

8-1-1976

A Critique of John McNeill, S. J. and Gregory Baum, o. S. A. on the Subject of Homosexuality

John F. Harvey

Follow this and additional works at: <https://epublications.marquette.edu/lnq>



Part of the [Ethics and Political Philosophy Commons](#), and the [Medicine and Health Sciences Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Harvey, John F. (1976) "A Critique of John McNeill, S. J. and Gregory Baum, o. S. A. on the Subject of Homosexuality," *The Linacre Quarterly*. Vol. 43: No. 3, Article 6.

Available at: <https://epublications.marquette.edu/lnq/vol43/iss3/6>

A Critique of John McNeill, S. J. and Gregory Baum, O.S.A. on the Subject of Homosexuality

John F. Harvey, O.S.F.S.

You may wonder why I have chosen to treat only two writers on the subject of homosexuality. It is my experience that John J. McNeill, S.J. and Gregory Baum, O.S.A. are regarded by gay Catholics as offering an alternative theology to that of the Church on the question of homosexuality.



Father Harvey is president of De Sales Hall School of Theology in Hyattsville, Md. He teaches courses in pastoral-moral theology in the Cluster of Independent Theological Schools in metropolitan Washington. Father Harvey is a frequent contributor to Linacre.

Going beyond the position of Charles Curran, who seeks to justify faithful homosexual unions by his principle of compromise, McNeill and Baum do not consider homosexual actions wrong in themselves. It is not surprising, then, that *Dignity*, a national organization of gay Catholics affirming that "gays can express their sexuality in a manner that is consonant with Christ's teaching" makes frequent use of two statements of McNeill and Baum. The first, "The Homosexual and the Church," is an excerpt from the keynote address McNeill delivered at the first national convention *Dignity* held in September, 1973 (*National Catholic Reporter*, October 5, 1973, 7-8, 13-14). The second statement by Gregory Baum, "Catholic Homosexuals," appeared in *Commonweal*, February 15, 1974, 8-11. Let me first describe McNeill's position.

McNeill's major arguments treat (1) the various texts in Holy Scripture concerning homosexuality and conclude that none of the texts contains a clear condemnation of faithful homosexual union; (2) he also affirms that man's radical freedom enters into the formation of man's sexual

orientation in such a way that biological givens, such as the sex in which one is born, should not be determinative of sexual activity. First, let us consider McNeill's use of Scripture.

(1) Cautioning that the Scriptures are historically and culturally limited, McNeill makes reference to the Genesis account of the creation of male and female. He cites the traditional view that genital human sexuality derives its meaning exclusively in terms of the relationship of male and female in a procreative union. Then he questions whether this traditional view is really an expression of God's will, or merely the reflection of the needs of the primitive human community. He suggests that with some theologians we should read Genesis with a new perspective: The Genesis account of the origin of man and woman and marriage is a myth, expressing an ideal for the future rather than an event of the past.

"The Garden of Eden in which man found himself perfectly at one with himself and his sexuality, his fellow man, nature, and God represents primitive man's primordial dream of what ought to be in the future which he projected into the past as a state he once possessed and lost and now must work to regain. From this perspective ideal human sexual relationships are not to be sought in the past, but must be created for the future. And the key to that future is man's ideal human nature which represents not so much a static given from the past but a dynamic ideal process of growth and development." (p. 7)

(2) McNeill believes that the *Genesis* account represents various aspects of the then monogamous agrarian family unit. (a) It reflects the need of a paternalistic society to reflect male superiority; (b) like other accounts of sexuality in Old Testament and New, it is fearful of Canaanite and other idolatrous sexual practices. Turning to the Code of Leviticus condemnations of homosexual acts, McNeill sees it as an expression of the Jewish horror of the meaning of sodomy, namely, it was the common practice in the Middle East to submit a captured foe to sodomy. (Homosexual activity then was an expression of domination, contempt and scorn.) The Jewish male population undoubtedly suffered this indignation, and because the dignity of the male was of prime importance to this society, it would follow that "any activity necessarily associated with the degradation of the male was a serious offense,"¹

McNeill finds problematical "that what is referred to in Scripture as homosexuality is either not the same reality at all, or that the Biblical authors did not manifest the same understanding of that reality as we have it today. Therefore it can be seriously questioned whether what is understood today as the true homosexual and his activity is ever the object of explicit moral condemnation in the scriptures."

