

Romantic relationships



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Same-gender Relationships versus Mixed-gender Relationships (College)

Same-gender Relationships Vs Mixed-gender Relationships The ability to maintain a healthy relationship is not really instinctive. It requires incessant efforts and perseverance for an individual to maintain loving relationships. Obviously, romance is the most profound feeling that determines the intensity of relationship especially between adolescents. To be more specific, the different choices in romantic relationships have a profound influence on their aspirations. In order to understand this concept, one has to analyze the different kinds of romantic relationships. Researchers have identified mainly three kinds of romantic relationships. According to Sternberg (as cited in Santrock, 389), passion, intimacy, and commitment are the different traits found in romantic relationships. To illustrate, partners with passion is driven by physical and sexual attraction; whereas, intimacy indicates emotional feelings and attachment. Finally, commitment is rather 'cognitive appraisal of relationship' that makes the relation strong despite all difficulties (Santrock, 389). Therefore, depending on the intensity of these three factors, the collapse of a relationship can be either tragic or mild in effect. To begin with, a relationship will be effective or not effective depending on how the individuals involved think and act. If they maintain entirely different perspectives and romantic mood, the relationship will definitely fail regardless of their gender. The fundamental reasons for the same sex drive are still a subject for research. The way in which people carry on with their sexual relationship is markedly different in different cultures and communities. Even though the basic necessities are the same, the difference in lifestyle can be attributed to the choices. As Barrios (2003, p. 16) states, millions of people maintain homosexual relationships while eschewing every

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chance to be called the 'third sex'. The differences in the intensity of the adaptation of this considerably strange sexual behavior depend largely on the facilities, fashion and social trends prevalent in the city. Studies show that the trend of gay/lesbian sex is more intensive in metropolitan cities. For instance, from the 1950s the metropolitan areas of New York and Los Angeles have been the notable area in the United States to have deep rooted practice of gay sex. People who cherish mixed gender relationships often conveniently forget their discontent or as Kantor (1998) comments, "uncomfortable with his or her own sexuality, the homophobic person focuses on what is wrong with the sexuality of other people" (Crooks & Baur, p. 247). The writers also point out the plethysmograph study conducted by Adams et al in 1996 which clearly reveals that men with keeping negative attitude to gay men also have erotic feelings toward other men though they would deny the arousal. Evidently, homophobic people are highly influenced by the social perspectives and living environments. Hence, the socially acceptable relationship depends on the way people define appropriate sexual behavior or gender relationship. Hence, it is not the gender difference but the perceptual variance and individual choices determine the intensity of relationships. In other words, mixed gender relationship does not necessarily sustain, and the same gender relationships may not necessarily fail. At this juncture, it is important to point out the theory of Terry Tafoya that introduces the concept of 'two-spirit males and females'. According to this explanation, two-spirit males and females, regardless of their involvement with men or women, may have sex or relationship with same sex but not with the same gender (cited in Jacobs, 1997, p. 104). The underlying notion is that individuals who involve in same sex relations may not be necessarily

homosexuals. What is important to them is not the sameness but the gender variance they experience from each other. In short, the above discussion clearly points out different kinds of romantic relationships and how different choices in romantic relationships influence ' same-gender relationships versus mixed-gender relationships'. Researchers maintain that sexual outlook and individual choices are the key factors that determine the agreement or conflicts between partners. Above all, same sex does not inevitably ensure same gender if the individuals involved maintain opposite gender desires. References Barrios, R. (2003). Screened Out: Playing Gay in Hollywood from Edison to Stonewall. New York: Routledge. Crooks, R & Baur, K. (2008). Our sexuality. US: Cengage Learning. Lang, S. (1997). " Various kinds of two-spirit people". In Two-spirit people: Native American gender identity, sexuality, and spirituality. Eds. S. E. Jacobs, W. Thomas, & S. Lang. University of Illinois Press. Santrock, J. W. (2006). Life-span development. 3rd Edn. New York: Tata McGraw-Hill Education.