

SELECTED AND ANNOTATED BIBLIOGRAPHY ON CHRISTIANITY AND HOMOSEXUALITY

A vast number of publications, both academic and popular, exist on the topic of Christianity and homosexuality. Selections in this bibliography were chosen to guide readers interested in serious theological reflection on Christianity and homosexuality as the ELCA engages in conversations about and study of the topic. In light of this purpose, the bibliography focuses on theological and cognate resources as well as materials produced by the ELCA and Lutheran authors. The ELCA and Lutheran citations include publications and bibliographies that can lead the reader more broadly into topics on church, ministry, and homosexuality not otherwise addressed by this bibliography. Many of the works listed in all sections of this bibliography also include bibliographies, as described in the annotations, to assist readers interested in further and broader study.

This bibliography was prepared by Mark Wilhelm, ELCA Division for Ministry, at the request of the ELCA's seminary Presidents, but he is solely responsible for the selection of works cited, the categorization of citations, and for the annotations. The bibliography will be updated on an occasional basis.

Reference Works and Studies

Bell, Alan P. and Martin S. Weinberg. *Homosexualities: A Study of Diversity Among Men and Women*. The Institute for Sex Research. Simon and Schuster, 1978.

An old but benchmark study by the Kinsey organization based on 1500 interviews, with funding by the National Institutes of Mental Health. Chapter on "Religiousness," pp. 149-154.

Horner, Tom. *Homosexuality and the Judeo-Christian Tradition: An Annotated Bibliography* (American Theological Library Association Bibliography Series, Number 5) Scarecrow Press, 1981.

An extensive, albeit dated, bibliography.

Melton, J. Gordon. *The Churches Speak on Homosexuality*. Detroit: Gale Research, 1991.

Ecclesiastical statements grouped by religious tradition. ELCA antecedent church body statements are included.

Rueda, Enrique T. *The Homosexual Network: Private Lives & Public Policy*. The Free Congress Research & Education Foundation. Old Greenwich, CT: The Devin Adair Company, 1982.

A conservative compilation of information about the gay rights movement, with an advocacy for "traditional alternatives." For discussion of religion and homosexuality see

chapters 6, 7 and appendices 5-9. Appendix 5 prints rites for blessings of unions.

Works from Disciplines Outside Religious and Theological Studies

Boswell, John. *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality: Gay People in Western Europe from the Beginning of the Christian Era to the Fourteenth Century*. University of Chicago Press, 1981.

A widely read historical study that argues against a direct, inherent connection between Christianity and intolerance of homosexuality.

Boswell. *Same-Sex Unions in Premodern Europe*. Villiard Books, 1994.

Boswell's second major and less well-received publication that purports to describe Christian sanction and liturgies of male same-sex unions in pre-14th century Europe.

Churchill, Wainwright. *Homosexual Behavior Among Males: A Cross-Cultural and Cross-Species Investigation*. Hawthorn Books, 1967.

An early discussion of homosexuality based on cultural as well as clinical analysis. The book, written by a psychoanalytic psychologist, reflects the change that developed during the mid-20th century in the prevailing perspective about homosexuality within the psychiatric and psychological guilds.

Greenburg, David F. *The Construction of Homosexuality*. University of Chicago Press, 1990.

A sociologist's argument that homosexuality-like race-is a social construct, with an extensive, and seemingly exhaustive as of 1988, bibliography. See pp. 501-613.

Martin, Del and Phyllis Lyon. *Lesbian / Woman*. 20th anniversary and updated ed. Volcano, CA: Volcano Press, 1991.

An overview and "rationally partisan" introduction to the topic, written to counter the larger body of literature on male homosexuality. Initially published in 1971 and twice revised.

Williams, Walter L. *The Spirit and the Flesh: Sexual Diversity in American Indian Culture*. Edition with a new preface. Beacon Press, 1992.

Study by an anthropologist of the "berdache," who are gender-variant men or androgynous people, in American Indian cultures.

ELCA Publications and Lutheran Authors

Bessler, Jeffrey. *“Can We Talk About This? An Audio Tape and Study Guide for Christians Preparing to Discuss Homosexuality.”* Commissioned by the Task Force on Homosexuality of the Missouri-Kansas Synod. Revised for a churchwide edition, by the Commission for Church in Society, August 1989.

