeVay conducted an experiment on the hypothalamus in autopsy specimens from nineteen homosexual men, all of whom died of AIDS and sixteen heterosexual men, six of whom had also died of complication of AIDS. After encoding the specimens to eliminate all the bias that could skew the outcome. LeVay carefully sliced the hypothalamus into serial slices. He measured their cross-sectional areas and their thickness under a microscope. LeVay has concluded the sexually dimorphic nucleus INAH3 were significantly larger than of female and smaller in male homosexuals than in straight men and similar in size to the nucleus of female. In some gay men, this group altogether nonexistent; this is statistically proven in 1 in 1000 gay men. LeVay hypothesized that this is a biological factor and possibly genetically based has influenced in the brains of homosexuals to become feminized. (LeVay/Hamer 25)

William Byne, a psychiatrist at Mount Sinai Medical Center decided to challenge and test LeVay?s finding. Byne compared the brains of nineteen heterosexual men and seven women and found the male nuclei were larger, as LeVay had initiated. Byne came up with several arguments that other factors could also influenced the cause of homosexuality but chosen not to publish his result until he can rule out all the possibilities that could contradict his argument. He is also collecting numerous human brains for a comparison of gay and straight males. (Horgan 26)

There are many conservatives who disapprove of homosexuality and have the intense hostility with the concept of ?gay gene? and have traditionally argued against it. But this is because those conservatives do not understand the implications that lie behind the gay gene. Homosexuality is life left-handedness. It?s neither chosen nor a psychological illness. Since the homosexuality exposed and became a controversial issue in United States in the last three decades, many conservatives argue, ?Homosexuality is a chose lifestyle, like vegetarian. It?s a disease like schizophrenia.? (Burr 22). But since scientists had proven those are not completely cases of homosexuality and it clearly a biological development like and it does not correlate with any environment factors.

Scientists has classified homosexuality is a trait. For every trait they studied, clinicians and biologists often assemble a trait profile of the sum total they have gathered in their studies. The trait usually shows up in the population as two ?orientation?. Ninety-two percent of the population usually has the majority orientation and about eight percent has the minority orientation. Either the two traits are non-pathological and chosen. The minority orientation runs in the families has a name of ?maternal effect? given by the geneticists which men always receive it from their mother. If it is inheritable, as demonstrated by the fact those identical twins, whose are naturally clones are far more likely to share the minority orientation than siblings who are not twins. For example, handedness, right- handed holds the majority orientation in the populations that the left-handed holds the minority orientation. This theory could apply to the homosexuals and heterosexuals. Heterosexuality accounts roughly ninety-five percent of the population while the homosexuality is the minority orientation, which holds the other five- percent of the population. Clearly family, social norms, friends, teacher or school education can?t make you to become gay, which is a minority orientation. (Burr 24)

Dean H. Hamer of National Cancer Institute studied the DNA from forty pairs of homosexual brothers and found thirty-three of them share genetic markers on the X-chromosome in a region know as Xq28. X chromosome is one of the two sex determined chromosomes. It is always inherited from mothers. Genes are arranged along 46 chromosomes and each chromosome contains tiny coils of DNA, deoxyribonucleic acid, which carries the instruction to manufacture a particular body substance. There was no such similar sharing in the same region among heterosexual men. Researchers have not yet compared the homosexuals? genetic information to the other group. The finding does not explain all the homosexuals; seven out of forty homosexual brothers did not have the common genetic factor. The explanation for this is it might cause by other unknown genetic influence. (LeVay/Hamer, 27-29). Since the DNA strand is long enough to contain hundreds of genes. Hamer?s team has not found the gene that makes some men gay but the Xq28 is one of the possibilities of the gay gene (Begley, Sharon, Hager, Mary)

If homosexuality is inherited and the male homosexual gets the gay gene from the X-chromosome of his mother, then aren?t that twin brothers and other siblings of the family have a good chance of being genetically influenced by that trait. Looking for linkage, Hamer has conducted a random survey and a survey with families with gay brothers between the maternal and paternal relatives. The possibilities of maternal uncle and maternal cousin through aunt have the highest percentage of being gay. It?s from 7.3 % to 12.9% compared to the paternal uncle and cousin through aunt of 3.9% to 5.4%. Why are most gay men relatives are gay on their mother?s side of the family? The possibility is a man has two chromosomes, X and Y. The Y chromosome is the sex chromosome and any traits that on the X chromosome pass to the child come mostly from his mother. Chances are she had inherited those traits from her side of the family. (Hamer/Copeland 111)

