

Concordia Seminary - Saint Louis

Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary

Master of Divinity Thesis

Concordia Seminary Scholarship

4-1-1973

Contemporary Extramarital Sexual Behavior- Insights and Theology

Robert Sielaff

Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, ir_sielaffr@csl.edu

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholar.csl.edu/mdiv>

Digital Part of the [Practical Theology Commons](#)
Commons

Network Recommended Citation

Sielaff, Robert, "Contemporary Extramarital Sexual Behavior- Insights and Theology" (1973). *Master of Divinity Thesis*. 120.

<https://scholar.csl.edu/mdiv/120>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Concordia Seminary Scholarship at Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master of Divinity Thesis by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Resources from Concordia Seminary. For more information, please contact seitzw@csl.edu.

CONTEMPORARY EXTRAMARITAL SEXUAL BEHAVIOR

Insights and Theology

A RESEARCH PAPER

**Robert Sielaff
Spring, 1973**

6-20-73
research paper

00452

CONCORDIA SEMINARY LIBRARY
ST. LOUIS, MISSOURI

This research paper will investigate contemporary insights and attitudes regarding human sexual behavior (in the area of extramarital sex) and evaluate this from the perspective of the Word of God.

The first section of this paper will deal with contemporary insights and attitudes regarding sexual behavior (in the area of extramarital sex).

Joseph Fletcher and what he terms his fellow Christian situation ethicists feel that many Christians go overboard on adultery or extramarital sex.

Fletcher says, "To this day Christians think an adulterer more wicked than a politician who takes bribes, although the latter probably does a thousand times as much harm."¹ Also, Fletcher believes it is a duty in some situations to break any or all of the commandments or to abide at times with being one of the people Paul lists in I Cor. 6:9-10 (adulterers are included in this list). He feels we should simply follow the law of love.² Moreover, if you ask

Fletcher is adultery wrong, he will say that to ask this is to ask a mare's-nest question. It is a glittering generality, like Oscar Wilde's mackerel in the moonlight: it glitters but it stinks. Fletcher believes that one can only respond, "I don't know. Maybe. Give me a case. Describe a real situation."³

I would now like to elaborate a little more on just what Fletcher believes love consists of. Using terms made popular by Tillich and others, he says that Christian situationism is a method that proceeds, so to speak, from (1) its one and only law, agape (love), to (2) the sophia (wisdom) of the church and culture, containing many "general rules" of more or less reliability, to (3) the kairos (moment of decision, the fullness of time) in which the responsible self in the situation decides whether the sophia can serve love

¹Fletcher, Situation Ethics. p. 20.

²Ibid., pp. 73-4.

³Ibid., pp. 142-3.

there, or not. This is the situational strategy in capsule form. Fletcher adds that Jesus and Paul replaced the precepts of Torah with the living principle of agape--agape being goodwill at work in partnership with reason. It seeks the neighbor's best interest with a careful eye to all the factors in the situation. They redeemed law from the letter that kills and brought it back to the spirit that gives it life. And to do this, law and general rules always have to be refined back from legalistic prescriptions and from rabbinical pilpul to the heart principle of love. Also, Christian love is not desire. Agape is giving love--non-reciprocal, neighbor-regarding--"neighbor" meaning "everybody", even an enemy (Luke 6:32-35). It is usually distinguished from friendship love (philia) and romantic love (eros), both of which are selective and exclusive. Erotic love and philic love have their proper place in our human affairs but they are not what is meant by agape, agape is love or "Christian love". Erotic and philic love are emotional, but the effective principle of Christian love is will, disposition, it is an attitude, not feeling. Moreover, the law limits your obligation only for what you do--not for what you should or could have done. This is the prudence of self-centeredness and indifference, contrasted to the aggressive, questioning prudence of agape.⁴

A contemporary writer, Erich Fromm, says that love is union under the condition of preserving one's integrity, one's individuality. Love is an active power in man; a power which breaks through the walls which separate man from his fellow men, which unites him with others; love makes him overcome the sense of isolation and separateness, yet it permits him to be himself. Also, if I truly love one person I love all persons, I love the world, I love life. If I can say to somebody else, "I love you", I must be able to say, "I love in you everybody, I love through you the world, I love in you also myself."⁵ Furthermore, there is only one proof for the presence of love: the depth of the relationship, and the aliveness and strength in each person concerned;

⁴Ibid., p. 82.

⁵Fromm, The Art of Loving. p. 17.

this is the fruit by which love is recognized.⁶

For Rimmer love is the discovery between a male and a female of the amazing interacting delight of being the other, the Jesus-joy of pure altruism. At its height it washes out loneliness. He further adds that the biological basis of love consists in the organism's drive to satisfy its basic needs in a manner which causes it to feel secure. Love is security. Mere satisfaction of basic needs is not enough. Needs must be satisfied in a particular manner, in a manner which is emotionally as well as physically satisfying. It is a discovery of the greatest possible significance for mankind, that the ethical conception of love independently arrived at by almost all existing peoples is no mere creation of man, but is grounded in the biological structure of the functioning organism. It means that man's organs potentialities are so organized as to demand but one kind of satisfaction alone, a satisfaction which ministers to man's need for love which registers love, which is given in terms of love--a satisfaction which is defined by the one word, security.⁷

Rimmer says if you learn to love one person, it is likely that you will learn to love another person. He feels a person can say I love you, but love is not marriage. Marriage is society's protection for the children.⁸ Also, he stresses that every human being is condemned to his own driving need for the love and comfort of another human being. The trouble was that somewhere along the way, the need for love, much stronger than the small gift of sex given along the way got equated with sin.⁹

It is important to realize that sexual problems of one kind or another afflict at least half the married couples in the U.S. today. In the past, husbands and wives had to take their marital problems to a clergyman or family doctor who was usually ill-prepared to deal with sexual dysfunction. Today,

⁶Ibid., p. 87.

⁷Rimmer, Proposition 31, p. 183.

⁸Psychology Today. "Rimmer Conversation". p. 57.

⁹Rimmer, Proposition 31, p. 97.

they can take their problems to a qualified sex therapist. However, some critics raise moral questions about the techniques employed by the sex therapists, especially the use of paid "surrogate" partners to help single men work out their sexual problems.¹⁰ The Playboy writers feel that the human body, in disrepute for too long (and still with anxiety by some), had made a joyous debut on campus, the human image can only prosper. Nudity has even invaded the religious sphere, a recent "environmental theater baptism service" at Manhattan's St. Clement's Church used a trio of nude young people splashing in a tub to symbolize innocence reborn.¹¹ Even at Rimmer's Harrad college the young people eventually take nudity for granted. After months and months of seeing boys and girls naked in the gym and in the communal showers of the dormitory, they not only do not usually give it a second thought, but they simply can not conceive being naked as anything but an interesting fact of life.¹²

The story Couples has been called an intellectual Payton Place. It has been assailed for its complete frankness and praised as an artful seductive, savagely graphic portrait of love, marriage, and adultery in America. A central theme seems to be repeated many times throughout the book. It is that all love is a betrayal, in that it flatters life. The loveless man is best armed.¹³ Also, Couples portrays the people as trapped in their cozy catacombs, the couples have made sex by turns their toy, their glue, their trauma, their therapy, their hope, their frustration, their revenge, their narcotic, their main line of communication and their sole and pitiable shield against the awareness of death. Adultery, says Updike, has become a kind of imaginative question for a successful hedonism that would enable man to enjoy an other-wise meaningless^{life} The couples of Tarbox live in a place and time that to-

¹⁰ Newsweek, "The New Sex Therapy." pp. 65-6.

¹¹ Playboy, "Student Bodies." pp. 99-100.

¹² Rimmer, The Harrad Experiment. p. 148.

