



On The Record

LDS COMMENTS AND HISTORICITY HOMOSEXUALITY AND GENDER IDENTITY

This article contains a collected sample of comments, documents and historical messages concerning the topics of homosexuality and gender identity. Many of the positions and postures contained within this document are no longer used as doctrines or policies of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Some readers may find these statements to be painful and difficult to read.

This production was created to establish a baseline understanding of where the Church commenced regarding the public and private discussion of homosexuality and gender identity. We advise the reader to use MormonAndGay.Lds.org and contemporary Church statements to contrast the declarations contained herein against those currently offered as policy and doctrine.

If we are to understand the progress that has been made to better understand homosexuality, we must understand where we've been. This document is intended to establish an historical trail of the Church's education, policy, disclosure and messaging against homosexuals and homosexuality.

Sources and citations were included to allow the reader the opportunity to study the full context of the subject matter.

Contagion requiring destruction of the contagious

George Q. Cannon, 1st Counselor in First Presidency
October 1897, *Report of the 68th Semiannual General Conference of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, 65-66

"If we may believe that which is told to us, without going into researches ourselves, it and other kindred wickedness, is far too common. The same sin that caused the utter destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah! This and other abominable crimes are being practiced. How will these be stopped? Only by the destruction of those who practice them. Why, if a little nest of them were left that were guilty of these things, they would soon corrupt others, as some are being corrupted among us. In coming to these mountains, we hoped to find a place where we could live secluded from the abominations of Babylon. But here in this secluded place wickedness intrudes itself, and is practiced in this land which we have dedicated to the Lord as a land of Zion! How can this be stopped? Not while those who have knowledge of these filthy crimes exist. The only way, according to all that I can understand as the word of God, is for the Lord to wipe them out, that there will be none left to perpetuate the knowledge of these dreadful practices among the children of men. And God will do it, as sure as He has spoken by the mouths of His prophets."

Malady [disease] brought on by lack of self-mastery

Spencer W. Kimball, Apostle
July 10, 1964, "A Counseling Problem in the Church" - BYU Devotional for LDS Seminary & Institute Instructors

"The cure for this malady [homosexuality] lies in self-mastery".

Contagion

Ernest W. Wilkinson, BYU President
Deseret News, "Church News" supplement, November 13, 1965, p. 11

BYU does not intend "to admit to our campus any homosexuals. If any of you have this tendency and have not completely abandoned it, may I suggest that you leave the university immediately after this assembly; and if you will be honest enough to let us know the reason, we will voluntarily refund your tuition. We do not want others on this campus to be contaminated by your presence."

Four contributing factors of Homosexuality

Spencer W. Kimball, Apostle
"Crime Against Nature", chapter six of *The Miracle of Forgiveness*, (Salt Lake City: Bookcraft) 1969, pp. 7778, 85

"Thus prophets anciently and today condemn masturbation.... While we should not regard this weakness as the heinous sin which some other sexual practices are, it is of itself bad enough to require sincere repentance. What is more, it too often leads to grievous sin, even to that sin against nature, homosexuality. For, done in private, it evolves often into mutual masturbation - practiced with another person of the same sex - and then into total homosexuality." [77-78]

"Sin in sex practices tends to have a 'snowballing' effect. As the restraints fall away, Satan incites the carnal man to ever-deepening degeneracy in his search for excitement until in many instances he is lost to any former consideration of decency. Thus, it is that through the ages, perhaps as an extension of homosexual practices, men and women have sunk even to seeking sexual gratification with animals." [78]

"Many have been misinformed that they are powerless in the matter, not responsible for the tendency, and that God 'made them that way'. This is as untrue as any other of the diabolical lies Satan has concocted. It is blasphemy. Man is made in the image of God. Does the pervert think God to be 'that way'?" [85]

"Sometimes not heavenly but earthly parents get the blame. Granted that certain conditions make it easier for one to become a pervert, the second Article of Faith teaches that a man will be punished for his own sins. He can, if normal, rise above the frustrations of childhood and stand on his own feet." [85]

According to Kimball the four main factors of homosexuality are:

- **Masturbation**
- **Satanic incitement leads to it and then into bestiality**
- **Not born with it; made in God's image and God is not homosexual**
- **Parental failure**

Pornography and television

Victor L. Brown Sr., 2nd Counselor in Presiding Bishopric
April 4, 1970, Conference Reports, April 1970, p. 31

"A normal 12- or 13-year-old boy or girl exposed to pornographic literature could develop into a homosexual!... [Recounts a story of a minister performing a same-sex marriage for two men, which was reported on TV.] Who is responsible for this moral decay? The children? Hardly. It is we adults, those of us who permit the sale of filth on our newsstands and also permit the broadcasting of it over airways."

Homosexuality is “Satan’s weapon”/ Homosexuals are perverts

Spencer W. Kimball, Acting Presiding Apostle

"New Horizons for Homosexuals", church-published pamphlet, 1971, pp. 3 and 11

"Some begin the ruinous practice of perversion through curiosity and then become entangled in its tentacles." [p. 3]

"One of Satan's strongest weapons is to make the victim believe the practice incurable regardless of one's effort.... Satan tells his victims that it is a natural way of life; that it is normal; that perverts are a different kind of people born 'that way' and that they cannot change. This is a base lie... Many...authorities in the field have proclaimed that homosexuality, like fornication, adultery, robbery, and other detestable sins is curable." [p. 11]

The letter asserts "God made no man a pervert" or "evil" and that "[t]o blame a weakness ... upon God is cowardly." It also calls homosexuality "ugly", "degenerate", "unnatural", "vicious", "base", a "waste of power", a "deep sin", and "an end to the family and ... civilization". The publication advises for the homosexual to recover they must "shun" anyone "associated with the transgression" and pray and read the scriptures.

