

# Changing views on homosexuality

[People](#)



If you live in a metropolitan city like Atlanta, as I do, you may notice that the gay culture is mixed in with the rest of the multi-cultural happenings of the city. Having a large gay community is just another unique feature to Atlanta, GA. Although other cities may not have as large a grouping, the gay community is growing across the states. Men and women are feeling more open to express their homosexual lifestyle and this is in part due to the changing views of sexual behavior and homosexuality. Homosexual behavior is defined as sexual behavior with a member of one's own sex (Sarason & Sarason, 2005).

Prior to the 1970s, homosexuality was considered to be a diagnosable psychiatric disorder and was listed in the DSM (Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders). Homosexuality was viewed almost as a disease that people needed to be cured of. Research revealed that homosexual men and women did not differ in psychological adjustment from heterosexual men and women (Sarason & Sarason, 2005). There has been the debate of whether a person is born gay or if homosexuality is a learned behavior.

In my opinion, I believe that a person is born gay and does not choose or learn this sexual behavior from others. I've witnessed a relative grow up and noticed behavior as child that suggested he may be gay. As an adult, he informed the family that he is in fact gay. This came as a shock to no one and when asked when he knew he was gay, he stated that he knew all along. It is thought that if people no longer viewed homosexuality as a behavior that people choose to partake in, that less emphasis would be placed on trying to "cure" homosexuality.

Dr. Glenn Wilson and Dr. Qazi Rahman, authors of the book *Born Gay*, state that there is no single gay gene, but genes do contribute and consider the effect of sex hormones to which fetuses are exposed in the womb (Ahuja, 2005). Wilson and Rahman feel that sexual orientation is fixed at birth and that any evidence-based scientist would agree (Ahuja, 2005). With more people understanding that sexual orientation is innate rather than learned, viewpoints on homosexuality are shifting.

Our society is slowly becoming more accepting and placing less of a stigma on homosexual behavior. In the past there were no rights for gays wanting to marry, but now gays in Massachusetts can legally marry. In Vermont and other parts of the world, gay men and women now have the right to enter into legal partnerships that give them some of the same protections and responsibilities of marriage (Sarason & Sarason, 2005). Past opinion polls have resulted in some Americans saying that gays cannot be considered good role models for children (Sarason & Sarason, 2005).

Some people have thought that a child's sexual orientation could be affected if the child had gay or lesbian parents. Research on child adjustment in homosexual households provided results that did not differ from children raised by heterosexual parents (Sarason & Sarason, 2005). Dr. Ellen C. Perrin feels that children raised by gay or lesbian couples do just as well as children raised as by heterosexual couples. " In some ways children of same-sex parents actually may have advantages over other family structures", says Perrin (Chang, 2005).

Studies conducted on homosexual couples show that lesbian couples share household responsibilities equally and that children adjust better when there is an equal division of labor (Chang, 2005). Raising healthy, well-adjusted children and understanding that homosexuality is an innate behavior are just two examples of why attitudes towards homosexuality are changing.

Although there is still room for improvement in terms of accepting gay culture, strides are being made compared to earlier attitudes. To me the most significant change is understanding that homosexuality is not a disorder, it represents a person's sexual orientation.

## **References**

[http://www. webmd. com/mental-health/news/20051012/study-same-sex-parents-raise-well-adjusted-kids](http://www.webmd.com/mental-health/news/20051012/study-same-sex-parents-raise-well-adjusted-kids)