¹³ Updike, Couples. p. 92.

gether seem to have been ordained for the quest.¹⁴

In Walden Two and Utopian society is formed. Some of their following concepts fit right in with Rimmer and his contemporary insights. Concerning the care of babies, they try to protect them from infection during the first year. It's especially important when they are cared for as a group. Some parents work in the nursery. Others come around every day or so, for at least a few minutes. Also, the topic of love for these babies produced the following dialogue: Castle said, "How about the love which the mother gives her baby--- the affection?" Frazier said, "It is very real, and we supply it in liberal doses. But we don't limit it to mothers. We go in for father love, too--- for everybody's love---community love, if you wish. Our children are treated with affection by everyone---and thoughtful affection too."¹⁵ Moreover, they could arrange things more expeditiously at Walden Two because they do not need to be constantly re-educating. The ordinary teacher spends a good share of her time changing the cultural and intellectual habits which the child acquires from its family and surrounding culture. Or else the teacher duplicates home training which is a complete waste of time. At Walden Two they could almost say that the school is the family and vice versa. Furthermore, at Walden Two they give friendship every support. They do not practice free love, but they have a great deal of free affection. And that goes a long way toward satisfying the needs which lead to promiscuity elsewhere. Skinner does not mean that no one in Walden Two has fallen in love 'illicitly,' but there has been minimum of mere sex without love. Extramarital love was not regarded as wholly justifiable or without its difficulties.¹⁶

Alvin Toffler in Future Shock states that as transience increases the loneliness and alienation in society, we can anticipate increasing experimentation with various forms of group marriage. The banding together of several adults and children into a single "family" provides a kind of insurance against isolation. In Denmark, a bill to legalize group marriage has already

¹⁴Ibid., p. 8.

¹⁵Skinner, Walden Two. pp. 96-7.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 118-9.

been introduced in the Folketing (Parliament). While passage is not imminent, the act of introduction is itself a significant symbol of change. In Chicago, 250 adults and children already live together in "family-style monasticism" under the auspices of a new, fast-growing religious organization, the Ecumenical Institute.¹⁷ Toffler stresses that we might also see the gradual relaxation of bars against polygamy. Polygamous families even now, more widely than generally believes, in the midst of "normal society." Writer Ben Merson, after visiting several such families in Utah where polygamy is still regarded as essential by certain Mormon fundamentalists, estimated that there are some 30,000 people living in underground family units of this type in the United States. As sexual attitudes loosen up, as property rights become less important because of rising affluence, the social repression of polygamy may come to be regarded as irrational. This shift may be facilitated by the very mobility that compels men to spend considerable time away from their present homes. The old male fantasy of the Captain's Paradise may become a reality for some, although it is likely that under such circumstances, the wives left behind will demand extramarital sexual rights. Yesterday's "captain" would hardly consider this possibility. Tomorrow's may feel quite differently about it.¹⁸

In this paper Robert Rimmer is the biggest advocate of a changing concept of marriage. He feels marriage fifty years from now will definitely change. Females will have shaken off all areas of inhibition. Freed of the fears of pregnancy the female will be no more monogamously inclined than the average male, or maybe she'll demand a form of monogamy that permits other sexual interests. Rimmer also visualizes that if four people or more can keep love and the rest of the Christian-Judaistic overtones of romance and sexual possessiveness out of an encounter, and just think about themselves as four people who have the possibility of liking each other, they may find they have more in

¹⁷ Toffler, Future Shock. pp. 245-6.

¹⁸ Ibid., p. 248.

common than they suspect.¹⁹ However, Rimmer does not think that flagrant sexual congress with many women or many men is the answer to the loneliness that besets every human being. Rimmer purposes that in a group marriage the members have multiple sexual experiences, but as couples. They function as a group, but make love separately.²⁰

Rimmer does not feel group marriage members are immoral in a sexual sense. They are not adulterers who are breaking the Sixth Commandment. There is a better commandment in Leviticus: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." To adulterate meant make corrupt, impure; to debase. These people are adding to, purifying, cleansing, creating a new vital entity that enlarges all members of the group. Obviously, with the new concepts of marriage and the family, adultery would have no meaning.²¹

Rimmer contends too, that economics will hasten change. The spreading of economic wealth and inflation, which are by-products of exploding populations, will inevitably make "extended families" (families together in a group marriage) the only practical way of living.²² Rimmer feels that ultimately monogamous marriage will not be the only legal, sanctioned form of marriage. There will be bigamous marriages, and there will be open-end marriages in which each partner has a relationship outside the marriage.²³ Also, Rimmer is very interested in the concept of open-end monogamous marriage, and many couples, particularly at the graduate and faculty levels of colleges and universities, are experimenting, but he wonders, without any particular structure to guide them, how they will handle the interpersonal problem. He does not think an uninstructed situation would last too long. However, he does not believe that bigamy or group marriage is always the answer. There should not be any one alternate lifestyle, but many. He feels pluralism is the salvation of

¹⁹Rimmer, Proposition 31. p. 166.

²⁰Ibid., p. 167.

²¹Rimmer, The Harrad Experiment. p. 284.

²²Psychology Today, "Rimmer Conversation." p. 62.

²³Ibid., p. 57.

society.²⁴

Rimmer contends that monogamous marriage, because it limits the opportunity to know even one other person or have one other friend becomes a cropper on the natural yearning of the human soul.²⁵ However, monogamy can survive deteriorating interpersonal adjustments, because if nothing else, children can give the relationship a sense of purpose. ~~Or monogamy can exist with no apparent~~ sense of purpose. Perhaps even three people in a bigamous relationship can survive without some sense of exterior mission. But no group of four or more people can work, live, or love without some external input on which they agree.²⁶ It is true too that we live in a world that sanctifies monogamy but is humorously permissive in its attitude toward adultery.²⁷

Rimmer feels that in group marriage the members can work all their lives at one goal, that is, being each other. What they achieve between themselves they can multiply. It's more than being your brother's keeper. It's being your brother.²⁸ Group marriage creates a much more vital life for the individuals involved. It is an adventure and we have very little adventure in our lives. It enlarges your life.²⁹

Most group marriage members have upper-middle class origins. The young faculty members of many colleges and universities are very wide awake to experimentation, and many are involved in group marriages. Also, Rimmer feels that group marriage is superior to monogamy because if you have a group marriage, the home of the other couple becomes your home, and you now see another home operating with different approaches to life and to human relationships.³⁰ Furthermore, group marriage will not work unless you begin with reasonably happy monogamous marriages. You can not solve your neurotic

²⁴Ibid., pp. 59-61.

²⁵Rimmer, Proposition 31. p. 113.

²⁶Psychology Today, "Rimmer Conversation". p. 64.

²⁷Rimmer, Proposition 31. p. 64.

²⁸Rimmer, The Harrad Experiment. p. 262.

²⁹Psychology Today, "Rimmer Conversation". p. 78.

³⁰Ibid., p. 78.

problems in a group marriage; you just accentuate them.³¹

Rimmer visualizes two couples coming together in group marriages rather than four individuals somehow merging because in most cases they would probably first spend about 10 years in monogamous marriage, then in their 30's move into group marriage. He does not feel a group marriage is for the 20's. There is a monogamous phase in man's life. There is a phase of discovering yourself one-to-one. The major childbearing would go on during the monogamous period, although there might be some children later. As a matter of fact, it would help to weld the group together if each wife had one child by the other husband.³² He also feels that anyone trying communal marriage must succeed within their present environment, using all the artifacts of their culture, bending them to their needs, and not vice versa. They would only reject values which did not contribute to their basic need as a group family.³³

Rimmer does not think that sex is all there is to life, but he believes there's a natural male drive and probably a female one to experience sex, and through it friendship and communication with more than one person of the opposite sex. Monogamy has created an unnecessary and artificial barrier to that need.³⁴ Some books are written about sex. Some are written about love. Rimmer's books are about friendship, the sine qua non of both sex and love. Since, in its fullest flowering, friendship is a learned response rather than a genital reaction, the cerebral ability to sustain friendship may bring man closer to God than sex or love. Rimmer purposes a solution which may be the only way the individual can make his technologies and his society serve him for complete self-actualization.³⁵ Also, Rimmer contends that any two people reach a high point when they are not only aware that their passion and coupling are good, but when they hold within themselves something over and above sex. This is that they are friends.³⁶

³¹Ibid., p. 64.

³²Ibid., p. 78.

³³Rimmer, The Harrad Experiment, p. 199.

³⁴Rimmer, Proposition 31, p. 126.

³⁵Ibid., p. x.

³⁶Ibid., p. 132.

