



## An Ethico-Philosophical Disquisition Of Homosexuality

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### ABSTRACT

The practice of homosexuality in several nations has been the subject of intense controversy recently. In addition to eroding the sense of identity of individuals who practice it, homosexuality—also known as same-sex relationships or marriage—has also been condemned for undermining the order of creation and endangering the survival of many societies. This paper examines homosexuality as an act and its consequent implications for the community in which the actor belongs. The paper employs the method of critical analysis; hence, using Kantian ethics, the utilitarian view, situation ethics, sexual ethics, and Christian ethics to look at the issue of homosexuality; and also, the natural law theory of morality, which states that since what is natural is morally right and what is unnatural is morally wrong, homosexuality as an act is unnatural, hence it is morally wrong. To conclude, we are of the opinion that an unauthentic lifestyle has detrimental consequences for society in general and the individual in particular

## INTRODUCTION

It is known that homosexuality exists throughout all cultures and eras of history. However, depending on the social setting, its acceptance and meaning can vary greatly. Youth are frequently exposed to antihomosexual ideas, despite the fact that LGBT individuals are generally more visible and accepted than they were in the past. Coming out to family, friends, healthcare professionals, and other people is a big step for many GLB kids. Different developmental pressures may be experienced by particular racial/ethnic, religious, and other demographic groupings (Robert, 2020). We could describe "homosexuality" as sexual relationships between people of the same sex. However, many diverse occurrences lurk underneath this simple concept. People differ greatly in their same-sex behaviors, sexual urges, and self-definition. Cultures also differ greatly in how they define and treat these connections and the people who participate in them (Cardoso & Werner, 2003).

Although homosexuality has occasionally enjoyed social tolerance or, more rarely, elevated status, social hostility, to the point of brutal violence, is the norm rather than the exception. Homophobia reflects and reinforces heteronormativity, and it frequently intersects with other forms of dominance (racism, sexism, class conflict, etc.). Homophobia has an impact that extends beyond its primary victims to allies and anyone else who may fear dangerous stigma. Various ethical systems have been used to justify otherwise obvious injustices against lesbians, gay men, bisexual, transgender, and queer people (LGBTQ); they typically rest on questionable metaphysical assumptions (Davies, 2012).

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Concept of Homosexuality*

The experience of having an exclusive or virtually exclusive romantic preference for people of the same sex in fantasies and, typically, in the actuality of sexual intimacy with people of the same sex, is referred to as "homosexuality." It can be thought of as a combination of identity, action, and desire (although it is not always congruent within one person at any one time and so may represent a source of personal conflict) (Bertram & Phillip, 2004).

According to Collins Dictionary of Medicine (2005), homosexuality is defined as the liking for a person of the same anatomical sex. The term is correctly applicable to both men and women and comes from the Greek homos, which means "the same" (as opposed to the Latin homo, which means "a man"). It was discovered in 1991 that heterosexual and homosexual males have different hypothalamic nuclei sizes, and it was shown in 1993 that male homosexuality is connected with a region of the long arm of the X chromosome. However, the notion that homosexuality is genetically driven is still not widely acknowledged. orientation, not a gender identity like male, female, or non-binary. People who are homosexual may identify as gay, lesbian, LGBTQ, queer, or a variety of other terms. There is no single way to feel same-sex attraction. Many LGBT persons develop feelings for people of the same sex during their adolescence. However, it may take some time to discover what you're most drawn to or to feel comfortable admitting it to yourself and others.

People have sexual, romantic, and emotional sentiments toward another person in various ways throughout their lives.