After all, McNeill continues, biblical writers were not familiar with the distinction between

homosexual orientation and homosexual activity, and could not have reasoned to the conclusion that a homosexually oriented person should be allowed to engage in homosexual activity. For this reason, even in the one passage which McNeill finds in the New Testament (Romans 1:26-27) as referring clearly to homosexual activity, he sees no condemnation of contemporary homosexual unions. He believes Paul understood the Greeks who indulged in homosexual activity to be heterosexuals involved in homosexual activities, probably forms of the sacred prostitution so often condemned in the Old Testament.

From his study of biblical scholars on human sexuality McNeill concludes that the primary message of the Old Testament is that "love, including sexual love, requires respect for the other person as well." The sin which man can commit in his sexual conduct with another consists in dishonoring the person of a fellow human being. In the New Testament the writers teach the need to integrate sexual powers into one's total personality within the context of free, interpersonal love.

Author's Critique

Critique: While I believe that the Scriptures are not the only source of our teaching on homosexuality, they are important for our understanding of sexuality in general and homosexuality in particular. McNeill's use of Scripture presents many difficulties. Were

one to grant for the sake of the argument that the Genesis account was an ideal representation of a future condition, an ideal to be striven for, it is significant that the biblical account is concerned with the man-woman relationship. The Genesis accounts (chapters 2, 3) have been regarded as both an ideal and norm of sexual behavior, and the sexual behavior is heterosexual. Matthew's reference to this norm (Matthew 19: 1-9) strengthens the argument that Genesis taught a heterosexual norm of sexuality in permanent marriage. The author of Matthew quotes both Genesis 1:27 and 2:24: (Jesus) answered: "Have you not read that the creator from the beginning made them male and female, and that he said: This is why a man must leave father and mother, and cling to his wife, and the two become one body? They are no longer two therefore, but one body. So then what God has united, man must not divide." (Jerusalem Bible translation)

Again, in the Genesis accounts it is said that man was created as male and female (Genesis 1:27) and that it was not good that man should be alone. At this point, however, God did not create another man but a woman. Surely, the Genesis account says something about the complementary nature of man and woman.²

Another argument used by McNeill throughout his discussion of scriptural references is that sexual norms are determined exclu-

sively by cultural factors: Jewish and Christian marriages were structured to assure male domination. Homosexual acts were condemned, because they were forms of prostitution rites, or painful reminders of humiliation by the captors of the Israelites. And so forth. It can be argued against this kind of speculation that the authors of the sacred books, beginning with the Genesis account of marriage, intended to affirm certain transcendental principles concerning human sexuality and marriage. If this were not so, how could the author of Matthew, 19, 1-9, refer back to the pristine integrity of marriage? On another occasion why would Jesus say that divorce was not prevalent in the beginning, but was a concession due to the hardness of men's hearts? (Mark 10: 2-12.)

This is not to say that everything which is said about sexuality in the Old Testament is of permanent value. One recognizes the prescriptions of Leviticus (15: 19-30) concerning the menstruating woman as a purely cultural determinant. In accepting the cultural milieu of Genesis and other books of the Bible we do not deny that they also contain certain perennial principles, such as the norm of heterosexual marriage.

It would be a mistake to demonstrate the heterosexual norm of marriage from individual texts when the context of both the Old Testament and the New stress the complementary relationship

of man and woman.³ Nowhere in Holy Scripture is the homosexual person condemned, but always the action is condemned. Nowhere is there any approval of homosexual unions, but the heterosexual union of man and wife is confirmed from Genesis to Ephesians as a perennial principle. While Holy Scripture does not say the last word about homosexuality, it gives no support to such actions.

