

Esther Fishbaugh
Bozeman, Montana
406-587-0455

March 7, 2005

House Education Committee

Testimony against SB 198

Bullying in most cases is the action of an immature person who enjoys exercising power over others by force of brute strength or cutting witticisms. The object of the bully is anyone and anything that opportunity presents to the bully. Most bullying only uses tags and labels as a convenient reason to target someone for their immature aggression. Little bullying is truly because of prejudice; it is a power play to feed the desire to dominate. Anyone can be, at some point or another, the target of a bully. I have been the target of a bully for no other reason that I was at the right place at the right time. SB 198 is unnecessary because schools already recognize and address the practice of bullying; school administrators do not need the extra paperwork required to comply with this bill. And SB198 will create a nuisance in the schools as it is abused by smart-Alex children calling in anonymous "tips" about bullying. But a greater harm than these already mentioned is the rubber stamp of approval that we will place on homosexuality and other aberrant sexual orientations within our school environments by including sexual orientation in this bill.

Homosexuality is not a lifestyle equivalent to heterosexuality. It is fraught with increased risk for several serious disorders and diseases. This is not a lifestyle that we want to promote among our malleable teenagers or elementary children. Recent studies on the brain confirm what parents have know for some time, that teenagers do not assess risks in the same manner as adults and are unable to accurately predict long term consequences for present behavior. Homosexuality has long term consequences as evidenced by the following statistics.

"The CDC reports that homosexuals comprise the single largest exposure category of the more than 660,000 males with AIDS in the United States. "Men who have sex with men' and 'men who have sex with men and inject drugs' together accounted for 63% of the cumulative total of males AIDS cases." (Getting it Straight, Peter Sprigg & Timothy Dailey, 2001) Just this January, the CDC has reported a variant HIV that develops into AIDS in a matter of weeks instead of years; this mutation was found in the homosexual population in NYC, a population known for its risky sexual practices. Younger homosexuals are the most likely to participate in these risky sexual practices, again proving the point. Is this what you want to promote to your teenagers who are impaired when it comes to assessing the risk of their actions?

Homosexuals with HIV have a 37-fold increase in anal cancer, a 4-fold increase in Hodgkin's disease, 2.7-fold increase in cancer of the testicles, and a 2.5-fold increase in lip cancer. Many studies confirm that many homosexuals infected with HIV do not tell their partners that they have the disease while practicing unprotected sex. HPV is "almost universal" among homosexuals as reported in the Washington Blade, a gay periodical. Hepatitis A outbreaks are a recurring problem in many industrialized cities around the world; hepatitis leads to liver cancer. All the other STDs are prevalent within the gay community.

The average homosexual marriage lasts less than two years. Most homosexual marriages are not monogamous and thus are prone to physical disease which is a burden on the health care systems of the state and affects the average citizen with higher insurance rates. Insurance rates are so high already that many Montanans cannot afford health insurance. Homosexuals have a shortened lifespan because of their unhealthy lifestyle. This does not give the state or society in general a reliable base for its communities and greatly increases the burden on public health service increasing insurance rates by 33%.

SB 198 is a bad bill primarily because it will promote an unhealthily lifestyle with the inclusion of sexual orientation in its protected groups. Please do not stifle free speech by making it a crime to annoy or offend in the fear of being called a bully. I will faithful warn those I love of the dangers of drug abuse and drunkenness; I want the schools to be able to warn the children of the dangers of homosexuality. Please vote no on SB 198.

environmental factors versus genetics! If homosexuality were in the genetic code, then both of the twins would have been homosexual 100 percent of the time, yet this was not the case.¹⁰

The well-known Simon LeVay brain study of 1991, which tried to find differences in the hypothalamuses (a very small part of the brain) of homosexual and heterosexual men, found no evidence that there is any genetic cause for homosexuality. Nothing in the study showed that gay men are born that way.¹¹ Other prominent researchers have concluded that there is no evidence to support a biological theory, but rather that homosexuality could be best explained by an alternative model where "temperamental and personality traits interact with the familial and social milieu as the individual's sexuality emerges."¹²

Why does the truth matter?

As the myth of being born gay is more accepted by our society and government, our country is seeing the effects. For instance, increasingly more states are trying to legalize same-sex marriages. Educational curricula now include courses on lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender studies.¹³ Clearly, our perception of science can affect political policies. LeVay, the researcher and gay activist mentioned previously, made an interesting observation about the emphasis on the biology of homosexuality. He noted, "...people who think that gays and lesbians are born that way are also more likely to support gay rights."¹⁴

Let's face it: science is meant to be fact . . . not theory. So, when the media takes hold of false theories of genetic links to homosexuality and promotes it as science, people are led astray. This is not right. Even if somewhere in the future a genetic link could be proven, it wouldn't suddenly make the behavior right—or acceptable to God. Look at alcoholism or tendencies toward anger. While these have been promoted as having a genetic linkage, there are few, if any, in our society who would accept such behaviors just because they are linked genetically. God's Word still makes no provision for any type of sexual activity except that found within heterosexual marriage between one man and one woman. So to answer the question, "Are homosexual attractions biological?" the conclusive answer is there is no support in the scientific research for the conclusion that homosexuality is biologically determined.

