

## Inherent Sexuality

There are many debates about what homosexuality is and where it comes from. Two distinct schools of thought have arisen from those debates. One belief is that you are born with your sexual identity and the other notion is that it is a learned response or preference. The following pages will explore the standpoint of inherent sexuality versus acquired preference, the implications of where sexuality begins, the effects of prejudice in society and religion, and possible solutions that we can prescribe to.

The consensus within the LGBTQ community is that people are born homosexual, bisexual, heterosexual, or otherwise. I have spoken with many people, “gay” and straight, most of whom state that in their adolescence they noticed a predilection for certain types of people as their ideal mate. Heterosexual males may be attracted to females with specific attributes whereas homosexual females will have similar attractions along with their own characteristic nuances. This awakening of sexuality through initial attraction is a natural response to hormonal changes in the body. But this doesn’t answer the question of why some people are born with homosexual tendencies while others are not.

The answer to the origins of sexuality may come down to chemical selection during the development stages of pregnancy. The same DNA makeup that defines hair color, height, and bone structure may also hold the key to inherent sexuality. The laws of cause and effect, the Hindu term of which is Karma, may determine another possible origin. Karmic law dictates that our souls are bound to the wheel of life in an endless cycle of death and rebirths called Samsara. Every event within one’s lifetime dictates the next incarnation until a soul can reach an

enlightened state called Nirvana, the release from Samsara. But is homosexuality atonement for a previous sin or is it an enlightened state?

To insinuate that homosexuality is penance presents us with another issue. Is homosexuality the imprisonment of the soul in a stigmatized society or is bigotry and hate the chasm blocking a path to enlightenment? Also, if God intended for homosexuality as an enlightened state of unified sexual identity then the implication is that those who quote from scripture as justification for intolerance are in fact committing the sin of blasphemy.

Human physiology is complex, the science of which is still developing. For these reasons, neither the DNA nor the Karma theory can be proven or discredited. The same can be said about the psychological aspects. The factors that govern one's libido such as, environment, taste, experience, and emotional connectivity are far too numerous to generalize the origins of desire.

Understanding of the abundant physiological and psychological factors is limited. Any measurement of sexual origin may or may not bring acceptance to society. Because prejudice, a human tendency to dehumanize others, is so prevalent in the world, the need to elevate human nature above that is imperative.

Since the civil rights movement of the 1960s era, our society has made efforts to be more accepting of all people. The strides that were made at that time, and the policies that most companies adopt to protect workers from harassment and discrimination, are in actuality corporate protections from lawsuits. In response to the safeguards, bigotry has become subtle.

Some examples of this include an intolerant supervisor finds out that an employee is homosexual, the employee starts getting bad job reviews that affect pay increases and the ability to post into other positions. Upon finding out someone is homosexual; co-workers and friends may remain polite but will also distance themselves emotionally.

Additionally, many cultures throughout the world raise their children to separate and classify anyone that acts differently. Homosexuality is viewed within world cultures as a contagious disease. LGBTQ people in America and abroad are shunned, mocked, scorned, shamed, attacked, and even killed.

Families and communities have been torn apart by loved ones announcing their homosexuality. Our nation is divided on whether acceptance of homosexuals constitutes the same rights and privileges that heterosexuals take for granted, or if there is no room at all for their kind.

Then we must ask why would someone jeopardize his or her safety, relationships, and national accord? The answer is thus when society forces one to stifle their identity a multitude of emotional problems occur. For example, any homosexual trying to live a normal lifestyle and marries a heterosexual because of community pressures risks causing undue distress not only to themselves but also to their spouse and children. The rifts caused by denial of self can have a ripple effect throughout the family history as each child carries the burden of parents from every previous generation. The same can be said of inherent prejudice. Children are not born intolerant; children are indoctrinated into bigotry.

An argument can be made that we have come a long way and that our culture has made great strides since the 1950s. As true as that statement is we have more work ahead of us. The current administration seems bent on returning us to previous eras with an attack on civil liberties, scientific thought, and our economy. The religious right has become a powerful caucus in Washington and appears to be guiding policymakers in concert with corporate sponsors.

However, there is a small movement in the religious community that preaches acceptance and love. Christian and Jewish ministries have been actively returning to the original teachings of Christ and the Torah. Yet, the message is drowned out by the electronic buzz of video games, DVDs, and televangelists that have subtle messages of hate and discord in their flashy visuals and textural worlds.

History is replete with death and destruction caused by clashing interpretations of religious text. When can we, as an intelligent species, grasp that intolerance limits human potential? When will acceptance and love be realized as the only way that we can survive the damages that we have already wreaked upon the world?

Through communication and understanding, we can actualize the ideals of equality and fairness. There are people who were taught to discriminate against anyone who is different. Some of those people, who were taught to hate, have realized why bigotry is wrong after communicating on a personal level with various racial and sexually-oriented people at work. Yet, not all people are open-minded enough to make that connection. Consequently, the question remains how do we

instill tolerance and equality in our citizens without infringing on the civil liberties of those who believe that homosexuality is a sin?

The first step is to remove our incessant labels. Words like black, Jew, homosexual, transsexual, fat, short, ugly, and so on corrupt our society like a cancer. We must express equality for every individual in order to get past this blockade of hatred. If the thought of homosexual activity sickens a person, they must still accept that the LGBTQ person in question is a person and ought to be treated as such. The diversified sexuality of our citizens has become icons of mainstream media. Homosexuality is no longer taboo, yet stigmatization is still intrinsic in our society. What we teach our children regarding tolerance and acceptance is personified the moment they walk out the door and into the world. Teaching children the difference between right and wrong is merely the basis of an ongoing dialogue that must include sensitivity and respect for others as well as the confidence to protect others from discrimination. Beliefs must be instilled from an early age to properly shape their minds for humanity.

To legalize same-sex marriage we must first remove the label same-sex and call it simply marriage. Yet, with a marriage of any kind comes the issue of divorce. Within the LGBTQ community, there are open relationships, which are basically the same as a swinger relationship inasmuch that partners are in love and will spend the rest of their life with each other, however sexual play with others within agreed-upon boundaries is allowed.

The laws that define marriage and divorce must be re-examined. Any person in America that has experienced a divorce can tell you that the laws are not fair to all parties. If a couple in an open

relationship were to get divorced, the actions during the marriage could be used against one or the other out of spite. Our current divorce and custody laws favor the women over the men. With same-sex marriage where do you define those boundaries?

The fact is that homosexuals in America are citizens and deserve the same rights and privileges that all Americans should enjoy. The same principle must be applied to our poor, ethnic and cultural groups, religious denominations, and all other people. When we, as a society, fully embrace the principles of equality, acceptance, love, and liberty only then can we bring peace to our world.