As already mentioned, McNeill interprets all the specific texts referring to homosexual activity in terms of a relationship to prostitution cults. Prescinding from the Leviticus texts in the Old Testament, and the other references in the New, one wonders how one can prove that in Romans I:26-27 homosexual acts were condemned *only* because they happened in the background of deliberate repudiation of God, or because it happened to be Greek heterosexuals performing homosexual activities. He draws the conclusion that the men were heterosexuals because of the active aorist participle, *aphentes*, men *giving up* their natural relations with women. He does not explain St. Paul's reference to women making use of other women. This is hardly a convincing proof. Really, McNeill cannot have it both ways. In one place he argues that biblical authors condemn homosexual actions, because of their association with sacred prostitution rites, while they do not condemn the interior disposition toward homosexuality; but, on the other hand, McNeill argues on the basis of a

grammatical phrase (*aphentes*) that Paul was condemning heterosexual Greeks performing homosexual actions. It has been assumed by McNeill that biblical authors knew nothing about the interior dispositions of the homosexual.

In summing up his understanding of Scripture and homosexuality McNeill asserts correctly the primacy of love in both Testaments, and hence the need for mutual respect. But his attempt to show that a faithful homosexual couple fulfills these ideals of Scripture is weak in the absence of any supporting scriptural texts dealing with the matter at hand.

Personal Uniqueness

(2) In his treatment of human nature and human freedom, McNeill stresses that every individual is more than the species, and that each human being has a personal uniqueness. If a loving action takes the form of a sexual gesture it must be directed to the other person as unique, and as an end in himself or herself. Too much emphasis on procreation can lead to a dehumanizing form of sexuality. As he puts it, "There is something more to the question of the moral quality of sexual behavior than purely the objective legal question of marriage or the objective rational question of openness to procreation—that something else is love."

McNeill posits that human sexuality, like all human reality, participates "in the radical freedom

of man" precisely because it is human.

Many theologians ignore the fact that sexuality is not a totally instinctive determined phenomenon. Human freedom, however, cannot receive its total explanation in terms of causal determinacy, but only in terms of ideal goals and purposes. Since man can project ideal goals, man can allow these goals to be the ultimate determining factor in his behavior.

He goes on to argue that man can use his bodily organs in many creative ways. He uses his mouth, which is obviously intended for eating, in order to communicate his innermost sentiments; likewise, he can use his sexual organs, designed by nature for procreation, in order to give the most intimate personal expression of his drive for union in love with a fellow human. The point is that man has the freedom to decide how he will use his powers.

McNeill explains how man's freedom enters into the formation of his sexual orientation. Biological givens (one's physical sexuality) do not determine human behavior precisely as it exists on the human level. What we are in our society, or in any other society, is a free cultural creation. For each culture creates its own ideal identity images from the masculine and feminine roles. That is why the young undergo a process through which they adapt themselves to the prevailing cultural images and expectations,

which are in agreement with their biological identity. Although in the past theologians have mistakenly identified such cultural images as divine givens, in more recent times they have been able to identify such images as determined purely by particular cultures.

In this context Jesus is seen as the great liberator from sexual taboos. (McNeill does not identify these taboos, nor does he show how Jesus liberates us from them.) He concludes that the sexual identity images which concretize heterosexual relationships at any point in human history are human creations; and that any effort to insist that they come forth from God's will is to raise a human creation to the level of idolatry. Theologians then should make a critical investigation of sexual identity images. If they do so, they will discover that as a result of our identifying with the heterosexual identity images, we have accepted as the form of heterosexual relationships that of the master-slave, in which the male seeks to dominate, and the female seeks to be dominated.

Such a relationship is contrary to ideal Christian love, which can exist only if both persons see themselves as equals. The primary goal, then, of human sexual development is that "we should fashion cultural identity images that make it possible for human beings to achieve the fullness of a true personal relationship in the process of conforming to the images provided by society."

