



## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

In the world in which we are living today many people, especially Christians, wonder why they should talk about homosexuality and lesbianism. For many years past, the Christian Church, especially in East Africa, considered itself more or less immune from many of the problems experienced in the world, particularly the Western world. As the church now continues to grow in numbers and expand its territories, however, these problems start to appear in the church also all over East Africa.

Increasingly the consciousness of the society is being raised concerning social-ethical issues, such as women's rights, battered children, single-parent families, teenage pregnancy, wife beating and of course homosexuality and lesbianism. In turn, this frequently causes a corresponding rise in consciousness about these things. As a result these issues are widely discussed within the church and outside.

Such has been the case with homosexuality and lesbianism. In recent years the church has discovered that among its members there are a good number who claim a homosexual orientation. Parents find themselves confronted by a child who says he is homosexual. Children may learn that their father has declared himself homosexual. Sometimes a wife learns that her husband's preference is for another man, and as a result the family is broken up. Some of the people seek to lay blame, while other simply want answers to this seeming riddle. As "gays"

and "lesbians" seek in sophisticated ways to justify the homosexual lifestyle, questions naturally arise in the Christian Church. Church members and traditional members, particularly those who have come in contact with homosexuals, look for information and clarifications about this disturbing subject.

Questions arise about the origins of homosexuality, its historical background and its causes. There is also a keen interest in an understanding of what the culture of the people and the Bible has to say on the subject and whether this practice is ethical or not.

Those who have read much about homosexuality already know that it is a subject plagued by lack of clarity and wide differences of opinions. There is a disagreement not merely about what sort of condition it might be, but whether it is a pathological, biological, or even psychological condition at all. Therefore if the church is to gain a clear picture of homosexuals within the organisation and how to relate to them, much consideration should be given beyond this preliminary study in theology, ethics, culture, psychology, and sociology.

Psychological theories alone pertaining to a etiology of homosexuality fill many volumes. In addition to this, biological arguments concerning genes and hormones are brought to bear on the issue as well as sociological considerations. The vast majority of this material approaches the question of homosexuality from an amoral stance, concerning itself strictly with the issue of pathology.

Although such literature provides no answers about the morality or immorality of homosexuality, it is an indispensable part of the study. In it we discover that the term "homosexual" covers a number of conditions, situations and activities that are not morally equivalent. What is referred to as the actual "condition" of homosexuality, sometimes known as inversion, accounts for a portion of homosexual activity. Some authors suggest that the condition characterised by a desire for same sex love need not be criticised at all.

At present homosexuality is no longer something hidden from society to be discussed in privacy and never mentioned in polite company. Today it is openly discussed on radio, television, and in literature. In many cases it is advocated as a way of life fully as acceptable as heterosexuality and perhaps superior to it. Homosexual groups often are militant and ally themselves with other social activist groups such as civil rights and women's rights movements.

Much literature about homosexuality is written along Biblical or theological lines. It attempts to reconcile the irreconcilable differences between the Judeo-Christian view and those of the gay liberation groups. Some gays attempt to parallel the Scriptures with findings from modern science, as various gay rights groups understand them. Some Christians reply by invoking the authority of Scriptures above all scientific discoveries which seek to define homosexuality. The former view asserts that homosexual acts are legitimate, the latter that they are not. Both views tend to oversimplify homosexuality. To complicate matters

further, various views of Biblical authority are coupled with varying hermeneutical approaches.

### **1.1 Target Audience and the Research Problem**

This dissertation is written first of all for Seventh-day Adventist Church lay-members, pastors, church administrators and the public at large in east Africa who are currently seeking for a fuller understanding of the teaching of Scripture regarding homosexuality.

