



Family Policy Brief

What You Need to Know About Homosexuality

Issues related to homosexuality and so-called “homosexual rights” are driving much of the current worldwide assault on marriage, the family, and family related issues. It is essential that people who support the family understand the basic facts about homosexuality so they can recognize the inaccuracies and deception in the anti-marriage and anti-family propaganda and so they can educate those with whom they come in contact.

People are not “born homosexual,” and homosexuality is not innate.

This is perhaps the most fundamental misunderstanding about homosexuality. Part of the reason that homosexual activists desperately promote the myth that homosexuality is innate is because they know that people who believe it are more likely to be sympathetic to the entire homosexual agenda, including same-sex marriage, and are therefore more likely to support it.

While there are periodic reports in the media that science has found some new evidence that homosexuals are “born that way,” the research already done with identical twins confirms that science will never prove this is the case. By definition, identical twins share exactly identical genetic material and experience exactly identical chemical and hormonal influences before birth, yet the highest correlation of homosexuality among identical twins found in any study is only 50 percent. Other larger and much more rigorous studies put the correlation much lower—38 percent among identical twin males and 30 percent for identical twin females.¹ If someone were truly “born homosexual” or if homosexuality were innate, the correlation of homosexuality among identical twins would have to be very close to 100 percent since they are genetically identical. At most, an individual may have a genetically based predisposition toward homosexuality but nothing more.

While we do not know all the causes of same-gender attraction, we do know that in many cases, it can be successfully treated.

Since it is clear that homosexuality is not innate like one’s sex or race, but is a behavior largely the result of environmental influences, it follows that in at least some cases, it is treatable. Literally thousands of people in the U.S. alone with unwanted same-sex attraction have successfully “re-oriented” from homosexuality to heterosexuality. The National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality (NARTH) is an association of psychotherapists who specialize in this therapy.² In 2009, NARTH released the most comprehensive review of 125 years of scientific research and clinical experience showing conclusively that unwanted same-sex attraction can be successfully treated and that there is no unusual risk associated with this therapy.

Homosexuality is relatively rare.

The percentage of the population that is considered to be homosexual depends to some extent on how the term is defined, since people can and do change their sexual orientation. But a widely accepted average is that about 2 percent of men and about 1 percent of women are exclusively or largely homosexual. The importance of how homosexuality is defined is well illustrated by one study that found that only about one in every 15 men who have had any homosexual experiences are exclusively homosexual and only about one in 21 women.³

“Families” headed by homosexual individuals with children in the home are even more rare.

According to the U.S. Census, they represent only about 0.2 percent of U.S. households.

There is increasing and disturbing evidence that children raised in same-sex households have serious problems.

There has not been enough time for many long-term studies of these children, but there is evidence that they experience significant problems, including a higher tendency toward same-sex orientation themselves.⁴ The evidence is strong enough that a federal appeals court upheld Florida’s toughest-in-the-nation prohibition on homosexuals adopting children. It is for these same reasons that a [report](#) issued by a commission appointed by the French National Assembly, their national legislature, strongly recommended that that very liberal country not legalize same-sex marriage, allow same-sex adoption or support artificial conception of children by same-sex couples.

Their sexual behavior does not qualify homosexuals for special rights.

One of the fundamental demands of homosexuals is that they deserve “equal rights” with heterosexuals, including the right to marry a person of the same sex. They complain that their civil rights under the Constitution are being violated unless society grants them their demands. However, until very recently the federal courts in the U.S. have consistently rejected their claim that they are in the same category as other groups, such as women or racial minorities that do in fact qualify for civil rights protection. In making these determinations, the courts apply a three-part test: 1) there must be a clear history of discrimination against the group; 2) members of the group themselves are powerless to help themselves in a way to avoid the discriminatory actions; 3) members of the group are defined by immutable characteristics, such as race or national origin. For years, the courts found that homosexuals fail the last two parts of this test. Recently, several activist judges at the district court level have ignored these precedents, and it is now clear that the U.S. Supreme Court will make the final determination.

The laws preventing same-sex marriage are not similar to laws that once prevented interracial marriage.

Even though homosexual activists and others, including media commentators, try to draw parallels between the two, there are no valid comparisons. For example, in the U.S., the laws prohibiting interracial marriage were enacted in most cases after the Civil War and were racially-based (with race being a protected class qualifying for civil rights protection) and not based on society’s understanding of the institution of marriage. English common law, for example, does not consider the race of a man and a woman as a qualification for marriage. Legalizing marriage between a man and woman of different races still falls within the traditional definition of this critical social institution as only the union of a man and a woman. Allowing same-sex individuals to marry is such a radical redefinition of the institution of marriage that no one can predict what the negative long-term consequences would be from doing so.

¹ Hershberger, SL (1997): A twin registry study of male and female sexual orientation. *J. of Sex Research* 34, 212-222.

² Extensive information about the treatment of same-gender attraction can be found at NARTH’s Web site www.narth.org.

³ Laumann, E. et. al, (1994). *The Social Organization of Sexuality: Sexual Practices in the United States*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

⁴ Stacey, J. & Biblarz, T.J. (2001). (How) Does sexual orientation of parents matter? *American Sociological Review*, 65, 159-183.