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## Homosexuality and the Love of Death

Some years ago (September, 1980) Midge Decter published in *Commentary* one of the most illuminating pieces that I have ever seen on homosexuality. It was a very autobiographical piece dealing with her own summer vacation experiences on Fire Island off of New Jersey. When she was a girl, it was one of the more fashionable vacation haunts for upper middle class New York professionals, and parts of the island were always vacation digs for the homosexual community. Her family vacationed there from the time she was a small girl until her own children were well along in adolescence. Through all of that time, the homosexual element of the island grew. By the late '60s it had become a notorious homosexual trysting place. In the early years the interaction between the straights and the gays was always cordial. There were common enjoyments — to a point; and at a certain unspoken edge it was known that the commonality was over, and the two communities were quite separate.

Well, the point of all that is that she had considerable social interaction for years with that community. So her observations (and Midge Decter is peerless in her observations concerning matters of the family and erotic convention) have a long term mooring.

The point that she makes, with great power and great color, is that in her observation, the more the "gay" community came out of the closet, the less gay it became. The more acceptable homosexuality became to upper middle class east coast liberals, the more miserable and death-obsessed the homosexual community became.

She describes the homosexuals that she knew as a young woman on Fire Island. There was a clear and distinct "us/them," but there was also the possibility of real interaction and even friendship. Let me quote. "There is such a thing, for example, as a unique and entirely characteristic homosexual form of wit. It is difficult to describe and analyze — as is any form of wit — but

unmistakable. Its central characteristic is malice, but that does not describe it either, for the malice is of a special kind, brilliantly playful and startling in equal measure. . . . Suffice it to say that, provided such malice is not trained upon oneself, intelligent homosexuals can be the most naughtily amusing company in the world." She describes the fantastic and palatial parties that the homosexuals used to host every year and the extraordinary camp creativity that went into making their fantasy vacation world.

But as the years went by, all of that disappeared. The community became lugubrious, serious, self-obsessed in a way that was under the surface before. Then they began to hear about suicide, and the slide goes on from there. You get the picture. She ends her piece by looking at the S&M parlors in San Francisco (where in the '80s, one could pay to get beat up). What happened?

Her implicit thesis (which she states very subtly) is that homosexuality is at heart masochistic and self-hating. A conservative society is good for homosexuals because it restrains that which, if released, will destroy them. The "boys on the beach" were out of the closet for perhaps 6 weeks out of the year. On Fire Island, they "expressed" their true nature. For the rest of the year, they were in the closet, and knew full well that if they were known or discovered as practicing homosexuals, that society would punish them. When society stopped punishing them, they had to begin to punish themselves openly, and the end result is suicide and San Francisco S&M houses. To put it as baldly as I can, when the cops stop beating up queers, the queers will start beating themselves up.

Set it up this way. There are two theories about homosexual unhappiness. 1) Homosexuals are persecuted and not accepted by society, and hence they are forced to "repress" their true natures. 2) Homosexuality is per/se masochistic, and the expression of homosexuality is the expression of a deadly pathology. Liberals clearly stand on one side, and the Bible on the other. "Though they know God's decree that those who do such things deserve to die, they not only do them but approve those who practice them" (Rom. 1:32). This is in line too, with (the now out of favor) Edmund Bergler. Bergler describes *all* neurosis as "masochism," but homosexuality is "masochism plus." (It was from Bergler that

Rushdoony originally picked up the masochism theme that he works out so brilliantly in *The Politics of Guilt and Pity*.)

Midge Decter seems to be saying that in a conservative society (which will never eliminate homosexuality) it takes very little to fulfill the need for masochistic thrills on the part of that community. The possibility of losing a job or of going to jail fulfills that need. But the more liberal a society becomes, the greater is the level needed to fulfill. Hence, drug addiction, flirtation with venereal disease, and suicide become ever more needful. I can only say from the bits of homosexual propaganda that I see, that that community would not know what to do with itself were it not for its completely self-intoxicated and self-absorbed love affair with AIDS martyrdom. They *want* to die, and then on the death bed, fling it in the face of the straight community, "You see what you have done to me. It's all your fault."

What is perfectly predictable is that as we cave in and give the homosexual community everything that it asks, the decibels of injustice-collecting will become ever more shrill. *This* is one argument against legalizing homosexual marriage (aside from the fact that long-term relationships between male homosexuals is a complete myth). It is the final barrier to complete acceptability. And when such acceptability is achieved (to quote Gary North quoting Cornelius Van Til) *the crack of doom will have come for that community*. It will be the end of all "common grace."

One final note. The reason that Jesus refers to "dogs" and "swine" in Matthew 7:6 is because dogs and pigs are pack animals. By themselves, dogs are very nice, and I understand pigs are too. But ask any rancher what a pack of dogs is like. Now Matthew 7:6 is all Rene Girard stuff. (I mean, it all has to do with the rivalry, envy, and scapegoating that holds a pack together.) I think it no mistake that one of the Biblical designations for homosexual prostitutes is "dogs." Yes, a homosexual here or there more or less to himself can be very charming, witty, and talented. But a group of thoroughly religiously acceptable homosexual prostitutes would indeed be *the very epitome of all of the phenomena that Rene Girard writes about*. They would not just be rivalrous, but as close as is humanly possible, the essence of rivalry, envy, and scapegoating. I think the ho-

mosexual community in this country is very close to having reached this level.

This is something I have had to think about a lot over the years, because I have dealt with a fairly large number of homo-erotically troubled men pastorally. I think sexual orientation is one of the most mysterious things in the universe, and I don't think these things are just patently obvious. But, homosexuality is just as much (maybe more) a spiritual affliction as it is a "sin of the flesh." It is a terrible symbolic confusion. It is especially involved with the "doppelganger" (or double).

Everybody is at least *two*. "Commune with your own hearts on your beds, and be silent," Psalm 4:4b. We have self-transcendence. This was Augustine's observation that each soul is analogous to the Trinity — we can commune with ourselves. This doubleness is especially disturbed in homosexuals. Each self hates the other, and feels little complementariness. Hence, the homosexual self seeks to cannibalize on other selves to suck or absorb some hoped for beauty or perfection. Homosexuals do not seek to complement the incomplete self through erotic attachment to the opposite sex, or friendship with either the same or opposite sex. Rather they seek to reproduce or duplicate a hoped for ideal self *using* and cannibalizing the other. It is a terrible self absorption that is a vortex.

The explanation of suicide is the inner feeling that the true self is already dead, and hence the public self *must* die in order to bring inner harmony. When relationships have burned themselves out, there is no reality or beauty left in the undead self, so suicide (fast or slow) becomes imperative.

I *think* that the terrible sinful conclusion of complete moral anarchy represented in Romans 1:28-32 is a description of the homosexual coterie. These are the homosexual "dogs" in the pack. Rivalry, envy, and contempt are *everything*. This is the final burning out.

We are engaged in an interesting and terrible social experiment as to what the outworkings will be of *not* suppressing homosexuality. I'm sure it will not be pretty, and we will once again find that God knew what he was talking about.

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