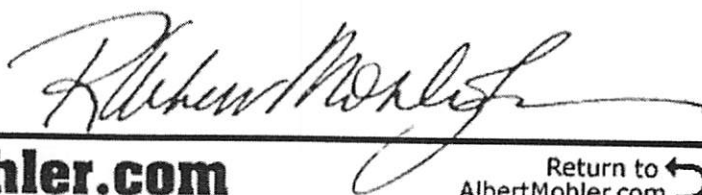



# Blog

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## Is Your Baby Gay? What If You Could Know? What If You Could Do Something About It?

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What if you could know that your unborn baby boy is likely to be sexually attracted to other boys? Beyond that, what if hormonal treatments could change the baby's orientation to heterosexual? Would you do it? Some scientists believe that such developments are just around the corner.

For some time now, scientists have been looking for a genetic or hormonal cause of sexual orientation. Thus far, no "gay gene" has been found -- at least not in terms of incontrovertible and accepted science. Yet, it is now claimed that a growing body of evidence indicates that biological factors may at least contribute to sexual orientation.

The most interesting research along these lines relates to the study of sheep. Scientists at the U.S. Sheep Experiment Station are conducting research into the sexual orientation of sheep through "sexual partner preference testing." As William Saletan at [Slate.com](http://Slate.com) explains:

*A bare majority of rams turn out to be heterosexual. One in five swings both ways. About 15 percent are asexual, and 7 percent to 10 percent are gay.*

*Why so many gay rams? Is it too much socializing with ewes? Same-sex play with other lambs? Domestication? Nope. Those theories have been debunked. Gay rams don't act girly. They're just as gay in the wild. And a crucial part of their brains--the "sexually dimorphic nucleus"--looks more like a ewe's than like a straight ram's. Gay men have a similar brain resemblance to women. Charles Roselli, the project's lead scientist, says such research "strongly suggests that sexual preference is biologically determined in animals, and possibly in humans."*

What makes the sheep "sexual partner preference testing" research so interesting is that the same scientists who are documenting the rather surprising sexual behaviors of male sheep think they can also change the sexual orientation of the animals. In other words, finding a biological causation for homosexuality may also lead to the discovery of a "cure" for the same phenomenon.

That's where the issue gets really interesting. People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals [PETA] has called for an end to the research, while tennis star Martina Navratilova called the research "homophobic and cruel" and argued that gay sheep have a "right" to be homosexual. No kidding.

Homosexual activists were among the first to call for (and fund) research into a biological cause of homosexuality. After all, they argued, the discovery of a biological cause would lead to the normalization of homosexuality simply because it would then be seen to be natural, and thus moral.

But now the picture is quite different. Many homosexual activists recognize that the discovery of a biological marker or cause for homosexual orientation could lead to efforts to eliminate the trait, or change the orientation through genetic or hormonal treatments.

Tyler Gray addresses these issues in the current issue of Radar magazine. In "Is Your Baby Gay?," Gray sets out a fascinating scenario. A woman is told that her unborn baby boy is gay. This woman and her husband consider themselves to be liberal and tolerant of homosexuality. But this is not about homosexuality now; it is about their baby boy. The woman is then told that a hormone patch on her abdomen will "reverse the sexual orientation inscribed in his chromosomes." The *Sunday Times* [London] predicts that such a patch should be available for use on humans within the decade. Will she use it?



This question stands at the intersection of so many competing interests. Feminists and political liberals have argued for decades now that a woman should have an unrestricted right to an abortion, for any cause or for no stated cause at all. How can they now complain if women decide to abort fetuses identified as homosexual? This question involves both abortion and gay rights -- the perfect moral storm of our times.

Homosexual activists have claimed that sexual orientation cannot be changed. What if a hormone patch during pregnancy will do the job?