### *Evolution of Homosexuality*

The origins of homosexuality, particularly exclusive homosexuality, have baffled many scientists. How is it that a behavior that seems to lower reproductive success could endure the rigors of natural selection? A hidden adaptive value has been proposed by numerous researchers: (1) Exclusive homosexuals may assist their relatives in having more children (kin selection, parental manipulation); (2) Genes that are particularly maladaptive in males may be particularly adaptive in females; (3) Genes for exclusive heterosexuality may be less adaptive than combinations of genes that permit some homosexuality (balanced polymorphism, heterosis, hybrid vigor) (Kirkpatrick, 2000; Sommer, 1990; Werner, 1998). It is still difficult to definitively support or refute these various theories. The majority of theorists have simply addressed adaptation, but evolutionary explanations also need to take into consideration potential change over our phylogenetic past. Werner (1998) proposed a progression of ever-increasing male-male cooperation among primates, starting with systems that designated territories in more solitary animals, systems that marked dominance and submission in multimale groups, and systems that marked alliances in increasingly complex social animals. To switch from one system to another, just a few minor adjustments were necessary. Some animals started to be identified as subordinate "guests" in a dominant animal's area thanks to scent deposits in urine or other bodily secretions that served as territorial markers. Subordinates had to hide or avoid penile erections while observing the erection displays of the dominant males (who had exclusive sexual rights to the group's females) and possibly tolerate the dominant's mounting behaviors in addition to "paying homage" to dominant individuals by inhaling their markings. Adolescent males in several of these cultures exhibited dominance displays by swapping roles with one another. This adolescent behavior persisted in increasingly complex animal groups among adult males who could mark relationships by alternating subservient and dominating roles. As these connections grew more intricate, same-sex behaviors began to mimic human homosexuality. In a complex animal society, a male with genes that only fostered submission might not succeed in reproducing despite his best efforts, while a guy with genes that only allowed him to function as a dominant might also not succeed in mating. A little bit of submission facilitates the formation of alliances and helps avoid potentially harmful fights. Every generation may have males who are either too dominant or too submissive to procreate, but their genes will still be passed on to future generations through individuals who exhibit traits from both temperaments. According to this theory, the bonobo, one of the primates that is most peaceful and cooperative, likely exhibits the highest rates of "homosexual" behavior, particularly in females. According to De Waal (1989), sex is likely the primary means by which these animals resolve disputes and uphold peace.

## **METHODOLOGY**

Critical analysis has been employed as the main methodology in this qualitative research in order to examine the materials useful for the completion of this research. The method of data collection focused on written data such as books, journals, and websites related to this study. Hence, the study examines homosexuality from various ethical perspectives.

## **RESEARCH RESULT**

Ethics is the study of good and bad behaviour and how we ought to behave in various circumstances. The ethical issues surrounding homosexuality centre on how we treat those who identify as homosexuals as well as the larger social, cultural, and political implications of homosexuality.

So one of the most important results of the study is that sexuality should be guided by the same moral rules or precepts that govern all other areas of human interaction, and another is the idea of respecting human dignity, which is one of the main ethical issues surrounding homosexuality. According to this idea, regardless of sexual orientation, human beings have inherent worth and value and should be treated with respect and dignity. Since it infringes on their inherent human dignity, discrimination or prejudice against people who identify as homosexual is therefore regarded as wrong.

## **DISCUSSION**

### ***Kantian Ethics and Homosexuality***

Immanuel Kant, a German philosopher who lived from 1724 to 1804, expressed a variety of opinions on homosexuality, despite the fact that he thought it repugnant. As the main principle directing human conduct, Kant supported the categorical imperative. The categorical imperative has many different forms. What unites them is the advice to follow the laws that one would hope would serve as the rule of law for all people. A world where lying is accepted as the norm is one that one should not like, to offer a bad example of how this would apply. One should be charitable since they might need assistance from others in the future, to use a positive example.

In Kant's view, homosexuality is wrong since it cannot be a universally acceptable behavior. If homosexuality were to be applied to everyone, childbirth would be prohibited. Kant thought same-sex erotic conduct to be particularly humiliating to the people involved. In response to the Kantian perspective, it should be highlighted that it might be challenging to determine how precisely, broadly, or narrowly a moral maxim should be drawn. For instance, it could be conceivable to state a behavioral maxim in the following way: People should act in accordance with their sexual attraction to their own sex, but in no other circumstance. People wouldn't have to act in ways that go against their true sexual inclinations, and the continuation of the human species would be assured. Of course, certain heterosexual behaviors are equally as demeaning to romantic partners as gay behaviors are; only one sexual orientation is allowed to pursue selfish sexual fulfillment.

