

Breaking Trump nominates Mike Huckabee to be ambassador to Israel

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Updated: Nov. 12, 2:06 PM ET

National Election Results: Presidential →

Projection: Trump is President-elect

226

270 to win

312

 Harris

71,815,184

 Trump

75,014,698

Recent Projections →

Ariz. Dist. 1

Projected Winner

David Schweikert • R

14 hours ago

Ariz. Senate

Projected Winner

Ruben Gallego • D

14 hours ago

National Election Results: House →

206

218 for control

215

Dem.

214 up for election

Lost: 1

Rep.

221 up for election

Gained: 1

Undecided

Update

10:09 AM

10:08 AM

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Mormon 'Gay Cure' Study Used Electric Shocks Against Homosexual Feelings

Homosexuality still considered 'worse than murder' among Mormons.

By ABC News
March 28, 2011, 3:45 PM

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March 30, 2011; -- John Cameron said he was a naive and devout [Mormon](#) who felt "out of sync" with the world, when he volunteered to be part of a study of "electric aversion therapy" in 1976 at Utah's [Brigham Young University](#).

Twice a week for six months, he jolted himself with painful shocks to the penis to rid himself of his attraction to men.

"I kept trying to fight it, praying and fasting and abstaining and being the best person I could," said Cameron, now a 59-year-old playwright and head of the acting program at the University of Iowa.

"I was never actively gay, never had any encounters with men -- never had moments when I failed and actually had sex with other men," he said.

But his undercurrent of feelings put him in direct conflict with the [Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter-day Saints](#) (LDS) and its principles.

https://abcnews.go.com/Health/mormon-gay-cures-reparative-therapies-shock-today/story?id=13240700

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"As teens we were taught that homosexuality was second only to murder in the eyes of God," he said.

"I was very, very religious and the Mormon church was the center of my life," said Cameron, who had done missionary work in Guatemala and El Salvador.

The 1976 study at Brigham Young, "[Effect of Visual Stimuli in Electric Aversion Therapy](#)," was written by Max Ford McBride, then a graduate student in the psychology department.

"I thought he was my savior," said Cameron, who enrolled with 13 other willing subjects, all Mormons who thought they might be gay, for a three- to six-month course of therapy.

A mercury-filled tube was placed around the base of his penis to measure the level of stimulation he experienced when viewing nude images of men and women.

Shocks, given in three 10-second intervals, were then administered in conjunction with certain images. Participants set their own pain levels.

Cameron said his shame was so deep that he selected the highest level.

"Max didn't do it, we did it," he said. "I was always turning it up to get the most pain because I was desperate."

Homosexuals were seen as a "prurient, expendable population," according to Cameron. "To admit homosexuality in 1976 was the kiss of death. You could be targeted, lose your job, lose your income, lose everything."

And those weren't the only attempted cures that were used in that era. Others allege they were given chemical compounds, which were administered through an IV and caused subjects to vomit when they were stimulated.

Psychologists confirm those harsh experiments were used in a variety of medical settings by scientists of all faiths.

Church officials say they no longer support aversion therapy, but a generation who grew up in the 1970s say they have been scarred for life because of well-intentioned attempts to change their sexual orientation.

Today, the church still steadfastly opposes homosexuality, as witnessed by the millions of dollars in support it gave to pass California's [Proposition 8](#), which would amend the state's constitution to outlaw gay marriage.

Carri P. Jenkins, assistant to the president of BYU, confirmed that McBride did study the effects of aversion therapy in the 1970s. She said the experiment was an "outgrowth of the behaviorist movement, which believed that any behavior could be modified.

"Our understanding is that most behaviorists no longer believe this is an appropriate treatment for those who are seeking change," she said.

Jenkins said other universities at the time used similar techniques, and none of this type has taken place at BYU since then.

"The BYU Counseling Center never practiced therapy that would involve chemical or induced vomiting," she said.

Today, therapies are all "mainline therapeutic approaches," according to Jenkins, and all faculty are expected to be licensed and programs accredited.

The university, which is owned by the Mormon Church, said its policy on homosexuality is in line with Mormon doctrine -- today's students are not disciplined unless they engage in sexual activity, and that includes heterosexual sex before marriage.

"BYU will respond to homosexual behavior rather than to feelings or attraction, and welcomes as full members of the university community all whose behavior meets university standards," said Jenkins. "Members of the university community can remain in good standing if they conduct their lives in a manner consistent with Gospel principles."



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