The impetus for this investigation came from a Seventh-day Adventist Church camp meeting in East Africa where a debate in a Bible study on the ethics of homosexuality as perceived by the Seventh-day Adventist Church generated four positions (groups) on the issue namely: (1) the Culturist group (2) the Rejection group (3) the Reinterpretation group (4) the Reaffirmation group. Unfortunately the debate closed without a definite conclusion leaving the church divided. It was out of this situation that I decided to do research on homosexuality so as to contribute in informing and providing direction to the Seventh-day Adventist Church on homosexuality. A very brief description of each of these positions will offer the reader an overview of the problem.

#### **Culturist Group**

This group argues that, the Bible and Christianity originated from the West and that the missionaries, when they came to East Africa, tried by all means to change the ways of life of the people and in this way affected their cultural life adversely. And it is believed by many by assumption that homosexuality as well

originated from the West and that to accept it in the Church in East Africa will be completely destroying their image as people of East Africa where this practice never existed before. Therefore they should hold firm to their cultural standards, which are the only means of evaluating or defining the position of homosexuality in societies.

### **Rejection Group**

The heart of their rejection is the authority or the applicability of the Scripture or both. While they continue to work with the Bible as a religious document, they reject the Bible as the only normative rule of faith and practice. They concede that Scripture condemns homosexuality, but they argue that there is no need to take such teaching seriously. Different authors and lay-members in discussion with them orally offer varying reasons for holding such a view. Biblical texts and teachings are regarded as time-bound, culturally conditioned etc. They employ the historical-critical method for determining which texts can be rightly used for developing a theology of homosexuality and which texts are unacceptable. In the final analysis, this group find their ultimate authority in their own interpretation rather than in the teachings of the Scripture. By so doing they themselves become victims of their own culturally conditioned interpretation.

### **Reinterpretation Group**

This group, for the most part respect the authority of Scripture, but they protest against what they view as a misinterpretation of Bible texts by the

“Reaffirmation” group. They believe that the Bible does not really condemn homosexuality as such but the violation that may be involved, e.g. homosexual rape. For this group the true Biblical picture is that homosexual love is acceptable, they quote the case of Jonathan and David in 1 Samuel 18:1-2 and 1 Samuel 20:41 etc. So for them homosexuality is acceptable to God and the church should not be against it. To sustain this position, they reinterpret those texts that speak against homosexuality.

### **Reaffirmation Group**

This group reaffirms the teachings of the Bible regarding homosexuality. They insist that the Bible condemns homosexuality as sin. The reasons for condemning homosexuality to them are not cultural or time-bound, but theological and timeless. They hold unto the view that, the Holy Scriptures, Old and New Testaments, are the written word of God, given by divine inspiration through holy men of God who spoke and wrote as they were moved by Holy Spirit. In this word, God has committed to man the knowledge necessary for salvation. The Holy Scriptures is the infallible revelation of His will. They are the standard of character, the test of experience, the authoritative revealer of doctrines, and the trustworthy record of God’s acts in history.

In this dissertation I would like to contribute to this debate within the Seventh-day Adventist Church. Hopefully it will help to bring more clarity on some of the central issues that are at stake in the church debate on homosexuality. In my opinion the most central issue is on what the normative basis for the ethical

evaluation of homosexuality should be. The first part of the research problem that I am investigating in this dissertation, is therefore:

1. What should be the normative basis for the ethical evaluation of homosexuality by the Seventh-day Adventist Church in East Africa? Should it be (a) the Bible, (b) culture or (c) both the Bible and culture?

I believe that the Seventh-day Adventist Church should make a *theological ethical* evaluation of homosexuality. Such an evaluation has to take the message of the Bible seriously. One of the central issues that are debated at present within the Seventh-day Adventist Church, however, is whether the Bible does provide clear ethical guidance for the evaluation of homosexuality, as it is understood today. The second part of the research problem that I am investigating in this dissertation is therefore:

2. What theological ethical guidance does the Bible provide for the evaluation of homosexuality in the present-day context?