Includes a dated but extensive annotated bibliography.

Bloomquist, Karen L. and John R. Stumme, eds. “A Table Talk on Lutheran Ethics: Continuing Deliberations Regarding Homosexuality,” *The Promise of Lutheran Ethics*. Fortress Press, 1998, pp. 168-173.

Addresses major themes in Christian social ethics from a Lutheran theological perspective, with little direct reference to homosexuality or other case-study topics. A brief reflection on homosexuality in a table-talk format presents a range of issues at stake and perspectives held on the topic. Contains an extensive English bibliography on Lutheran social ethics.

Call to Witness: A Documentary on Gay Ordination. Pam Walton Productions, 2000.

Video documentary of the debates within the ELCA. Includes a study guide. Available through Augsburg Fortress.

Capetz, Paul E. “Homosexual Conversion? Finding Freedom as a Gay Man,” *Word and World*. XXI/3 (Summer 2001): 302, 304; and, Ragan, Bob, “Homosexual Conversion? Finding Freedom from Homosexuality,” *Word and World*. XXI/3 (Summer 2001): 303, 305.

Testimonies from both sides of the “conversion” argument.

Chilstrom, Herbert W. and Lowell O. Erdahl. *Sexual Fulfillment for Single and Married, Straight and Gay, Young and Old*. Augsburg Press, 2001.

Casts same-sex relations as a possible form of “life-giving,” not “life-degrading” sex. Discusses blessing same-sex unions and ordination of non-celibate gays and lesbians. Annotated bibliography.

Dialog: A Journal of Theology. Issue on Sexuality in Ministry. 40:1 (Spring 2001).

“Dialog in dialog: Can pastors be openly gay or lesbian? Comments by Steven L. Ullestad, George Paul Mocko, Anita C. Hill, James Martin-Schramm, Marc Kolden.

“Dialog in dialog: Are same sex unions marriages? Comments by Peter Rogness, Mary Elise Lowe, Meg Madson, Gilbert Meilaender, Karen Lebacqz, Barbara Lundblad, David Fredrickson.

Frost, Ruth. “Sexuality and Ministry: One Woman’s Story: Graced, Gifted and Gay.” 33-39.

“Sexuality in Ministry: Resources for Further Information,” 40-42.

“A Review of ‘Call to Witness’” by JoAnne F. Henry.

“ELCA Resources,” by Kristin Johnson Sutton.

A compilation of diverse views held by Lutheran leaders on the topics of the ordination of non-celibate gays/lesbians and same sex unions. Discussion of ELCA resources points the reader to materials beyond the Division for Church in Society.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Division for Church in Society, Resources URL: <http://www.elca.org/dcs/sexissues.html>.

A comprehensive listing of official church statements and other ELCA studies.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Division for Church in Society, "Talking Together as Christians about Homosexuality: A Guide for Congregations." Leaders Guide, Participants Book, and video, "Two Ethical Perspectives." Companion video, "Stories of Gay People and Family Members." 1999.

The current primary resource for congregational study issued by DCS. Annotated bibliography.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Division for Outreach. "Congregational Hospitality to Gay and Lesbian People." The study may be ordered at <http://www.elca.org/do/hospstudy.html>.

A study of sixteen congregations, short case studies, other related information, including a bibliography, to assist congregations in the welcoming of gay and lesbian people.

Fredrickson, David E. "Natural and Unnatural Use in Romans 1:24-27: Paul and the Philosophic Critique of Eros," in David L. Balch, ed. *Homosexuality, Science, and the "Plain Sense" of Scripture*. Eerdmans, 2000.

Frederickson contributes chapter seven on the interpretation of Romans 1:24-27, in which he argues that it is anachronistic to claim that Paul condemns homosexuality as "unnatural."

Haas, Harold I., "Homosexuality," *Currents in Theology and Mission*. 5/2 (April 1978): 82-104.

Includes an important review of literature from the period.

Jersild, Paul. *Spirit Ethics: Scripture and the Moral Life* Fortress Press, 2000.

Proposes an ethic that includes a method for deriving moral guidance from the Bible, with homosexuality as one of the case applications.