Myth #3: Homosexual relationships are no different than heterosexual ones

Homosexual advocates want their relationships to be treated the same as heterosexual ones. But are homosexual relationships any different than heterosexual ones? You'd be surprised.

Fact: Homosexual male relationships are rarely monogamous and those involved are more at risk for life-threatening illnesses

Studies indicate that the average male homosexual has hundreds of sex partners in his lifetime. The median number of partners for homosexuals is four times higher than for heterosexuals.¹⁵ A study on the sexual profiles of 2,583 older homosexuals, published in the *Journal of Sex Research*, found that only 2.7 percent claimed to have had sex with one partner only.¹⁶ Research has also found that few homosexual relationships last longer than two years, with many men reporting hundreds of lifetime partners.¹⁷

Check out these findings:

- 24 percent of gay men had over 100 partners
- 43 percent of gay men had over 500 partners
- 28 percent of gay men had over 1000 partners¹⁸

Solid, irrefutable evidence proves that there are lethal consequences to engaging in the defining features of male homosexuality—that is, promiscuity. Active homosexuals are vulnerable to dozens of sexually transmitted diseases.¹⁹ According to one report, the risk of anal cancer

rises by an astounding 4,000 percent for those engaging in homosexual intercourse and doubles again for those who are HIV positive.²⁰

AIDS remains the fifth leading cause of death among those aged 26 to 44, and 60 percent of new cases are contracted by men who have sex with men.²¹ Despite the twenty-year "safe-sex" campaign, the incidence of unsafe sexual practices resulting in various diseases is on the rise.²² An estimated 30 percent of all 20-year-old homosexual men will be HIV positive or dead by the age of 30.²³

Studies have also found that while homosexuals may be trying to convince themselves that what they are doing is acceptable, they have serious doubts in their hearts. A Columbia University study on "internalized homophobia" among homosexual persons found that a significant percentage of homosexuals surveyed held negative attitudes toward their own homosexuality and toward other homosexuals.²⁴

While there are some who would promote the myth that homosexual relationships are no different than heterosexual ones as pure fact, there are also those from the gay community who admit it to be a false statement. Andrew Sullivan, a prominent conservative gay author, says that gay couples adhere to a very different moral standard than straight couples do. He says their moral standard is one in which "a greater understanding of the need for extramarital outlets" exists.²⁵ Also, two researchers who professed themselves to be a gay couple came to the conclusion that gay relationships between men rarely survive if they are not open to outside sexual contacts.²⁶

Why does the truth matter?

God created the unique relationship between a man and a woman. Yet He is equally unhappy with pre-marital sexual relationships as He is with homosexual relationships. Both are not what He intended. To say that homosexual relationships are the same as heterosexual ones is to make a mockery of God's divine act of creation and His ordination of marriage. He made man and woman for each other and called it "good" (Genesis 1:26-28,31). To say otherwise is to lead people astray.

Myth #4: AIDS is as much of a risk for heterosexuals as it is for homosexuals

Of course, AIDS is a risk for anyone who engages in sex—especially if that someone is "not a virgin, or who is, or was, an intravenous drug user or blood product recipient."²⁷ But we've already established that, in general, homosexuals are more promiscuous than heterosexuals. Therefore, it is likely that homosexual men are at a greater risk than heterosexuals for contracting AIDS.

Fact: According to the Centers for Disease Control, homosexual men are a thousand times more likely to contract AIDS than the general male heterosexual population.²⁸

Whoa! While AIDS has indeed become a universal disease, (and you are still at risk when you engage in pre-marital heterosexual behavior) it is an undeniable fact that the potential for an individual to become infected is much more pronounced for homosexual men.

Studies have indicated that the body's natural immune system is broken down by repeated exposure to semen during anal intercourse. Also, the tearing and rupturing which can take place during such intercourse exposes the individual to infection by manifold serious and dangerous diseases. Of these, AIDS is the most well-known and the most dangerous.²⁹ AIDS remains within the top 10 leading causes of death among those aged 20 to 55. As of December, 2001, 45 percent of all AIDS cases involved men who were exposed to the disease through having sex with other men while 4 percent of the cases were among men who had heterosexual contact.³⁰

Why does the truth matter?