This research project, I hope, begins to answer some of these questions. It surveys the definitions and causes of homosexuality and traces some of the historical background regarding homosexual practices and views of homosexuality. It looks briefly at the Biblical texts that refer to or are thought to refer to homosexuality and examines the claims made in much of the "gays" literature with reference to these texts. However, not all the texts examined are used to defend prohomophile positions: We therefore look also at others used by over-zealous Christians bent on finding condemnation of homosexuality through

Scripture. This research will also discuss and assess the cultural beliefs on homosexuality in East Africa.

## **1.2 The Hypotheses**

The hypotheses that I want to prove in this dissertation are as follows:

- i. East African culture does not provide an adequate normative basis for the theological ethical evaluation of homosexuality.
- ii. The Bible should be regarded as the sole normative ethical basis for the theological ethical evaluation of homosexuality.
- iii. The Bible teaches that God condemns homosexual acts and practices, but loves the homosexual person, just as he condemns adulterous acts and practices, but loves the adulterer.

## **1.3 The Method, Objective and Overview.**

**Method.** This research project is written from a Historical, Ethical, Cultural and Biblical perspective. I accept the Bible as normative for defining Christian beliefs and practices. Because the words of the Bible contain a divine message written by human authors who lived in specific historical situations, every effort must be made to understand their meaning in the historical context. My conviction is that an understanding of both the historical and literary context of relevant Biblical texts, is indispensable in establishing both their original meaning and their present relevance. This conviction has very much influenced my examination of the texts and the discussion of homosexuality. I will also deal with books on homosexuality by selected theologians, representing

distinctive positions in the interpretation of homosexuality in society today. Great emphasis will be placed on the African theologians and authors. These is because of the general demand that African theologians should do Biblical hermeneutical research and also do “restructuring” of the interpretation of the concept of homosexuality themselves.

Since I am concerned with the views and opinions of the people of East Africa regarding this subject and since most of them are not theologians and have not authored any book, questionnaires and interviews will be conducted with a representative(s) sample of them to obtain their ideas.

**Objective.** This research project has a general objective, which is to ascertain the Biblical understanding of homosexuality and the role that culture play in the evaluation of homosexuality.

**Overview.** Chapter two of this research will deal with the definitions of homosexuality whereas chapter three will consider the cultural/traditional views of the people of East Africa today concerning homosexuality. Then chapter four and five will make a survey on the Biblical position of the subject. CHAPTER 6 will carry a general summary of the researcher’s opinion and then the conclusion in chapter seven.

## CHAPTER 2

### What is Homosexuality?

#### 2.1 Definitions of Homosexuality

The term "homosexuality can be used for a wide variety of human experiences. Simple definitions of this term have the disadvantage of distorting the concept by lumping all of them together. According to McCary this term "homosexuality" refers to "sexual activity between same-sex partners."<sup>1</sup>

Some sexologists regard the homosexual experience as being so diverse, and the psychological, social, and sexual aspects so varied, that to use the words homosexual or homosexuality to describe anything more than the individual's sexual choice at a particular time is misleading and inexact.<sup>2</sup>

The language in this quotation is a loose paraphrase of A. Bell in his book *Homosexualities: A study of Diversity among Men and Women*. Bell, a researcher at the Kinsey Institute, juxtaposes the term "homosexualities" over against "heterosexualities" suggesting, it seems, that just as there are various kinds of heterosexuals so there are various kinds of homosexuals. Malloy maintains that Bell's use of this terminology suggests that only a small proportion of homosexuals are mentally ill, just as a small proportion of heterosexuals are mentally ill. Consequently, most homosexuals, apart from their sexuality, are normal.

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<sup>1</sup> S.P McCary, *Human Sexuality*, Third Edition: (Belmont, California: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1984), P. 246.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid* P. 246; see also E. Hooker, *Homosexuality*: Rockville, MD: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1972, P.11.