Rimmer feels that Western man must take the long step away from primitive emotions of hate and jealousy and learn the meaning of love and loving as a dynamic process. Such a process would counteract the decadence that is slowly infiltrating our society.³⁷

Rimmer purposes establishing a college where heterosexual couples would share the same quarters. This college would provide the blueprint for a new sexually oriented aristocracy of individual men and women who were free of sexual inhibitions, repressions, and hate, and were thoroughly educated into the meaning and the art of love as distinguished from the purely sexual relationship. Rimmer expects this program, if it continued in existence for any length of time, could lead to a healthy development in marital patterns for many of its graduates. According to his predictions, a goodly percentage of the student body would ultimately become involved in monogamous marriage. Also, there is the possibility that others would become involved in a close and lasting friendship with another couple of the same background. Because these two couples would have had their college and intellectual training in an atmosphere of controlled sexual freedom, they would be equipped to realize the many advantages of entering into a group marriage.³⁸

Although this above proposal may seem startling, a start must be made somewhere. Too much is at stake to permit our basic social and family patterns to drift on the currents of haphazard marriage and distorted sex relations. Also, in this proposal, Rimmer feels that heterosexual relations among strangers would be very nonsatisfying relationships. However, he actually assumes that a love requirement will occur concomitantly or prior to any actual sexual relationship.³⁹ Furthermore, at this college they have the opportunity to know and understand more than one person of the opposite sex intimately and develop emotional relationships with them that are far more mature than any similar relationships occurring in what would be termed a normal premarital

³⁷Rimmer, The Harrad Experiment. p. 1

³⁸Ibid., p. 3-4.

³⁹Ibid., p. 15.

environment.⁴⁰

Rimmer feels his college would be better for picking mates in general because it provides the male and female an exposure to many potential husbands and wives and gives them an opportunity to indulge their natural sexual desire and curiosity without fear and furtiveness. This college would also show that the individual human being is ultimately good. Jealousy is within our own control. It's strictly a man-made emotion. Love and sex are two different concepts, interrelated but impossible of satisfactory existence also. You can love man in general, but to really enjoy the peak experience of sex with one specific person, you must know that individual, deeply and emotionally, in a thorough empathetic contact based on a desire to rationally understand the other person and care for him. If individual men can be taught to make the effort, they can learn to love other human beings in a brand new way that gives the male and female security and value in each other's eyes.⁴¹

Rimmer feels that at his college the young people will learn that from each person they will make love with, they will learn something. The basic fact they will learn is that the act of sexual congress is simply not so death-defying, all encompassing serious. It is not the alpha and omega of marriage or love. It's fun. The really wonderful thing about it is; if you come to the act of love defenseless, willing to give yourself to another person, and the other person shares this feeling then for a few moments in your life it's possible to be wholly and completely the real you. If two people make love this way, and stop playing roles with each other, and can enjoy and accept each other for the frightened little people they really are--then sexual intercourse becomes a way of saying "I am for a moment no longer me, I am you!"⁴²

Rimmer says the family is crucial and stays. Synergamy would be a formal, church-sanctioned marital relationship which can be embraced not so much as a legal form of marriage but as an emotional commitment, preferably in the form

⁴⁰Ibid., p. 133.

⁴¹Ibid., pp. 40-1.

⁴²Ibid., pp. 135-6.

of a church ceremony that would give an ordinary adulterous or marital relationship a status appropriately equal to the first marriage commitment. In a perfectly operating synergamous marriage, the spouses would enter into one secondary commitment that would take responsibility for any possible additional children, and would enlarge, not destroy, the original monogamous marriage. The second spouse would live in the home of the primary spouse a portion of the week and accept love and involvement in the primary relationship. Synergamous marriages would lead to group marriages ultimately.⁴³ Rimmer would involve the church because he feels that ultimately the church has got to come to grips with alternate life-styles, particularly when they support a strong family structure. He also thinks that man needs something to lean on. Rimmer believes that a church ceremony is necessary because people need some kind of structure to guide their social interaction, and they instinctively need to make a commitment in some form. The combination of structure and commitment keeps many families together.⁴⁴ Moreover, Rimmer feels that people can not make their own commitment in private because they are in an adulterous relationship. The pressures of secrecy and guilt, and the way you live, gradually make it untenable. Your guilt feelings become destructive. You can not easily fit a second relationship into the perspective of your life.⁴⁵

Many people who hear about the proposals of Robert Rimmer feel that he is trying to undermine the family structure of this country. However, he believes that strong family structure is a sine qua non of social existence. He claims that the trouble with the majority of homes in the United States today is that they are not families, they are simply households, most of them sustained by three or four people, including parents and children.⁴⁶

In preindustrial society, intimate contacts were sustained by primary groups. The only vestige of the group which still remains is the nuclear

⁴³Psychology Today, "Rimmer Conversation." p. 59.

⁴⁴Ibid., p. 59.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 59.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 62.

family. The family still functions as a mechanism for sustaining intimate contact. But where the extended family of preindustrial society contained many adults, and gave them many opportunities for intimate contact, the modern nuclear family contains two adults. This means that each of these adults has at most one intimate contact within his family. Rimmer believes that intimate contacts are essential for human survival, and, indeed, that each person requires not one, but several given intimate contacts at any one time. He feels that the primary groups which sustained intimate contacts were an essential functional part of traditional social systems, and that since they are now obsolete it is essential that we invent new social mechanisms, consistent with the direction that society is taking, and yet able to sustain the intimate contacts which we need.⁴⁷ Also, Rimmer believes that even if his ideas do not at first succeed, his way of life will survive. In a society that largely negates the individual this is the way for human survival.⁴⁸ Rimmer visualizes the present day group marriage people as the placenta, the plank to bridge the impossible and bring it to life. Is not that the essence of America too? While we have split the United States into two opposing camps, those who disagree with us are dreaming of a past that not longer exists. The fundamentalist preachers, who state categorically that corporate marriage is a blasphemy; the psychologists and psychiatrists, who insist that man is still too primitive for this kind of emotional adjustment; the lawyers, who claim that even if group marriage becomes a law the legal problems can never be surmounted; the industrialists, who shiver a little when they realize a group family can live quite comfortably with fewer automobiles, appliances, and television sets (and have less time or motivation to look at TV); the faithful romanticists, who point with pride to their years of absolute fidelity to a monogamous marriage (extolling the sufficiency of two people triumphant against the world); and the prurient snickers who conceive corporate marriage as licensed lust--all these are of the same breed. They were alive, too.

⁴⁷Rimmer, Proposition 31. p. 185.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. viii.

when the great adventurers were exploring a flat ocean and daring to sail off the world into hell. They lived in Puritan England, preferring frustration at home to joining their brothers of greater vision who took off for a new world. They lived when the first few families dared to cross the country in a covered wagon only to arrive in California, and discover even more daring men, who, believing in their God, had fled Mexico and were here before them. And they exist today in an even more frightening form--people and their leaders who would rather destroy the world than take the greater adventure and penetrate the jungle of petty nationalistic virtue. Even though the exploration of space remains, there remains a vast adventure for those challenged to the conquest of man's physical environment, it is an adventure for the few. In place of the substitute adventures of drugs and the thousands of mechanical escape mechanisms created by man to fill the growing voids of his new freedom from work, Rimmer offers the greatest challenge and adventure of them all--- to discover one another as human beings.⁴⁹

The next part of this paper will deal with the fact that my theological perspective regarding human sexual behavior (in the area of extramarital sex) is based on the Scriptures. Through the Scriptures God gives us instructors regarding His will for us. The Scriptures constitute His Word to men, centering in the revelation of Himself in the person and work of Jesus Christ for our salvation. Through the Scriptures God continues to speak to men in all ages. Also, they are the inspired Word of God. Only through the process of the Holy Spirit working in me, am I able to believe in faith that this Word of God is true.

My theological perspective definitely speaks about the moral inferences of "extramarital intercourse or sex." The Scriptures, which are the basis for my theological perspective, equate "extramarital intercourse or sex" with adultery. The Old Testament viewed adultery as a serious sin, oriented as it was toward a concern for progeny and the purity of the family's bloodline. Not only was it forbidden in both versions of the Decalogue, in Exodus 20:14 and Deuteronomy 5:18, but also Leviticus 20:10 specifically prescribed the

⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 270-1.

death penalty as its punishment.⁵⁰

The one-sided understanding of adultery in the Old Testament law was not specifically broadened in the prophetic writings, which were not altogether silent on the subject. Hosea had numerous references to adultery, with respect both to Gomer's infidelity and to Israelite life as a whole (Hosea 2:2-3; 3:1; 4:1-2,12-14; 7:4). The prophet listed adultery among the indictments which Yahweh directed against the whole nation, and not only symbolically, in their worship of pagan gods. The adultery in Isaiah (57:3-5,7-8) was with the prostitutes of the pagan shrines, but it was also infidelity to Yahweh. Jeremiah again and again used the symbol of adultery for Israel's apostasy (Jeremiah 3:1-2,6-9; 5:7-9; 7:9; 29:23; 23:11,14; 13:26,27). The mixture in these passages of adultery as a symbol of faithlessness to the God of the covenant and adultery as a literal act, relations with other women, is striking. Ezekiel spoke entirely of adultery in reference to the nation as a whole, though the symbolism is such that cult sexuality was obviously in the prophet's mind (Ezekiel 16:31-34; 23:37-45). Proverbs makes it clear that adultery as intercourse with a married woman was a crime (Proverbs 6:23-32).⁵¹ Malachi 3:5 felt both parties involved in adulterous intercourse were to be killed. Job 31:11 calls adultery a "Heinous crime." In concluding the Old Testament data one must note that it presents adultery not primarily as marital infidelity, but as trespassing upon the rights of the male.⁵²

The New Testament views the relationship differently. All marital infidelity, male or female, was adulterous. The whole sexuality of man was internalized and placed in the context of motivation. Anyone who had lustful desires toward a person of the opposite sex outside of marriage was already guilty of adultery (Matthew 5:27-28). This is because the things that defile come from within the heart. "Out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, fake witness, slander" (Matthew 15:19). Or, as

⁵⁰Cole, Sex and Love in the Bible. pp. 318-9.

