



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on September 5, 2012

Univ. of Texas Vindicates Study That Casts Negative Light on “Gay” Parenting

A University of Texas at Austin professor whose research on homosexual parenting was attacked by a “gay” activist has been vindicated by university officials. As reported in June by [The New American](#), the study by University of Texas sociology professor Mark Regnerus demonstrated that children raised by parents who at some point had a same-sex partner were more likely to be on welfare, experience depression, have less education, and have a history of sexual abuse than children raised by heterosexual parents.



Homosexual activist blogger [Scott Rose](#) took the lead in attacking the research of Regnerus, sending a pair of letters to university officials that accused the professor of deviating from “ethical standards” for research, and “possible falsification” of his findings. [Fox News](#) reported that “Rose, who is gay, claimed the study was compromised because it was funded by the conservative [Witherspoon Institute](#) and that Regnerus was unable to be impartial because he is Catholic.”

An intensive inquiry by the university found that, contrary to Rose’s claims, the research methods of Regnerus were sufficiently scholarly. The [Catholic News Agency](#) reported that the university’s research integrity officer, Robert A. Peterson, “said he ‘carefully reviewed’ all available data, materials and information and discussed the process with other inquiry panel members. ‘I have concluded that Professor Regnerus did not commit scientific misconduct,’ he said in an Aug. 24 memorandum to university officials.”

A subsequent statement from the university confirmed that “no formal investigation is warranted into the allegations of scientific misconduct lodged against associate professor Mark Regnerus regarding his July article in the journal *Social Science Research*. As with much university research, Regnerus’ New Family Structures Study touches on a controversial and highly personal issue that is currently being debated by society at large.” The statement added that the university “expects the scholarly community will continue to evaluate and report on the findings of the Regnerus article and supports such discussion.”

Some academic observers were troubled by the dynamics of the investigation, which included the seizure of Regnerus’ computers and tens of thousands of e-mails. To validate the heavy-handedness, “the school had Alan Price, a former associate director of the Office of Research Integrity in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, review the inquiry,” reported Fox News, with Price determining that the investigation was “consistent with federal regulatory requirements of inquiries into research misconduct.”

Among those protesting the tactics of the investigation was the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education, which advised in a written statement that the university “take a closer look at its rules to make sure that the provision for sequestration does not become an open invitation to hassle and discourage researchers working within politically charged topics.”



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As reported by *The New American*, in his New Family Structures study, “Regnerus surveyed nearly 3,000 U.S. adults, ages 18 through 39, measuring their past and present lives relative to 40 social, emotional, and relationship outcomes.... Of the approximately 3,000 participants, 73 said that their father had engaged in a homosexual relationship, with 163 reporting that their mother had had such a relationship.” While the study did not claim a causal connection, it did find that individuals whose parents had had a same-sex relationship tended toward a history of depression, welfare, and sexual abuse.

“Regnerus said funding from the Witherspoon Institute and the Bradley Foundation, which he acknowledged are known for supporting conservative causes, played no role at all in the study,” reported Fox. “He also noted in his paper that different outcomes for children of same-sex vs. heterosexual parents could be in part due to a lack of social support for same-sex parents, stigmatizing of gay parents.”

Meanwhile, homosexual blogger Scott Rose said he intends to take his beef against Regnerus all the way to the American Sociological Association. “The legitimate scientific community is united in concerns about the Regnerus study’s lack of intellectual integrity, and the fact that prior to publication, the study did not receive ethical and appropriate professional peer review,” Rose claimed.

By contrast, conservative and pro-family leaders applauded the results of the inquiry, noting that they found Regnerus’ actions above reproach. Glenn Stanton of [Focus on the Family](#) said that Regnerus was rigorous in employing high academic standards for his research, including asking for input from sociologists with ideologies at odds with Regnerus’ Catholic faith. “The university has essentially concluded there is not even the slightest whiff of credibility” in the accusations against the professor. “That surprises none of us,” Stanton added, “because Mark is not an activist scholar, and that is very clear in the research that he did.”

In fact, Regnerus went as far as giving homosexual parents the benefit of the doubt, writing: “... it is certainly accurate to affirm that sexual orientation or parental sexual behavior need have nothing to do with the ability to be a good, effective parent.”

Reflecting on the inquiry, David Hacker, senior legal counsel at [Alliance Defending Freedom](#), said that “America’s universities should always serve as truth-seeking, free marketplaces of ideas. Disagreeing with a study’s conclusions is not grounds for allegations of scientific misconduct.” He added that his group was not surprised Regnerus’ research was vindicated. “We agree with the UT-Austin inquiry’s conclusion that the academy is the appropriate place for debate about this study.”

Photo of Gregory Gymnasium at University of Texas at Austin



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