

OUR SEXUALITY AND ITS ORIGINS

R. B. Moody

During the last quarter of a century, from 1968 to 1992, scientific research and findings about the sexuality of mammals has completely changed what human populations know. By 1968 research on the psychosexual orientations of all mammals had clarified these were created by hormones in the uterus after pregnancy began. Research has approached this inquiry from many avenues; hormone influence and timing, anatomical differences and conclusions, genetic studies and finally psychological studies. This brief outline contains some of each of these.

Hormone Research.

Dr. Charles Phoenix of the Oregon Primate Center outside of Beaverton, and his colleagues from many centers, are internationally regarded as major researchers on physical and behavioral impacts of hormones in all mammals. His research, started in the 1950s, established what determines masculinity and femininity, and the biological mechanisms by which sex and sexual-related behaviors are determined. **Research determined that in all mammals, a fetus begins with a female brain, and that this is masculinized by the hormone testosterone.** Masculinization has a dual function: morphological (demonstrated in 1938), and degrees of physiological-psychological-behavioral masculinization (1959-68). These changes are made in a short period of time with critical limits, and this produces the permanent "psychosexual differentiation", at which time the fetus' brain and nervous system become male or stay female, independent of gender. The book Brain Sex, detailing most of these findings and others in this outline, reports that testosterone in the womb affects brain sexuality during at least three phases that develop 1) behavior, 2) sexual orientation, 3) color sensitivity and style, so that in each of us every one of these areas develops independently as to whether it is more to the female or male characteristic. So we are composed of independent areas with ranges of these characteristics, whatever our appearances may be.

Anatomical Research.

In November 1991 Simon LeVay, a neuroscientist at the Salk Institute in LaJolla California, reported that he had scanned the brains of 41 cadavers including 19 homosexual males and found that an area in the hypothalamus of the brains of gays to be a quarter to one half the size of male heterosexuals'; this area of the gays' brain is the same size as the females'. This was the first direct evidence that gay brains were structurally different from heterosexual males, and that brains could be different within bodies of the same sex. LeVay said, **"The main result of this research is to show that it is possible to study sexual orientation at the biological level. It is not just the province of the psychologist and psychoanalysts anymore"**. Dr. Thomas R. Insel, a behavioral neuroscientist at the National Institute of Mental Health in Rockville Md. said, "It's quite a striking observation, and as far as I know it's unprecedented. Simon LeVay is a top-notch, world-class neuroanatomist, and this is a very provocative paper. Most of us who look at the influence of the brain on behavior work at the molecular level. But this is a rather gross anatomical difference and it is a dramatic finding."

Dr. Ingeborg L. Ward, professor of psychology at Villanova University near Philadelphia, said the finding fits in logically with what is known about the development of the central nervous system. The brain *at birth* is thought to be basically female. During pregnancy it requires the influence of the male hormone, testosterone, generated by a male fetus' testes, to develop a masculine structure. "Male rats who are exposed to testosterone blockers during fetal development will emerge from the womb with characteristically feminine brains, including the region that corresponds to the anterior hypothalamus in humans."

Dr. Roger Gorsky, chairman of the department of anatomy and cell biology at the University of California School of Medicine in Los Angeles is preparing for publication the discovery of another difference in brain structure between homosexual and heterosexual men which will show that **the connection between the left and right hemispheres in gays is composed of female brain cells.** The hormonal-psychosexual orientation indicates that the male homosexual has a female brain and nervous system, while a lesbian has a male brain and nervous system.

Genetic Research.

From 1981 to 1992 the hormonal findings have shaped the work of scientists on **genetic makeups of mammals as to how and when sexuality is defined in the uterus and what influences sexuality after birth.** What we know of the human is that an individual's discovery of one's sexuality can be very early or quite late in a lifetime. Psychoanalysts, psychiatrists, and psychologists realize that the sexual development before birth becomes dominant and is permanent. Scientists look for how and when genetic variables shape the timing, extent and shape of our sexuality. East Germany, as well as other countries, has been experimenting with and studying the development of sexuality in mammals; that can be found in the literature.

Psychological Research.

Psychological tests to offset commonly held beliefs, condemning homosexuals, in the mental health professions and society were first reported in 1956 by Dr. Evelyn Hooker, professor of Psychology at UCLA, one of the "Grand Dames" of American Psychology. Many other clinical psychologists replicated and expanded her findings in the next 33 years. Evelyn Hooker's August 30, 1956 definitive "paper" was read at the American Psychological Convention in Chicago. She included in the paper the following about her colleagues: **"It is well known that many people, including physicians, react in an exaggerated way to sexual (orientation), and particularly to homosexuality with disgust, anger, and hostility. Such feelings often arise from the individual's own conflict centering about his unconscious homosexual impulses. These attitudes may interfere with an intelligent and objective handling of (a) problem."** One of the conclusions of this paper and one that has been duplicated many times is that, "homosexuality as a clinical entity does not exist." Not a clinical entity means there's no problem; there is nothing to fix. The American Psychiatric Association dropped homosexuality as an emotional and personality disorder in 1973.

