

BENEFITS AND BEHAVIOR:

In my profession I have the opportunity to work with many people living the gay life-style, and I find little to distinguish them from anyone else. They deviate no further from the norm in most aspects of society than do I, and I consider myself characteristically average.

Why then all this hubbub about state employees receiving something, medical and retirement benefits for their homosexual partners, that any reasonable person would otherwise deduce everyone should be entitled to. Well, to grasp the finer points of both the 'hub' and the 'bub' one has to look beyond both these benefits and the 'gay- marriage' issue. One must look at homosexuality itself.

The logic here is simple. If one is born homosexual, then one should be afforded any and all rights and privileges granted any non-homosexual. That is, if one cannot help being 'born that way' then there is no culpability and one then should be viewed and treated with equality under the law. In this country and in this state, with rare exception, we simply do not discriminate against someone for what they are, just how they behave. On the other hand, if state employees and their same-sex partners are not born homosexual, why should they be entitled to any recognition or special treatment under the law for their *behavior*?

This then is the crux of this issue; contrary to the common understanding that homosexuals are genetically determined (*gay gene*); contrary to the strong affirmations of some homosexuals and nearly all gay activists, there is no *gay gene*. Simply put, it is not possible to be *born* a homosexual. The scientific evidence for this assertion is clear, concise, overwhelming ... and unpopular in the main-stream media. But the myth of a 'gay gene' lives on, severely restricting any reasoned debate on homosexuality. This 'gay gene' myth finds its genesis in two separate studies authored by researchers themselves politically active homosexuals. They are Dr. Simon LeVay and Dean Hamer.

Simon LeVay, a neuroanatomist at The Salk Institute in San Diego, founded the Institute for Gay and Lesbian Education in San Francisco after researching and publishing the study of hypothalamic structures in men most widely-cited as confirming innate brain differences between homosexuals and heterosexuals, as he himself initially argued. He later acknowledged:

"It's important to stress what I didn't find. I did not prove that homosexuality is genetic, or find a genetic cause for being gay. I didn't show that gay men are born that way, the most common mistake people make in interpreting my work. Nor did I locate a gay center in the brain."

Furthermore:

"Since I looked at adult brains, we don't know if the differences I found were there at birth, or if they appeared later."

Also pertinent to the present debate is his observation that:

"...people who think that gays and lesbians are born that way are also more likely to support gay rights."

Dean Hamer of the National Institutes of Health performed and published the research most widely cited as pointing to a "gay gene." Dr. Hamer testified in the Colorado Proposition 2 court case that he was "99.5% certain that homosexuality is genetic." He later came to the following conclusions:

"The pedigree 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 pattern that Mendel observed..."

Hamer's study was duplicated by Rice et al with research that was more robust. In this replication the genetic markers found by Hamer turned out to be of no statistical significance:

"It is unclear why our results are so discrepant from Hamer's original study. Because our study was larger than that of Hamer's et al, we certainly had adequate power to detect a genetic effect as large as reported in that study. Nonetheless, our data do not support the presence of a gene of large effect influencing sexual orientation..."

ref. Homosexuality and the Politics of Truth, Jeffery Satinover.

Thus, the very authors who spawned the 'gay gene' myth for political purposes now dispute the myth altogether. However, the consequences of this myth affect each of us through the public policies they engender.

What then is homosexuality if it is not genetically determined? It is simply, a pattern of behavior. The causes of that behavior may be varied and complex, but it is behavior none-the-less. Behavior that is harmful to the individual who engages in it and problematic for the society that must deal with it. Behavior that leads to broken relationships, broken lives and broken bodies.

In Alaska the Supreme Court has decided that homosexual partners of state employees should receive spousal retirement and medical benefits based solely upon their homosexual *behavior*. Continuing this reasoning then, what other behavior should be rewarded so handsomely? Charity is not only a virtue but also behavior. Should then the charitable behavior of two individuals of whatever sexual nexus, one of whom being a state employee, be the grounds for state benefits? What of pedophilia? It too is sexual behavior. A pedophile could claim that he/she was 'born that way' and therefore should receive the same state benefits the Court has ordered for homosexuals. What of bestiality, polygamy, or kleptomania? Thus it becomes only too apparent that when the state goes beyond marriage as the sole behavior which receives special recognition in this regard the imagination is the only limitation on who then should receive special recognition and benefits. Benefits provided at no small cost to Alaskan taxpayers.

