

Quotes from Gay Researchers LeVay and Hamer

—Submitted by NARTH Member A. Dean Byrd, Ph.D.

From "gay gene" researcher Dean Hamer, (1994), *The Science of Desire*, published by Simon and Schuster:

1. "We knew also that genes were only part of the answer. We assumed the environment also played a role in sexual orientation, as it does in most if not all behaviors...." (Page 82)

2. "Kinsey himself never said 10 percent of the population was gay; but that 10 percent of adult white males he surveyed--many of them prisoners--had been predominantly homosexual for a period of three or more years, sometime between age 16 through their 50's. Fewer than 4 percent of them had been predominantly or exclusively homosexual for all of their adult lives." (Page 98)

3. "More recent random-population surveys in the United States, West Germany, and Canada had reported that anywhere from 0.3 percent to 6.2 percent of men identified themselves as gay. Estimates of homosexual behavior, as compared to self-identification, also had yielded a wide range of figures, from 1 percent for having had a homosexual partner during the previous year to 7 percent for any same-sex activity during adulthood." (Page 99)

4. The pedigree study failed to produce what we originally hoped to find: simple Mendelian inheritance. In fact, we never found a single family in which homosexuality was distributed in the obvious sort of pattern that Mendel observed in his pea plants." (Page 104)

5. "In other words, some people were gay partly because of their genes and some were gay for other reasons." (Page 107).

6. "Most sissies will grow up to be homosexuals, and most gay men were sissies as children...Despite the provocative and politically incorrect nature of that statement, it fits the evidence. In fact, it may be the most consistent, well-documented, and significant finding in the entire field of sexual-orientation research and perhaps in all of human psychology." (Page 166) [In Hamer's own study, he asked] "...Did you consider yourself less masculine than other boys your age, or were you ever regarded as a sissy as a child?" The answer was yes for 68% of the gay men, compared with 5% of the straight men. Another question was, 'Did you enjoy sports such as baseball and football as a child?' Of the heterosexual men, 78% said 'very much,' compared with 8% of the homosexual subjects"...The gay participants recalled substantially more gender-atypical behaviors than the straight subjects." (Page 167)

7. "...[B]iology is amoral; it offers no help distinguishing between right and wrong. Only people, guided by their values and beliefs, can decide what is moral and what is not." (Page 214)

From brain researcher Simon LeVay (1996), in his book *Queer Science*, published by The MIT Press:

1. "Most gay men and lesbian women have their own opinions about why they are homosexual. Although there are exceptions, gay men in the United States today generally tend to claim that they were "born gay." Ninety percent of gay men surveyed by the *Advocate* in 1994 claimed to have been born gay, and only four percent believed that choice came into the equation at all. Lesbians surveyed by the *Advocate* gave somewhat more diverse reasons: about half of them believed they were born gay, 28 percent thought that environmental circumstances (generally early childhood experiences) had played some role, and 15 percent said that choice had something to do with their sexual orientation. Although there are significant differences between the attitudes of lesbians and gay men, it is clear that both groups are far more inclined to consider their sexual orientation a biological "given" than is the general population.

"Should one take these assertions seriously? Not entirely, of course. No one even remembers being born, let alone being born gay or straight. When a gay man, for example, says he was born gay, he generally means that he felt different from other boys at the earliest age he can remember. Sometimes the difference involved sexual feelings, but more commonly it involved some kind of gender-nonconformist or 'sex-atypical' traits--disliking rough-and-tumble play, for example--that were not explicitly sexual. These differences, which have been verified in a number of ways, suggest that sexual orientation is influenced by factors operating very early in life, *but these factors could still consist of environmental forces such as parental treatment in the early postnatal period.* [emphasis added]" (Page 6)

2. "Recent surveys in the United States have also come up with prevalence figures well below 10 percent. Most studies agree that about 2 percent of the population have had at least one homosexual experience in the previous few years. In a large survey conducted by the National Opinion Research Center in 1992, 2.8 percent of men and 1.4 percent of women identified as "homosexual" or "bisexual". Another 3.2 percent of men and 4.1 percent of women identified as "heterosexual" but acknowledged some degree of same-sex attraction. The highest percentages reported in recent random-sample studies come from a market-research firm, Yankelovich Partners, Inc., who stated that 5.7 percent of their respondents identified as 'gay/homosexual/lesbian'." (Page 62)