⁵¹Ibid., pp. 322-8.

⁵²Ibid., pp. 328-31.

Mark put it, "All these evil things come from within, and they defile a man" (Mark 7:23). The apostle Paul said the same thing in his appeal to the Jews in Romans: "You then who teach others, will you not teach yourself? While you preach against stealing, do you steal? You who say that one must not commit adultery, do you commit adultery?" (Romans 2:21-22).

So far does the New Testament extend the understanding of marriage and its binding force that "Whoever marries a divorced woman commits adultery" (Matthew 5:32), and "everyone who divorces his wife and marries another woman commits adultery" (Luke 16:18). Suffice it to say here that sex relations were clearly to be confined to monogamous marriage. Christians especially must beware of falling into adultery, for they then became like the dog returning to its vomit or the washed sow wallowing in the mire, and "the last state has become worse for them than the first" (2 Peter 2:22,20)⁵³ Still further, adultery was strictly prohibited by law (John 8:2-5). Adultery is used of religious disloyalty and harlotry in Revelation 2:22. Once more, the New Testament sweeps aside the old double standard and applies the same requirement to both sexes.⁵⁴

The ultimate argument from the Scriptures for forsaking adultery is that I am committed to a "person". This person possess me, and yet, he does not dominate me. Jesus Christ does not use me for His own ends and He still gives me pleasure, joy, and self-fulfillment that I could not possibly find any other way.

The idea of a "personal relationship to Christ" is somewhat difficult to describe. In fact, the phrase can easily become a cliché; but the Bible makes it plain that what Christ did for the world is no cliché. The Bible makes it plain that when a Christian repents of his sin and believes in Christ, something happens. He is born again. He becomes a new person. He turns from one way of living and one set of values (i.e., materialism) to a completely new outlook

⁵³Ibid., pp. 328-31.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 331.

and way of being. The Christian's body is not his own, but God's. This body becomes the dwelling place of the Holy Spirit Himself. God bought this body with a great price, the shed blood of Jesus Christ.

The following part of this paper will deal with specific theologians views concerning human sexual behavior (in the area of extramarital sex). It will be divided into two parts. First, I will discuss writings before 1962 pertaining to my specific topic. Second, I will discuss writings which have taken place since 1962.

Bailey believes that the law of God governing the relations between men and women is simply stated in Genesis 2:24: "Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh". Although the union in "one flesh" is a physical union established by sexual intercourse it involves at the same time the whole being; and affects the personality at the deepest level. It is a union of the entire man and the entire woman. In it they become a new and distinct unity, wholly different from and set over against other human relational unities, such as the family or the race; to bring into existence the "one flesh" a man must leave his father and his mother. Yet husband and wife in their union remain indissolubly one with all "flesh"---with the things which are passing away, and this "fleshy character of the henosis sets a term to its life; it endures until death, but in heaven there is neither marrying nor giving in marriage.⁵⁵

Bailey is very strongly against adultery. He says that is why both Church and secular community have been prepared to allow divorce for adultery. He feels that the very fact of its occurrence constitutes acceptable evidence that the marriage has failed, and there is usually good reason for considering its rehabilitation improbable.⁵⁶ Also in Engagement and Marriage, the authors point out that God ordained marriage for man's good (Gen. 2:18-25) and gave the commandment "Thou shalt not commit adultery" in order to safeguard marriage.⁵⁷ According to Bailey, Jesus felt that every act of infidelity

⁵⁵Bailey, The Mystery of Love and Marriage, p. 91.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 81.

⁵⁷Engagement and Marriage, p. 20

merited the same severe censure, and could, therefore, be justly termed "adultery." No other word could so clearly expose the true character of the sin which severed the union of man and woman in "one flesh."⁵⁸ Capper and Williams include adultery under their disorder section in their book Heirs Together. They define adultery as a break of a solemn legal contract; it clearly commences to invalidate the marriage bond and to render it a broken thing. True marriage must be undertaken as an exclusive relationship.⁵⁹

In Sex and the Church, the authors describe adultery as an act of infidelity on the part of a married person, either husband or wife. It has been maintained, however, that in the Old Testament a husband's sexual relations with another woman, provided she were unmarried, were not considered adulterous, that the wife alone could be charged with adultery. But such a double standard in sex morality is not a divine directive or teaching in the Old Testament. It is rather a recorded social phenomenon that has persisted throughout the Middle East until the present day and that has had a pronounced effect on our Western sex standards. However, the Old Testament references that accord the man greater latitude in sexual matters than the woman are to be regarded as reflecting the mores of that time which the people of God confronted and which the Word of God eventually brought under control and then eliminated. There is evidence, for example, that at Hosea's time the Lord held man and woman equally responsible. In Hosea 4:14 the Lord says that He will not punish the women for their immorality because the men themselves gave their wives and daughters a bad example by their unchastity. Still the real offense in adultery, whether committed by man or woman, is against God is shown by such references as Gen. 39:7-9; Ex. 20:14; Deut. 5:18; 2 Sam. 12:13; Ps 51:4; Prov. 6:23-29. This, of course is also the evident conclusion from the many references to God's rejection of idolatry under the symbol of adultery.⁶⁰

⁵⁸Bailey, The Mystery of Love and Marriage, p. 91.

⁵⁹Capper and Williams, Heirs Together, p. 69.

⁶⁰Sex and the Church, pp. 21-2.

Fidelity is a very important concept in marriage, too. It is demanded from all lovers from the very moment they accept their vocation and know that thenceforth their lives are bound together in a single destiny. Even in the case of a unilateral love--experience an obligation to remain faithful to the mediator or mediatrix of the vision may be regarded as absolute and life-long. The essence of fidelity may be said to consist in treating as unconditional in its own sphere the claim which (under God) lovers are entitled to make one upon the other, and in the ordering of their lives with constant reference to the single centre around which (under God) their individual person lives revolve--the idea of love which they have built up, which relational experience, and to which they are bound in allegiance.⁶¹

Capper and Williams feel that in marriage Christian love reveals itself in the form of conjugal faithfulness. It is not simply that there is continued respect for the legal bond which has been contracted, or that the marriage service has caused certain vows to be publicly taken. But, like all truly Christian conduct, it is a deeper thing of the heart and mind. The Christian recognizes that the other person is the divinely provided "complement," both in the experiences of sex and also in the whole of life. Reverence for the partner in Christian marriage should ever be deepening as new lessons of life are learnt. It is not simply a matter of keeping the vow of "until death do us part," but of recognizing and experiencing the divine decree "and they two shall be one flesh."⁶² Also, they feel that the Christian standard of marriage is based on the integrity of the human personality. Men and women are equal and reciprocal, and the human personality it not to be tampered with, either before marriage or after it. This standard, then, necessarily demands absolute chastity before marriage and absolute loyalty to each other afterwards "till death do us part."⁶³

Fields thinks of monogamy and lifelong faithfulness to his spouse not merely as a pattern that is followed by respectable people, but as a standard

⁶¹Bailey, The Mystery of Love and Marriage. pp. 21-22.
⁶²Capper and Williams, Heirs Together. pp. 58-9.
⁶³Ibid., p. 24.

established by God Himself, and to which he is unalterably committed. Marriage to him is "the free acceptance of a bond." He is not thereby made blind to the physical attractiveness of women other than his wife, but the possibility of making love to them is ruled out in advance. One big decision makes a host of minor decisions unnecessary. Free love, like private marriage, is a contradiction in terms, for conjugal love in many directions is real love in none.⁶⁴ Also, Christian marriage is the flowing together of two lives and the surrender of the whole person, one to the other. This personal attraction and personal trust is the precondition of marriage and its one-flesh union. It forms the true foundation for monogamy.⁶⁵ Moreover, in Engagement and Marriage, the authors feel that Jesus strongly emphasizes the union of one woman and one man and thus implies monogamy (Mark 10:6-9).⁶⁶

Luther thinks of marriage as the union of two people is clearly shown in many of his statements. What is marriage? Marriage is an eternal and orderly joining together of one man and one woman. I say, the union of one man and one woman, not many, because God says that two shall be one flesh. For a man to have several wives is against the natural law. Luther's opinion was that God permitted polygamy because of the weakness of man but that Christ in His teaching went back to monogamy. The church followed Christ. The constitutional character of monogamy can not be annulled. While polygamy may have its place among non-Christians, for Christians God has ordered monogamy. Abraham did not commit adultery by leading a decent life with his second wife also. Abraham was a true Christian. His example dare not be condemned. It is true, one dare not make any laws out of the behavior of our forefathers, but one may not make sin out of their examples. He seems to reduce the matter to custom, saying that in those lands it was customary to take more than one wife.⁶⁷

This section will treat theological writings that discuss extramarital sex that have been written since 1962. First, the Judaeo-Christian sexual code

⁶⁴Fields, Unity in Marriage. p. 22.

