

Fake “Gay Conversion” Case Studies?

April 24, 2009 By [Oriol R. Gutierrez Jr.](#)

William Masters and Virginia Johnson (a.k.a. [Masters and Johnson](#)) were arguably the most influential husband-and-wife team of sex researchers. A new book claims that their assertion of being able to convert gay and lesbian people into straight people may have been a big lie.

Their 1966 book *Human Sexual Response* is often cited as a spark for the sexual revolution of the 1960s. So when they published their 1979 book *Homosexuality in Perspective*, it gave much credibility to the “gay conversion” concept.

Author Thomas Maier claims in his new book [Masters of Sex](#) that there were serious doubts about the validity of the Masters and Johnson “gay conversion” research even before the 1979 book was published.

Maier claims that the doubters included none other than Virginia Johnson. Here’s an excerpt from [an article by Maier](#) in *Scientific American* about Johnson’s doubts:

“That was a bad book,” Johnson recalled decades later. Johnson said she favored a rewriting and revision of the whole book “to fit within the existing [medical] literature,” and feared that Bill simply didn’t know what he was talking about. At worst, she said, “Bill was being creative in those days” in the compiling of the “gay conversion” case studies.

This is absolutely appalling for numerous reasons. However, the most disturbing reason is that the Masters and Johnson “gay conversion” case studies are still cited by religious conservatives to justify their belief that they can “cure” homosexuality.

For example, the Catholic Medical Association released [a report](#) in 2006 that repeatedly cites the Masters and Johnson research. The report supposedly “counters the myth that same-sex attraction is genetically predetermined and unchangeable, and offers hope for prevention and treatment.”

I sincerely hope that if indeed the Masters and Johnson “gay conversion” case studies are nothing more than a fraud that mainstream scientific organizations will make a point of spreading the truth.

As GLBT people, we shouldn’t have to be fighting this fight. How we are the way we are is still up for debate (perhaps), but as far as I’m concerned the question of whether we can change our sexual orientation or gender identity has only one answer. No, we can’t.

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<http://beta.docker.poz.com/blog/fake-gay-conversion>