

Why Homosexual Behavior Is More like Consensual Incest and Polyamory than Race or Gender

A Reasoned and Reasonable Case for Secular Society

Part 1: The Initial Case

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On Apr. 29 the U.S. House of Representatives passed the so-called "[Local Law Enforcement Hate Crimes Prevention Act](#)" which places "sexual orientation" and "gender identity," "real or perceived," alongside of "race," "national origin," "gender," and "disability" as benign conditions for which society should provide special protections in federal law. Those who oppose homosexual practice are, by analogy, implicitly identified in law as discriminatory bigots, akin to racists and misogynists.

The problem is that the analogy to race and gender doesn't work well. Race and gender are 100% heritable, absolutely immutable, and primarily non-behavioral conditions of life, and therefore, intrinsically benign. Homosexuality and transsexuality are none of these things. While there probably are some biological risk factors for some homosexual development and even transgenderism, science has failed to establish that homosexuality and transsexuality develop deterministically like race and gender. Even the Kinsey Institute has acknowledged that at least one shift in the Kinsey spectrum of 0 to 6 is the norm over the course of life for those who identify as homosexual (75%). Most importantly, unlike race and gender, homosexuality and transsexuality are in the first instance impulses to engage in behavior that is structurally discordant with embodied existence (as male and female). They are therefore *not* intrinsically benign conditions.

I contend that a better analogy (i.e., with more points of substantive correspondence) can be made between homosexuality and transsexuality on the one hand and polysexuality (an orientation toward multiple sexual partners) and incest (here I am thinking of an adult-committed sort) on the other hand. The latter are, after all, two other sexual behaviors that are incongruent with embodied existence that, despite such incongruence, can still be conducted as committed, caring relationships between adults. Polyamory has the added similarity of being connected to a sexual orientation (polysexuality, from *polu* meaning "much," pl. "many," here an innate orientation to multiple concurrent sexual partners). If incest and polyamory are indeed better analogues to homosexuality and transgenderism, then it is clear that placing the latter alongside race and gender as conditions worthy of special protections and benefits becomes, well, misplaced.

In making these remarks, I trust that people of faith know that it is just as wrong to hate and commit violence against persons who engage in adult-consensual relationships with close kin or with multiple partners as it is to hate persons who engage in same-sex intercourse or who otherwise attempt to override their sex or gender given at birth. It is not right to hate anyone or commit violence against anyone.

As regards a logical connection to polyamory, the limitation of the number of persons in a valid sexual union to two persons at any one time is predicated on the natural “twoness” of the sexes, “male and female” or “man and woman.” This was certainly Jesus’ view in Mark 10 and Matthew 19, where he cited “God made them male and female” (Genesis 1:27) and “For this reason a man ... sticks to his woman and the two become one flesh” (Genesis 2:24) as the reasons for overthrowing concurrent and serial polygamy. (Note that the Jewish community at Qumran made a similar point about how “male and female” in Genesis 1:27 implicitly ruled out polygamy.) Polyamorous behavior and homosexual behavior alike violate the natural pair constituted by the existence of two primary, complementary sexes, even when they are conducted in the context of consensual, adult-committed relationships. The very sex act itself, which accommodates only one act of penetration at a time, illustrates the essential sexual twoness of a sexual bond predicated on two (and only two) complementary sexes.

As regards a logical connection to incest, incestuous behavior and homosexual behavior alike violate a requisite principle of embodied otherness within embodied sameness, even when such sexual behaviors are conducted consensually between committed adults. Incest is sex between persons who are too much structurally or formally alike as regards kinship. The high risk of birth defects that attend incestuous births is merely the symptom of the root problem: too much identity on the level of kinship between the sexual partners. That is why society rejects incestuous sexual relationships even when it occurs between consenting adults who either cannot procreate (whether because one partner is infertile or because both partners are of the same sex) or take active birth-control precautions. The structural impossibility of births arising from homosexual intercourse is likewise not so much the problem as the symptom of the root problem: namely, too much formal or structural identity between the participants and not enough complementary otherness, here as regards sex or gender.

In Part 2 I will look at what disproportionately high rates of measurable harms associated with homosexual relationships indicate for the unnatural character of homosexual relations.

For Part 2: What Disproportionately High Rates of Harm Mean go [here](#).

For Part 3: The Illogic of Homosexual Unions go [here](#).

For Part 4: Responses to Counterarguments go [here](#).

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