Spreads like a prairie fire (contagion)

Spencer W. Kimball, Acting Presiding Apostle. April 3, 1971, "Voices of the Past, of the Present, of the Future, *Ensign*, June 1971, p. 16

"There are said to be millions of perverts who have relinquished their natural affection and bypassed courtship and normal marriage relationships. This practice is spreading like a prairie fire and changing our world. They are without 'natural affection' for God, for spouses, and even for children."

Ignoring differences between the sexes and sex-roles

Victor L. Brown Sr., 2nd Counselor in Presiding Bishopric

"The Meaning of Morality", *Ensign*, June 1971, p. 55

"The Lord defined some very basic differences between men and women. He gave the male what we call masculine traits and the female feminine traits. He did not intend either of the sexes to adopt the other's traits but, rather, that men should look and act like men and that women should look and act like women. When these differences are ignored, an unwholesome relationship develops, which, if not checked, can lead to the reprehensible, tragic sin of homosexuality. In other words, we have a responsibility as priesthood bearers to be examples of true manhood."

Demonic inspiration

Bernard P. Brockbank, Assistant to the Council of Twelve

"The Ten Commandments", *Ensign*, Dec. 1971, p. 61

"Fornication and homosexual acts are inspired by the devil and are grievous sins in the sight of God."

Unconscious, compulsive biological impulses

Dr. Allen E. Bergin (Psychology, BYU)

"Toward a Theory of Human Agency", *Ensign*, July 1973, p. 33

"Some homosexuals, for example, seem to be compulsively driven to frequent and sometimes bizarre acts that they say occur without the mediation of conscious intent. The act once repeated, the motivation behind it can become so powerful that one is literally in bondage to the demands of biological impulses and related stimuli."

Childhood seduction/molestation

Dr. Lindsay M. Curtis, M.D.

"Why does the Church oppose homosexuality? Why is it wrong?", *Ensign*, July 1974, p. 14

"There is harm in homosexuality. Many homosexuals seek to introduce others into their practice, often those in their tender, impressionable years."

Pornography, among others

Spencer W. Kimball, Church President

October 4, 1974, "God Will Not Be Mocked", *Ensign*, Nov. 1974, p. 4

"Every form of homosexuality is sin. Pornography is one of the approaches to that transgression."

Poor examples set by parents and community leaders

N. Eldon Tanner, 1st Counselor in the First Presidency

October 6, 1974, "Why Is My Boy Wandering Tonight?", *Ensign*, Nov. 1974, p. 84

"Many are in the wilderness because of following the poor example set by leaders in homes and communities. Traffic in this area is most congested and confusing. Pornography, fornication, adultery, and homosexuality are permitted and practiced in the world today to such an extent that we are truly following the ways of Sodom and Gomorrah. There is too much corruption in the world. We need strong leaders of good character in all places—leaders who are examples of integrity, dependability, and righteousness."

Homosexuality cured by opposite sex marriage

Dr. Robert D. Card, M.D.^[17]

"Counseling the Homosexual in a Private Practice Setting", AMCAP (Association of Mormon Counselors and Psychotherapists) annual journal, Vol. 1, no. 1, 1975, pp. 10-13

Card's definition of male homosexuality was "a conditioned avoidance of an adult female in a domestic setting". According to Card, Lesbianism is caused when "the husband or father has been covertly seductive, buying the girl slinky dresses and all sort of things and at the same time the girl cannot relate to the mother". As to "curing" homosexuality, he said that, "I'm afraid that the measure of success that I'm looking for is marriage".

Lack of parental affection

Victor L. Brown Jr., BYU Instructor

"Two Views of Sexuality", *Ensign*, July 1975, p. 50

"Children learn how to love in a stable, healthy family. Parents need to know that lack of proper affection in the home can result in unnatural behavior in their children such as homosexuality or inability to be an effective parent when the time comes."

Environmental influences

Gordon B. Hinckley, Apostle

October 1975, "Opposing Evil", *Ensign*, November 1975, p. 38

Speaking about a young gay man who had recently visited Hinckley, he said, "We talked of the influences that had put him where he is, of the home from which he came, of associations with other young men, of books and magazines read, of shows seen."

Homosexuals are not born "that way"

***The LDS church has since deleted and removed "To Young Men Only" from printed publications and online access. You can read a web archive of the talk by clicking this [link](#).**

Boyd K. Packer, Apostle

October 1976, "To Young Men Only", *Priesthood Session General Conference*, October 2, 1976

"There is a falsehood that some are born with an attraction to their own kind, with nothing they can do about it. They are just "that way" and can only yield to those desires. That is a malicious and destructive lie. While it is a convincing idea to some, it is of the devil. No one is locked into that kind of life.

