

## Are Gays Born That Way?

**D**EAR ABBY: I am terribly confused about this subject. Are homosexuals and lesbians born that way? If so, is it possible to detect it before birth or in the early stages and be averted?

Nobody wants to be a homosexual today; it's a living death. If they are born that way, perhaps society would be more willing to accept them and treat them more humanely.

Please go into detail on this in your column because I am sure there are others who are just as confused as I am.

### HUMAN BEING

**DEAR HUMAN:** My consultant, Dr. Judd Marmor, a psychoanalyst who is one of the most respected authorities on the subject, says:

"There is no single cause for homosexuality. People come to it in a variety of ways. A number of recent research studies strongly suggest that many homosexuals are born with a predisposition toward such behavior, which then becomes shaped and reinforced by environmental factors. In other homosexuals, environmental factors seem to be more important than inborn ones."

According to my mail, most homosexuals and lesbians are born that way and environment has little or nothing to do with it. (Why in a family of two, three, four or more children raised in the same environment is one gay while the others are straight?)

However, one thing is clear: The vast majority of gay people do not "choose" to become homosexual; their homosexual inclinations feel just as natural to them as heterosexual inclinations feel to straights.



The statement "Nobody wants to be a homosexual today — it's a living death" is no longer true. In recent years, more and more homosexuals are "coming out," demanding their civil rights and in many quarters are living happy, productive lives without apologies or feelings of inferiority or guilt.

Although there are biblical injunctions against homosexuality (Leviticus 18:22), in recent years God-fearing, churchgoing Catholics, Protestants and Jews who are admitted homosexuals and lesbians have been made welcome in the churches of worship.

So, "detecting" and "preventing" homosexuality are not the issue. The issue is accepting homosexuals as human beings with the same needs for love, personal dignity and human support as the rest of us.

Homosexuals and lesbians are neither sick nor defective. And nobody "went wrong." They are simply a minority (approximately 10 percent of our population) that for years has been misunderstood and discriminated against by an unenlightened society.

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