
In Memoriam

The following is a tribute given by Dr. Joseph Nicolosi at the funeral of Hector Roybal this February in Southern California. He was a good friend of NARTH and a longtime supporter of men coming out of homosexuality.

I am very glad to be here today to honor Hector and to celebrate his life.

Anyone who knew Hector knew that he was fully engaged in life, and fully engaged with people. If you spent just a half-hour with him, you might well be interrupted a dozen times by calls coming in to his cell phone. He was always talking, networking, and connecting with people around the world. Even when I was in Europe giving conferences, people would come up to me afterward to say, "You know Hector, don't you?" They would tell me that they knew him and were thankful for his work and support.

Hector did not want to die. It was not that he was afraid of death, since from every thing I knew of him, he had a rock-solid faith. But the reason he didn't want to die, was because he did not want to be separated from the people he loved. And he loved a lot of people--and because we felt his love, we loved him. That's how it works, and Hector knew that; we love people when we feel their love for us, and you couldn't help but love Hector.

And you couldn't help be annoyed by him: strong-willed, pushy, opinionated and controlling. But if he was pushy, it was because he pushed himself. If he was demanding, it was because he was equally demanding of himself. And if you called him on that, he'd back down---he did not want to hurt you.

Hector and I went out to lunch together about a month before he died. We were talking about his work, his life, the fact that his cancer treatments were no longer helping, and about his expectation



Hector Roybal

that the end would soon come. It was at that time that he asked me to speak at his memorial, and I agreed.

What we said must have remained on his mind, because a few days later he told me again, "Thanks, Joe for saying you'd speak at my memorial service." Discussing a memorial with a man who will soon die, I guess made me a little nervous, so I said something silly -- "Oh, don't worry Hector, it'll go great. It's just too bad you won't be there to hear it." Without skipping a beat, Hector answered calmly, "That's O.K. Joe, you can tell me all about it when we meet in the next life."

Hector was driven by a sense of mission -- not only to perfect his Christian walk, but especially, to help other men...men who struggled with homosexuality, but sometimes, even just strangers he met that he'd give his time and energy to. After battling to overcome his own boyhood insecurities and self-doubts, he had become a leader of men. That's a lesson for all of us; whatever our struggles, we can work to grow beyond them and offer a life of service.

To Hector's wife Sharon, we want you express our deepest condolences. To his children, we want to say that the older you get, the more you will understand the man your Dad was, and the more you will appreciate his determination to be what he wanted to be--a leader, a Christian, and a loving family man. ■

I should add a caveat about this type of modeling. It neglects rigorous control groups in favor of using the criterion of how well the model accounts for the data, on the kind of basis of "if the shoe fits, wear it." It even assigns causes on this basis. This is not an absolute proof, because the well-fitting shoe could be a coincidence, and it's even possible that two unrelated shoes might fit equally well. This will make traditional sociologists uneasy, but when the results are as strong as those here, there is not likely to be much error.

In another way the good fit of a statistical model can be compared to the finding of the answer to a clue in a cryptic crossword – so many things fit the answer statistically that it is very unlikely there is another answer which fits so brilliantly.

This is twice as successful an explanation for homosexuality that Bell, Weinberg and Hammersmith found, and has an extra-fascinating implication: for the first time, a careful modern study finds that social factors predominate, and hence other factors, such as genetics (at least in Taiwan), must be minor!

Results Support Parental Influence

These results support those who implicate over-close mothers and distant fathers as causes of male homosexuality. But why were Lung and Shu's results so clear, compared with results from the West, which were much less clear? Could the authors have manufactured their results? Are they too good to be true? I think not, because the authors seem largely unaware of the details of the ongoing controversy in the West, though they understand it existed. It seems that they do not appreciate the deep significance of their own results.

They do mention a cultural difference. They say that Taiwanese society is very traditional and conservative. This presupposes a high degree of social control, and a suppression of any genetic predispositions there might be. The role of family factors is likely to be highly magnified under such circumstances.

I conclude that the results reflect one extreme – what happens in a society where family influences are very strong. That itself is useful, because it gives a picture of what would happen at one extreme even in the West, in social groups where family influence is very intense (the close communities of the Amish?). However, generally in the West, things are very different. Why? Because in comparison with Taiwan we are hyper-individualistic.

Our high divorce rate and extreme diversity of belief and custom are evidence of this. Hyper-individualism seems to be one of our most prized and politically correct values. Therefore in the West, even two genetically identical twins are likely to react in a different way to family factors which might tend to trigger homosexuality.

