

Elvis Martinez

Julie Fraad

English 1101

15 November 2017

Homosexuality Essay

Have you ever wondered if our sexual orientation is something that we are born with or something we learn? Well there has been a lot of controversy regarding it. Many psychologists believe that genes play a huge role when it comes to sexual orientation, mainly heterosexuality but, over the course of years many psychologists have specifically questioned and debated about homosexuality. Many psychologists have been trying to figure out if homosexuality is a choice, influenced by our environment or something that people are born with. Homosexuality is biologically determined because of the studies shown in twins, natural selection and the brain structure in homosexual men.

Homosexuality is biologically determined because of the twin studies that have been done. Michael Bailey, a professor of psychology was studying genetics and the sexual orientation by using twins in 1978. Bailey believes that since identical twins have the same genetics, the sexual orientation would be the same in identical twins rather than in fraternal twins. In *The Last Mile*, author Siddhartha Mukherjee states that Bailey's results were "Among the fifty-six pairs of identical twins, both twins were gay in 52 percent. Of the fifty-four pairs of non-identical twins, 22 percent were both gay—lower than the fraction for identical twins, but still significantly higher than the estimate 10 percent gay in the overall population" (373-374). This

shows that a good portion of the identical twins were homosexuals and the portion of non identical twins were still pretty high compared to the overall gay population. This proves that if one twin is homosexual the other is most likely to be homosexual as well due to the same genetics they share. Even if the twins were separated at birth and raised in different environments, the results were the same. This also proves that homosexuality does have a connection to our genes since the results were high. If homosexuality was a choice, the results of the data would have been extremely low and most would have been heterosexual.

Homosexuality is also biologically determined because of natural selection. Natural selection is when individuals are best suited for their environment and survive due to their genetic traits. Dr. James O'Keefe, a cardiologist at Saint Luke's Mid America Heart Institute, gave a TED talk in which he talks about homosexuality being inborn due to family and environmental factors. In the TED talk "Homosexuality: It's about survival - not sex" O'Keefe states "You have many different DNA programs downloaded on your DNA and epigenetics chooses from among these to determine which version of you is the best fit for the environment" and "If the [human] family is flush with plenty of kids and/or it's a stressful place in time, nature occasionally flips these epigenetic switches to turn on the gay genes" (O'Keefe). This states that when your family/environment is a certain way, the epigenetics changes and it alters the brain development which leads to the change in sexual orientation. This leads for homosexuality to be predisposed and have the child grow up to be gay. This shows that genetics does have a role when it comes to choosing what sexual orientation is needed and why it occurs. This also shows an advantage for family and community in order to thrive and succeed since homosexuals have characteristics that helps to bring families closer and bring kindness to a society.

One last reason why homosexuality is biologically determined is because of the brain structure in homosexual men. Simon LeVay, a neuroscientist at the Salt Institute, conducted research on the brains in homosexuals and heterosexuals and found surprising results on the size of a certain part in the brain. In the article “Born or Bred” authors D. Gelman and D. Foote stated “the cluster of neurons known as INAH 3(the third interstitial nucleus of the anterior hypothalamus , which LeVay call “the business end as far as sex goes”) was more than twice as large in the heterosexual males as in the homosexuals, whose INAH 3 was around the same size in the women”. This states that the part of the brain in which is believed to control sexual activity was found out to be smaller in gay men than in straight men. Although many neurologists don’t know when it got in the brain, it does show that it has to do with genetics since all homosexuals have the same size. If genetics had not played a role in sexual orientation, the brain structure in all men would have been the same size or different for each. Also, if straight women and gay males have around the same size of brain structure, it further proves that it is biologically determined since both genders are attracted to men.

Many psychologists believe that homosexuality is not inborn but something rather learned or taught. Author Dean Byrd of “The Innate, Immutable Argument Finds no Basis in Science” states “Homosexuality can best be explained by an alternative model where “temperamental and personality traits interact with the familial and social milieu as the individual’s sexuality emerges” (2) . Although it may be true that family and society can impact sexuality I don’t agree because there hasn’t been any concrete evidence to support this case. Instead there has been evidence that proves this wrong. Author D. Gelman and D. Foote also stated in their article “None of the usual domineering-mother , distant-father theories has been conclusively shown to

determine sexuality. Meanwhile, the case for biology has grown stronger... homosexuality occurs at the same rates with the same rates of behavior. That suggests something biological going on. The biological evidence has been growing for 20 or more years". This shows that having a close mother and distant father is not the reason for homosexuality in a male. Despite different cultures and countries, homosexual men were found out to be surrounded by the same type of behaviors in their family. Behavior also runs in genes which leads to both homosexuality and behavior to have connections to genes/DNA. Family doesn't change your sexuality, it's the genes in your family that helps to determine your sexuality.

To conclude, homosexuality is biologically determined due to our DNA and the role of our genes. The study on identical twins prove that homosexuality in both twins is due to their identical genetics, natural selection leads for homosexuality to be predisposed in some genes in order to survive and benefit community, and the size of brain structure that controls sexual orientation is smaller in homosexuals. If homosexuality was really a choice, why would someone want to be part of a community that is constantly oppressed and frowned upon? If homosexuality is influenced by society, why is there differences in brain structures in males? This just comes to show that biology is the role in the disposition of homosexuality.

Work Cited

Byrd , Dean. "The Innate, Immutable Arguments Finds No Basis in Science ." 27 May 2001,

Gelman, D. and D. Foote. "Born or Bred? (Cover Story)." *Newsweek*, vol. 119, no. 8, 24 Feb. 1992, p. 46. EBSCOhost,

Mukherjee, Siddhartha. "The Last Mile". *The Gene*. First ed. New York Scribers, 2016.370-90.Print

O' Keefe , James. *Homosexuality: It's about Survival - Not Sex* | James O'Keefe | TEDx Tallaght.