⁶⁵Sex and the Church. p. 102.

⁶⁶Engagement and Marriage. p. 39.

⁶⁷Ibid., p. 71.

received one of its hardest looks by a group of eleven British Quakers, including six elders in the Religious Society of Friends, in Towards a Quaker

View of Sex published "as a contribution to thought on an important subject".

This led them to a straightforward conviction. "If Christianity is a true faith there can be no ultimate contradiction between what it demands of us and what in practice works--works toward human fulfillment. We have no hesitation in taking every now and then an empirical approach--to ask, for instance whether to have a variety of sexual partners does in fact weaken intimate relations and destroy a community." Also, in their findings they felt it possible to say a good word for the "external triangle": it just "may arise from the fact that the very experience of loving one person with depth and perception may sensitize a man or woman to the lovable qualities in others."⁶⁸

A best-selling British clergyman writes, "The decisive thing in moral judgment is not the line itself between marital and extramarital sex, but the presence or absence of love at the deepest level". Sweazey believes that this is so obviously true that we may have to reflect before we recognize it as the same plea that has been used to excuse every adultery since rationalizing began. All that is new in this new morality is the new vocabulary and the new degree of confusion. Also, Sweazey responds to the following question: If no one gets hurt, what's wrong with it?" His answer is that someone does get hurt--what is wrong is the damaged personalities of two human beings. Man is not an animal, and all his progress may increase, but can never decrease, the deeply personal aspects of sex. He further adds that the sex radicals of two generations ago used the expression "free love" to embody the same confusion that exists in modern terminology. What is meant by "free love" is really loose love. Loose love and genuinely free love are exact opposites. It is only in the lifelong loyalty to one person that love has a chance to explore the heights and depths and find its full expression. This is a freedom that is lost in the cramped bondage of compulsive sex. Loose love lessens sensi-

⁶⁸Towards A Quaker View of Sex. pp. 10, 20.

tivity. Experiment does not necessarily add to experience. The range of feeling is not increased by touching fire.⁶⁹

Walter Wegner says that if we are correct in viewing the union of Adam and Eve of Genesis 1 and 2 as the family as God wants it to be, then there can be no doubt about the fact that the marriage held up for the emulation of ancient Israel was a monogamous one. A survey of the family in Old Testament history will make abundantly clear that marriage practice in ancient Israel did not always match God's plan of one man and one woman in marriage. Not only Genesis 1 and 2 but also other portions of the Old Testament similarly represent the monogamous pattern of the first couple in the Garden of Eden and constitute a call away from polygamy. For the Christian, the interpretation given by Jesus in Matt. 19:3-9 is definite.⁷⁰

Helmut Begemann sees the Old Testament statements on marriage, on honoring parents, and on the prohibition of adultery as being closely related not only to the welfare of the tribes and the nation.⁷¹

Soren Kierkegaard shocked many of his contemporaries in the last century by suggesting that within marriage there has probably been more "adultery" than outside matrimony. His words continue to surprise people today. They are in flagrant contradiction with the common idea that the institution of marriage is the legalization of sexual intercourse between the partners regardless of their attitude. His point, however, is that also in marriage love needs to be deepened and sex to become more fully integrated into the whole of life and the human personality. Sex in marriage is dehumanizing if the partners use each other merely for the satisfaction of their own desires or just for the purpose of reproduction. If sexual intercourse fails to express a growing love and concern of a truly personal nature, marriage in some way has become the legitimation of adultery. Therefore it is necessary to pay attention to the humanization of sex within marriage.⁷²

⁶⁹Sweazey, In Holy Marriage. pp. 77-8.

⁷⁰Family Relationships and the Church. p. 29.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 28.

⁷²Sex, Family, and Society. pp. 74-5.

Walter Bartling says he will risk being misunderstood by stating badly and boldly that there is no such thing as a Biblical view of marriage. There are at best, Biblical resources for a discussion of marriage. However, Bartling stands by the one man and one wife marriage concept when he says that the words of Christ are absolute so that an intrusion of a third party is wrong.⁷³ Also, in this same issue of CTM, Coiner feels that marriage as instituted by God is a sacred gift which is to be kept secure from violation or profanation. God's judgment rests on the repudiation of a spouse. Also, he states that adultery or moicheia basically means unfaithfulness to the marital commitment.⁷⁴

Furnish points out that in I Corinthians the apostle makes fairly direct use of the O. T. in his ethical teaching. The Genesis text about man and woman becoming "one flesh" (Gen. 2:24) is quoted exactly in I Cor. 6:16 in order to refute the notion evidently held by the Corinthian "spiritists" that what one does with his body has no bearing on his relationship to Christ. It is not surprising to find that slightly more than 40% of the scriptural texts Paul employs in ethical contexts are drawn from the Torah. The remainder comes, almost equally, from the prophets (virtually always 2nd Isaiah), the Psalms, and Proverbs. Also, it is noteworthy that Paul never quotes the O. T. "in extenso" for the purpose of developing a pattern of conduct. Except for a few instances in which a catena of passages from several different scriptural contexts is assembled, the citations are always brief. Moreover, and of even greater significance, they are never casuistically interpreted or elaborated.⁷⁵ Furthermore, the O. T. is not a source for Paul's ethical teaching in that it provides him rules, aphorisms, maxims, and proverbs. Rather, it is a source for his ethical teaching in that it provides him with a perspective from which he interprets the whole event of God's act in Christ, and the concomitant and consequent claim God makes on the believer.⁷⁶

⁷³CTM, June, 1968. pp. 356, 366.

⁷⁴Ibid., pp. 369-71.

⁷⁵Furnish, Theology and Ethics in Paul. pp. 32-3.

⁷⁶Ibid., pp. 42-3.

For Thieliicke, adultery requires a personal act of infidelity, a betrayal of a fellowship based upon fidelity by entering into another relationship. Therefore marriage infidelity requires the interruption of the psychophysical fellowship by means of another psychophysical experience. When the Sermon on the Mount says "Every one who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Matt. 5:28), it is calling attention to this personal side of adultery and saying that it is the really decisive element. For what it is saying is that in adultery it is not primarily the body or the genitals that are involved, but rather the heart. In the language of the Bible, however, the heart always means the personal center. This is why the infidelity can begin way back there where the physical consummation of an adultery does not occur at all. Paul, too, agrees with this in I Cor. 6:16 when he speaks of becoming "one body" with a prostitute. The porneia breaks into the personal center. For soma, in contrast to sarx, is a synonym for the psychophysical ego itself.⁷⁷

In the New Testament, adultery^{is} again listed in catalogue fashion with other forms of disobedience, such as idolatry, fornication, homosexuality, greed, drunkenness, thievery (I Cor. 6:9-10). Accordingly, there can be no doubt that Paul regards adultery as a sin and a perversion of the order of human existence willed by God. Also, there are subtle forms of breaking a marriage which are more grave than the physical act of adultery. But the opposite is also true: the physical act of adultery need not in every case seriously impugn a marriage which is still sound so far as subtle human contact is concerned. Here a couple's knowledge that they permanently belong together and are meant for each other (in an altogether earthly, erotic sense!) makes it possible for them to overlook intimate, but passing alliances, because they are sure that the other party will always come back home.⁷⁸

In extramarital intercourse there is a denial of one of the essential purposes of sexuality, namely, a personal relationship designed to be permanent

⁷⁷Thieliicke, Ethics of Sex. p. 259.