Jung, Patricia Beatrice and Ralph F. Smith. *Heterosexism: An Ethical Challenge*. SUNY, 1993.

At the time of publication, both authors were members of the faculty at Wartburg Seminary. Defines heterosexism as a system of wrongful prejudice based on an inadequate

understanding of human sexuality. Discusses same-sex unions and ordination of non-celibate homosexuals.

Klein, Ralph W. "Dialogue With Gay and Lesbian Lutherans," *Currents in Theology and Mission*. 13, 5 (October 1986): 304-306.

Kolden, Marc. "Rules for Talking about a Difficult Issue," in Beth Ann Gaede, ed. *Congregations Talking About Homosexuality*. Alban Institute, 1998.

A helpful set of practices. Urges true openness in such discussions, with no outcomes-or pressure for outcomes-required.

"An LGBT Bibliography for Faith Communities," published by Saint Paul Lutheran Church, 1600 Grant Street, Denver, Colorado 80203. No date.

A six page bibliography helpful to congregations supportive of the Reconciling in Christ movement.

The Lutheran. "What Scripture says...Two ELCA scholars examine biblical themes on homosexuality," May 2001, pp. 54-57.

"The Old Testament and Homosexuality: What is God doing?" by Terence E. Fretheim.
"The New Testament and Homosexuality Denying God's Purpose," by Walter F. Taylor, Jr.

The Lutheran article published excerpts from the two lectures, which were originally presented to the March 2, 2001, meeting of the ELCA Conference of Bishops. The entire texts of the lectures, and related materials are available at www.thelutheran.org/scripture.html.

Lutheran Church in America. "A Study of Issues Concerning Homosexuality." Report of the Advisory Committee of Issues Relating to Homosexuality. 1986.

A major study of the topic from the period just prior to the founding of the ELCA.

Metropolitan New York Synod, ELCA. "Study Guides and Bibliography." No date.

A seven page bibliography prepared in support of the Metro NY Synod's conversations about becoming a Reconciling in Christ synod.

Nissinen, Martti. *Homoeroticism in the Biblical World: A Historical Perspective*. Translated by Kirsi Stjerna. Fortress Press, 1998.

Chapter on "Homoeroticism in the Biblical World and Homosexuality Today." Argues that biblical and ancient non-biblical texts do not address homosexuality as we understand

it today. Translated from Finnish by Kirsi Stjerna, faculty at LTSG.

Peters, Ted. "On the Gay Gene: Back to Original Sin Again?" *Dialog* 33 (Winter 1994): 30-38.

Discusses implications of claimed genetic causation of sexual identity.

Scharen, Christian Batalden, *Married in the Sight of God: Theology, Ethics, and Church Debates Over Homosexuality*. University Press of America, 2000.

A critique of the ELCA's practices regarding exclusion of non-celibate homosexuals from rostered ministry, based on a theological reading of the practice's development in the history of the ELCA's predecessor churches. Extensive bibliography, including conservative sources.

Strommen, Merton P. *The Church and Homosexuality: Searching for a Middle Ground*. Kirk House Publishers, 2001.

Largely a critique of research-based claims made by those arguing for changing the received tradition on homosexuality. See responses by Herbert Chilstrom and Lowell Erdahl in *Metro Lutheran* 16:7 (July 2001), with a reply by Strommen, *Metro Lutheran* 16:8 (August 2001): 5. See also the *Metro Lutheran* 16:10 (October 2001): 6 for additional comments by Strommen and commentary by James B. Nelson on the exchange between Strommen and Chilstrom/Erdahl. Twin Cities Lutheran Newspaper, Inc., Minneapolis.

Advocacy for Traditional Theology and Practices

Atkinson, David. *Homosexuals in the Christian Fellowship*. Eerdmans, 1979.

A statement of the received perspective on homosexuality that is fair to his opponents.

Gagnon, Robert A. J. *The Bible and Homosexual Practice: Texts and Hermeneutics*. Abingdon Press, 2001.

Argues from biblical texts and scientific knowledge that the traditional prohibitions against same sex intercourse remain valid for today. See bibliographic discussion of scholarly literature on pp. 38-39.

Grenz, Stanley J. *Welcoming But Not Affirming: An Evangelical Response to Homosexuality*. Westminster John Knox Press, 1998.