### *Utilitarian view on Homosexuality*

In stark contrast to Kant, British utilitarian philosopher Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832) reached a nearly identical conclusion about the morality of homosexuality. In writings that were not made public during his lifetime, he endorsed homosexuality for those who were inclined to it, claiming that it brings them joy and leads to happiness. Bentham believed that homosexuality was an undeniable path to human pleasure, in line with his utilitarian philosophy that activities should be assessed according to their potential to enhance human happiness through pleasure. Thus, the pursuit of same-sex relationships might be advantageous for some people.

Bentham was less concerned about the possibility that social acceptance of homosexuality would lead to an increase in the number of homosexuals because, if there is nothing wrong with homosexuality (for those who are interested in it), then an increase in the number of homosexuals in a society is also not wrong. He was also convinced that any danger that homosexuality would represent to the birth rate was outweighed by the forces of heterosexual lust. From this perspective, homosexual orientation and behavior are not fundamentally morally interesting (Crompton, 1978).

John Stuart Mill (1806-1873), another utilitarian philosopher, believed that actions were moral if they promoted happiness. Mill wanted to limit social interference with individual pursuits because adults are normally the best judges of what makes them happy. He articulated his "liberty principle" to define a realm of behavior that did not necessitate social action. Mill believes that social interference in the actions of others is only justified when it is used to prevent harm to others. Interfering with an adult's beliefs and choices is not a sufficient reason. With this conceptual framework, a formidable barrier against social interference with homosexuality can be articulated. Men and women need to be free to pursue same-sex relationships without hindrance from society, unless their actions hurt other people—as in the case of rape, for instance (Crompton, 1978).

### *Situation Ethics and Homosexuality*

Situation ethics, also referred to as the New Morality, is a type of ethics that emphasizes the importance of the situation in establishing the morality of any given action. Situation ethics is primarily a reaction against legalistic tendencies in ethics, particularly in classical Christian ethics, which holds that some actions are intrinsically evil, meaning that they are always evil whenever and wherever they are performed, regardless of the situation in which they are performed. Situation ethics, on the other hand, contests the idea that any action is inherently bad, that is, always wrong regardless of the circumstance in which it is carried out. It depends on the circumstance whether a certain activity is good or bad. A particular action that is bad in one circumstance may turn out to be good in another. The American moralist Joseph Fletcher, whose book *Situation Ethics* was released in 1966 and provoked a contentious controversy, is the key figure in situation ethics (Omeregbe, 1993).

Fletcher argues that because every circumstance is different, the same course of conduct cannot always be ethically right. The context in which a

behavior is carried out determines whether it is good or bad. Goodness or badness is not anything that may be discovered to be inherent in some activities as qualities of such actions. They are predicates rather than characteristics of acts, and whether an action should be predicated with the term "good" or "bad" depends on the context in which it is carried out (Omogbe, 1993).

One must understand the principles of situation ethics in order to apply them or put them into practice in real life situations. One of the first things to remember about situation ethics is that the basic principle of agape is applied to the individual person in each situation, not to abstract concepts or ideas. Therefore, situation ethics cannot make a general pronouncement about the goodness or badness of homosexual relationships in theory. Situation ethics does not apply any absolute to the issue of homosexual relationships because it is all relative to love. Therefore, the question is not, are homosexual relationships morally acceptable? The question is, is this homosexual relationship going to promote agape? Agape, of course, is non-preferential. It is not a love that is based on like or dislike, as that would be likened to filia or eros. Instead of being an illustration of agape love, a homosexual relationship is more likely to be one that is emotional and/or sexual. It does not, however, exclude the possibility of the participants exhibiting agape to one another or of their exhibiting agape to them. Then, in each relationship, a specific circumstance must be examined to see whether or not agape is served or obscured by the relationship. This holds true for all relationships, not just homosexual ones. According to the agape principle, an abusive or manipulative heterosexual relationship is unacceptable. Therefore, there is no difference in this aspect between a homosexual and a heterosexual relationship.