From our premortal life we were directed into a physical body. There is no mismatching of bodies and spirits. Boys are to become men—masculine, manly men—ultimately to become husbands and fathers.

No one is predestined to a perverted use of these powers."

Packer encourages violence against homosexual missionaries

***The LDS church has since deleted and removed "To Young Men Only" from printed publications and online access. You can read a web archive of the talk by clicking this [link](#).**

Boyd K. Packer, Apostle

October 2, 1976, "To Young Men Only", Priesthood Session General Conference, October 2, 1976

Packer described a situation where a gay missionary "came out" to his companion. His companion reacted by physically assaulting the gay missionary.

Packer: *"While I was in a mission on one occasion, a missionary said he had something to confess. I was very worried because he just could not get himself to tell me what he had done. After patient encouragement he finally blurted out, 'I hit my companion.'*

'Oh, is that all,' I said in great relief.

'But I floored him,' he said.

After learning a little more [missionary had told his companion he was gay], my response was 'Well, thanks. Somebody had to do it, and it wouldn't be well for a General Authority to solve the problem that way.'

I am not recommending that course to you, but I am not omitting it."

Failure in parenting

J. Richard Clarke, 2nd Counselor in Presiding Bishopric

April 1977, "Ministering to Needs through LDS Social Services", *Ensign*, May 1977, p. 85

[Read a letter from a self-hating Gay man who had a poor relationship with his father.]

"It should go without saying that many of these problems would be alleviated if parents would spend more time teaching and rearing their children. Related to the story that I gave at the beginning of my talk is evidence of a clinical researcher who, after studying 850 individual cases, stated: "Homosexuality would not occur where there is a normal, loving father-and-son relationship." Any of our people living in righteousness would normally avoid being involved in these problems."

Social permissiveness and parental failure

Spencer W. Kimball, Church President

October 1977, "The Foundations of Righteousness, *Ensign*, November 1977, p. 4

"The growing permissiveness in modern society gravely concerns us. Certainly our Heavenly Father is distressed with the increasing inroads among his children of such insidious sins as adultery and fornication, homosexuality, lesbianism, abortions, pornography, population control, alcoholism, cruelty expressed in wife-beating and child-abuse, dishonesty, vandalism, violence, and crime generally, including the sin of living together without marriage.

"We call upon our Church members everywhere to renew their efforts to strengthen the home and to honor their parents, and to build better communications between parent and child.

"Important as it is, building stronger homes is not enough in the fight against rising permissiveness. We therefore urge Church members as citizens to lift their voices, to join others in unceasingly combatting, in their communities and beyond, the inroads of pornography and the general flaunting of permissiveness. Let us vigorously oppose the shocking developments which encourage the old sins of Sodom and Gomorrah, and which defile the human body as the temple of God."

Are not born but are "made"

Mark E. Petersen, Apostle

January 14, 1978, "The strong delusions", *Church News*, p. 16

A 1977 Sacramento Bee article "gave expert evidence that homosexuals certainly are not born - they are made - further defusing claims that they 'can't help it.'"

Finding a cure for homosexuality

Boyd K. Packer, Apostle

March 5, 1978, "To the One" pamphlet of BYU Twelve Stake Fireside address, published in 1978 by "Corporation of the President of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints"

Finding "the cause of this condition" is "an essential step in developing a cure."

(1) "It is not desirable; it is unnatural; it is abnormal; it is an affliction. When practiced, it is immoral. It is a transgression." (p. 2)

(2) "I accept that word [homosexual] as an adjective to describe a temporary condition. I reject is a noun naming a permanent one." (p. 2)

(3) The "reason why we in the Church do not talk more openly about this subject"...is because "with many things, it is easy - very easy - to cause the very things we are trying to avoid." (p. 3)

(4) "Some who become tangled up in this disorder become predators. They proselyte the young or the inexperienced." (pp. 5-6)

(5) "Perversion may have some very physical expressions, but it is not a physical disorder. A most extensive physical examination will not reveal one shred of evidence that it is." (p. 9)

(6) "Have you explored the possibility that the cause, when found, will turn out to be a very typical form of selfishness - selfishness in a very subtle form?" (pp. 10-11)

Appetites unchecked by family life and real religion

Spencer W. Kimball, Church President

April 1978, "Listen to the Prophets, *Ensign*, May 1978, p. 76

"Once the carnal in man is no longer checked by the restraints of family life and by real religion, there comes an avalanche of appetites which gathers momentum that is truly frightening. As one jar looses and begins to roll down hill, still another breaks loose, whether it is an increase in homosexuality, corruption, drugs, or abortion. Each began as an appetite that needed to be checked but which went unchecked. Thus misery achieves a ghastly monument."

Free agency

Mark E. Petersen, Apostle

December 16, 1978, "Sin is No Excuse", *Church News*, p. 16

"It was not God who made them [homosexuals] that way.... He gave all mankind free agency."