⁷⁸Ibid., pp. 278, 312.

and the willingness to accept the office of parenthood. This unwillingness ceases to exist to the degree that one regards the union as being merely temporary and therefore as a momentary pleasure, consequently and to the degree that one excludes the element of responsibility and thus, parenthood. Since in the human realm the libido always tends to build up an "ideological superstructure the result in persons who are not altogether primitive in nature is almost always a physiologically induced illusion that there are deeper affections or even some personal elements in the relationship. The libido is such that it generates such wish-images, partly because it achieves the maximum of its ecstatic potentialities when it is directed, not merely partially to the body (or merely to certain zones of the body) but rather to the totality of the other person, and partly because the elemental tendency of man is toward the communication of this kind of make-believe. In any case, a relationship within the realm of sex which does not aim at permanence invites this self-critical question. Sexuality loses its essential nature when it is practiced outside of marriage with no respect for the personhood of the other partner (thus failing to be "love" in the full sense and refuses to accept parenthood).⁷⁹

For Thieliicke the key in a marital relationship is agape. Agape regards the "existence-for-the-other-person" as the foundation of all fellow humanity, and that it regards man as being determined by his neighbor, it becomes apparent that under the gospel there is a clear trend toward monogamy. Because the wife is a "neighbor," the husband cannot live out his own sex nature without existing for her sex nature and without respecting the unique importance which he himself must have for the physical and personal wholeness of the feminine sex nature. This postulate of agape does not mean that the sexual is merely to be lifted to a higher ethical plane and thus subjected to regulation from the outside and from above, but rather that it is already in fundamental accord with the law of "mutual compliance" within the realm of the libido and thus is really in accord with nature itself. But in spite of this clear affin-

⁷⁹Ibid., p. 201.

ity of monogamy with the gospel, we have intentionally spoken of a trend toward monogamy that comes with the gospel. What we mean to express by the use of this term, which appears to be a qualification, is that monogamy is not simply "given" when one becomes a Christian, but rather that it "becomes" the some form of relationship.

Here it is characteristic that the Bible contains no references to this connection which can be quoted in so many words. The Old Testament does not, since it recognizes polygamy. In the New Testament--except with respect to bishops (I Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:6-7)--the problem is not mentioned at all. So we cannot speak of there being a "law" that demands monogamy. All the more, then, are we prompted to ask how it was that Christianity arrived at the completely unambiguous decision to give monogamy the prerogative of being the Christian form of marriage.

The masculine sex entelechy, in contrast to that of the woman, has a polygamous tendency, then the autonomy of eros within a society which is determined by the primacy of the man would lead us to expect a trend toward polygamy. And since long periods of history, including church history, are characterized by the primacy of the man, it is surprising that Christianity very emphatically allowed no room, not even the slightest, for this expected tendency.

This Christian decision in favor of monogamy is certainly not to be explained as a conclusion of a "natural theology". For as a rule, natural theology tends to regard what is given and desired as natural, so that one can easily figure out what a male-dominated society would have produced in the way of a "natural theology" on this subject. Since direct biblical injunctions also were not the basis for the formation of definitely monogamous customs, we must suppose that quite different motives were at work. These can be found only in the new Christian orientation of personal community--and thus the marriage relationship too--upon agape. Even in primitive Christianity the undisputed primacy of the man in society and the family was limited by the requirement that the man should love his wife. But agape in its New Testament sense means to exist for the other person and enter into his life in a very realistic way. If this is not to be thought of as being merely a universally human, diluted,

and abstract attitude of mind (and what could be farther from the New Testament) than it implies, as we have said, an acceptance of our actual neighbor as he is and therefore of his sex nature too. If for the woman not to be the sole wife of her husband means to wound her, then agape demands that this wound must not be inflicted upon her.

Hence we have here a classic instance of how theologically and anthropologically determined ends are intertwined, how grace and nature work together unmixed and unseparated. That is to say, agape, which accepts the other person, would not really be "seeing" the other person as he is if it regarded him merely as a human being in general and did not approach him as the particular person that he is, with his own particular and individual nature.

Therefore agape, which is understood as being "bodily" and personal and not Docetic, possesses an infinite variety of possible forms. In the realm of eros it has a tone which is different from what it has in loving service; it is one thing in the fellowship of the workaday world and another between parents and children. And yet in all these areas it is the same.

The only explanation of Christianity's decision in favor of monogamous marriage which seems reasonable to us lies here and here alone: The appeal to agape, which demands the full acceptance of the other person, causes the husband to deal with his wife as a unique, individual person and thus checks his own tendency toward polygamy. Love in the sense of agape teaches us to understand; it also teaches us to understand the other person's sex nature and then in the light of that understanding to "be there," to "exist," for him.

Implicit in these statements is the negative assertion that monogamy cannot be explained simply on the basis of the autonomy of eros itself. Not that eros in itself is altogether without a tendency in this direction. As we have already seen, the compliance with the other person which is required by the ars amandi is in itself one of the indications of this tendency. But, as history shows, these tendencies in eros are not sufficient to establish monogamy. Only a large number of analyses of actual situations in

polygamous societies could show the sociological and psychological reasons that block the road to monogamy or make it seem--in the erotic sense--unnecessary. In any case, eros itself does not have in it an inherent trend toward monogamy, although certain "secular" philosophers have tried to find a basis for monogamy in arguments which appeal to the autonomy of eros.

The central argument that is usually advanced here is that basically there is only one person who fits another, in other words, that it is the uniqueness, the singularity of the partner, that constitutes the basis of marriage and leads to its monogamous form. The argument for this unique affinity may employ mythological concepts, like Plato's spherical man which we mentioned above, namely, that the reason that two lovers fit each other perfectly is that originally they were one in a pre-existent unity; and therefore love is two halves, which are specifically suited to each other, finding each other again. The same idea of two highly differentiated individuals belonging together can also be argued quite unmythologically on the basis of the laws of sexual complementarity. This argument asserts that every human being has in him an M (man) component and a W (woman) component, and in each case in differing proportions. The formal relationship of mutual completion, which Plato already regarded as the goal of eros, thus comes into being through one's discovering the corresponding M-W proportion in the other. Therefore in the ideal case, i.e., if the partner is to be the "one and only," the total sum of M and W must always equal 200.

Now, it is probably beyond all doubt that this harmonizing with each other is the *conditio sine qua non* of all real life relationships which are based upon eros. We have already made it clear that agape does not take the place of eros, but rather takes it into its service and leads me to love the other person in the milieu of the erotic and in an erotic way just as I love him in other areas of life in another way. In this context, then, this would mean that eros and the law of complementarity and mutual conformity which it demands is not the thing that forms the foundation of marriage but only that which conditions it.

If, however, the marriage is founded exclusively upon this erotic principle, then it will be subject to a permanent crisis, for it will be repeatedly compelled to ask: Is the other person really the "right one" for me; in other words, does he represent the optimum of complementarity? This recurring question is prompted by three motives: First, once the empirical diagnosis (which is often nothing more than a prognosis!) that this particular person is the optimum complement for me, it demands constant re-examination and possibly revision. For, in the first place, we are both beings with a history and therefore we change. What may have been, or only appeared to be, complementarity at the moment when the union was entered into can change or turn out to be a mistake. Self-love, which is inherent in eros, brings up the question in the interest of self-preservation and self-development. And then, too, during the course of my life I meet other representatives of the opposite sex who provoke comparisons and thus likewise appeal to my tendency to make revisions in my original estimate.

Secondly, the eros which is isolated to itself makes not only the being of the other person, but also his functions, the criterion of his complementarity. For, after all, it is precisely in the erotic realm that a person's being is actualized in specific functions, that is to say, in the *ars amandi*. This results in something like a permanent compulsion to keep on the watch to see whether the other person is still capable of functioning. Here again the historical character of our existence is at work: we know that in the course of time the ability to function changes, and that this change is not synchronized in the two partners (one ages faster than the other) and that this must inevitably result in strains and disharmonies. In this historical sense the functions are far more variable than the being of the two individuals.