There is a great physical danger in circulating the myth that homosexuals

are not at a greater risk for contracting AIDS than heterosexuals. Of course, there are other risks for those who are involved in homosexuality: isolation, heartache, confusion, disillusionment, abandonment, etc. When you're living outside of God's will for your life—whether by experimenting with homosexuality or willfully embracing any other sin—you will feel the effects one way or another. And probably the biggest result of living a sinful life is not having peace with God.

Myth #5: Homosexuals are normal, healthy, everyday people

While the American culture promotes "having it all," it is likely that most individuals just want to be accepted and appreciated. Homosexuals are no different. They have been wounded by rejection and, in general, seem to say whatever it takes to be considered "normal." Ironically though, society's intolerance doesn't seem to be what's driving homosexuals into more risky and dangerous behavior. In fact, such conduct tends to exist most intensely in places where homosexuals face the least amount of disapproval—such as large cities like New York and San Francisco or on college campuses with concentrated gay communities.

Fact: Contrary to claims made by gay activists, homosexually active persons as a group appear to be less psychologically healthy than the general population

There are several areas where the average homosexual differs from the average, normal, "everyday" heterosexual. Research has shown that men and women living homosexually are at substantially higher risk for some forms of emotional problems, including suicidality, major depression and anxiety disorder, conduct disorder and nicotine dependence.³¹ For instance, one twin-study found that men with same-sex partners are 6.5 times as likely as their co-twins to attempt suicide.³² Another study found that a substantial percentage of gay males and lesbians report some participation in illegal drug use.³³

Why does the truth matter?

Paul states in the book of Romans that homosexuality is "unnatural." But some homosexuals will tell you they've been attracted to people of the same sex for as long as they can remember—in other words, it just feels natural to them. Unfortunately, their feelings do not justify their actions. "Sin" is any behavior that is displeasing to God. We live in a fallen world and sin has distorted our perception of truth—so, what someone may consider as natural or normal still cannot change the truth of God's moral laws found in the Bible.

Homosexuality is only one symptom of fallen humanity. In our brokenness of human nature, we have an undeniable inner craving to be whole. And yet, maybe it's because of our sinful nature that we (homosexuals and heterosexuals) seek wholeness in the wrong areas. Whether we're struggling with same-sex attractions, pornography, envy or lying, it's easy to want to slap a label of "normal" or "healthy" on ourselves to try to justify our sinful behaviors. But a label will never cover the deep wounds of people entangled in a life that is displeasing to God. The only place a person can find healing and wholeness is at the foot of the cross.

Myth #6: The Bible doesn't condemn homosexuality—only promiscuity

In recent years, several mainline denominations have abandoned traditional interpretations of Scripture and have embraced the "Gay-Christian" movement. Similarly, people claim that Paul's statements were only addressed to believers back then and are not relevant today. But God's Word—which is unchanging and stands forever (Isalah 40:8) gives us a different story.

Fact: God clearly condemns any sexual act outside of heterosexual marriage

God designed sexual relationships only for a union between one man and one woman in marriage. The first chapter of Genesis declares that "God created man in His own image . . . male and female He created them." Throughout this chapter we learn why fornication, adultery and prostitution—as well as "homosexual marriage"—are all distortions of God's

original plan for healthy sexuality.

In the Old Testament, the sin of homosexuality is condemned by the Law of Moses (Leviticus 18:22). In Matthew, male and female relationships are the only sexual relationships allowed by Jesus (Matthew 19:4-6). And the first chapter of Romans is usually considered the most thorough and clear condemnation of homosexuality in the Bible, which includes a specific reference to lesbianism (Romans 1:24-27).

Why does the truth matter?

There are many distortions in sexuality because of the effects of sin, which have caused grief and hardship to so many. We know from the Bible that those who practice homosexual acts receive "in themselves the due penalty for their perversion" (Romans 1:27, NIV). As the executive director of Exodus International—North America, the world's leading outreach to those affected by unwanted homosexuality, Alan Chambers sees the devastation that occurs when the lines between right and wrong are blurred, erased or reversed. He states: "Today, culture is moving further and further away from biblical teachings about sexuality and gender. We now have an entire generation of young people being taught that homosexuality is morally, physically and spiritually equivalent to heterosexuality. Because of the downward spiral that has become our way of life, it is not surprising that people are questioning what is right and wrong regarding sex when wrong is now considered normal."

Our actions--good and bad--have consequences that impact us, our society and every single living person that comes after us until eternity. The truth matters because it means freedom for all who believe it and abide by it.

While God's Word is clear on the matter of homosexuality, it's also very clear on the matter of healthy sexuality. You've probably heard it said that "God has a plan for your life." Would you believe He also has a plan for your sexuality? He does! He planned for us to have an exciting love life in marriage.