Malloy's caveat is well taken. However, he himself admits, "the word "homosexual" will necessarily refer to a particular person only at some highly generalised level of their existence."<sup>3</sup> Malloy's definition of a homosexual is "a person, male or female, who experiences in adult life a steady and nearly exclusive erotic attraction to members of the same sex and who is indifferent to sexual relations with the opposite sex."<sup>4</sup>

It will be useful to examine Malloy's definition. It is a more specific and carefully worded definition, of interest as much for what it excludes as for what it includes. First, for Malloy, true homosexuality is limited to "adult life" and to an adult who "experiences a steady and nearly exclusive erotic attraction to members of the same sex." This eliminates homosexuality as a spasmodic phase during adolescence from Malloy's genuine homosexual category. These teenage tendencies may be outgrown in adulthood where heterosexual attraction and activity are pursued exclusively.

According to Harvey, in some instances it may be uncertain whether an adolescent is homosexual and diagnosis cannot be made before the mid 20's. "To label every youth homosexual who has experienced some homosexual activity or who expresses ambiguous homosexual feelings, without further comment, is a

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<sup>3</sup> E.A. Malloy, *Homosexuality and the Christian Way of Life*: (Lanham, MD: University Press of America; 1981), P.11.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid*; PP. 11 – 12.

drastic mistake.”<sup>5</sup> It may accomplish the thing most feared, that is, it may drive them into the homosexual subculture for support, sympathy and direction.

Another class excluded from genuine homosexuality by Malloy's definition are those who do not experience "a steady and nearly exclusive erotic attraction to members of the same sex." Individuals in this class of homosexuals are those referred to as "contingent homosexuals." They may include teenagers who experiment with homosexuality and outgrow it. Contingent homosexuals may also include adult heterosexuals who become bored with conventional sexual taboos and seeking variety, go out for a fling on the gay world hoping to accomplish their purpose without fear of scandal.

“By far the most numerous in this category however are those designated situational homosexuals”.<sup>6</sup> These are men or women who are thrown together by circumstances and situations, who having no other sexual outlets, resort to homosexual outlets. Men or women in prison, military camps, boarding schools, seminaries, and other single sex environments are most often involved in situational homosexuality. Men or women in such situations would not consider themselves homosexuals, and return to heterosexual patterns once they are removed from the restrictive environment. "Forced homosexual rape in prison is more often the expression of a power relationship than sexual identity. It

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<sup>5</sup> J.F. Harvey, *Counseling the Homosexual*: (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor Press; 1977), P. 188.

<sup>6</sup> H.K. Jones, *A Christian understanding of the Homosexual*: (New York: Association Press, 1966), PP. 20 – 23.

becomes an instrument for establishing rank and status, validating masculinity and creating protective-dependent relationships."<sup>7</sup>

The remaining individuals involved in homosexual acts, those who do fit Malloy's precise definition are frequently referred to in literature as "constitutional homosexuals" or "inverts". Invert is a common term in current parlance. It originally referred to the true homosexual disposition of Malloy's definition, that is, an invert is a person whose sexual feelings are reversed or turned inside out. Bailey used the word over against "pervert" and thus gave it a moral, ethical significance, which it did not have before. A pervert, by his definition, is not a true homosexual but a heterosexual who engages in homosexual practices. An invert, however, is a true homosexual, a constitutional homosexual, someone whose homosexuality is a permanent part of his very constitution and not a transitory phase of life or merely an accommodation to situational pressure. Bailey introduces morality into the picture by claiming that the true invert is not responsible for his/her condition. He says:

The genuine homosexual condition or inversion, as it is often termed ... is something for which the subject can in no way be held responsible. In itself it is morally neutral — the pervert is not a genuine homosexual; rather, he is a heterosexual who engages in homosexual practices, or a homosexual who engages in heterosexual practices.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> A. Karlen, *Sexuality and Homosexuality: A new View* (New York: W.W. Norton and Co; 1971), PP. 187 – 188.

