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The Cause of Homosexuality Is Irrelevant

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My blog post "[The Same-Sex Marriage 'Debate' Is Based Upon Ignorance and Inaccurate Information](#)" was published Sept. 11, 2014. The response to that blog post, both positive and negative, has far exceeded anything I could have imagined. In any event, after reading through the numerous comments on that post, I noticed certain themes that deserve further attention and discussion.

Many people seem fixated on the fact that the actual cause of homosexuality has not yet been established with any degree of certainty. As someone who likes to understand the reasons things occur, I respect and appreciate the curiosity. However, the ultimate result remains the same, regardless of whether the cause is genetic, environmental, or some combination of the two. As Jim Kennedy [writes](#) on TeachTheFacts.org:

[I]t needs to be understood that there is no scientific debate about whether homosexuality is a choice. The professional mental health and scientific organizations uniformly reject the idea. Many of them make even stronger statements about these issues.

Dr. Gregory Herek of UC Davis tweeted a link to my prior post with the following comment: "No one's sexual orientation is a 'lifestyle' choice." [According to his website](#):

Professor Herek is an internationally recognized authority on prejudice against sexual minorities, anti-gay violence, and AIDS-related stigma. He received his Ph.D. in social psychology from UC Davis in 1983, then was a postdoctoral fellow at Yale University. He subsequently served as a faculty member at Yale and the Graduate Center of the City University of New York before returning to UCD, first as a research psychologist and later as a tenured professor.

He has been a pioneer in the scientific study of heterosexuals' prejudice against lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people, as well as the effects of that prejudice on its targets.

In her Sept. 15 article for Religion Dispatches, "[Marriage Is for Everybody, Says Former Anti-Gay Evangelical](#)," Candace Chellew-Hodge writes:

Mark Achtemeier has been a minister with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) since 1984, and for much of his ministry he characterized himself as a "conservative anti-gay activist." As a pastor and an associate professor of theology and ethics at the University of Dubuque Theological Seminary, Achtemeier wrote and spoke against the ordination of gay and lesbian ministers and co-wrote a declaration of faith that an anti-ordination coalition adopted.

That began to change in 2001, Achtemeier says when he made friends with some gay and lesbian Christians, some of whom had tried everything in their power to "change" their sexual orientation or had embraced a life of celibacy.

"It was producing broken people," he told me, "and it wasn't just isolated instances of this. I saw more and more of this and came away from these experiences thinking something is wrong with this picture. That got me writing and asking questions."

By 2009, Achtemeier was a changed man, leading the charge for gay and lesbian ordination. He even preached at the ordination service of Scott Anderson, "the first gay minister" ordained by the PCUSA.

After reading my prior post and the comments on it, [Lee Thompson, Esq.](#), stated the following in a comment on the discussion in the Family Law Professionals LinkedIn group:

The comments on the blog are interesting and numerous. This is no doubt a polarizing issue which is why I would take exception to use of the word ignorance. But, the lifestyle choice comments are perplexing.

I'm not sure if at one time I thought it was a lifestyle choice. I do remember having a conversation with my dad, older at the time of the discussion and a conservative man in many respects. He did not believe it to be a lifestyle choice at all (he wasn't so sure when it came to bisexuals though). His rationale was simple enough and made sense. Who would choose a lifestyle that included discrimination or being subjected to violent acts? In his opinion, and I agree, no one.

I'm still of the opinion it's a state issue though and more states are passing the right for it through ballot initiative and more will. I always opposed DOMA along these lines. Personally, I have no problem with same-sex marriage, just how it comes about.

I agree with Lee that the belief that homosexuality is a "lifestyle choice" is perplexing. Those who hold such a belief have never been able to explain why anyone would make such a choice. However, they respond with examples of people who claimed to have "changed" their sexual orientation or are otherwise more sexually fluid. But as [Ellen Schecter, Ph.D.](#), [writes](#) on [GoodTherapy.org](#):

[T]he research does not prove that sexuality is fluid, only that it can be. Studies have shown that sexual fluidity is not uncommon. It is found more frequently in women than men, though it clearly exists in both sexes. This does not necessarily mean that we all experience a degree of fluidity, nor that we are all really bisexual.

When a person's sexual orientation appears to have "changed," keep in mind that appearances can be deceiving. Such individuals may be sexually fluid, to some degree, or bisexual. While a person's bisexuality, like a person's homosexuality, may or may not be a choice, a bisexual person can choose to disregard their attraction to one gender or the other. Depending upon where on the sexual spectrum a person lies, they may or may not be successful in their efforts to disregard certain sexual feelings.

In her blog post "[And Yet Another Reason We Shouldn't Assume](#)," [Stacey Neil](#) states, "Making assumptions is risky, full of ego, any typically inaccurate by its very nature, and yet most of us do it all the time." For just those reasons, people should stop making assumptions about a person's sexuality.