According to McNeill, then, ideal human nature lies in the future, and to the development of this ideal man must be directed: a free, mature person living in a mature, interpersonal community. Then a homosexual relationship will be viewed as a truly constructive and mature expression of human love.

Following Gustav Jung's analysis of positive traits in the homosexual, McNeill concludes:

"Each of the special qualities Jung attributes to the homosexual community is usually considered as a striking characteristic of Christ—the qualities which distinguished him from the ordinary man. The ability to meet the individual as a person apart from stereotypes and cultural prejudices, the refusal to establish his identity and accomplish his mission by means of violence, the image of himself as the loving servant of all humanity."

McNeill asks that we be prepared to meet every individual person on his or her own merits without allowing ourselves to be blinded by stereotypes. The tendency of both heterosexuals and homosexuals to define themselves in contrast to one another leads to a "narrow and impoverished self-image for both parties." Man should be free to develop all the qualities belonging to the fullness of person.

McNeill's Concept of Freedom

Critique of McNeill: To understand McNeill one needs to examine his concept of freedom, which he derives from Blondel. In several other articles⁴ he contrasts

the traditional notion of freedom with that of Blondel. In the traditional concept man exists and then he acts. "All actions are considered as functions which can only influence that unchanging reality on the phenomenal or accidental level of substantial determination."⁵ In the Blondelian conception, however, man's freedom must be understood beyond all particular actions as the radical self-positing of his own reality. Man must exist at every moment as a consequence of his freedom. "If in the depths of his own subjective being man meets with any determinism whatsoever—biological, psychological, social, or even a determinism springing from the divine will, a determinism which lies radically outside his free ability to determine himself—then one must be forced to accept the conclusion that the existence of an individual human being as such is an illusion."⁶ The law is within us, and we cannot escape it, whether we conform to it freely or oppose it freely.

McNeill accepts as a first principle of moral activity Blondel's understanding of freedom, which he quotes: "There is no being where there is only constraint. If I am not that which I will to be I am not. At the very core of my being there is a will and a love of being or there is nothing. If man's freedom is real, it is necessary that one has at present or at least in the future a knowledge and a will sufficient never to suffer any tyranny whatsoever."⁷

McNeill logically accepts the Blondelian principle of immanence:

"Nothing can impose itself on a man, nothing can demand the assent of his intellect or the consent of his will, which does not in some way find its source in man himself."^{7a}

Thus, accepting these premises, McNeill draws the conclusion that whatever we are as men in this present society is a free cultural creation. In the circumstances of his life and culture man creates his own freedom. At the same time McNeill admits the strong cultural influences which shape a child from earliest years. He also acknowledges that his freedom is "dependent upon a transcendent truth, to which it must conform and is directed to values which, far from being his exclusive creation serve him as guide, norm, and sanction."⁸ Referring to Blondel, he resolves the relationship between transcendence and immanence by the philosophy of action:

"Action has its own a priori structure from which the totality of thought derives its meaning and structure. . . . Accordingly, he changed the central structure of philosophy from thought as analytic to action as synthetic. . . . His search for moral principles is therefore an endeavor to discover the all-encompassing dialectical law that immanently governs the evolution of human life."⁹

One exercises his freedom by responding to ideals, which are not imposed from without, but arise within consciousness:

"The metaphysical order is not outside the will as an extraneous end to be attained, but is contained within the will as a means to move beyond. It does not represent a truth already constituted in fact, but presents to thought what one wishes to will, that is, an ideal object. . . . Man is thereby free from all predeterminism."¹⁰

In free action one synthesizes the real and the ideal, and thereby discovers his moral principles. A communion with God is possible through union with Jesus Christ. Man can make a free commitment to both God and fellow-man.¹¹

Once one has grasped McNeill's acceptance of Blondel's thought, he can see why McNeill rejects the traditional position of the Church on objective standards of morality. Any sexual action by a loving person is a unique action not measurable by any *extrinsic* norm. Sharing in the radical freedom of man, this action derives its morality from the ideals which arise within the will of the person himself. Thus, as long as a sexual act is free, loving, and creative, it is good; the biological and instinctive elements of the sexual act determine *in no way* its moral goodness or evil.