<sup>8</sup> D.S. Bailey, *Homosexuality and the Western Christian Tradition*: (Hamden, CT: Shoe String Press; 1975), P. 38.

Bailey's theologising about homosexuality is based upon this distinction. He is followed by numerous authors who presuppose the moral neutrality of the homosexual "condition" as it is sometimes called. Some authors make a distinction between the condition and the practice of homosexuality — "the former being morally neutral while the latter is culpable."<sup>9</sup> This distinction seems to be the crux of the whole issue.

### **2.1.1 The Condition Separated from the Act**

The drawing of a line between the "condition" for which the individual is not responsible, and the homosexual "acts", for which one is responsible is basically the position adopted by Kubo who makes the distinction between inversion and perversion. He sees "the New Testament as dealing with the issue, not with the inverts who do not participate in homosexual practices."<sup>10</sup> Kubo does not see homosexual acts practised by the invert as morally neutral. Such a person's condition "does not give license to practise homosexual acts which violate Christian moral standards."<sup>11</sup>

He concludes by saying "The homosexual may not be able to do anything about the attraction for his own sex, but by God's grace he can control his impulses".<sup>12</sup>

Although approaching the subject in a more equivocal manner, Thielicke takes essentially the same position."<sup>13</sup> This view, in which the condition is neutral but

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<sup>9</sup> L.R. Buzzard, *Homosexuality and the Christian faith*: (Valley Forge, PA: Hudson Press, 1978), P. 49.

<sup>10</sup> S. Kubo, *Theology and Ethics of Sex*: (Nashville: Southern Publishing Association, 1980), P. 49.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid*: P. 83.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid* P. 83.

<sup>13</sup> H. Thielicke, *The Ethics of Sex*: (Greenwood, SC: Attic Press; 1978), PP. 282 – 283.

the acts are not, gives the homosexual the benefit of the doubt as it were. The homosexual condition is explained theologically as part of the post-fall evil of which mankind is heir and which causes numerous physical and mental aberrations for which individual victims are not directly responsible.

In the present situation where certainty about the cause of homosexuality is not possible this view presumes that the homosexual was not responsible for his condition. That is, he/she did not make a deliberate choice to become a homosexual/lesbian. It does assume, however, that the homosexual is responsible for any same-sex acts that he/she practises, which are therefore considered immoral. Consequently this view mandates celibacy for the confirmed or constitutional homosexual. By a large section of the homosexual community, this is rejected as a grossly unfair consequence of the condition.

Hatterer sums up the attitude of the homosexual community:

The majority believe either that they were born as homosexuals or that familial factors operating very early in their lives determine the outcome. In any case homosexuality is believed to be a fate over which they have no control and in which they have no choice.<sup>14</sup>

### **2.1.2 Homosexuality as Natural**

The implication is that if the condition is inherent to a certain extent it must be natural. Therefore to fight against the same-sex drive he/she experiences is to

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<sup>14</sup> L.J. Hatterer, *Changing Homosexuality in the Male*: (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1979), P. 13.

fight against nature. Perry expresses himself along these lines saying, "I'm sure that homosexuality is preordained. I think a lot more work has to be done in this whole field, but I am firmly convinced that much of what we are comes to us through our genes."<sup>15</sup>

It is a short step from homosexuality as a part of nature's plan to homosexuality as a part of God's plan. R. Woods quotes an unnamed homosexual as follows:

I had no choice in being born gay or hetero; rather I was given my human nature and "beingness" from the being of all beings. I sincerely feel that we have to accept what and who we are, and accept it with our hearts — never feeling different from others, but rather as being part of Divine providence, the Divine plan."<sup>16</sup>

N. Pittenger constructs his theology on the premise that homosexuality, "as a state or habitual orientation, is fully "normal" and "natural" and is a viable moral choice for a Christian."<sup>17</sup> He defines the homosexual in this manner:

The homosexual, then, is one who through no special choice — above all, no special fault of his own finds that he is sexually drawn to members of his own sex. For him it is entirely "natural" thus to be drawn, that is the way he is ... If the homosexual condition, whatever may be its etiology, is a given fact for homosexual persons about which they can do nothing and about which most of them wish (quite rightly) to do nothing, what about the overt expression of this condition in physical sexual acts?