3. "They found that gays and lesbians were significantly

more nonconformist than heterosexuals in the following gender-differentiated traits: (1) participation in rough-and-tumble play, competitive athletics, or aggression, (2) toy and activity preference, (3) imagined roles and careers (significant difference for men only), (4) cross-dressing, (5) preference for same- or opposite-sex playmates, (6) social reputation as "sissy" or "tomboy," and (7) gender identity." (Page 98)

4. "Thus the association between childhood gender nonconformity and adult homosexuality is well established, especially in men." (Page 98)

5. "Richard Green, who trained with Money, searched for factors that might predispose to gender nonconformity in children. In his 1974 book *Sexual Identify Conflict in Children and Adults*, Green explored these factors by means of extensive interviews with gender-nonconformist boys and their parents. Although he was cautious in attributing causality, Green named several factors that he believed were associated with femininity in boys: the failure of parents to discourage feminine behaviors, their active encouragement of feminine behaviors, their active discouragement of boyish behaviors, maternal overprotection, and so on. He explained to parents that they might have unwittingly caused or promoted their son's femininity, and that they stood the best chance of correcting the problem if they started to actively discourage it and encourage masculinity instead. In particular, the fathers should take a more active role in the boy's life. "You've got to get these mothers out of the way," Green told the parents of one seven-year-old. "Feminine kids don't need their mothers around." (Pages 99-100)

6. "Surveys of the actual sex behavior of lesbians and gay men have indicated that gay men have far more sex partners than do lesbians. Sometimes the reported differences have been extreme. In a study conducted in the San Francisco Bay area in the 1970s, for example, almost one-half of the white gay men and one-third of the black gay men claimed to have had at least five hundred different male sex partners, whereas most of the lesbians had had less than 10 female sex partners." (Page 159)

7. "...[T]he gay men scored higher--they achieved more uncommitted sex--than the straight men." (Page 160)

8. "Although homosexual *behavior* is very common in the animal world, it seems to be very uncommon that individual animals have a long-lasting predisposition to engage in such behavior to the exclusion of heterosexual activities. Thus, a homosexual *orientation* if one can speak of such a thing in animals, seems to be a rarity." (Page 207)

9. "Hooker's findings...were a challenge to the prevailing notion that male homosexuality was invariably associated with florid psychopathology. Looking back at her work from a present-day viewpoint, one can see that it had distinct limitations." (Page 216)

10. "Gay activism was clearly the force that propelled the APA to declassify homosexuality." (Page 224)

11. "...it needs to be acknowledged that a significant part of the development of sexual orientation remains unexplained." (Page 250)

12. "At this point, the most widely held opinion is that multiple factors play a role. In 1988' PFLAG member Tinkle Hake surveyed a number of well-known figures in the field about their views on homosexuality. She asked: "Many observers believe that a person's sexual orientation is determined by one or more of the following factors: genetic, hormonal, psychological, or social. Based on today's state-of-the-science, what is your opinion?"

The answers included the following: "all of the above in concert" (Alan Bell), "all of these variables" (Richard Green), "multiple factors" (Gilbert Herdt), "a combination of all the factors named" (Evelyn Hooker), "all of these factors" (Judd Marmor), "a combination of causes" (Richard Pillard), "possibly genetic and hormonal, but juvenile sexual rehearsal play is particularly important" (John Money), and "genetic and hormonal factors, and perhaps also some early childhood experiences" (James Weinrich).

Somewhat discordant with these opinions were those of Lee Ellis ("prenatal factors"), Martin Weinberg ("biological factors for homosexuality and heterosexuality; conditioning for various degrees of bisexuality") and the then-director of the Kinsey Institute, June Reinisch ("no one knows"). (Page 273). ■

Important New Resource Available

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