

Homosexuality as
such, many
homosexuals prefer
to



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Homosexuality as a lifestyle and sexual orientation has been documented in nearly all civilizations throughout the ages. The practice has bore heavy condemnation in many societies which uses religious connotations to justify that homosexuals not only go against the laws of nature, but they willingly or unwillingly defeat God's purpose of procreation (Kinsey et al, 1998). Recently though, the practice seems to be gaining acceptance in predominantly modern societies across the world. It is the purpose of this paper to evaluate how historical and scientific standpoints on homosexuality continue to shape the way gay people perceive themselves.

Religion and heritage are two historical perspectives that have contributed immensely towards the development of a worldview that homosexuals are evaluated in society especially in regard to sexual behaviors (Kinsey et al, 1998). In religion, it is known that ancient Greek and Roman cultures habitually engaged in homosexual affiliations. The Christian religion, however, censured homosexual relationships, arguing that it was unchristian and ungodly to engage in the practice despite its mention in the Holy Bible (Siker, 1994). In early societies, religion was greatly intertwined with the state, and therefore the Christians used their muscle to introduce a legal system that criminalized homosexuality (Rathus et al, 2005).

This standpoint makes individuals with homosexual tendencies to live in conflict of fulfilling their natural body desires on the one hand and going against the law on the other. Cultural heritage is yet another historical perspective that shapes the way homosexuals perceive themselves. In many traditional cultures, there exist clearly cut gendered roles for both males and females, and the family is considered as the primary social unit.

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Anything that is practiced outside the gender roles designated by society is considered unacceptable (Rathus et al, 2005). Specific gender roles in nearly all civilizations across the world lay the foundation and regulations for what is right and wrong for both genders especially in regard to sexual orientation. Homosexuality is viewed as culturally unacceptable, and hence individuals exhibiting gay orientations are left with no basis to exercise their sexual orientations whatsoever (Kinsey et al, 1998). Apart from the historical perspectives, a multiplicity of scientific factors such as gene, hormonal compositions, and brain differences influence the way homosexual individuals perceive themselves. This paper will discuss the brain difference factor. Scientific research has revealed differences in neuropsychological and neuroanatomical reaction in straight and gay individuals (Pinel, 2007). Such evidence-based discoveries insinuate that an individual's sexual tendency may be premeditated by biological factors outside his or her control. This perspective qualifies homosexual orientation as a natural behavior that is dictated by biological factors.

A gay individual following this standpoint will not feel any guilt for his sexual orientation since he understands too well that there is nothing much he or society can do to change the scenario (Siker, 1994) The experience of adjusting as a gay individual through openly stating your sexual orientation is not an easy one for homosexuals as they are stereotyped and looked upon as unnatural beings in most societies (Kinsey et al, 1998). Many homosexuals are met with negative connotations of going against the very tenets of culture. As such, many homosexuals prefer to engage in clandestine relationships. Due to breakdown of cultural standards, however,

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more homosexuals are feeling safe to state their sexual orientation and express their true identities, including formally legalizing their gay relationships (Siker, 1994).

Indeed, many gay people have now formed organizations to spearhead campaigns for equal rights amongst people with different sexual orientations, may they be heterosexual or homosexual. However, fear of rejection after coming out to state your sexual orientation still remains a challenge for many homosexuals. The historical and scientific perspectives have helped me understand my sexual orientation in addition to assisting me understand the sexual orientations of others. Culture and religion continues to reflect heavily on my sexual orientation since these two perspectives continue to hold that it is only acceptable to engage in heterosexual relationships. However, the scientific perspectives have greatly assisted me to understand why we appear to have a crush on members of the same sex as I personally experienced when I was in high school. All in all, tolerance for different sexual orientations can be advanced by clearly understanding the perspectives.

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