As Gray suggests:

*In a culture that encourages us to customize everything from our Nikes to our venti skinny lattes, perhaps it is only a matter of time before baby-making becomes just another consumer transaction. Already have a girl? Make this one a boy! Want to impress your boho friends? Make a real statement with lesbian twins!*

More to the point, Gray understands that such a development would reshape the abortion and gay-rights debates in America:

*Conservatives opposed to both abortion and homosexuality will have to ask themselves whether the public shame of having a gay child outweighs the private sin of terminating a pregnancy (assuming the stigma on homosexuality survives the scientific refutation of the Right's treasured belief that it is a "lifestyle choice.") Pro-choice activists won't be spared either. Will liberal moms who love their hairdressers be as tolerant when faced with the prospect of raising a little stylist of their own? And exactly how pro-choice will liberal abortion-rights activists be when thousands of potential parents are choosing to filter homosexuality right out of the gene pool?*

The development of Preimplantation Genetic Diagnosis [PDG] is one of the greatest threats to human dignity in our times. These tests are already leading to the abortion of fetuses identified as carrying unwanted genetic markers. The tests can now check for more than 1,300 different chromosomal abnormalities or patterns. With DNA analysis, the genetic factors could be identified right down to hair and eye color and other traits. The logic is all too simple. If you don't like what you see on the PDG report . . . just abort and start over. Soon, genetic treatments may allow for changing the profile. Welcome to the world of designer babies.

If that happens, how many parents -- even among those who consider themselves most liberal -- would choose a gay child? How many parents, armed with this diagnosis, would use the patch and change the orientation?

Christians who are committed to think in genuinely Christian terms should think carefully about these points:

1. There is, as of now, no incontrovertible or widely accepted proof that any biological basis for sexual orientation exists.
2. Nevertheless, the direction of the research points in this direction. Research into the sexual orientation of sheep and other animals, as well as human studies, points to some level of biological causation for sexual orientation in at least some individuals.
3. Given the consequences of the Fall and the effects of human sin, we should not be surprised that such a causation or link is found. After all, the human genetic structure, along with every other aspect of creation, shows the pernicious effects of the Fall and of God's judgment.
4. The biblical condemnation of all homosexual behaviors would not be compromised or mitigated in the least by such a discovery. The discovery of a biological factor would not change the Bible's moral verdict on homosexual behavior.
5. The discovery of a biological basis for homosexuality would be of great pastoral significance, allowing for a greater understanding of why certain persons struggle with

these particular sexual temptations.

6. The biblical basis for establishing the dignity of all persons -- the fact that all humans are made in God's image -- reminds us that this means *all* persons, including those who may be marked by a predisposition toward homosexuality. For the sake of clarity, we must insist at all times that all persons -- whether identified as heterosexual, homosexual, lesbian, transsexual, transgendered, bisexual, or whatever -- are equally made in the image of God.

7. Thus, we will gladly contend for the right to life of all persons, born and unborn, whatever their sexual orientation. We must fight against the idea of aborting fetuses or human embryos identified as homosexual in orientation.

8. If a biological basis is found, and if a prenatal test is then developed, and if a successful treatment to reverse the sexual orientation to heterosexual is ever developed, we would support its use as we should unapologetically support the use of any appropriate means to avoid sexual temptation and the inevitable effects of sin.

9. We must stop confusing the issues of moral responsibility and moral choice. We are all *responsible* for our sexual orientation, but that does not mean that we freely and consciously *choose* that orientation. We sin against homosexuals by insisting that sexual temptation and attraction are predominately chosen. We do not always (or even generally) choose our temptations. Nevertheless, we are absolutely responsible for what we *do* with sinful temptations, whatever our so-called sexual orientation.

10. Christians must be very careful not to claim that science can never prove a biological basis for sexual orientation. We can and must insist that no scientific finding can change the basic sinfulness of all homosexual behavior. The general trend of the research points to at least some biological factors behind sexual attraction, gender identity, and sexual orientation. This does not alter God's moral verdict on homosexual sin (or heterosexual sin, for that matter), but it does hold some promise that a deeper knowledge of homosexuality and its cause will allow for more effective ministries to those who struggle with this particular pattern of temptation. If such knowledge should ever be discovered, we should embrace it and use it for the greater good of humanity and for the greater glory of God.