#### ***Sexual Ethics and Homosexuality***

According to sexual ethics expert Alan H. Goldman (1977), there are no moral laws that are exclusive to sexuality. He contends that sexuality should be governed by the same moral principles or precepts that apply to all other aspects of human interaction. This means that the same principles that govern heterosexual partnerships should also apply to other relationships: faithfulness to sexual promises should be kept, there should be no deceit or abuse, etc. In a way, the ambitious attempts to change the laws that penalize homosexuality are a result of this very attempt to make social connections consistent across sexual orientations.

#### ***The Natural Law Ethics and Homosexuality***

The natural law doctrine is an important part of St. Thomas Aquinas' ethics. He sees law as a rational ordinance geared toward the common benefit and published by the one in charge of the community. This means that, according to St. Thomas, a law is a command, a directive, that must be reasonable (if it is opposed to reason, it is not a law), and must be geared toward the common good, rather than the private interests of a few persons. Natural law is the rule of God over rational beings. God governs all creatures according to their nature. As a rational entity, man is not directed by God in the same manner as other animals are, but rather in a unique manner through natural law, which is a rational participation in the eternal law. Nothing else except a rational creature's involvement in the eternal law constitutes the

natural law. "Natural law" refers to this participation of rational creatures in the eternal law. St. Thomas held that God governs over men by the moral law, whereas he governs over all species in the universe by the physical laws of necessity. The moral law is the same as what St. Thomas meant by "natural law." He actually refers to the moral law when he talks about natural law (Omoregbe, 1993).

Natural law ethicists frequently claim that gay behavior is unethical because it is against nature. The foundational premise of the natural law theory in ethics has been that there are some inherent or basic laws that govern human beings rather than laws that are established by legislators. This theory states that there are a number of fundamental goods that are compatible with human nature. People are naturally drawn to these aims, which are these things. For instance, life and health, truth and knowledge, friendship and society are some of them (Fox & DeMarco, 1990). According to Aquinas, everyone should constantly be receptive to the realization of these benefits and never be opposed to them. According to him:

We should be positively oriented towards these goods and promote them as much as we can because it is the first precept of law that good is to be done and promoted and evil is to be avoided (1988).

This serves as the foundation for all other natural law precepts, making any actions that the practical mind naturally perceives as being in man's best interests fall under the purview of natural law precepts in the form of actions that should be taken or avoided (Baumgarth & Regan, 1988). Thomas Aquinas (1988) asserts further that the first principle of nature, emphasizing the promotion of good and the avoidance of evil, is self-evident because nature has endowed us with this and other practical principles, as well as because people can use their reason to determine what these moral laws of nature are, just as they can determine the rules of logic (Barcalow, 1994). These rules form the basis for moral thinking.

The primary tenet of Thomas Aquinas' natural law theory of morality is that every form of creature or species has a distinctive method of living and acting that is an inherent part of it. If this is the case, then the inherent nature of an organism establishes norms or standards for what is desirable for entities of that kind. Some lifestyles, environments, or behavioral patterns enable members of a species to endure and thrive while others do not. For instance, living in the ocean is advantageous for sharks but not for cats, and eating meat is advantageous for lions but not for cows (Barcalow, 1994). Humans must act according to reason, and doing so means acting in conformity with nature. Reason determines how humans should act. Therefore, anything that goes against reason is immoral since it is unnatural. This is the rationale behind Aquinas' condemnation of homosexual acts as particular crimes that go against nature. According to him, male homosexual union, which has the particular label of the unnatural sin, is in opposition to heterosexual relations, which are inherent to all species (see Baumgarth & Regan, 1988).