Hays, Richard B. "Relations Natural and Unnatural: A Response to John Boswell's Exegesis of Romans 1," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 14 (1986): 184-215.

A critique of Boswell's use of the Romans text in *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and*

Homosexuality.

Jones, Stanton L. *The Gay Debate*. InterVarsity Press Booklets, 1995.

Challenges revisionist views of the scriptures on homosexuality.

Jones, Stanton L. and Mark A. Yarhouse. *Homosexuality: The Use of Scientific Research in the Church's Moral Debate*. InterVarsity Press, 2000.

A conservative assessment of the use of scientific research on homosexuality within debates in the Methodist, Presbyterian, and Episcopal churches.

Kirk, Jerry. *The Homosexual Crisis in the Mainline Church*. Thomas Nelson, 1978.

An early, somewhat polemical critique. Most helpful at this point for historical perspective.

Neuhaus, Richard John. "In the Case of John Boswell," *First Things*. 41 (March 1994): 56-59.

Accuses Boswell of anachronistic analysis.

Schmidt, Thomas E. *Straight & Narrow?: Compassion & Clarity in the Homosexuality Debate*. InterVarsity Press, 1995.

An assessment of homosexuality from an evangelical Christian perspective, by the director of a university-related education institute, addressing biblical interpretation, health-related issues, and the "nature/nurture" debate.

Satinover, Jeffrey. *Homosexuality and the Politics of Truth*. Baker Books, 1996.

Author is a psychiatrist who disputes scientific research reports that suggest homosexuality is not "changeable."

Smith, Mark D. "Ancient Bisexuality and the Interpretation of Romans 1:26-27," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*. LXIV/2 (June 1996): 223-256.

An argument against the position of Robin Scroggs' *The New Testament and Homosexuality* (1983).

Stott, John. *Same-Sex Partnership? A Christian Perspective*. Baker Books, 1998.

Rejects arguments in favor of same-sex partnerships, but asserting "a biblical attitude of understanding, respect, and support for persons with a homosexual disposition."

Wright, David. "Homosexuals or Prostitutes? The Meaning of *Arsenokoitai* (I Cor. 6:9, 1 Tim. 1:10)," *Vigiliae Christianae*. 38 (1984): 125-53.

Critique of Traditional Theology and Practices

Alexander, Marilyn Bennett and James Preston. *We Were Baptized Too: Claiming God's Grace for Lesbians and Gays*. Westminster John Knox Press, 1996.

Testimonies in favor of changing received theology and practices.

Borhek, Mary V. *Coming Out to Parents: A Two-Way Survival Guide for Lesbians and Gay Men and Their Parents*. Revised edition. Pilgrim Press, 1993.

Annotated bibliography.

Brooten, Bernadette J. *Love Between Women: Early Christian Responses to Female Homoeroticism*. University of Chicago Press, 1996.

Examines female homoeroticism and the role of women in the ancient Roman world, including the presentation of evidence for marriage between women. Discusses condemnations of female homoeroticism in the early church. Annotated bibliography.

Davis, Lennard J. "Gaining a Daughter: A Father's Transgendered Tale," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*. 46 (March 24, 2000): B4.

A father's reflections on his son's embrace of post-gendered, polymorphous culture.

D'Erasmus, Stacey. "Polymorphous Normal: Has Sexual Identity—Gay, Straight or Bi—Outlived Its Usefulness?" *The New York Times Magazine* (October 14, 2001): 104-107.

A journalistic exploration of those who reject the idea that every person must have a sexual identity.

DeLong, Amy and Tex Sample, eds. *The Loyal Opposition: Struggling with the Church on Homosexuality*. Abingdon Press, 2000.

Essays on the theme of working within one's denomination despite its stance on homosexuality.

Gaede, Beth Ann, ed. *Congregations Talking About Homosexuality*. Alban Institute, 1998.

Essays on recommended practices for addressing controversial topics in congregations and case studies of seven churches that held conversations on homosexuality. Edina Community Lutheran Church, Edina, Minnesota, is one of the case studies. Overall the collection implicitly conveys preference for changing the received understanding of

homosexuality. See also entry above for Marc Kolden in “ELCA Publications and Lutheran Authors” section.