Letter to a Friend

Spencer W. Kimball, Church President, 1978 Revised Edition

In 1978 the Church re-released Kimball's 1971 *New Horizons for Homosexuals* as a 30-page pamphlet called Letter to a Friend. [<link>](#)

"Next to the crime of murder comes the sin of sexual impurity as expressed in its many manifestations: adultery, fornication, homosexuality and related transgressions." ... these sins [of homosexuality] can be overcome if there is adequate restraint and repentance. ... Satan tells his victims that it [homosexuality] is a natural way of life; that it is normal; that perverts are a different kind of people born 'that way' and they cannot change. "

Poor fathering skills

Ed D. Lauritsen, Values Institute, BYU

February 6, 1979, "The Role of the Father in Male Homosexuality", paper presented to LDS Social Services

"[N]urturant fathering...almost serves as a form of psychological immunization against homosexuality in most cases". He also told his audience that "it is incumbent upon...all LDS clinicians to labor for the **prevention** of homosexuality" (emphasis in original). He indicated that every time "we assist a man toward improving his relationships with his children...we are, in effect, helping him reduce the possibility of homosexuality among his children, and in turn, among his children's children".

A physical perversion simply requiring repentance

James O. Mason, Church Commissioner of Health
1980 (?) undated, "Attitudes of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints Toward Certain Medical Problems"

"The Church looks upon the homosexual act as a physical perversion, and Church leaders are advised to...persuade them [homosexuals] that repentance can bring them forgiveness from such transgressions."

God did not create homosexuals because we are in God's image and God is not homosexual

Spencer W. Kimball, Church President
October 1980, "President Kimball Speaks Out on Morality", *Ensign*, November 1980, p. 97

"'God made me that way,' some say, as they rationalize and excuse themselves for their [homosexual] perversions. 'I can't help it,' they add. This is blasphemy. Is man not made in the image of God, and does he think God to be 'that way'?"

Homosexuality is "learned"

Victor L. Brown Jr., DSW, Board of Governors, Assoc. of Mormon Counselors & Psychotherapists (AMCAP) and Area Director, LDS Social Services in Northern California

October 2, 1980, "Male Homosexuality: Identity Seeking a Role", *AMCAP Journal*, April 1981, pp. 1, 3-4 "May I share with you some conclusions I have reached. First, homosexuality is learned, not inherent." [p. 1]

"The first phase is **pre-homosexual role confusion** in childhood and includes parent-child disturbances, gender and role distortion, relationship skill deficits, and erotization." [Brown later relates this role confusion to "troubled, even pathological parent-child and parent-to-parent relationships, on p. 4".]

"The second phase, **pre-homosexual compensation**, involves unilateral masturbatory fantasy...fragmentation, and self-focus." [Brown later defines this as partially involving "masturbatory fantasy", on p. 5]

"The third phase is **crisis of [role] fit**, a severe realization of being different."

"The final phase is **homosexual role** resolution, or "merging"....where the person and the role merge. [pp. 3-4]

Masturbation can lead to homosexuality

Spencer W. Kimball, Church President

November 1980, "President Kimball Speaks Out on Morality", *Ensign*, p. 97 and *New Era*, p. 39

"Sometimes masturbation is the introduction to the more serious sins of exhibitionism and the gross sin of homosexuality."

Homosexuality is an acquired addiction

*** It is important to note that the LDS church deleted and manipulated significant sections of Hartman Rector's General Conference talk when it was offered in print version. To hear the original address without the transcript manipulation you must listen to the audio version of the April 1981 General Conference talk.**

Elder Hartman Rector, Jr., April 1981 General Conference, "Turning the Hearts", (transcribed from the audio version) **The unedited audio/video version is here <[link](#)>**

"If children have a happy family experience, they will not want to be homosexual, which I am sure is an acquired addiction, just as drugs, alcohol and pornography are. The promoters of homosexuality say they were born that way. But I do not believe this is true."

"... [t]here are no female spirits trapped in male bodies and vice versa."

No values, a key to "lesbianism" and homosexuality

Ezra Taft Benson, President of the Quorum of the Twelve, April 1981, "Great Things Required of Their Fathers", *Priesthood Session General Conference*.

"We have seen introduced into many school systems false ideas about the theory of man's development from lower forms of life, teachings that there are no absolute moral values, repudiation of all beliefs regarded as supernatural, permissiveness about sexual freedom that gives sanction to immoral behavior and "alternative life-styles" such as lesbianism, homosexuality, and other perverse practices.

Such teachings not only tend to undermine the faith and morals of our young people, but they deny the existence of God, who gave absolute laws, and the divinity of Jesus Christ."

Parental Failure in the Home

Ezra Taft Benson, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles
November 1982, "Fundamentals of Enduring Family Relationships", *Ensign*, p. 59

"Today we are aware of great problems in our society. The most obvious are sexual promiscuity, homosexuality, drug abuse, alcoholism, vandalism, pornography, and violence.

"These grave problems are symptoms of failure in the home—the disregarding of principles and practices established by God in the very beginning.

"Because some parents have departed from the principles the Lord gave for happiness and success, many families throughout the world are undergoing great stress and trauma. Many parents have been enticed to abandon their responsibilities in the home to seek after an elusive 'self-fulfillment'." [These three paragraphs are quoted again by Benson verbatim in July 1992's First Presidency message.]