By the way, another very big assumption that people make is that homosexuality is unnatural. But as [Arash Fereydooni writes](#) in *Yale Scientific Magazine*, "Currently, homosexual behavior has been documented in over 450 different animal species worldwide." And as [Sandhya Somashekhar writes](#) in the *Washington Post*, summarizing the findings of the government's National Health Interview Survey, "1.6 percent of adults self-identify as gay or lesbian, and 0.7 percent consider themselves bisexual." If something is occurring in nature and cannot be changed, I'm afraid that it is natural, even though, as [Somashekhar writes](#), "the overwhelming majority of adults, 96.6 percent, labeled themselves as straight in the 2013 survey." After all, natural is [defined by OxfordDictionaries.com](#) as "existing in or caused by nature; not made or caused by humankind." It's about time that the 96.6 percent of the population that self-identifies as straight stops telling the 1.6 percent of the population that self-identifies as gay or lesbian that it is a "lifestyle choice."

As if all of this were not enough, we then have the issue of "morality." Interestingly enough, morality is [defined by OxfordDictionaries.com](#) as "a particular system of values and principles of conduct, especially one held by a specified person or society." If 96.6 percent of the population self-identifies as straight, who do you think is defining society's values and principles? The problem is that the 1.6 percent of the population that self-identifies as gay or lesbian most certainly did not have a say in society's definition of morality. If their behavior is natural and unchangeable, what makes the supermajority so arrogant to believe that they can define what is "normal" to 1.6 percent of the population, just because it is not "normal" to them?

Meanwhile, unless and until *all* U.S. states come around, a great deal of people and families are being very seriously harmed. I addressed just one such issue in my blog post "[Child Abduction and the Same-Sex Marriage Issue](#)."

In most places, people can be fired from their jobs [just because of their sexual orientation](#), regardless of their performance. Imagine someone learning that they have been terminated from their job because they entered into a domestic partnership, civil union, or marriage. Please note that someone need not be in a relationship to be fired from their job based merely upon their sexual orientation.

Parents subject their children to "[conversion therapy](#)," which has been banned in California and New Jersey because it accomplishes nothing more than injuring the children.

And as the Williams Institute at UCLA [explains](#):

[T]here are between 1.5 to 2 times as many LGBTQ youth living in foster care as LGBTQ youth estimated to be living outside of foster care. ...

To date, research on LGBTQ youth in foster care has documented some of the reasons LGBTQ youth enter and remain in foster care. Family rejection and violence is one oft-cited reason for LGBTQ youth entering out-of-home care.

Such "parents" throw their kids out, and those kids have nothing with which to support themselves other than their bodies.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) is not a gay or lesbian organization. As its website states:

The ACLU is our nation's guardian of liberty, working daily in courts, legislatures and communities to defend and preserve the individual rights and liberties that the Constitution and laws of the United States guarantee everyone in this country.

These rights include:

- Your First Amendment rights -- freedom of speech, association and assembly; freedom of the press, and freedom of religion.
- Your right to equal protection under the law -- protection against unlawful discrimination.
- Your right to due process -- fair treatment by the government whenever the loss of your liberty or property is at stake.
- Your right to privacy -- freedom from unwarranted government intrusion into your personal and private affairs.

The ACLU also works to extend rights to segments of our population that have traditionally been denied their rights, including people of color; women; lesbians, gay men, bisexuals and transgender people; prisoners; and people with disabilities.

If the rights of society's most vulnerable members are denied, everybody's rights are imperiled.

Here's what the ACLU has to say about gay rights:

We face an unprecedented opportunity to achieve the freedom to marry for same-sex couples throughout the country. The ACLU's historic 2013 Supreme Court decision striking down the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) is paving the way for equality for lesbian and gay couples across America, but for a full civil liberties victory we need to strike down barriers to the freedom to marry in states across the country.

While we celebrate all of the progress we've been making on marriage, individual states still have anti-gay, anti-marriage laws. In fact these discriminatory barriers are still embedded in 28 state constitutions.

With increased legislative advocacy and grassroots organizing to repeal existing marriage amendments, as well as aggressive litigation across the country, we can decisively win fair marriage laws and relegate discrimination against gay and lesbian couples to the dustbin of history.

Humanity is defined by YourDictionary.com as "the entire human race or the characteristics that belong uniquely to human beings, such as kindness, mercy and sympathy." However, as Fariss Samarrai writes on Science Daily, "one of the most defining features of humanity is our capacity for empathy -- the ability to put ourselves in others' shoes."

People often refer to a "gay agenda." I'm afraid that the "gay agenda" is nothing more than a desire to receive equal treatment. The only reason that gay rights are even an issue is the complete lack of empathy toward the LGBT community. This is all about a lack of empathy. Considering that empathy is "one of the most defining features of humanity," such behavior is inhumane.

What more must I say? Our society does nothing but abuse a segment of the population for no reason other than an orientation that cannot be changed. To be quite frank, it is nothing less than despicable.

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