McNeill, then, holds that all moral authority comes from within the person himself as he reaches out to grasp transcendental truth. This presupposes a process of growth in the person in all areas of development including the sexual. In the homosexual, according to McNeill, it often begins with

promiscuous sex and advances over a long period of time to a mature, loving relationship, which is characterized by love and trust. Implicitly, contrary to his own theory of freedom, however, McNeill presupposes that the homosexual has been *determined* in his orientation toward his own sex by myriad influences in early life. He regards this learned inclination as connatural to him; and so he seeks the same kind of fidelity from his chosen beloved as man and woman should do in marriage. Just as sexual intimacy between two heterosexual persons is considered as an expression of union, so sexual actions between two homosexual lovers is meant to be an expression of their committed love.

In contrast to traditional Christian teaching McNeill makes the homosexual union the alternative to marriage. It is meant only for those homosexually oriented. It presupposes an earlier experimental period (promiscuity) followed by faithful union. Apart from Roman Catholic teaching on marriage, the homosexual community by and large does not accept even the ideal of faithful homosexual union.

Summary of Gregory Baum.
Commonweal, February 15, 1974,
8-11.

Baum contends that the Catholic theologian has become suspicious of the old arguments about human nature. Perhaps what a particular culture calls

"human nature" is merely the self-understanding of the dominant class; and the perpetuation of that self-understanding tends to extend the power of the class. For this reason, "the theologian must try to discern in the inherited, historically constituted human nature the possible structures of oppression, legitimating various forms of what Hegel has called master-slave relationships." (p. 9)

Baum speaks of God's judgment enabling him to discern the structures of evil in this world. This judgment rests upon man's historically constituted nature, which appears to be mutuality: "What is normative for normal life is the human nature to which we are divinely summoned, which is defined in terms of mutuality. This, at least, is the promise of biblical religion." (p. 9) Further in the article Baum describes mutuality as friendship. He sets down a new norm by which to evaluate the morality of homosexual relationships, namely, mutuality. This means that a homosexual relationship is good if it grounds a friendship which "enables the partners to grow and to become more truly human. . . . For the structure of redeemed life is mutuality." (p. 10)

Baum realizes that there are damaged forms of sexuality which do not admit of mutuality: sadism, masochism, and paedophilia. They do not fulfill the ideal of mutuality to which God summons us. While recognizing that some

psychiatrists and psychologists do not believe that a homosexual relationship can fulfill the norm of mutuality, Baum holds that theologians should take seriously "the witness of homosexual men and women who have struggled for self-knowledge and transcended the weight society has put on them and who tell us that their lives are based on mutuality." (p. 10) From the specific witness of Christians and Catholics who have sustained lasting homosexual relationships the theologian may draw the conclusion that constitutive homosexuals "must accept their orientation and live accordingly. Homosexual love, then, is not contrary to the human nature, defined in terms of mutuality, toward which mankind is summoned." (p. 10)

Some Unproven Assertions

Before evaluating Baum's position it is profitable to note some of his unproven assertions. When he speaks of an historically constituted human nature, he is asserting that human nature at any given time is constituted exclusively from the elements of a particular culture; he asserts also that human nature as generally understood by scholastic philosophy is so entangled with dehumanizing elements which have been woven into our culture that it is no longer an operative moral norm. Yet the only example he gives of these dehumanizing elements is the tradition affirming the superiority of the male, or the master-slave relationship. He also

asserts that the long standing tradition against homosexuality is an example of the cruelty of the heterosexual culture. The consequence of the hostility of the majority is the placing of an unspeakable burden on homosexuals. The burden takes the form of self-hatred. The homosexual learns to hate himself in the same way he feels society hates him, and he becomes full of self-loathing. Theologians, then, should seek new ground for moral norms, because the traditional arguments arise from a cruel culture.