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<sup>15</sup> T.D. Perry, *The Lord is my Shepherd and He Knows I'm Gay*: (Los Angeles: Nash Publishing, 1972), P. 10.

<sup>16</sup> R. Woods, *Another Kind of Love: Homosexuality and Spirituality*: (Chicago: Thomas More Press, 1977), PP. 38 – 39.

<sup>17</sup> N. Pittenger, *A Christian's Approach to Homosexuality*: (London: SCM Press, 1976), PP. 31 – 32.

Right here there is a great disagreement in Christian circles as well as among those who look sympathetically enough at the "condition" but would raise questions about the "acts."<sup>18</sup>

McNeil finds glaring gaps in the Biblical material on homosexuality. He debunks the standard theological positions as lacking in comprehensiveness and outdated in contrast to recent scientific research. He makes a summary of his own stand as follows:

Given, as I believe, first, the uncertainty of clear scriptural prohibition, second, the questionable basis of the traditional condemnation in moral philosophy and moral theology, third, the emergence of new data which upset many traditional assumptions and fourth, controversies among psychologists and psychiatrists concerning theory, etiology, treatment, and so on, there obviously is a need to open up anew the question of the moral standing of homosexual activity and homosexual relationships for public debate — It would appear to follow that the same moral rules apply to homosexual as to heterosexual attitudes and behaviour. Those that are responsible, respectful, loving and truly promotive of the good of both parties are moral, those that are exploitative, irresponsible, disrespectful, or destructive of the true good of either party must be judged immoral.<sup>19</sup>

The underlying suggestions here are that current Biblical and theological interpretations of homosexuality are inconclusive and consequently, there is no ground for denying the basic moral and ethical equality of heterosexual and homosexual relationships. Homosexuality and heterosexuality are therefore of equal worth in the natural order. Cory supports these ideas by saying that:

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<sup>18</sup> N.Pittenger, *The Homosexual Expression of Love, In Is Gay Good? Ethics, Theology and Homosexuality: Ethics, Theology and Homosexuality*: (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1971), P. 227.

<sup>19</sup> J. McNeill, *The Church and the Homosexual*: (Kansas City, MO: Sheed, Andrews & McMeel, 1976), PP. 20 – 21.

Their action is not only voluntary, but it is the natural calling of their temperaments, as these temperaments have evolved and developed as a result of various environmental conditions. In fact, no other course of action would be natural to them. Nothing would be so unnatural as to thwart and deny themselves.<sup>20</sup>

Of course these arguments fly in the face of the conservative Christian view of Scripture. Invoking the authority of the Scripture, conservatives view the schema of Genesis as normative for all mankind, with anything contrary to it as "unnatural". Cory himself begs this question with his remark, "However, is it not, many will ask, contrary to nature? It would require a supernatural force to state what nature intended."<sup>21</sup>

Of course this is precisely what conservative Christians claim to have in the Bible. They believe that it states what "nature," that is, God, intended.

The views of Buzzard, Kubo, and Thielicke mentioned above are representatives of those prevailing in several major church bodies today. But this position is severely criticised again by Nelson on the basis of the naturalness of the homosexual's disposition.

It holds that while homosexuality as an orientation is contrary to God's created intention, the homosexual person ought not to be adversely judged or rejected by the church. Often this position carries the acknowledgement that sexual orientation is seldom if ever the result of voluntary choice and that constitutional homosexuality appears largely unsusceptible to psychotherapeutic reorientation. While some people see this as a more tolerant and compassionate view than outright condemnation, it places gay men and lesbians in at least two impossible binds.

