

From: "Collins, Francis (NIH/NHGRI) [E]" <francisc@mail.nih.gov>
To: "David Roberts" <david@exgaywatch.com>
X-OriginalArrivalTime: 21 May 2007 07:14:10.0808 (UTC)
FILETIME=[A102D780:01C79B77]
X-Evolution-Source: pop://david%40exgaywatch.com@pop.emailsrvr.com/
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You are welcome to quote my message in your blog.
Warm regards, Francis

-----Original Message-----

From: David Roberts [mailto:david@exgaywatch.com]
Sent: Sunday, May 20, 2007 7:51 PM
To: Collins, Francis (NIH/NHGRI) [E]
Subject: RE: Could you clarify?

Dear Dr. Collins,

Thank you for your thoughtful reply - it does help to clarify your meaning. The only time I ever see that old "gay gene" report from the 90s offered, it is by organizations such as NARTH who set it up as a Red Herring to then argue against - we certainly don't give any weight to it ourselves.

Do you mind if I quote you in context for an article on our blog? I think it only fair that others understand and are perhaps encouraged to read your book for themselves, rather than take their impression of your words from NARTH. I'll be happy to send you a link to the published post.

Thank you again for your work and your witness.

David Roberts

On Sun, 2007-05-20 at 18:42 -0400, Collins, Francis (NIH/NHGRI) [E] wrote:

> Dear David,

> Thanks for your message. It troubles me greatly to learn that anything I have written would cause anguish for you or others who are seeking answers to the basis of homosexuality. The words quoted by NARTH all come from the Appendix to my book "The Language of God" (pp. 260-263), but have been juxtaposed in a way that suggests a somewhat different conclusion that I intended. I would urge anyone who is concerned about the meaning to refer back to the original text.

> The evidence we have at present strongly supports the proposition that there are hereditary factors in male homosexuality -- the observation that an identical twin of a male homosexual has approximately a 20% likelihood of also being gay points to this conclusion, since that is 10 times the population incidence. But the fact that the answer is not 100% also suggests that other factors besides DNA must be involved. That certainly doesn't imply, however, that those other undefined factors are inherently alterable.

> Your note indicated that your real interest is in the truth. And this is about all that we really know. No one has yet identified an actual gene that contributes to the hereditary component (the reports about a gene on the X chromosome from the 1990s have not held up), but it is likely that such genes will be found in the next few years.

> I hope this response is of some help.

> Francis Collins

>

> -----Original Message-----

> From: David Roberts [mailto:david@exgaywatch.com]

> Sent: Thursday, May 17, 2007 3:39 PM

> To: Collins, Francis (NIH/NHGRI) [E]

> Subject: Could you clarify?

>

>

> Dear Dr. Collins,

>

> Thank you for your time, I will try to be brief however this is a matter

> of some importance to many lives and I hope you will take it seriously.

> I am the editor of a blog made up of contributing authors who do their

> best to keep track of the activities of what is generally called the

> "ex-gay" movement. We are not rabid extremists or even necessarily to

> the left, but we do all have personal experience with the pain that can

> be inflicted by those whose agenda overshadows their morality and the

> facts (something that is tragic no matter what ones point of view). I

> will confess that most of us are also Believers, and we respect the

> right of any individual to attempt to live their lives in a way which is

> congruent with their faith as they understand it. Our desire is to help

> people understand the facts before moving forward.

>

> I must also confess a certain admiration for you. I've seen and read of

> your faith, and the way in which you embrace the truth found through the

> scientific method as further evidence of the Glory of God and not

> something in competition with the Word. I maintain a similar view, and

> it has helped this former atheist come closer to God without the need to

> leave reason behind. I am concerned however by some things I have read

> about your comments on homosexuality and heredity, and perhaps more so

> by the way these comments are sometimes being used.

>

> For example, the following excerpt:

>

> <http://www.narth.com/docs/nothardwired.html>

>

> Whatever we may find to be true of the genetic component of

> homosexuality, or any other element of the human condition, I do not

> fear the truth - it is what it is. However, and this is the point I

> would like you to clarify - your words are being offered by such

> organizations to support their stand that those of us who have been

> attracted to the same sex romantically and physically since as long as

> we can remember, can reverse this attraction with a high degree of

> success (some even saying 100%) or that it can be prevented (heaping

> guilt on parents for whatever they must have done wrong). This is a

> conclusion which I do not think is supported by the facts - quite the

> contrary.

>

> Could you explain if this is what you meant to communicate? If not,

> could you take the time to explain better what you did mean? We are not

> seeking some sort of genetic excuse for not being able to make ourselves

> attracted to the opposite sex - so many of us have already been down

> that road, often for decades. We know the difficulty in such a task.

> As with your own work, we seek to uncover the truth. As a man with

> hefty credentials, your words on subjects like this carry probably even

> more weight than you know. This implies an equal level of

> responsibility for those words spoken as an authority. If you meant to

> express what NARTH is saying through your mouth, then I would beg you to
> reconsider this position. If you did not, I would again beg you to
> clarify, hopefully in way which can be shared.

>

> I look forward to your reply with great anticipation. Thank you for your
> incredible work, and your time.

>

> Sincerely,

>

> David Roberts

> Editor

> Ex-Gay Watch