In 1985, Richard C. Pillard and James D. Weinrich conducted the first modern study on the pattern of homosexuality runs in families. ?The random pooled data for men show that about 57% of identical twins, 24% of fraternal twins and 13% of brothers of gay men are also gay. For women, 50% of the identical twin, 13% of sisters of the lesbians are also lesbians.?(LeVay/Hamer 26)

Data of homosexuality combined and analyzed, it showed a good possibility of family clustering of sexual orientation becomes evident for both sexes. But others say this finding reveals another significant problem with a ?born gay? conclusion.

The argument against the data indicating above is if homosexuality is inherited then identical twin brothers who share 100% of their genes should have 100% chance of being gay instead of 57%? The respond to this argument is in a gene there are two alleles. For example of Huntington?s disease, it comes in two alleles. One is to suppress the gene and the other activates the disease. Therefore, the baby has a 50% to 50% change of his identical twin brother will get the same ?gay? trait. Another example is Type 1 diabetes; this disease has only 30% active, so in another word, you could only have 30% chance of this gene will become activate. Therefore two identical brothers could have share the same gene for diabetes but one might develop it and one might not. The activeness of the gay gene is only 50%, for that reason, some twins do not share the same sexual orientation unless there is something that triggers those alleles to activate. There are traits that emerge at the different time of life, some at the beginning and others that emerge later on in time. (Kangas 20)

Another explanation is after the fertilized egg separated into two individuals. The DNA sequence might have a few changes and that could lead to the personality as well as the sexual orientation differences. This has not been proven, but it could be one of the possibilities of why identical twins do not have 100% chance of being gay. ? Bailey and Pillard say their research indicates that male sexual orientation is ?substantially genetic?. Research on social factors has proven fruitless, with no evidence that parental behavior or even parent?s homosexuality affects the children?s sexual orientation. (Pillard 32)

Applying the homosexuality to the gene concept, New York psychiatrist Kenneth Paul Rosenberg believes that we, as people, should be more open-minded to the study of homosexuality because it could help to fight for gay and lesbian rights in this society. Hopefully it also could decrease an escalating hate crime rate and the discrimination toward homosexuals.(Horgan)

Like any genetic research, finding the gene sequence is time consuming and expensive. The finding of Huntington?s disease took about a decade and cost millions of dollars. What are the advantages of the study?s outcomes and who will be effects by it? Human sexual orientation is no ordinary topic or study. It?s at the center of a fierce debate involving politics, the law, religion, ethics and the origins and meaning of human behavior. Many legal experts felt the evidence for a genetic link to homosexuality would strengthens the evidence for immutability and therefore cause tighter scrutiny of laws that permitted discrimination against gays and lesbians in housing, employment, or participation in the political process. Others, though, argued that immutability was a red herring and that the real issue was equal protection, not biology.

There were also ethical, medical and economic issues involved as well. Although scientists did not provide any test for the still hypothetical gay gene but we are heading in that direction. If such test were developed, might parents decide to screen the fetus for homosexuality, just as they do for Down syndrome and other genetic defects? Would some doctors regard homosexuality as a genetic defect that should be cured and weeded out of the population? Would insurance companies charge men with the gay gene more on coverage or refuse to serve them because they have a higher risk of AIDS faced by gay men? These are questions that worried many people.

?In addition, homosexuals are frequently the targets of discrimination and violence. The treat of violence and discrimination is an obstacle to lesbian and gay people?s development. In a 1989 national survey, 5% of the gay men and 10% of the lesbians reported physical abuse and/or assault?47% report some form of discrimination over their lifetime. Other research has show similarly high rates of discrimination or violence toward homosexuals? (Yahoo.com, APA Q&A)

Personally I do hope the genetic surgery will reveal the true nature of homosexual and find the right loci of the gay gene in the near future. Optimistically with finding of the biological influences on the gay gene can help to eliminate the discrimination and the escalating hate crimes rate toward the homosexuals. Homosexuals are normal people like the heterosexuals. They have feelings and their sexual orientation of attracting the same sex is innate. They have no control over this destiny. Counseling, therapy or the environment can?t change this so since we can?t convert this then why don?t we accept this and give those homosexuals all the respects and rights that they deserve like any other heterosexuals.

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