Reference List.

The Men With the Pink Triangle, by Heinz Heger, 1980. Written by an Austrian man who was imprisoned in Nazi concentration camps for six years. This shows the dehumanizing of minorities by the Nazi and is an important observation as it is the same strategy used by the church and society to exclude and justify denial of human rights to gay men and lesbian women.

The Pink Triangle, by Richard Plant, 1986. Insight into the politics and sexuality of Nazism in the 1930's. While the gays were being persecuted; Hitler's second-in-command, Ernst Roehm, was gay.

Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality: Gay People in Western Europe from the Beginning of the Christian Era to the Fourteenth Century, by John Boswell, 1980. A large, comprehensive volume that searches the roots of modern prejudice against homosexuals. Covers social intolerance over the last 700 years.

Brain Sex, by Anne Moir, 1991. Covers many differences among the sexes and their biological origins. Ms. Moir collected sexual studies for many years and gives the results in readable form. Being Homosexual: Gay Men and Their Development, by Richard D. Isay 1989. A study on the timing of the development of sexuality.

Bob Moody collected and wrote this information. Shawn Higgins edited and presented it.



To the Editor:


Dear Reverend Hults;

Just a note to thank you for the lovely evening spent among friends in your home watching Armistead Maupin's "Tales of the City". It was poignantly appropriate that Lon Mabon was attempting to poison the hearts of Clatsop County residents on Tuesday, January 10th, while you were hosting a gathering of loving neighbors nibbling cheese & crackers, crudites & chocolates. Thanks.
In Peace,
Mona

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A SPEECH MADE AT SEASIDE HIGH SCHOOL, JANUARY 14TH, COMMEMORATING MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR'S BIRTHDAY

You see here before you a victim of discrimination. I am Amerasian, my mother is Chinese, my father is Caucasian. I lived in Portland until I was nine years old. Up until then, I had no idea I was different. I was always a little weird, but I still had friends of all races. Then I moved to Cannon Beach over the summer and my siblings and I made friends with a little boy next door. We spent a lot of time together, playing in the dirt and picking blackberries. Then one day our friend came over and told us that his dad said he couldn't play with us anymore because we were Chinese. He slid an abalone shell under the fence that divided our yards as a reminder of him. Shortly afterwards, he moved away and it was time to start school. I went to Cannon Beach Elementary School. The fourth grade consisted of about thirty students, all of them caucasian except for me and another girl of hispanic heritage. I was made the butt of many racial jokes which continued through junior high school. I realized that the children here weren't exposed to much culture and they didn't know any better, but it still hurt and it still made me furious. I thought that it would end once I got to high school, but it still happens. High School has been a wonderful experience for me, all these people with open minds who are willing to accept me for who I am. Yet my fellow freshmen are the ones who still hit the hardest and most frequently. Not just because of my Asian heritage, but because of the way I dress, and because I am different.

Just the other night I was watching a program about AIDS and a man stated that when AIDS first hit, the government was slow to do anything about it, because it attacked homosexuals and drug addicts first. If it had hit the middle class white families, they would've gotten right on it. Do you know what solution President Reagan suggested? He said that we shouldn't try to find a cure; we should prevent it by teaching sexual education in schools. If anything, that would make the problem worse. The only thing I cannot do without crying is look at the AIDS quilt. Millions of people who died of AIDS had patches sewn onto the quilt by people who loved them, and it breaks my heart.

The OCA is campaigning to end gay rights which they call "special rights", but the way I see it, the gay community just wants equal rights and to not be discriminated against. Lon Mabon said that he would set up a counseling center for homosexuals to convince them to become heterosexuals. As if being homosexual is wrong! The OCA claims that in the bible God condemns gays. As a friend of mine put it, "Homosexuals are people who love people of the same sex. How could God condemn people for loving?"

Animals are discriminated against also. We destroy their homes for our crops and houses and test our medicines on them. Who gave us the right to do this to them? We humans think we are superior to other animals because we are able to think rationally and mold the environment to fit our needs. The question is not "Can animals think rationally?" but "Can animals feel pain?" and YES, they can.

I see many, many wrongs going on in the world. Ethnic Cleansing for example. It's the Holocaust all over again. Yet we do nothing about it because it doesn't affect us personally. But millions of people are dying because they are different.

We are gathered at this assembly to commend Martin Luther King Jr. He strove to give his people equal rights and he died for it.

We cannot let this go on any longer.

by Sui Lin Chin

I ain't black, but there's a lot of times
I wish I could say I ain't white.
Frank Zappa

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