Avoid at all costs

Bruce Hafen, President of Ricks College, August 28, 1982, "The Gospel of Romantic Love,"
BYU Devotional Speech

*"The American Psychiatric Association recently voted to remove homosexuality from its list of disorders, even though one study pointed out by our own Allen Bergin showed that 50 percent of the male homosexuals surveyed in one American city had at least 500 sexual partners and 28 percent of them had had 1,000 partners (see "Bringing the Restoration to the Academic World: Clinical Psychology As a Test Case," *BYU Studies* 19 [1979]: 449, 464). If that is normal behavior, we've got problems. ... "avoid at all costs, no matter what the circumstances, of abortion and homosexuality. As serious as is fornication or adultery, you must understand that abortion and homosexuality are equally wrong and may be worse. They may also be called upon to face a Church court, at the peril of their membership in the Church."*

Updated Church Handbook of Instruction

Church Handbook of Instruction, 1983 pg. 51

The Church Handbook of Instruction was updated to state that a church court "may be convened to consider" serious transgressions including "homosexuality" and "lesbianism" but is not required.

A priesthood holder would not be homosexual

Ezra Taft Benson, President of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles
October 1983 General Conference, "What Manner of Men Ought We to Be?"

"A priesthood holder is *virtuous*. Virtuous behavior implies that he has pure thoughts and clean actions. He will not lust in his heart, for to do so is to "deny the faith" and to lose the Spirit. He will not commit adultery "nor do anything like unto it." This means fornication, homosexual behavior, self-abuse, child molestation, or any other sexual perversions."

Oaks creates talking points for Church leaders if media requested comment

Dallin H. Oaks, Apostle

1984 Principles to Govern On Legislation Affecting Rights of Homosexuals <[link](#)>

"This memorandum proposes general principles to guide those [church leaders, apostles, general authorities, church president] who prepare text of a public statement if one is needed"

Page 1: "Homosexual relations are "vile afflictions" and an "abomination"."

Page 5: "Homosexuality can be cured if the battle is well organized and pursued vigorously and continuously"

Page 5: "Homosexuality, like other sins, can be forgiven by the Church and the Lord if the repentance is total, all-inclusive, and continuous."

Page 10: "... penalties against homosexuals makes them martyrs and wins them public sympathy and some powerful liberal support they can use to their advantage on more important issues."

Page 11-12: "The gay rights groups present themselves as victims of intolerance against the condition of homosexuality and of broad based discrimination against persons with that condition. However, there is little evidence of such intolerance or such broad-based discrimination."

Page 13-14: The church SHOULD argue FOR laws that discriminate against homosexuals in the following jobs: "Arguments for job discrimination against homosexuals are strongest in those types of employment and activities that provide teaching, association and role models for young people. This would include school teachers (especially at the elementary and secondary levels), and youth leaders and counselors (such as scoutmasters, coaches, etc.)."

Page 14: The church SHOULD argue FOR laws that only allow homosexuals jobs where they are not a threat. "...jobs which pose no threat to youth or the values described above. Such jobs, which would seem to be done by a homosexual as by another person, would include factory and other laboring jobs involving an adult workforce. "

Page 16: "I recommend that if an anti-job discrimination law is proposed to protect homosexuals, the Church should oppose the law if it did not contain a youth-protection. ...the need for the good of society to protect youth from homosexual proselyting and role models among their teachers and counselors."

Page 19: "One generation of homosexual "marriages" would depopulate a nation, and, if sufficiently widespread, would extinguish its people. Our marriage laws should not abet national suicide."

Biological, in utero hormonal stress

Dr. Reuben W. Rhees (Zoology, BYU) and Dr. Donovan E. Fleming (Psychology, BYU)
April 1985, "Scientists Study Effects of Prenatal Stress", *BYU Today*, April 1985, p. 14

"If you block those critical [male] hormones or disturb that delicate balance, masculinization does not occur." "The demasculinized behavior of male rats includes decreased sexual activity in the male role and, given the right cues by aggressive males, female-like responses."

Selfishness and pornography

Theodore M. Burton, First Quorum of the Seventy
June 3, 1986 (BYU Devotional), "A Marriage to Last through Eternity", *Ensign*, June 1987, p. 12

"...I have come to understand some of the behaviors that lead to transgression. What are they? Generally they are various personal indulgences based on selfishness. One of the greatest of these is the use of pornography. Pornography is related to such sins as self abuse, homosexuality, fornication, adultery, child and spouse abuse, incest, rape, and cruelty."

Biological, in utero hormonal stress

Dr. Reuben W. Rhees (Zoology, BYU) and Dr. Donovan E. Fleming (Psychology, BYU)
"Stress feminizes male rats", *BYU's Daily Universe*, 16 November, 1987

"If the male brain does not receive enough testosterone to fully masculinize it, the brain retains female characteristics. In some instances, even though the rats are anatomically male, 'they are significantly less masculine and more feminine,' said Rhees."

Combination of biological and environmental factors

Dr. Allen E. Bergin (Psychology, BYU)
October 1988, "Questions and Answers", *Ensign*, p. 10

"For example, though a person may suffer from homosexual inclinations that are caused by some combination of biology and environment, the gospel requires that he or she develop firm self-discipline and make an energetic effort to change."

It is not known

Boyd K. Packer, Apostle |
October 1990, "Covenants", *Ensign*, November 1990, p. 85

After lengthy discussion of "Gay and Lesbian Rights", Packer said, "Why, they ask, does this happen to me?...They write that their bishop could not answer the 'why'....We are sometimes told that leaders in the Church do not really understand these problems. Perhaps we don't. There are many 'whys' for which we just do not have simple answers."

