

Features

Homosexuality could be inborn, not acquired

United Press International
NEW YORK — A new study by the Kinsey Institute suggests homosexuality is inborn rather than acquired, but a senior sex researcher says it is difficult to prove. "This is because you cannot experiment with humans," said Paul Gebhard, director of the institute at Indiana University. Gebhard worked with senior sex behavior researcher Kinsey on the groundbreaking reports first on male, then female sexual behavior. He said that ten years ago he would have been surprised by a finding as that reported in the new study directed by Alan Bell. Bell figures it possible that an inborn hormonal imbalance predisposes about ten percent of the world's population to homosexuality. The study, to be published in November, is based on based

on five-hour interviews with about 1,500 homosexuals and heterosexuals in the San Francisco area. The evidence suggests homosexuals are born and not warped in development by being raised in a home with a domineering mother and a dad with a wet noodle for a backbone. Gebhard said that although this will be difficult to prove scientifically, something might be learned by following males born to mothers who were treated with hormones when pregnant. He said a register of such males, born to mothers who have taken while their babies were in utero, might be one source. "Animal studies, meanwhile, show that underlying hormonal differences can lead to homosexual behaviors," he said. "One study of rats found a female sandwiched between two male rats in utero exhibited

masculine behavior during her lifespan. The theory is that she got large doses of male hormone secreted in utero by her brother rats." In other animal experiments aimed at reproducing homosexual animals, Gebhard said hormones have been injected into pregnant animals and the hormones have been transported through the female bloodstream to the developing animals in the uterus. "It doesn't work well to inject hormones after birth," he said. "The basic neural physiology apparently is set up in utero." Gebhard said inborn homosexuality, suggested by the latest Institute study should not be confused with acquired homosexuality. "I think when people are denied a normal sexual outlet, such as in single sex societies, there is acquired homosexuality," he said. "In prisons, for example."

Infants could mistake containers

Baby powder may be hazard

United Press International
NEW YORK — A team of poison control specialists says baby powder containers are hazardous because they resemble nursing bottles and should not be used around young children until changes are made. "Baby powders must be considered as potentially harmful by parents and physicians," says a report in Pediatrics, journal of the American Academy of Pediatrics. "Until minimal changes are made, the practice of using baby powders on young children should be actively condemned." The report, "Baby Powder — a Hazard," calls for drastic changes in the appearance of the containers and safety caps for devices on their caps. Here's why: Babes in arms, creepers just out of arms and toddlers still on the bottle occasionally fiddle with the baby powder containers while they're being changed or at other times. Their tiny fingertips sense the

similarity of the "feel" between a plastic nursing bottle and the plastic baby powder container or can — both shaped somewhat like a nursing bottle. After that, a lot of them do what comes naturally as a result of the touch connection. What they do: put the baby powder container to their lips, pucker up and suck. So far, not so bad — provided the top of the can is closed. But sometimes the top is open and the child sucks in and/or inhales some baby powder, said Dr. Howard C. Morrison and associates at the Poison Control Center and Department of Pediatrics, Nassau County Medical Center, East Meadow, N.Y. The report dealt with 40 episodes analyzed by the center. It said 25 of the cases occurred while the baby's diapers were being changed and the child had easy access to the can of powder. "The open screw top allowed the powder to spill freely when the can was inverted by the child

and placed in the mouth," the poison control team said. In presenting the case against present design of baby powder containers, the experts referred to a recent report in the Canadian Medical Association Journal. That told of more than 25 other cases of talcum powder aspiration, with a mortality of 20 percent. "These cases represent only the most severe episodes," the New York poison control experts said. "Talc is also closely related to the potent carcinogen asbestos and may contain microscopic asbestos particles. To eliminate 'the inherent hazard' in baby powder containers now on the market, the poison control experts said manufacturers must 'drastically change the appearance of the containers and institute a safety device on the cap that must be activated before the powder will dispense.' But that's not all. The doctors said containers of talc should include a warning that the ingredients may be hazardous if inhaled."

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Quirks in the News

Blue jeans malady

United Press International
JACKSONVILLE, Fla. — Dermatologists report an ailment that may rival tennis elbow, jogger's knee and Space Invader's fist. It's called jeans folliculitis, a skin ailment affecting wearers of tight jeans. "These kids get them so tight in the first place, then they shrink on to get them even tighter," said Dr. James Trimble, a Jacksonville dermatologist who has treated patients suffering from the

malady. "Jeans folliculitis was named by Dr. Osining, N.Y., physician, in a letter to the New England Journal of Medicine. He reported seeing cases of the rash on the buttocks, groins and thighs of the wearers of ultra-tight jeans."

'Love Boat' sinks

United Press International
HOLLYWOOD — The wife of actor Gavin MacLeod, captain of "The Love Boat," has filed for divorce, citing irreconcilable differences. Patricia MacLeod, an actress whose professional name is Patti LaBelle and has frequently appeared on "The Love Boat," filed with her husband, filed a divorce petition Wednesday in Los Angeles Superior Court. The couple was married in February 1974, separated last month. They have no children.

Yellow brick road

United Press International
MINNEOLA, Kan. — If Buddy Pimper has his way, a sparkling city in the Oz complete with a kindly wizard will soon rise out of the treeless Kansas prairie. Pimper, 57, an entrepreneur, owns southwest Kansas — the area where dusty tornadoes whirl away unsuspecting daydreamers — to have a town called Oz. He envisions a grand resort where visitors can attend a performance of "The Wizard of Oz" and their children can become jolly Munchkins in paper costumes. During the winter, he wants the Emerald City to become a meeting spot for psychologists holding workshops for people in search of self-esteem or courage. The area would also be a retirement community where elderly artisans could perform their crafts.

Jogger's kidney

United Press International
BOSTON — Dr. Joel Goldberg, a house officer at North Shore University Hospital in Danvers, N.Y., and a jogger for seven years, says his daily jaunts apparently jogged his kidney out of place. In a letter to the New England Journal of Medicine, Goldberg said he noticed the condition when he began to have severe pain under his rib and in his side during the first quarter-mile of his daily run. One day while massaging the area he said he found a lump that turned out to be his kidney, which had moved out of place during jogging. On the advice of his doctor, he quit running for six weeks and now wears a flexible corset while jogging.

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