Gudorf, Christine E. “The Erosion of Sexual Dimorphism: Challenges to Religion and Religious Ethics,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*. 69:4 (December 2001): 863-891.

Argues that a polymorphous understanding of human sexuality is more accurate than received categories of maleness and femaleness.

Lebacqz, Karen and Ronald G. Barton. “In the Closet and Out: Gay and Lesbian Pastors,” in *Sex in the Parish*. (Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991), pp. 192-213.

Professional ethics, sexuality, and the ministry. See chapter 9 for the discussion of issues facing gay and lesbian clergy.

Marshall, Loretta L. *Counseling Lesbian Partners*. Westminster John Knox Press, 1997.

An apparently the only book devoted to the topic.

McNeill, John. *The Church and the Homosexual*. 3rd edition. Beacon Press, 1985; and, *Taking a Chance on God: Liberating Theology for Gays, Lesbians, and Their Lovers, Families, and Friends*. Beacon Press, 1988.

The first volume is a revised edition of a widely used book by a Jesuit priest removed from the order for his advocacy of progressive views on homosexuality. The second volume presents a “spirituality based in the revelatory experience of lesbian and gay Christians,” with early extensive commentary on the AIDS crisis.

Rudy, Kathy. *Sex and the Church: Gender, Homosexuality, and the Transformation of Christian Ethics*. Beacon Press, 1997.

Proposes a social ethic that rejects gender and sexual orientation as the primary categories for defining persons in favor of a more communal understanding of sexuality and procreativity.

Scaonzoni, Letha Dawson and Mollenkott, Virginia Ramey. *Is the Homosexual My Neighbor?: A Positive Christian Response*. 1994.

Third revision, first published in 1978. Annotated bibliography.

Scroggs, Robin. *The New Testament and Homosexuality: Contextual Background for Contemporary Debate*. Fortress, 1983.

Sets forth what became the standard critique of the traditional interpretation of frequently quoted biblical passages. For a counter-argument see Mark D. Smith, “Ancient Bisexuality

and the Interpretation of Romans 1:26-27,” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, LXIV/2 (June 1996): 223-256.

Switzer, David K. *Coming Out as Parents: You and Your Homosexual Child*. Westminster John Knox Press, 1996.

Annotated bibliography.

Switzer, David K. *The Pastoral Care of Gays, Lesbians, and Their Families*. Fortress Press, 1999.

Wink, Walter, ed. *Homosexuality and Christian Faith: Questions of Conscience for the Christian*. Fortress Press, 1999.

Includes one author who would allow for homosexual partnerships as the best moral option in a creation “gone awry.”

Wink, Walter. *Homosexuality and the Bible*. Fellowship of Reconciliation Bookstore, Box 271, Nyack, NY 10960. 914-358-4601.

Inexpensive booklet on the topic, available for order in bulk. Chapter four in the Wink citation above is a revision of the booklet.

Collections Including Essays by Both Supporters and Opponents of Traditional Theology and Practices

Balch, David L. ed. *Homosexuality, Science, and the “Plain Sense” of Scripture*. Eerdmans, 2000.

Essays from a variety of disciplines. Arising from a debate “among persons concerned for the church, not primarily in the academy,” the collection offers both “evangelical and mainline understandings of science, Old and New Testaments, and theology.” See editor’s introduction. See also the entry for David Frederickson in the “ELCA Publications and Lutheran Authors” section of this bibliography.

Batchelor, Edward, Jr., ed. *Homosexuality and Ethics*. Pilgrim Press, 1980.

Essays covering a range of perspectives, including the writings of Barth and Thomas Aquinas. Helpful for understanding the development of the debate.

Brawley, Robert L., ed. *Biblical Ethics and Homosexuality: Listening to Scripture*. Westminster John Knox Press, 1996.

Essays by Presbyterian biblical scholars.

Seow, Choon-Leong, ed. *Homosexuality and Christian Community*. Westminster John Knox

Press, 1996.

Essays by the faculty at Princeton Seminary.

Siker, Jeffrey S., ed. *Homosexuality in the Church: Both Sides of the Debate*. Westminster John Knox Press, 1994.

Essay from various theological disciplines.