Understanding and Helping Those Who Have Homosexual Problems - Suggestions for Ecclesiastical Leaders (church-published guidebook), The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1992

Some people who seek help for homosexual problems may have concluded that experiences from their youth, such as perceived problems with a parent or some other older person, contributed to their inappropriate feelings. Some may believe that they have not consciously chosen to have such feelings in the first place. No general agreement exists about the causes of such problems.

Understanding and Helping Those Who Have Homosexual Problems

1992, LDS Family Services, "Understanding and Helping Those Who Have Homosexual Problems" <[link](#)>

LDS Family Services published the advising practitioners how to prevent and treat homosexuality saying, "There is sufficient scientific research and clinical evidence to conclude that homosexuality is treatable and preventable." The guide states that male homosexuality is caused by "the motivation to repair the loss of the father-son relationship creat[ing] sexualized father-hunger or reparative drive", and that "in the homosexual male this core gender identity has become confused". The manual cites "the roots of lesbianism" as "a dysfunctional family relationship" and/or "physical, sexual and emotional abuse" which causes women to "have a tendency to develop overly dependent or enmeshed emotional relationships". The guide further states that the "love between homosexuals is pseudo-love"

It is not known

Harold Brown, Commissioner of LDS Social Services May 10, 1992, transcript of "Take Two" television program, with Rod Decker, Salt Lake City

Rod Decker: What causes homosexuality?

Harold Brown: There're a lot of theories and there's no generally accepted reason for the cause of homosexuality. There're a lot of different theories.

Parental failure

Ezra Taft Benson, Church President

July 1992, "First Presidency Message: Salvation - A Family Affair", *Ensign*, p. 2

"Today we are aware of great problems in our society. The most obvious are sexual promiscuity, homosexuality, drug abuse, alcoholism, vandalism, pornography, and violence.

"These grave problems are symptoms of failure in the home—the disregarding of principles and practices established by God in the very beginning.

"Because some parents have departed from the principles the Lord gave for happiness and success, many families throughout the world are undergoing great stress and trauma. Many parents have been enticed to abandon their responsibilities in the home to seek after an elusive 'self-fulfillment'." [Quoted verbatim from Benson's October 1982 General Conference address - see November 1982 *Ensign*.]

Childhood molestation?

Spencer J. Condie, Quorum of the Seventy

November 1993, "A Mighty Change of Heart", *Ensign*, p. 15

"I know another good man who was reared in a family without the blessings of the gospel. Through a series of unfortunate events in his early youth, he was introduced to homosexuality, and gradually he became a prisoner of this addictive behavior."

Stimuli from acts of sexual immorality or aggression can lead to homosexuality

Richard G. Scott, Quorum of the Seventy

October 1994, "Making the Right Choices", *Ensign*, Nov. 1994, p. 38. [Also reprinted in Richard G. Scott,

"Serious Questions, Serious Answers", *New Era*, Oct. 1995, p. 4]

"Sexual immorality creates a barrier to the influence of the Holy Spirit with all its uplifting, enlightening, and empowering capabilities. It causes powerful physical and emotional stimulation. In time, that creates an unquenchable appetite that drives the offender to ever more serious sin. It engenders selfishness and can produce aggressive acts such as brutality, abortion, sexual abuse, and violent crime. Such stimulation can lead to acts of homosexuality, and they are evil and absolutely wrong."

Might be inherited but difficult to prove. "Sexual orientation" (sic) is not inborn and is mutable.

James E. Faust, Apostle

November 15, 1994, in a BYU address, "Trying to Serve the Lord Without Offending the Devil"; reproduced as the First Presidency Message in the September 1995 *Ensign* under the title, "Serving the Lord and Resisting the Devil," pp. 2-7.

*"There is some widely accepted theory extant that homosexuality is inherited. How can this be? No scientific evidence demonstrates absolutely, **absolutely** that this is so. Besides, if it were so, it would frustrate the whole plan of mortal happiness. Our designation as men or women began before this world was. In contrast to the socially accepted doctrine that homosexuality is inborn, a number of respectable authorities contend that homosexuality is not acquired by birth. The false belief of inborn sexual orientation denies to repentant souls the opportunity to change and will ultimately lead to discouragement, disappointment, and despair."* (emphasis in original)

Satan confuses gender, sexuality

Dallin H. Oaks, Apostle

October 1995, "Same-Gender Attraction", *Ensign*, pp. 7-8

*"It is easy to hypothesize that inheritance plays a role in sexual orientation. However it is important to remember, as conceded by two advocates of this approach, that 'the concept of substantial heritability should not be confused with the concept of inevitable heritability. ... Most mechanisms probably involve interactions between constitutional predispositions and environmental events.'" (Quotes R. C. Friedman and J. Downey, "Neurobiology and Sexual Orientation: Current Relationships," *Journal of Neuropsychiatry* 5 (48 (1991): 1089-96.)*

Satan "seeks to undermine the principle of individual accountability, to persuade us to misuse our sacred powers of procreation, to discourage marriage and childbearing by worthy men and women, and to confuse what it means to be male or female."