Baum is aware of the distinction between temporary and constitutive homosexuality. He refers to the former "as a *phase* to be passed through" and the latter as "a *constant* to be lived with." (p. 10. *Italics author's*) He is concerned with the question whether the constitutive homosexual should be allowed to express himself genitally. He is convinced that such an expression cannot be proven to be immoral, because the concept of human nature and the relationship between man and woman have become problematic in the writings of some moral theologians, who are not specified. Thus, he seeks a new norm to evaluate morally homosexual relationships, and he finds it in mutuality, or true friendship.

Author's Critique

Critique of Baum: As already pointed out, Baum does not prove sweeping assertions about the constitution of human nature. He presupposes that society's at-

titude toward homosexuals is the major cause of whatever neurosis the person may have. This is contrary to sound psychiatric opinion.¹² This is not to deny that the self-hatred found in the homosexual is in part a reflection of the attitude of hatred found in society toward the homosexual. Baum's choice of mutuality as a norm of human sexuality ignores other varied and complex aspects of sexuality, such as procreation and procreative longing, motherhood, fatherhood, and family-stability. He does not treat the Scriptural teaching on sexuality or homosexuality. On the basis of his own understanding of the interplay between human nature and the prevailing culture, he chooses the norm of mutuality for sexual actions. Since his norm is not comprehensive enough to take in all the known elements of sexuality, and does not give an account of scriptural teaching, it is inadequate.

Summary

There are a series of weak points in both approaches: (1) If the norm is purely subjective, and divorced from the history of man, it will not be able to see the full reality of man as he has learned from historical experience. Why should Baum's perception of morality as mutuality displace more nuanced norms which take into account not only man's subjective condition, but also the structure of human society, the structure of human acts, one person in relationship to another person and to society? (2) On the scriptural

question Baum does not really treat it; McNeill interprets the pertinent passages on the condemnation of homosexuality in such a way as to render them all non-applicable to the homosexual in the faithful union. (3) The concentration of both McNeill and Baum on the situation of the faithful homosexual union is quite disproportionate when you consider that the vast majority of homosexuals do not desire and do not seek this kind of union. Moral Theology is supposed to evaluate *per se* situations more than it does *per accidens* problems. Granted theologians consider both kinds, but more attention should be given to the typical behavior of the typical homosexual. (4) In psychiatry the idea of the constitutive homosexual, that is to say, the person who is permanently oriented in this direction is not universally accepted.¹³ It is premature to say that there is very little hope that future study will not reveal ways of helping some homosexuals to change the direction of their sexual instincts. (5) No consideration is given to the alternative life style of perpetual continence, motivated by the love of God, and expressed in service to neighbor.

There are many other problems in this phenomenon which demand research—problems both in psychology and in morality. We need the patience to probe them.

Appendix to Critique of McNeill and Baum

Since completion of my critique of McNeill and Baum the Sacred

Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith has issued its "Declaration on Certain Questions Concerning Sexual Ethics" (January 1976) in which Church teaching concerning the morality of homosexual actions is reaffirmed. Reaffirmed, however, *within a pastoral context*, which exhorts pastors to treat homosexuals with understanding, helping them to overcome difficulties and to relate to both heterosexuals and homosexuals. As is usually the case when the Church issues a statement on sexual ethics, it is roundly denounced by some secular and religious writers, and, at the same time, it is applauded in other sectors of the Catholic press, particularly *L'Osservatore Romano*.¹⁴ Rather than to review these publications I prefer to comment briefly on that part of the Declaration which considers homosexuality. (paragraph 8)

Significantly, the Declaration does not pose as an authority on the different kinds of homosexuals, but merely summarizes contemporary psychological thought. It follows a distinction commonly accepted, namely, that between transitory and apparently irreversible homosexual tendencies. It is on the latter form, so-called incurable or constitutional homosexuality, that the Declaration comments. People in this second category tend to conclude that their condition is so natural that faithful homosexual relationships, analogous to marriage, are justified as the only way of escaping a

solitary life. The Declaration shows understanding of this feeling in homosexuals, but does not justify even the so-called faithful union. Homosexual actions lack "an essential and indispensable finality," i.e., they fail to signify both the unitive and procreational meanings of genital acts—meanings which are inherent in the acts, apart from the intentions of the participants. "... Homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered." So much for the basic content of this paragraph. Now some personal reflections:

1. The Declaration says that the culpability of homosexual actions should be judged by the rule of prudence, which in this context indicates that imputability under stress is diminished considerably. In no way does it imply that homosexuals are not sufficiently free to be responsible for their actions, but, on the contrary, presupposes that there are ways of helping the homosexual to increase the degree of freedom and to reduce the degree of compulsion.¹⁵

2. The Declaration avoids any attempt at complete analysis of the causes of homosexuality, temporary or permanent, because we simply do not know them. Unfortunately, however, it seems to adopt the notion that some homosexuals are set in this direction because of "some kind of innate instinct."¹⁶ While the beginnings of homosexuality are seen to be in very early childhood—at least this seems to be the growing opinion—the tendency itself is not re-

garded as innate.¹⁷ Far more than instinct, moreover, seems to be involved in the formation of permanent homosexual tendencies.¹⁸ Even the adjective permanent must not be taken in any absolute sense. Again, the Declaration's reference to "pathological constitution" is infelicitous. Advocates of faithful homosexual unions will argue from such phraseology to the conclusion that one has no choice but to express "innate instinct" in the most acceptable love relationship possible.¹⁹

3. They would also add that the majority of the members of the American Psychiatric Association have voted to remove homosexuality from the categories of psychosis and neurosis, and therefore do not regard the condition as pathological. Some recognition of the debate which preceded and followed the vote would have avoided the impression that the authors of the Declaration were not aware of current psychological thinking. Terms like "seriously disordered" and "intrinsically disordered" should not be confused by the unwary reader with psychological language like "innate instinct" and "pathological constitution." *Intrinsic disorder* is an ethical term, meaning that something is lacking in one of man's basic relationships to God or to other men; pathological constitution, however, is a presupposition in psychological theory that a person inherits serious disorientations in cognitive or emotional patterns.

3. Concerning the use of Scripture in the Declaration's paragraph on homosexuality: The authors would have done better to use the Scriptural teaching on marriage, particularly as it is expressed in Genesis, 1, 2 and in Ephesians, 5, 21-33, as its basis for condemnation of homosexual acts. Having pursued this line of argument in other places,²⁰ I will merely state that the doctrine of the Church on marriage, as expressed in "The Church in the Modern World," nn. 47-52, and in "Humanae Vitae," nn. 7-16, reflect the constant tradition of the Church against homosexual actions. Just as nowhere in Holy Scripture are homosexual actions approved, and, wherever mentioned, condemned, so nowhere in Church teaching are homosexual actions approved, and, wherever mentioned, condemned.

4. In its condemnation of homosexual unions between those who seem set in their homosexual orientation the Declaration might have raised the question concerning fidelity. How exclusive a fidelity do homosexual couples really intend? It would seem that even the lasting unions involve the acceptance of a certain amount of infidelity on the part of either or both partners. Do writers who espouse faithful homosexual unions project into the minds of so-called faithful couples an idealism which the homosexuals really do not have? Again, when does a homosexual union become "faithful," or what are the criteria of fidelity?

5. Whether one regards the chastity of the irreversible homosexual as charismatic or not, it is a fact made possible by the grace of God who always gives to man sufficient grace to fulfill his commands; and, if we accept the authentic teaching of the Church, chastity is mandatory for the homosexual, just as it is mandatory for many heterosexuals living in difficult situations as singles, or as divorced. That God gives sufficient grace to fulfill difficult commands is a doctrine of faith; however, that He gives charismata for this or that action may be open for discussion and disagreement.²¹

6. I refer the readers of *Linacre Quarterly* to the "Pastoral: Human Sexuality" of Bishop Francis Mugavero.²² It is written with gentleness and hope without compromising the teaching of the Declaration, while stressing the truth that homosexuals share the same humanity as heterosexuals, and should regard themselves, and be regarded by us, as fully acceptable to God. On our part, we need to do more to describe and to defend the civil rights of the homosexual.

