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 The Evolution of Homosexuality

Human sexuality is a part of nature and society but has been questioned in the past century. Researchers have studied homosexuality and they’re on the lookout to see if this connects with human genetic makeup or how humans express themselves. The gay gene, Xq28, has been found to be one of the reasons for people being attracted to the same sex. Homosexuality is biologically inherited from birth, it has been researched, experimented, and religiously tolerated.

Genes are characteristics that are heritable within an individual, who have no choice in their future appearance and mentality. Homosexuals are seen to have inherited a gene, which seems to be what decides whether they are straight or not. In “The Last Mile” by Siddhartha Mukherjee, Dean Hamer who was a researcher at the National Cancer Institute had discovered a gene named, Xq28, that seems to be responsible for people identifying as homosexuals. The author sees this as an open door to finally getting to discover whether humans can be born gay. Mukherjee states how “ Multiple genes with small effects - in particular, genes that modulate and integrate inputs from the environment - are much more likely to be involved in the determination. There will be no SRY gene for straightness.”(379). He believes that there might be more to it than just one gene, Xq28. The author sees this as one of the many genes that may be responsible for human behavior and sexuality. Research has been conducted to confirm this somehow, one being in the article, “Pas de Deux of Sexuality Is Written in the Genes”. In the article, it describes how “Researchers have devoted considerable effort to understanding homosexuality in men and women...Studies of the twins show that homosexuality, especially among men, is quite heritable, meaning there is a genetic component to it. But since gay men have about one-fifth as many children as straight men, any gene favoring homosexuality should quickly disappear from the population.”(4). This means that this gene is passed between generation, explaining the fact of why homosexuality is a reoccurring thing and not something rare. With this in mind, homosexuality is beginning to seem less of a choice and more biological. In James O’Keefe’s Ted Talk, “It’s about survival - not sex”, is a very perfect example of explaining how homosexuality is based off through genetics and not influenced by culture. O’Keefe describes how homosexuality may be a sign of evolution doing its role, how gay men are born into a family is either due to the mother giving birth to too many guys, perhaps due to a gay gene passing through generations or because of a mutation while the mother is pregnant. Homosexuality should be seen as more of it inherited through ancestors than someone choosing to be homosexual.

Many researchers have experimented with people who identify as homosexual, to figure out whether this is out of choice or from birth. In the text, “Homosexuality: Born or Breed?”, by Newsweek Staff, it describes experiments that were conducted on homosexual people and one of them being called the Bailey- Pillard twin study. The point of this twin study was to figure out whether genetics had a role in determining if someone is born gay through identifying twins and their sexuality to see if they are the same or different. According to the experiment, “The researchers found out that of the 56 identical twins, 52 percent were both gay, as against 22 percent of fraternal twins, who have somewhat weaker genetic bonds. (Of the adoptive, non genetically related brothers in the study, only 11 percent were both gay.) The suggestion of a shared genetic destiny is strong, but many critics have wondered: what about the discordant twins-those where only one was homosexual? Many in the study were not only discordant but dramatically different.”(5), this shows the data that was found out between twins that were gay is not one hundred percent. The data was useful to see that there is some pattern of twins born being gay, 52 percent which is high data of 56 identical twins but is three times the general population which is 10 percent.

Religions around the world have had opposing views on homosexuality up until recently in the 21st century. The Roman Catholic Pope has come to say, “He said to me, Juan Carlos, that’s not a problem,’ said Juan Carlos Cruz, the abuse survivor, describing having told the pope he was gay in a long meeting the Vatican. ‘You have to be happy with who you are. God made you this way and loves you this way, and the pop loves you this way’”(1), this shows how religion is tolerating and accepting how people are born like this. The pope himself admitted this which spewed controversy. In the Middle East, people are struggling to gain acceptance for homosexuality. People are fighting and being killed for being homosexual, but change is beginning to occur. According to the article, “Everything You Need To Know About Being Gay in Muslim Countries”, it states how, “On the religious front, prevailing Islamic views of homosexuality have been challenged here and there, but not on a scale that is likely to make much difference. There are a handful of gay-friendly mosques and a few openly gay imams - including Muhsin Hendricks in South Africa, Daayiee Abdullah in the U.S., and Ludovic-Mohamed Zahed, a French-Algerian imam.”(8) this shows that change can happen for homosexuality to be accepted. Eventually any religions in the Middle East many support the LGBT community.

Although homosexuality has inclined towards being inherited, culture and outside influences may also be the reason for men and women being attracted to their own sex. In the article “Born Gay?” by Paul Billings, the author finds flaws in experiments that have been conducted to determine if homosexuality is heritable. Billings brings about how “Techniques that visualize brain structure, such as magnetic resonance imaging and positron emission tomography scanning, reveal that the experience of an individual, even as an adult, can significantly affect brain development. One’s emotions, life’s stresses, and numerous other environmental factors can alter the metabolism of the brain and presumably its internal connections.”(3), this shows how experience factors into how people will act and behave. The author sees this as people, not just changing from birth but also due to experiences changing people internally physically. This can be frequent and influence how people identify as homosexuals.

Homosexuality has been shown to be heritable characteristics, it has been researched, experimented, and religiously tolerated. Lots of research has been put into this to discover the gay gene, Xq28, and to find more evidence to back up how homosexuality is not a choice all the time. People identify themselves may be using this as a way to express themselves, but it may also be a characteristic people are born with and are attracted to the opposite sex. So homosexuality may be a part of nature not just due to culture.

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