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Evidence for distinct biodevelopmental influences on male sexual orientation

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Sex differences are mainly thought of in terms of differences between men and women, but we have a more limited understanding of the marked variability within sexes. Sexuality is a fundamental aspect of sex and gender, and can have profound health impacts. For example, gay men have overlapping but distinct health concerns with straight men. It is unclear to what extent these differences between gay and straight men result from lifestyle, or biological mechanisms. Inquiries into the biological bases of sexual orientation have yielded inconsistent evidence for biomarkers associated with sexual orientation in men. Swift-Gallant et al investigated the hypothesis that there are subgroups of gay men that result from distinct biological and developmental mechanisms. Using latent profile analysis of survey and biometric data from a large sample of men, Swift-Gallant et al identify statistically dissociable subgroups of gay men, some of which variously exhibit biomarkers and psychological traits associated with sexual orientation.

<https://www.pnas.org/content/pnas/116/26/12787.full.pdf>