Third, a further cause of this compulsion to keep watching arises from the rhythmical character of eros itself: The ecstasy of the moment is followed by phases of indifference or even repulsion, in which the question (which often becomes a neurosis) whether the complementarity still exists, gains a foothold. Thus often enough in the merely erotic, the merely "romantic," marriage the honeymoon is followed by crisis. With a deadly certainty the moment comes in

such marriages when the comparison of one's own partner with other and especially younger representatives of his or her sex turns out to his or her disadvantage, and then the half solution (like infidelity) or the radical solution (like divorce) is sought for. After all, the progressive instability of the kind of marriage which has appeared since the rise of individual eros is notorious in history. The old saying that love will come with marriage has proved to be right, at any rate as far as the solidity of the marriages so undertaken is concerned, over against the postromantic notion that love (meaning eros) must be the foundation of marriage and therefore must precede it. This observation cannot mean that the development can be reversed and that we can go back behind romanticism and recover that patriarchal form of marriage or even that we should do so. Its only intent is to show us the underlying problem of a marriage that is based only upon eros.

It is therefore strange to observe how both the eros line and the agape line point to the uniqueness of the sex partner. In both cases this uniqueness becomes a basic consideration. (This is not altered by the fact that we were obliged to conclude that in the realm of eros that uniqueness is desired but "in the long run" never attained). Eros postulates this uniqueness by its insistence upon a highly specified complementarity. Agape has it as its goal, because the indissoluble bond between the physical and the personal (especially in the woman) implies a single partnership and therefore tends toward monogamy.

With a view to controverting the idea that this uniqueness can be grounded only upon eros, we state in conclusion that Christian antithesis to it: Not uniqueness establishes marriage, but marriage establishes uniqueness.

The negative portion of this statement we have just discussed: the uniqueness of the sex partner demanded by eros cannot establish marriage because it must necessarily remain subject to constant re-examination and revision. Thus strictly speaking, the partner's uniqueness is such only "at the moment," or at most "for a time," but never for life "until death us do part."

With respect to the positive portion of the statement, namely, that it is the marriage that established the uniqueness, we have also said the most import-

ant thing already: the sexual encounter that takes place in the marriage and certainly the children who issue from it "mark" the two partners and make them the "one and only" for each other, so that they exist for each other and become a part of each other's destiny. Through it the wife especially--and indirectly through her the husband--acquires a character *indelebilis* in the sense of belonging to each other permanently. And this is exactly what is meant by the uniqueness which comes into being in the marriage itself. As we have seen, the wife who surrenders herself invests her whole self in the community of love. She even gives up her name. And since we were compelled to conclude that this connected with the congruence of sexuality and personhood, especially in the case of the wife, the uniqueness that arises in love cannot have its source only in eros, but must be grounded essentially in agape, which qualifies eros and gives it meaning and purpose. For only agape, the sole attitude in which the other person is really seen, in which he is seen as one who is dearly purchases, as a "person before God," and as a "neighbor," takes into account this congruence. And thus it also takes into account the characterizing character of sexuality and causes one to respect that uniqueness which comes into being in the sexual encounter.

In view of this uniqueness that comes into being in marriage (it is really something that "happens" and not a timeless, arithmetical assumption), it is therefore not going too far to speak of the creativeness of married love. This creative side is the gift of agape. Luther once defined the love of God as contrasted with human eros in this way: "The love of God does not find that which is worthy of his love, but rather creates it for himself; but the love of man comes into being through the lovableness which it finds. Human love, that is, eros, is dependent upon what is worth loving in the other person, that is to say, upon such immanent values as beauty, character, intellect, and harmonious complementarity. It is therefore dependent upon what is transient and unstable and is therefore subject to revision. Hence it is based upon what is perhaps a highly sublimated self-love; for, after all, this kind of love is directed, not to the other person's values "as such," but rather to his value "for me." Thus it has within it the question--and this makes it

"questionable" in the strict sense of the word--of what the other person means to me and whether he still has any value for me. But the love of God, which we imitate in agape, is not based upon the calculable value of the other person for me. For God does not love us because we are so valuable; rather we are valuable because God loves us. Because the other person is valuable to God, he compels me to show reverence. Therefore my love is no longer addressed to an unstable function, to what in any given moment I can or cannot find to be "valuable for me" in the other person. The continuing faithfulness of God with which he is surrounded also makes my relationship to him a continuing one.

Agape therefore penetrates beyond the superficialities of the momentary adequacy or inadequacy of the other person and addresses itself to his ultimate mystery. And this is precisely what makes it creative: the other person knows that he is being addressed and respected at the core of his being, at that point of human dignity which is unconditioned by, and independent of, what he is in actuality and which has its own hidden history with God. In this way agape brings out, "loves" out, as it were, the real person within the other human being. This is why all those who came into contact with Jesus--and especially the dubious characters, the harlots and publicans, the outcasts, the outsiders, the insulted and injured--were dignified by his agape and grew up into that dignity. They did not first have to qualify themselves in order to become worthy of this love; rather they were qualified by this love; and if this is not misunderstood in the sense of idealistic philosophy, one might even say that under the warmth of this love they grew to be something beyond themselves.

Thus all love in the sense of agape and eros which has been transformed by agape is like a reproduction of that divine creativity which Luther ascribed to the love of God. It is in the light of this creative love that we are to understand the statement that married love creates uniqueness and does not itself arise from uniqueness.⁸⁰

⁸⁰Ibid., pp. 90-8.

Since I have based my theological perspective on the Scriptures, the following question must be asked in light of my Scriptural argument against "extramarital sex": "Do the Scriptures or their applications in some instances favor "extramarital sex"? In Proposition 31, Rimmer uses a Scriptural argument to favor "extramarital sex". I will now discuss and evaluate his position in perspective of how I interpret the Scriptures. First, Rimmer uses the passage in Matthew that says, "For after the resurrection there is no marrying or being married, but they shall live as the angels do in heaven". I feel that we must first look at the context. Jesus is speaking to the Jews who are asking him which of the seven husbands will the woman have in heaven. Also, even more importantly, Jesus is speaking about a time after the resurrection. He is speaking about heaven, not life here on earth. Second, Rimmer asserts that Jesus in the Acts of the Apostles said, "All thine mine, and all mine thine". It must be pointed out that Jesus does not even speak these words in the Acts of the Apostles. Furthermore, it is not probable that Jesus meant a sharing of the sexual relationship as well as property because He would not now for the very first time in the New Testament introduce an ambiguous concept and not define or discuss this concept again in the New Testament. Third, Rimmer uses Paul's passage in Corinthians that says, "They that have wives be though they have none". Paul's real meaning here is not that men should cease regarding women as property. Instead in this passage and the total context Paul is talking about the soon approaching kingdom of God. He is telling his Corinthian readers to stop worrying about their wives and worry instead about whether or not they are ready to meet God. Thus, Paul is not talking about women as property. Fourth, in using Matthew 5:27-8, Rimmer tries to purpose that the act of adultery would be permissible because the wrong had already been done in the lust of the heart. This hardly merits comment unless Rimmer also wants to allow (and he must in order to be consistent) that murder is permissible if you have hated first since Jesus says that anger equals murder in Matthew 5:21-2. Jesus is trying to say that the new righteousness also includes the motive behind the acts but that does not

mean that the act then is excluded from judgment. The fifth reference is I Corinthians 7:12-16. It is hard to imagine anyone using Paul here in this chapter to support "extramarital sex", especially when Paul does not even favor marriage but prefers control (I Corinthians 7:8-9). The actual verses which Rimmer uses have absolutely nothing to do with "extramarital sex" since they are talking explicitly about the marriage relationship (i.e., husband, wife). The sixth reference is Romans 7:1-6. This is best supportive attempt, but he fails to examine the context. True we are dead to the Law and now live a new life in union with Christ through the Spirit, but Paul makes it crystal clear in I Corinthians 6:9 that certain things are characteristic of the old age, among which are immorality and adultery. These things do not belong to the new age. They are things the Gentiles do and thus are not part of one's relationship to Christ as a new man. In this context Galatians 5:13, 18 also proves to be very helpful. If you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law, but the works of the flesh are plain (i.e., immorality, impurity, and adultery). Moreover, we should take note of Galatians 5:21 where we see that the Law condemns us all, but one must be willing to accept the judgment and to walk in conformity with the Spirit of God which is characteristic of the new relationship we have in Christ. The seventh reference used by Rimmer is Romans 13:9-10. I believe he misunderstands Paul here. Paul is saying that where Christ is (the new man is) there is righteousness; that means there is no room for the unrighteousness against which the Law is directed. The Law speaks against sin, but where love is, the things which the Law forbids do not occur. This is agape. There is no longer anything for the Law to condemn. The Law is against sin, but not against life in Christ and in love (Galatians 5:22f.). In other words, The Law is fulfilled (Romans 13:10) not by fulfillment of Law, but by life in Christ and in love.⁸¹

The Harry Coiner statement that "adultery is being unfaithful to the commitment" has also been used to conform to a "New Morality" view. These

⁸¹Rimmer, Proposition 31. pp. 256-7.

advocates add to his statement that if mutual consent is involved, are you really being unfaithful to the commitment? Against this position, I believe that part of the marriage commitment is a pledge of faithfulness to the partner. This is made not out of eros, but out of agape, which always implies a total claim. In a man's marital commitment to his wife he makes a total claim upon her and him. Harry Coiner is right that adultery is being unfaithful to the commitment. However, even mutual consent does not negate the total claim. There is something more than a man and a woman in the marital relationship. There is a new unity formed. That can never be involved in "mutual consent". Furthermore, some "New Morality" advocates use the Niebuhr statement that "The Good News is that God accepts us for what we are" as another support for "extramarital sex". God accepts us "in spite of" what we are. However, one must accept that forgiveness which God offers in Christ. Matthew 22:1-14 tells us that the man who was accepted in spite of what he was, was rejected by the Lord of the Banquet because he refused the offer of God's grace (the wedding garment). The Lord refused to accept him for what he was. We should remember that the Good News is that God accepts us because of what Christ has done for us.

