

The two major models of socially sanctioned homosexuality in the pre-industrial world—pederasty and transgenderism—were models that indirectly supported the male/female pairing model by mimicking it without interfering with it. We don't see modern homosexuality in these societies because there were severe sanctions for expressing it. But the historical record does in fact provide glimpses of individuals who exhibited unmistakable signs of homosexual orientation. It's just that there were severe sanctions faced by an ancient Greek man, for instance, who exhibited too much of the wrong kind of affection for his boy lover once the man reached marriageable age.

Only in modern times have social libertarianism and constitutional, individual rights existed with sufficient strength to make it possible for gay people to finally come out. No one, including Muhlestein, wants to go back to the kinds of feudal society where gay people—or anyone not conforming to certain political or social ideals or economic norms—must live in silence or else fear for their lives. Only in modern times has science developed the tools to study complex phenomena like genetics, heritability, brain chemistry, hormones, and fetal development during gestation, thus enabling us to begin to understand the biological foundations of even more complex phenomena like human sexuality.

Modern homosexuality, in other words, was not invented by moderns. Moderns simply created the economic, social, and scientific conditions that have made it possible for us to recognize it, tolerate it, and even begin to un-

derstand it. This is not the only explanation of the sociological and historical data, but it has the advantage of taking account of *all* the data presently available to us, not just half of it. It takes changing social norms into account, as well as modern scientific data and—not least importantly—the testimony of gay men and lesbians themselves.

Parenthetically, it is hard to imagine what it would be like to live under the kind of economic system demanded by gospel principles, but I suspect that, whatever it is, it would enshrine freedom, responsibility, equality, compassion, and nurture of the planet, rather than inequality, poverty, exploitation, or coercion. The glimpses we catch of a gospel-based economy in the New Testament and in the early LDS Church suggest that, whatever it is, it will look very different from modern, family-eroding capitalism as well as ancient, coercive, woman-subjugating, homosexual-persecuting feudalism. Perhaps struggling for such a system is where the energies of those concerned about preserving the family should be focused.

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Appreciation for Wayne Booth

I appreciated Neal Kramer's review of Wayne Booth's *My Many Selves: The Quest for a Plausible Harmony*. (*Dialogue*, 40, no. 4 [Winter, 2007]: 137–41). Wayne Booth befriended me during my midlife Ph.D. program at the University of Chicago in the early 1990s. His ethical approach to literary

criticism has been useful in the work I am trying to do with interreligious contestational dialogue. I am writing to share another of Wayne's many selves with your readers.

In the winter of 1992 Wayne and I were at lunch discussing the social-psycho-spiritual dynamics of sincere "testimony contra testimony" dialogue within and between religious communities. Suddenly, he asked me what I believed about Joseph Smith's story. His pragmatic mind and open heart elicited this response: "Wayne, I would not be at all surprised if it turns out that Moroni, as an actual resurrected man, gave real gold plates to Joseph to translate by the power of God." Wayne

smiled thoughtfully, and said, "I like that. I could own that statement." We then talked of how he at times doubted his religious doubts and how he allowed himself to hope that something like Mormon sociality might exist beyond the grave.

Wayne Booth was a beloved teacher who loved Chaucer and William James with similar delight. Since these latter two are already enthroned along with Abraham—I just know this, but dare not reveal my sources), I trust Wayne has already found heaven fulfilling his hopes.

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