My belief is that if the twin studies done in the West were also done in a society like Taiwan, the results would be totally different, and show a much higher contribution from common factors,

with much diminished contributions from genes and non-shared environment. (This is already known for various traits – in Japan, twin studies mostly give a much lower genetic contribution than in the West).

This has significant research implications. We should deliberately sponsor studies in societies with extreme conditions to get a clearer picture of influences in our own!

So for the Western situation, if some male client seems to have the pattern of a distant father, or a family dynamic which has enforced conformity and discouraged initiative and rough-and-tumble play, these factors are inherently credible, and should not be dismissed, though they will not be politically correct. However, reactions to these factors will be very variable, and individualistic.

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research that clearly demonstrates that homosexuals are at greater risks for some forms of mental illness (Herrell, Ferguson, Sandfort).

It's unfortunate that APA does not move beyond its single-minded focus on "discrimination and prejudice" to allow honest and open study of GLBT issues. In areas such as homosexuality, political correctness seems to have gone amok. On this front in particular, APA seems to have surrendered its professionalism and its science to political correctness.

Some Say That Truth Doesn't Matter

Consider the following statement made by a prominent member of the American Psychological Association and published by the Harvard University Press: "...it may be that for now, the safest way to advocate for lesbian/gay/bisexual rights is to keep propagating a deterministic model: sexual minorities are born that way and can never be otherwise. If this is an easier route to acceptance (which may in fact be the case), is it really so bad that it is inaccurate?"

Where are the guardians of our professional ethics? Will they really allow such Machiavellian statements to go uncritically examined? Is there an ethical violation when a self-identified psychologist and a member of APA supports activism masqueraded as science, and states that it is not so bad?

Political correctness would suggest that there will be no response from the APA.

In his book, *Destructive Trends in Mental Health*, former APA president Nicholas Cummings notes that he and his co-author lived through the abominable McCarthy era and the Hollywood witch hunts; still he notes, there was "not the insidious sense of intellectual intimidation that currently exists under political correctness." He says, "Now,

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ences, but rather incredibly, the authors simply and blithely ignore the siblings for the rest of the paper, and use the twins only, to present a calculated genetic influence. Rather, no genetic influence at all is shown when all the data are included.

This is an unusual problem for the method, so the authors with the general approval of the scientific community, including the referees of the paper, implicitly say "Well, there is an inconsistency here that will take years to sort out but in the interim here is what the results would be using the traditional methods if we ignore this." This is some use to the researchers, though laymen may shake their heads at the procedure.

As usual in these studies, family upbringing ("shared environ-

ment") was consistent with a zero percentage influence, as shown in the table, but I contend again as I have in previous talks and articles that many family factors are hidden in the non-shared environment contribution, and highly individualistic and important to the people concerned. Thus for example, the influence of a distant father may well be critical for many individuals - but might not affect an identical twin at all.

Perhaps the British playwright, self-identified secularist atheist Pat Condell, is indeed correct: "Political correctness is like a drug that we just can't stop injecting, even though we know it's going to kill us."

In summary, if one reduces the recent APA document to one based on scientific merit and ethicality, it might translate into something like the following:

"We at APA acknowledge that there are probably many factors that lead to one to claim a gay identity, likely different for different folks. However, what is clear is that homosexuality is not simply a biological phenomenon. We are not sure about the effectiveness of reorientation therapy (or any other therapies for that matter!) but political correctness demands that APA take a position of extreme caution, even though there is no evidence to support such a position. And APA believes that though homosexuality may be fluid for some people, it is certainly not a matter of choice for anyone. However, having expressed these reservations (and fears), it is important that all mental health professionals respect client self-determination (including those who seek reorientation therapy)."

The APA should be commended for its greater reliance on science and ethicality in this document. Perhaps now is the time for the association to abide by its commitment that accompanied then-APA President Nicholas Cummings' proposal to remove homosexuality as a mental disorder in 1974: "a proscription that appropriate and needed research would be conducted to substantiate these decisions." None, however, was ever conducted. Such research should include a study of the efficacy of psychological care for those unhappy with unwanted homosexual attractions, as well as for its counterpart--gay-affirmative therapy for those who wish to claim a gay identity.

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The results, by my calculations, do in fact, reinforce one conclusion drawn from previous studies. **That is, if one identical twin--male or female--has SSA, the chances are only about 10% that the co-twin also has it. In other words, identical twins usually differ for SSA.**

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