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Homosexuality Is Not Inherited, and Science Fiction Solutions Won't Help

by

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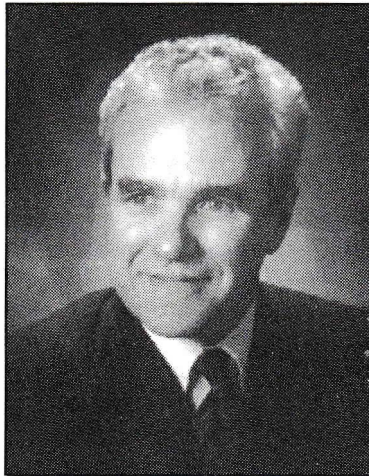
Ken Adelman, in his January 13th column, "Nature vs. nurture in the policy debate," has swallowed hook, line and sinker the junk science contained in Chandler Burr's book "*A Separate Creation: The Search for Biological Origins of Sexual Orientation.*"

The book contains massive amounts of scientific information that is absolutely irrelevant to the question at hand. Two studies that are quoted have been discredited. Then, having proved absolutely nothing, Mr. Burr writes another article making the outrageous claim that "clinical research-- all but universally accepted among biologists-- [shows] that homosexuality is a biological trait."

In November 1995, an article ("Gay Genes, Revisited: Doubts Arise Over Research on the Biology of Homosexuality") published in *Scientific American* pointed out the two studies cited by Mr. Burr (Simon LeVay and Dean Hamer) had not been replicated by any other researchers. Furthermore, Mr. Hamer's research had been discredited by other studies and Mr. Hamer was "charged with research improprieties."

There is substantial evidence based on years of clinical experience that homosexuality is a developmental disorder. Every child has a healthy need to identify positively with the parent of the same sex, have same-sex friendships, a positive body image and a confident sexual identity. Homosexual feelings can occur when these needs are not appropriately met. The adolescent's unmet needs become entangled with emerging sexual feelings and produce same-sex attraction. Therapy consists in helping male clients to understand the emotional causes of their attraction and to strengthen their masculine identity. It has been our clinical experience that as these men become more comfortable and confident with their manhood, same-sex attractions resolve or decrease significantly in many patients.

There is no need for those who feel burdened by same-sex attraction to wait for the development of genetic surgery or some other science-fiction solution. Treatment is already available. At-risk adolescents and parents have a right to know that homosexuality is preventable and treatable and the sooner intervention takes place, the better the prognosis. ■



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