Myth #7: Lesbian relationships are healthier than gay male relationships

It's generally believed that women who have sex with women are less likely to contract a sexually transmitted disease than gay men. While most of the research on medically related health risks of homosexual activity deals with men who have sex with other men, there is interesting research concerning homosexual activity among women.

Fact: Lesbian relationships are equally unhealthy, and just as life-threatening as gay male relationships

The fact is, most women who have sex with women do not do so exclusively. Approximately two-thirds of women surveyed have also had sex with men within the last five years.³⁴ Sexually transmitted disease rates for bisexually active women are as much as twice that of those who engage in exclusively lesbian activity.³⁵ Likewise, studies have also shown that a significant number of lesbian women engage in other risky behaviors which increase medical risks of disease, such as drug use and exchanging sex for drugs and money.³⁶ Another study reported that lesbians may have higher rates of breast and ovarian cancer because of a variety of risk factors like nulliparity (never having borne a child), childbearing later in life, higher rates of alcohol consumption and obesity.³⁷

The National Coalition of Anti-Violence Programs (NCAVP) has reported that domestic violence is as common in lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender relationships as it is in heterosexual relationships. While Lesbian partnerships generally are of longer duration than gay male relationships, there exists the counterfeit of healthy attachment-including, manipulative behaviors, emotional dependency and over-enmeshment.³⁸

Why does the truth matter?

It's important that women know the consequences of their choices. Lesbians are not excluded from the realities of promiscuity, like the HIV virus. The sad truth is that because this myth is being perpetuated, many lesbians are going to the doctor less often. While most heterosexual women visit the gynecologist every eight to nine months on average, the average for lesbians is every 21 to 24 months.³⁹ This is cause for great concern as "many lesbian-identified women have other risk factors for cervical dysplasia, such as multiple male partners, heterosexual intercourse at an early age and cigarette smoking."⁴⁰

Again, God's Word clearly speaks of consequences to sinful behavior. The only true form of "safe sex" is abstinence, or within a heterosexual marriage of one man and one woman. Whether you have lustful temptations for someone of your same sex or of the opposite sex, you can take a stand for purity and experience a lifetime of rewards. True love is worth the wait—not only because the risk of promiscuity, but because God has only blessed sex in the context of a heterosexual marriage.

Myth #8: Homosexuality is unchangeable

This is probably the most devastating myth of homosexuality circulating today. Yet, most homosexuals believe that their homosexuality is so much a part of their identity, that they can do nothing about it. In his report, "Homosexuality in America: Exposing the Myths," Richard Howe suggests two major reasons why homosexual activists promote this myth:

1. They would be admitting that there are those in the homosexual community who, after careful thought, have concluded that it is wrong to be homosexual and that it does not lead to personal happiness and fulfillment. Focusing on those homosexuals who want to change continues to emphasize the immorality and personal destructiveness of homosexuality.
2. They would be denying that homosexuality is physically caused. The more the homosexual community can convince the general public that their homosexuality is beyond their control, the more tolerance or even preferential treatment they can gain in public policy.⁴¹

Fact: There is freedom from homosexuality

The truth is, there are a tremendous number of homosexuals who have changed, and professional opinions are changing on this issue as well.

Dr. Robert L. Spitzer, the prominent psychiatrist who led the team that deleted homosexuality from the diagnostic manual in 1973, now says homosexuality may be changeable. "Like most psychiatrists," said Dr. Spitzer, "I thought that homosexual behavior could be resisted—but that no one could really change their sexual orientation. I now believe that's untrue—some people can and do change."⁴² To the researcher's surprise, good heterosexual functioning was reportedly achieved by 67 percent of men who had rarely or never felt any opposite-sex attraction before the change process.⁴³ "Contrary to conventional wisdom," Spitzer concluded, "some highly motivated individuals, using a variety of change efforts, can make substantial change in multiple indicators of sexual orientation and achieve good heterosexual functioning. I'm convinced from the people I have interviewed, that for many of them, they have made substantial changes toward becoming heterosexual . . . I think that's news . . . I came to this study skeptical, I now claim that these changes can be sustained."⁴⁴ Other professionals have reported a range from 50 to 70 percent success rate in the treatment of unwanted homosexual attraction.⁴⁵ Findings such as these have prompted some professionals to admit that homosexuals can change their sexual orientation through a variety of change efforts.

Individuals who have gone through an Exodus International Member Ministry have discovered that Jesus Christ is sufficient to make the difference. "The road begins not with just giving up on the gay life, not with trying to relate with a woman, not with just trying to relate to other men in a different way; it begins with coming into a relationship with God . . . From where many of us stand who have gone down that road, it was