

# Historical and scientific perspectives on homosexuality



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Homosexuals are individuals that are attracted both romantically and sexually to the same sex. All throughout history homosexuality has been viewed in a controversial light with many people viewing it as a disgrace, while others view it as an accepted way of life. Without question homosexuality can be described as one of the most resilient and taboo minorities in our society. History as well as science has had a profound impact on how we as a society view homosexuals and how they view themselves.

We can start with the first historical perspective involving the Western culture. In this culture, male homosexuality was more accepted and less taboo than lesbianism. This was due in part because men were seen as the superior gender whereas women were seen simply as children producers (Peterson, 1999). When the Roman Empire fell in the 15th century Christianity became the dominant religion and the main moral view in the West. Homosexuality in the Christian religion is considered a sin therefore many Romans were punished and condemned for being homosexual. This began the start of the perpetual stereotyping of homosexuals that has been passed to each generation.

The second perspective that has had an impact on homosexuals revolves around scientific and biological factors. Our text states that homosexuality is determined by genetic factors, this is backed up by studies that suggest hereditary influences sexual orientation. In the reading, it talked about how scientists believe they have associated part of the "x" chromosome to gay males. The "x" chromosome comes from our mothers. Therefore, they think

that sexual orientation comes from our mothers (Nevid, Rathus & Fichner-Rathus, 2005).

This scientific approach is important in helping homosexuals not feel guilt or shame thinking it is something they did wrong or could have changed. The final perspective on homosexuality is called gender nonconformity. Our text defines gender nonconformity as a “ failure to conform to the gender-role stereotype that is consistent with one’s anatomic sex” (Nevid Rathus & Fichner-Rathus, 2005). Gender nonconformity can also be a result of heredity and environmental factors (Nevid Rathus & Fichner-Rathus, 2005).

When an individual understands or feels that are homosexual they go through a myriad of feelings and emotions. This realization is usually called the “ coming out” process in which the individual admits to themselves that they are in fact homosexual. After an individual admits that he or she is homosexual the next step is coming out to others. This process can be very enduring and is often met with a lot of confusion and non acceptance by family and friends (Nevid, Rathus & Fichner-Rathus, 2005).

There are a lot of stereotypes and assumptions that homosexuals lead a particular type of lifestyle. The truth is that many homosexuals lead lives that are just like heterosexuals. Being a homosexual is being just like a minority so they are faced with challenges just as any minority would be. There are several organizations that help homosexuals transition into life as a gay individual.

There are a lot of different perspectives that have steered and shaped my sexual orientation. I am a male biologically and I have male parts, I am also <https://assignbuster.com/historical-and-scientific-perspectives-on-homosexuality-essay-samples/>

attracted to the opposite sex making me a heterosexual. Growing up I was very masculine and conformed to my gender quite easily. I am not sure if genetics attributed to my sexual orientation but I am sure environmental and societal influences played a big role in my sexual orientation.

In summary, there are many aspects of homosexuality and several factors that play into its development. As we have progressed as a society so have our views towards homosexuality. Individuals do not fear coming out as much anymore and they are not treated as someone with a horrible disease anymore. We still have a long way to go as a society in terms of treating homosexuals the same as everyone else, but with more awareness and understanding we will eventually get where we need to be.

## References

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