REFERENCES

1. Lionel Ovesey believes that the master-slave relationship is still present in actions which are not homosexual in motivation. He cites examples of the pseudohomosexual elaboration of the power struggle among men and among women: *Homosexuality and Pseudohomosexuality* (New York: Science House, 1969), pp. 58-61, 84-96, 104-106.

2. See Roger Shinn, "Homosexuali-

ty, Christian Conviction and Enquiry" in *The Same Sex*, Ralph Weltge (ed.) (Philadelphia: Pilgrim Press, 1969), p. 26; "The Christian tradition over the centuries has affirmed the heterosexual, monogamous faithful marital union as normative for the divinely given meaning of the intimate sexual relationship."

3. Grelot, Pierre, *Man and Wife in Scripture* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1964). The author develops the theme of marriage from all the books of the Old Testament and the New which treat the matter.

4. "Freedom and the Future," *Theological Studies*, vol. 33 (1972), pp. 503-530; and "Blondel on the Subjectivity of Moral Decision Making," *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association*, vol. 48 (1974), pp. 208-217.

5. "Freedom and the Future," *loc. cit.*

6. *Ibid.*, 507.

7. "Blondel on the Subjectivity . . .," *ACPA Proceedings*, vol. 48 (1974), p. 209. McNeill takes this quotation from "L'action (1893): Essai d'une critique de la vie et d'une science de la pratique."

7a. *Ibid.* Taken from Blondel's *The Letter of Apologetics* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964), pp. 60-61.

8. McNeill, "Blondel on the Subjectivity . . .," *op. cit.*, p. 211.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 221.

10. *Ibid.*, p. 212.

11. *Ibid.*, pp. 212-217.

12. See Harry Gershman, "Reflections on the Nature of Homosexuality," *American Journal of Psychoanalysis* XXVI (1966), pp. 46-58. See my article in *Continuum*, "Morality and Pastoral Treatment of Homosexuality," Summer, 1967, pp. 279-297 and 282-284.

13. Haddon, Samuel, M.D. Interview, October 19, 1975.

14. Daniel Maguire in "The Vatican on Sex" (*Commonweal*, Feb. 27, 1976) refers to the "bad theology" of the Declaration and asks whether the permanent homosexual receives the charism of celibacy to live chastely. Barnabas Ahearn in "Christian Holiness and Chastity" (*L'Osservatore Romano*, Feb. 19, 1976, pp. 4-5) advises that we see the document in the larger perspective of Pauline teaching which exhorts Christians to practice the kind of chastity which is proper to their state of life.

15. A helpful discussion of degrees of freedom is found in John Ford and Gerald Kelly, *Fundamental Moral Theology* (Westminster, Maryland: 1958), vol. 1, ch. 11, "Imputability Under Stress," pp. 201-247.

16. The Latin is "ob quoddam quasi impulsus innati genus aut vitiata constitutionem, quae existimatur sanari non posse."

17. Jeanniere, Abel, *The Anthropology of Sex* (New York: Harper and Row, 1964), p. 10. Reference is made to the work of John Money and colleagues of Johns Hopkins.

18. *Ibid.*

19. In *Dignity* newsletter, March, 1976, Father Tom Otto comments on 'innate instinct': "Something which is innate is 'natural.' There may well be a good case here for speaking of homosexuals being such naturally."

20. "The Controversy Concerning the Psychology and Morality of Homosexuality," *American Ecclesiastical Review* (November, 1973), pp. 602-629 at 616; also in "Homosexual Marriages," in *Marriage and Family Living* (January, 1974), pp. 19-23.

21. See C. of Trent, D-Schonmetzer, n. 1536; S. Aug., *de natura et gratia*, ch. 43, n. 50, CSEL, 60, 270; PL 44, 271.

22. *The National Catholic Reporter*, March 5, 1976, p. 8.