With respect to Rimmer's whole endeavor, I might point out that the Law has not died (Romans 7:4), but we have died to the Law in Christ. The first purpose of the Law is to accuse us (this is still valid). The Law always drives us to the mercy of Christ. That is not the third use of the Law, but the first use of the Law and it is still valid for the Christian. Rimmer's search for Bible passages to support "extramarital sex" is hopeless. Ephesians 5:25-8 points out that the kind of love that God intended for the sex relationship is agape, which can only be held where there is total devotion of one person to another in a specific situation. This total claim can only be realized in a monogamous marriage. Marriage is one of the good orders of God's creation. Moreover, it is a given part of our existence. Also, it is established for order in the community and is thus a part of our existence

even under grace. In light of this rebuttal of a pro "extramarital sex" Scriptural basis, we can now refer again to my prominent position that the Scriptures place a prohibition on all forms of "extramarital sex" relations.

Several rational applications of my principles concerning group marriages have already been alluded to throughout this paper. However, there are a few other rational applications that I would like to discuss now. First, no matter how much modern authors like Robert Rimmer⁸² stress the idea that you can have a "true" love with several people at the same time in a group marriage, I believe that there are times when one of the marriage partners in the group marriage is going to feel "slighted". There is no way possible that you can always show an equal preference to all the marital partners involved. This will only lead to a great deal of tension or conflict in the group marriage. Why does someone have to be slighted? The following illustration will demonstrate why I believe this fact to be so. Let us suppose that Joe, Ted, Sally, and Sue are involved in a group marriage. Sally is pregnant and is experiencing an early arrival and she calls Joe to be by her side. At the same time, Sue has been involved in a car accident and she calls Joe to tell him to come to the scene of the accident. Joe must make a decision. Whoever he turns to, the other woman will feel slighted. Joe can not possibly have the same amount of feeling towards both women and in this above case his preference will show. Second, group marriage presently is only working in theory, not in practice. A significant example of the failure of group marriage is Harrad West. The main reason that the Harrad West group marriage failed was because its participants felt there were too many hangups.⁸³ Third, in our society at the present time group marriage is still illegal. Thus, people have to form a secret relationship in their group marriage in order to be within the bounds of the law. They are actually deceiving the community of people in which they operate. They are not only probably causing offense, but they will

⁸²Rimmer, The Harrad Experiment. pp. 15, 39, 106, 135-6.

⁸³Houriet, Getting Back Together. pp. 141-52.

eventually find themselves in trouble with federal and state authorities concerning the laws which they are breaking.

In dealing with group marriage, I would use the role of a pastoral counselor with these people. I would try to show them just how the Bible deals with group marriage. Since I have proved the Scriptures to be against the concepts involved in group marriage, I would have to point out to them that their act would come under the judgment of God. However, there is still hope for them because they have an opportunity to know God's forgiveness and grace as especially promised in I John 1:9. Also, I would definitely be concerned to be involved in a helping relationship with group marriage members. By this term I mean a relationship in which the people involved in this group have the intent of promoting the growth, development, maturity, improved functioning, and improved coping with life, with each other. My behavior in this helping relationship would need to be guided by the following questions, too. Can I "be" in some way which will be perceived by these people as trustworthy, as dependable or consistent (I hope I have done this through the use of the Scriptures) in some deep sense? Can I be expressive enough as a person that what I am will be communicated unambiguously? Can I let myself experience positive attitudes towards these people (i.e. attitudes of warmth, caring, liking, interest, respect)? Can I be strong enough as a person to be separate from them? Am I secure enough within myself to permit them their separateness (this is difficult because I am obligated to present the Good News)? Can I let myself enter fully into the world of their feelings and personal meanings, and see these as they do? Can I receive them as they are? Can I act with sufficient sensitivity that my behavior will not be perceived as a threat? Can I free them from the threat of external evaluation? Finally, can I meet these people as people who are in process of "becoming", or will I be bound by their past and by my past?

In light of these above questions, I face a different dilemma. I have my own beliefs, based on the Scriptures, concerning their group marriage. However, I must somehow reach these people where they are at because in the

end the members will make their own decision as to how they are going to deal with their situation. I can present my beliefs to them, but at the same time I do not want to lose them. Thus, in every case in which I face as a pastoral counselor I will have to face this dilemma.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Rimmer, Robert. Proposition 31. The New American Library, Inc., Bergenfield, New Jersey. 1968.
2. Fromm, Erich. The Art of Loving. Bantam Books: New York. 1956.
3. CTM. Vol. XXXIX. June, 1968. No. 6, "Sexuality, Marriage and Divorce in I Corinthians 6:12-7:16" by Walter J. Bartling and "Those Divorce and Remarriage Passages" by H. G. Coiner.
4. Bailey, Derrick Sherwin. The Mystery of Love and Marriage. Harper and Brothers Publishers: New York. 1950.
5. Capper, Melville W. and Williams, Morgan H. Heirs Together. The Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship: Chicago and Toronto. 1949.
6. Fields, W. J. Unity In Marriage. Concordia Publishing House: Saint Louis. 1962.
7. Sweazey, George E. In Holy Marriage. Harper and Row Publishers: New York. 1966.
8. Hansen, Paul G.; Feucht, Oscar E.; Kramer, Fred; and Lueker, Erwin L. Engagement and Marriage. Concordia Publishing House: Saint Louis. 1959
9. Feucht, Oscar E.; Coiner, Harry G.; Sauer, Alfred von Rohr; and Hansen, Paul G. Sex and the Church. Concordia Publishing House: Saint Louis. 1961.
10. Playboy, Vol. 19, No. 9. September, 1972. "Student Bodies" pp. 99-103. Published Monthly by Playboy, Chicago, Illinois.
11. Skinner, B.F. Walden Two. The Macmillan Company: New York. 1962.
12. Furnish, Victor Paul. Theology and Ethics in Paul. Abingdon Press: Nashville and New York. 1968.
13. Fletcher, Joseph. Situation Ethics, the New Morality. The Westminster Press: Philadelphia. 1966.
14. Thielicke, Helmut. Ethics of Sex. Translated by John W. Doberstein. Harper and Row Publishers: New York. 1964.
15. Newsweek, "The New Sex Therapy", by Matt Clark. November 27, 1972. Newsweek, Inc. New York.
16. Updike, John. Couples. Fawcett Publications, Inc., Greenwich, Conn. 1968.
17. Psychology Today, January, 1972. Vol. 5, No. 8, "Do you Mary, and Anne, and Beverly, and Ruth, Take These Men..... A Conversation with Robert H. Rimmer by Elizabeth Hall and Robert A. Poteete. pp. 57-82. Published monthly by Communications, Research, Machines, Inc.
18. Sex, Family, and Society in Theological Focus, edited by J.C. Wynn. Association Press: New York. 1966.
19. Alastair Heron et al., Towards a Quaker View of Sex. London: The Literature Committee of the Friends Home Service Committee. 1965.

20. Family Relationships and the Church. Edited by Oscar E. Feucht.
Concordia Publishing House: Saint Louis. 1970.
21. Rimmer, Robert H. The Harrad Experiment. Sherbourne Press, Inc.
Los Angeles. 1966.
22. Toffler, Alvin. Future Shock. Random House, Inc.; New York. 1970.
23. Cole, William Graham Cole. Sex and Love in the Bible. Association Press:
New York. 1959.