### ***Christian Ethics and Homosexuality***

In general, the universal church holds that homosexuality is not a Christian tradition. The Metropolitan Community Church, the United Church of Christ, and a small portion of the Episcopal Church were among the few church denominations who first accepted homosexuality but did not allow it for church leaders. The involvement of priests accused of pedophilia and other scandals prompted the church worldwide to take on the problem of homosexuality. It is unmistakably stated in the Bible that homosexuality is incompatible with God's purpose for humanity. Numerous passages in the Bible demonstrate that God ordained and approved heterosexual acts that do not involve homosexual conduct within the union of marriage. The few biblical scriptures that address the matter do not address homosexuality as a psychosexual orientation, but rather specific types of homosexual conduct. The key references strongly oppose same-sex genital expression. From the beginning of time, sexual activity was clearly between opposite sexes (Ezekiel, 2020). Male and female human beings were created first. The primary reasons for creating Adam and Eve were to care for other creations and to procreate. Obviously, a homosexual partnership cannot fulfill this latter goal as it has in the past. The creation of male and female by God, as well as the order to produce children, demonstrate that God ordained heterosexuality rather than homosexuality (Gen 1:27-28). (Geisler, 2003). God stated that everything he created was good. Because humans are made in the image of God, they are excellent and should not engage in anything that may alter the good image of God. In Genesis 18 and 19, the Old Testament describes the judgment passed on Sodom and Gomorrah. Sodomy represents the sin that characterized the city. The need for males for illicit sex was one of the reasons for the city's downfall (Shield, 2004). God cursed and punished the people for their unrepentant hearts in the sin of homosexuality.

This is meant to serve as a warning to individuals of all ages that God holds homosexuals totally responsible for their wrongdoing (Kraus, nd). Two biblical references in the New Testament expressly condemn homosexual conduct. Paul condemned homosexual behaviors as unnatural and incompatible with God's kingdom lifestyle. It is also a violation of God's law and the Gospel. For example, Paul argues in Romans that "women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones." Similarly, men abandoned natural relationships with women and were enamored with one another. Men did immoral actions with other men and received the appropriate punishment for their wickedness." (1:26-27, NIV) According to Stewards (2003), this behavior highlights the pride and obscene lusts of the Gentile world in front of a holy God, exposing their guilt. Instead of living according to God's instructions, they suppress righteous behavior in favor of sinful behavior and pursue passions that defame God. A person who commits such an act is seen to be poles apart from the holy God who calls his people to holiness.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study examined the ethical consequences of homosexuality in depth. As a result, it exposes Kant's position, which holds that homosexuality is bad since it cannot be a generally accepted activity. Childbirth would be illegal if homosexuality were applied to everyone. Kant considered same-sex erotic behaviour to be particularly humiliating to those engaged. Bentham the utilitarian, on the other hand, advocated homosexuality for those who were inclined to it, stating that it brings them pleasure and leads to happiness. Bentham considered that homosexuality was an undeniable way to human pleasure, in keeping with his utilitarian view that actions should be evaluated based on their ability to increase human happiness through pleasure. According to the sexual ethicist, sexuality should be guided by the same moral rules or precepts that govern all other areas of human interaction. This means that the same rules that apply to heterosexual relationships should also apply to other types of relationships. But natural law ethicists usually argue that homosexual behaviour is wrong because it contradicts nature. The global church, according to the Christian ethicist, does not recognise homosexuality as a Christian tradition. The study also demonstrates that, in theory, situation ethics cannot make a blanket statement about the goodness or badness of homosexual relationships. Because homosexual relationships are all relative to love, situation ethics does not apply any absolutes to the issue. To conclude, we are of the opinion that an unauthentic lifestyle has detrimental consequences for society in general and the individual in particular. On an individual level, it would result in him failing to realise his full potential. On a societal level, it should be underlined that a community filled with unauthentic people is the embodiment of dashed dreams, stunted growth, failing leadership, corruption, and indiscipline.

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