If God intentionally created homosexuals, then the whole plan of Happiness would be frustrated

James E. Faust, 2nd Counselor in First Presidency

November 1995, "First Presidency Message: Serving the Lord & Resisting the Devil", *Liahona*, Nov. 1995, p. 3 (see Faust, Nov. 15, 1994).

"Satan is only interested in our misery, which he promotes by trying to persuade men and women to act contrary to God's plan. One way he does this is by encouraging the inappropriate use of sacred creative powers."

"There is some widely accepted theory extant that homosexuality is inherited. How can this be? No scientific evidence demonstrates absolutely that this is so. Besides, if it were so, it would frustrate the whole plan of mortal happiness. Our designation as men or women began before this world was. In contrast to the socially accepted doctrine that

homosexuality is inborn, a number of respectable authorities contend that homosexuality is not acquired by birth. The false belief of inborn homosexual orientation denies to repentant souls the opportunity to change and will ultimately lead to discouragement, disappointment, and despair."

Church Handbook of Instruction update

1998- Church Handbook of Instruction

The Church Handbook is updated to ban members from full-time missionary service who have participated in "homosexual acts" from age 15 and on unless it has been at least one year since the occurrence and the leaders see "strong evidence of lasting repentance and reformation". The update also includes the first church policies sections on homosexuality and same-gender marriage stating if members have "homosexual thoughts or feelings or engage in homosexual actions" they should be helped to understand faith, repentance, life's purpose, and should be helped to "accept responsibility for their thoughts". Additionally, the manual asserts that the Church "opposes any efforts to legalize" same-gender marriages and encourages members to appeal to government officials to reject those efforts.

Certain powerful inclinations

Gordon B. Hinckley, Church President

October 1998 General Conference, "What Are People Asking About Us?"

"So-called gays and lesbians...may have certain inclinations which are powerful and which may be difficult to control."

Homosexuality is not a natural behavior, it is learned

A. Dean Byrd, Ph.D., Assistant Commissioner of LDS Family Services

"When a Loved One Struggles with Same-Sex Attraction", *Ensign*, Sept. 1999, p. 51

"First, it is important to understand that homosexuality is not innate and unchangeable. Research has not proved that homosexuality is genetic. Even more important, many researchers whose studies have been used to support a biological model for homosexuality have determined that their work has been misinterpreted. What is clear is that homosexuality results from an interaction of social, biological, and psychological factors. These factors may include temperament, personality traits, sexual abuse, familial factors, and treatment by one's peers."

Homosexuality is a personal choice

Boyd K. Packer, Acting Presiding Apostle

October 8, 2000, "Ye Are the Temple of God", *Ensign*, Nov. 2000, p. 72

"Normal desires and attractions emerge in the teenage years; there is the temptation to experiment, to tamper with the sacred power of procreation. These desires can be intensified, even perverted, by pornography, improper music, or the encouragement from unworthy associations. What would have only been a more or less normal passing phase in establishing gender identity can become implanted and leave you confused, even disturbed.

"If you consent, the adversary can take control of your thoughts and lead you carefully toward a habit and to an addiction, convincing you that immoral, unnatural behavior is a fixed part of your nature.

"With some few, there is the temptation which seems nearly overpowering for man to be attracted to man or woman to woman. The scriptures plainly condemn those who "dishonor their own bodies between themselves ... ; men with men working that which is unseemly "or "women [who] change the natural use into that which is against nature".

*"The gates of freedom, and the good or bad beyond, swing open or closed to the password **choice**. You are free to choose a path that may lead to despair, to disease, even to death."* (emphasis in original)

Not genetic or biological

A. Dean Byrd, PhD. (formerly of LDS Family Services)

October 2001, *Homosexuality and the Church of Jesus Christ: Understanding Homosexuality According to the Doctrine of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints*, Cedar Fort Press

"The Church refutes the idea that homosexual orientation is genetically determined....Furthermore, a genetic/biological cause of homosexual attraction has not found support in the scientific literature."

"Science has never proved a genetic link to sexual orientation. Moreover, the Church repeatedly, in nearly every statement about homosexual relations, teaches that homosexual attraction is not inherent to a person's particular genetic make-up and that they are quite able to change."

Cause of homosexuality is not known

December 26, 2004, Gordon B. Hinckley, Church President

Interview with Larry King, on CNN's "Larry King Live"; transcript available on cnn.com

HINCKLEY: Well, we're not anti-gay. We are pro-family. Let me put it that way. And we love these people and try to work with them and help them. We know they have a problem. We want to help them solve that problem.

KING: A problem they caused or they were born with?

HINCKLEY: *I don't know. I'm not an expert on these things. I don't pretend to be an expert on these things. The fact is, they have a problem.*

The Church has no position; it is not known

Dallin H. Oaks, Apostle, and Lance B. Wickman, Quorum of the Seventy
September 2006, "Same Gender Attraction", <[link](#)>

PUBLIC AFFAIRS: You're saying the Church doesn't necessarily have a position on 'nurture or nature'....

ELDER OAKS: That's where our doctrine comes into play. The Church does not have a position on the causes of any of these susceptibilities or inclinations, including those related to same-gender attraction. Those are scientific questions - whether nature or nurture - those are things the Church doesn't have a position on.

