



FRIDAY, JUNE 03, 2005

Gays Can Be Cured! At Least, Gay Fruit Flies Can!

by Michael in New York on [6/03/2005 03:02:00 AM](#)

That's a headline some have feared for years -- would science find a "gay" gene? One that parents could search for and abort a fetus before it's born (the way people around the world abort baby girls) or perhaps just "fix?" Many took comfort in the knowledge that scientists believed something as complex as sexual orientation would be derived from many factors and not just one lone gene.

Well, the New York Times reports in an experiment on fruit flies ...

That one gene, the researchers are announcing today in the journal Cell, is apparently by itself enough to create patterns of sexual behavior - **a kind of master sexual gene** that normally exists in two distinct male and female variants.

In a series of experiments, the researchers found that females given the male variant of the gene acted exactly like males in courtship, madly pursuing other females. Males that were artificially given the female version of the gene became more passive and turned their sexual attention to other males.

"We have shown that a single gene in the fruit fly is sufficient to determine all aspects of the flies' sexual orientation and behavior," said the paper's lead author, Dr. Barry Dickson, senior scientist at the Institute of Molecular Biotechnology at the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna. "It's very surprising.

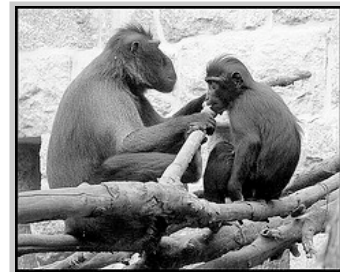
"What it tells us is that instinctive behaviors can be specified by genetic programs, just like the morphologic development of an organ or a nose."

The results are certain to prove influential in debates about whether genes or environment determine who we are, how we act and, especially, our sexual orientation, although it is not clear now if there is a similar master sexual gene for humans.

Humans are much more complicated, of course. And one should point out these are FRUIT flies we're talking about, after all. But is this a positive development? (See, it is genetic!) Or is it negative? (See, it can be cured!)

Actually, it's neither -- it's simply an apparent advance in human knowledge, one that could be confirmed or clarified or proven misleading down the road. Yes, people can abuse science or jump to silly conclusions based on one study. But only fools fear finding out the world is round or circles the sun or that the earth is more than 50,000 years old, etc. Let's leave fear and hatred of science to the fundies.

JOHN'S PHOTOS



Click here for more tips
fightglobalwarming.com
 e
 ENVIRONMENTAL DEFENSE
 finding the ways that work

HOT OFF THE WIRE

- Eschaton**
 Overnight - Folk On. Newish.
13 minutes ago
- HuffPost Politics**
 Michael Likosky: Ed Rendell: Hardest Working Man in Infrastructure - At this year's National Governors Association (NGA) meeting, Governor Ed Rendell's tenure as Chair fittingly came to a close with a plenary session on infras...
15 minutes ago
- Daily Kos**
 Open Thread and Diary Rescue - *Today, srkp23 (pulling a double shift), ybruti, taylormattd, ItsJessMe and vcmvo2 combed through hundreds of diaries to find this powerful list. Today's...
31 minutes ago
- Crooks and Liars**
 Open Thread - Open Thread below...
41 minutes ago
- Firedoglake**
 Pecora in Perspective: Investment Banking, Commercial Banking, and Glass-Steagall - The Pecora Commission report devotes a substantial amount of pages to discussion of the evils of allowing the commingling of commercial banking services, i...
1 hour ago

Show All

AMERICABLOG TV

Next 6

Despite insurance premiums doubling over the past decade, Republicans want to see health care reform fail. For the GOPers, health care is politics. They just

Traditional media has to debunk the birthers

One small step...

The right-wing media, the voices of the GOP, in

REM - Orange Crush

REM - Orange Crush

I collect with vodpod

[see all 322 videos >](#)

[Visit our AMERICAblog TV site.](#)

GAY POLITICS



Visit our new gay politics section, [AMERICAblog Gay](#).

FEEDS



Blog RSS



1,423 readers



AMERICAblog TV RSS



Twitter RSS

Twitter Feed



Mobile Version



Google

Get the blog by email:

Subscribe me!

Top Ad

[Advertise in this spot.](#)

HEALTH CARE REFORM

Ezra Klein

Tab Dump

4 hours ago

Wonk Room

Sen. Byron Dorgan: The 'Trade' In Cap-And-Trade 'Makes No Sense To Me'

6 hours ago

Health Beat

Truth Squad: Wall Street Journal Health Care Editorial Wrong on

SEARCH

AMERICAblog
 Web

Search

SEND US TIPS & COMMENTS

americablog@starpower.net

BLOG ARCHIVE

Blog Archive

SITES WE LIKE

- [Air America Radio](#)
- [Alan Colmes' blog](#)
- [Ari Melber \(The Nation\)](#)
- [Ben Smith](#)
- [BicycleMark's blog & podcast](#)
- [Bilerico](#)
- [BradBlog](#)
- [Bring It On](#)
- [Carrie Fisher](#)
- [Crooks and Liars](#)
- [DailyKos](#)
- [Dan Savage's "Slog"](#)
- [Daou Report](#)
- [Democratic Underground](#)
- [Eschaton](#)
- [Ezra Klein](#)
- [Fire Dog Lake](#)
- [FiveThirtyEight.com](#)
- [Freeway Blogger](#)
- [The Gavel \(Speaker Pelosi's blog\)](#)
- [Good As You](#)
- [Glenn Greenwald](#)
- [Holy Bullies and Headless Monsters](#)
- [Huffington Post](#)
- [Hullabaloo \(Digby\)](#)
- [Jack and Jill Politics](#)
- [Jed Report](#)
- [Jesus' General](#)
- [Kenneth in the 212](#)
- [Margaret and Helen](#)
- [Matthew Gross](#)
- [Media Matters](#)
- [Mike Signorile's "The Gist"](#)
- [Mudflats](#)
- [MyDD](#)
- [Open Left](#)
- [Plum Line](#)
- [Political Punch \(Jake Tapper\)](#)
- [Political Wire](#)
- [Politics 1](#)
- [Pop Surfing](#)
- [Progressive Blog Digest](#)
- [Queers United](#)
- [RawStory](#)
- [Rex Wockner](#)
- [Rude Pundit](#)
- [Smirking Chimp](#)
- [Talk Left](#)
- [Tapped](#)
- [Taylor Marsh](#)
- [Think Progress](#)
- [TowleRoad](#)
- [VetVoice.com](#)
- [Washington Note](#)
- [WayneBesen.com](#)
- [Wonkette](#)
- [Worth Repeating](#)



NEWS LINKS

- [US](#)
- [Washington Post](#)

PLEASE SUPPORT AMERICABLOG

One-time donation

\$

Donate

Recurring monthly donation

\$

Donate

Donations are not tax-deductible.

LABELS

Select a label

LAST 100 VISITORS

Recent Visitors

[Click to Get FEEDJIT](#)

ABOUT AMERICABLOG

Why AMERICAblog?

Because a great nation deserves the truth.

What issues do you cover?

US politics overall with a particular focus on the Obama Administration, the radical right, and civil rights.

Who are you?

John Aravosis
Editor
Washington, DC

Joe Sudbay
Deputy Editor
Washington, DC

Chris Ryan
Associate Editor
Paris, France

Robert Arena
Contributing Editor
Baltimore, Maryland

Jacki Schechner
Contributing Editor
Washington, DC