Some have suggested a very reasonable compromise would be to allow each state employee to select one individual in their lifetime to receive these benefits. But ask the gay activists who are now agitating on this issue about this option and they will argue vehemently against it... because what they really want are special rights and benefits for *their* behavior and no other. They allow no debate, no consideration of opposing viewpoints or research which questions their assertions. They merely shriek "homophobia" and then expect the opposition to sit down and be quiet. Most importantly they demand public recognition and affirmation of their lifestyle... their behavior. They argue that they seek only equitable treatment for all, but in fact nothing could be further from the truth.

What then should the new legislature and governor do? They should strengthen Article 1, section 25 of the constitution, which now reads:

"To be valid or recognized in this State, a marriage may exist only between one man and one woman." by changing it to read as written in SJR 20, 2006;

"To be valid or recognized in this State, a marriage may exist only between one man and one woman. No other union is similarly situated to a marriage between a man and a woman and, therefore, a marriage between a man and a woman is the only union that shall be valid or recognized in this State and to which the rights, benefits, obligations, qualities, or effects of marriage shall be extended or assigned."

That is, they should construct the constitutional language to reflect what nearly all Alaskans have always thought marriage was supposed to be. Failing this they should allow each state employee to designate just one other individual to receive such benefits, regardless of relationship or behavior.

In the end, there should be no public or legal recognition or affirmation of *behavior* that is recognized by every major religion and nearly every culture, as detrimental to the common good.

Some say that for Governor Palin or the Legislature to defy the Supreme Court on this issue will create a constitutional crisis. I submit that a constitutional crisis has existed for some time now whereby the Alaska Supreme Court regularly overreaches and simply legislates from the bench, thwarting the will of the legislature. If this Court is not to be brought-to-rein on this issue, then when? What cause, what issue, what principle is great enough to entice our elected leaders to reclaim their constitutional rights and responsibilities and end this unconstitutional tyranny by this small group of un-elected and un-accountable judges?

This conflict, which is dividing our community, began when a politically active and minute segment of our society sought to redefine marriage and seek societal approval and affirmation of their behavior. In this endeavor they allow no debate or opposing view points but offer only shrieks of "homophobia" as their strongest rebuttal. When unable to accomplish their objectives legitimately through the legislative process they seek to subvert that process by finding willing accomplices in the media and the legal profession. They have been very successful. They have forced a redefinition of marriage which has stood for millennia. Think about it. For the entire history of this nation, and western civilization, the idea of marriage could be nothing other than between one man and one woman. They want it to mean anything. Could the architects of our civilization have been so remiss as to 'forget' to give homosexuals their due recognition? Indeed, they actually enacted laws *against* homosexual behavior. What did they know that we do not? Or, more importantly, what do we know that they did not? (I submit, exactly nothing.) And some at this point will argue that these are the same individuals who institutionalized slavery, asking "If they were wrong on that, were they then not just as wrong on homosexuality?" That is precisely my point. They were wrong on slavery because skin color is genetic and immutable, and therefore a state of *being*. Homosexuality, like pedophilia, bestiality, kleptomania, and drunk-driving is behavior. Societies always have and always should discriminate against behavior that runs contrary to the public good. The degree to which we discriminate is the only logical open question. Regardless, we clearly should not reward such behavior.

On the Third of April we Alaskans will have the opportunity to communicate clearly to our elected representatives what we think on this issue. We can encourage them to reaffirm the institution of marriage or allow them to submit to the will of the Supreme Court and render marriage meaningless. Regardless, we all will certainly live with the consequences of whatever they decide. Until then let's have a free and open discussion on the facts of the subject. Let's dispense with the epithets and simply debate who should get what, where, when, and most importantly why.

Dave Bronson
Alaska Family Council
dave@alaskafamilycouncil.org