ELDER WICKMAN: Whether it is nature or nurture really begs the important question, and a preoccupation with nature or nurture can, it seems to me, lead someone astray from the principles that Elder Oaks has been describing here. Why somebody has a same-gender attraction...who can say?

Policy of Exclusion: November 5th 2015

Thomas S. Monson, Church President, updates the Church Handbook of Instructions: Handbook 1 regarding new rules of apostasy and same-sex marriage. The Handbook change was not publicly announced, but letters were delivered to bishops and stake presidents informing them of the change. As word leaked of the policy change, the public concern resulted in the Church initiating multiple revisions, clarifications and television interviews to better explain their position. See Elder Christofferson public affairs interview here <[link](#)>

See the original letter and policy update here <[link](#)>

The policy that declares members in same-sex marriages to be in apostasy and makes a disciplinary council mandatory. The policy also excludes the children of a parent living in a same-sex relationship from receiving church ordinances unless and until the child: has reached the age of 18; does not live with the parent; "specifically disavows" same-sex relationships; and receives approval from the First Presidency.

November 5th policy: "mind and will of the Lord" to be deleted

President Russell M. Nelson's comments about the November 5th Policy being a "revelation" have been removed from Church materials

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saint, Spokesman, September 2016, " Salt Lake Tribune. "[Lord giveth and new manual taketh away? Mormon apostle's statement on gay policy is cut](#)" <link>

A spokesman for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints has confirmed that the President Russell M. Nelson's illustration that the November 2015 policy was "revelation", has been removed from the lesson on "prophets and revelation" — as Mormon authorities continue to develop the new online training for teachers who instruct Mormon high-schoolers.

Oaks, LDS Church doubles down against gender identity and homosexuality

Dallin H. Oaks, Counselor First Presidency, October 2018 General Conference

"Gender is eternal. Before we were born on this earth, we all lived as male or female spirits in the presence of God. ... We affirm the Lord's teachings that "gender is an essential characteristic of individual premortal, mortal, and eternal identity and purpose" and that "marriage between man and woman is essential to His eternal plan." ... Our knowledge of God's revealed plan of salvation requires us to oppose many of the current social and legal pressures to retreat from traditional marriage or to make changes that confuse or alter gender or homogenize the differences between men and women. We know that the relationships, identities, and functions of men and women are essential to accomplish God's great plan."

"Our positions on these fundamentals frequently provoke opposition to the church. We consider that inevitable. Opposition is part of the plan, and Satan's (the Adversary's) most strenuous opposition is directed at whatever is most important to God's plan. He seeks to destroy God's work," he said. "He also seeks to confuse gender, to distort marriage, and to discourage childbearing — especially by parents who will raise children in truth."

Additional Sources:

- [1] LDS authorities have also historically referred to homosexuality as sodomy, buggery, the crime against nature, and same-gender or same-sex attraction, or simply "SSA".
- [2] For the divinatorial titles of church presidents and apostles, see Lewis R. Church, "Prophet, Seer, and Revelator", *Encyclopedia of Mormonism*, vol. 3 (New York: Macmillan, 1992). For the number of Apostles since 1830, see <link > (7 September 2006).
- [3] The official church publications I have drawn upon are the *Ensign* (for Mormon adults), the *New Era* (for youth), the *Liahona* (a compact version of the *Ensign* designed for international publication), *BYU Today*, the *AMCAP Journal*, the *Deseret News*, and several pamphlets and guides published by the LDS Church.

- [4] Connell "Rocky" O'Donovan, "'The Abominable and Detestable Crime Against Nature': A Brief History of Homosexuality and Mormonism, 1840-1980", Brent Corcoran (ed.), *Multiply and Replenish: Mormon Essays on Sex and Family*, (Salt Lake City: Signature Books, 1994), pp. 132-4; now online in a greatly expanded version at [<link>](#).
- [5] For academic references to the speeches cited hereafter, see the chronological entries in "What Mormon Authorities Have Said" section.
- [6] D. Michael Quinn, *Same-Sex Dynamics among Nineteenth-Century Americans: A Mormon Example*, (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1996) p. 417; and O'Donovan, "Abominable", p. 144
- [7] O'Donovan, *Abominable*, pp. 153-4
- [8] Ernest L. Wilkinson, "Make Honor Your Standard", *Deseret News*, Church News supplement, November 13, 1965, p. 11.
- [9] Dallin H. Oaks and Lance B. Wickman, "Same Gender Attraction", September 2006,
- [10] Boyd K. Packer, "To the One", published by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, 1978, p. 3; accessible online at [<link>](#).
- [11] Packer, "To the One", p. 4.
- [12] Packer, "To the One", pp. 4-5.
- [13] Packer, "To the One", p. 6.
- [14] Packer, "To the One", p. 10.
- [15] O'Donovan, "Abominable", pp. 156-8, and 160; see [<link>](#).
- [16] Pritt and Pritt, "Homosexuality: Getting Beyond the Therapeutic Impasse", *AMCAP Journal*, Vol. 13, No. 1 (1987) pp. 37-66.
- [17] Dr. Robert D. Card also performed horribly debilitating electric shock "therapy" on Gay Mormons for some 10 years of private practice in Salt Lake City, using referrals made by LDS bishops and other church leaders.
- [18] Principles to Govern: Possible Public Statements on Legislation Affecting Rights of Homosexuals [<link>](#)