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<sup>20</sup> D.W. Cory, *The Homosexual In America*: (New York: Greenberg Publishing, 1951), P. 29.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*

One, of course, is the individual's recognition that her or his own sexual orientation is as natural and as fundamental to identity as is colour of the skin. It is both naive and cruel to tell a lesbian or gay man, "your sexual orientation is still unnatural and a perversion, but this is no judgment upon you as a person." The individual knows otherwise.

The other bind concerns churchly pressure towards celibacy. When the Church presumes to be non-judgmental toward orientation but then draws the line against genital expression, it is difficult to understand how a sense of guilt — even in the celibate — will be significantly alleviated.<sup>22</sup>

Nelson finds both intellectual and psychological contradictions in any position which is based on what he refers to as an "outmoded version of natural law" or which seeks to make a fine distinction between orientation and genital expression."<sup>23</sup> Plainly speaking, the nub of the entire debate between homosexuals and conservative churches hangs on this point.

Thoughtful leaders in most churches are willing to concede that some individuals involved in homosexual acts act from a condition. These individuals who are not sexually attracted to females, but who for as long as they can remember have been attracted to males, are inverts through no fault of their own. Many Christian churches, including the Seventh Day Adventist Church in East Africa, insist, however, that homosexual acts are condemned as immoral in Scripture. Therefore they conclude that the homosexual condition is an aberration due to the fall of man and not something intended by God, and is to be counteracted and eliminated if at all possible. If this is not possible, the church still finds itself

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<sup>22</sup> J.B. Nelson, *Religious and Moral Issues In Working With Homosexual Clients*: New York: Haworth Press, 1982), PP. 168 – 169.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid*; P. 169.

unable to condone homosexual acts because this would countermand the authority of Scripture, which condemns them as sin, no matter how strong the temptation might be to participate in them.

Homosexuals reply that Scripture does not condemn loving, wholesome, homosexual relations, but only rape, lust, exploitation and idolatry — whether heterosexual or homosexual. The homosexual condition and the acts, therefore are seen by them as natural, even as God-given.

### 2.1.3 The Psychological Thesis

In concluding this section, two other definitions must be looked at briefly. The first proposes that homosexuality is a psychological maladaptation — a failure in some sense or other to reach psychosocial maturity. Finally it is suggested by some that homosexuality is neither a pathological nor a psychological condition, but a series of sinful acts to which a person becomes habituated and of which they need to repent.

The most straightforward spokesman for the thesis that homosexuality is a psychological condition is Bergler. To him it is only "a therapeutically changeable subdivision of neuroses."<sup>24</sup> There is no healthy homosexual.

The entire personality structure of the homosexual is pervaded by the unconscious wish to suffer, this wish is gratified by self-created troublemaking. This "injustice-collecting" (technically called psychic masochism) is conveniently deposited in the external difficulties confronting the homosexual.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup> E. Bergler, *Homosexuality: Disease or Way of Life?* (New York: Macmillan Publishing Co. 1967), P. 9.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*

"Homosexuals take flight to men because they fear and hate women", Bergler theorizes.<sup>26</sup> His view of homosexuals is largely negative. By his account they are very sick people trying to claim that they are well.

For Marmor the homosexual is not necessarily neurotic. He sets forth a psychodynamic definition of homosexuality that includes motivational and operational aspects of behaviour. He defines the clinical homosexual as "one who is motivated, in adult life, by definite preferential erotic attraction to members of the same sex and who usually (but not necessarily) engages in overt sexual relation with them."<sup>27</sup>

Marmor limits his definition, much as does Malloy, to same-sex desires, which grow out of personality needs, not mere situational necessity. The homosexual is the person who preferentially seeks same-sex partners even when alternatives are present. Only these represent genuine homosexuality in motivational terms.

He summarises:

The clinicians represented in this volume present convincing evidence that homosexuality is a potentially reversible condition. There is little doubt that much of the recent success in the treatment of homosexuals stems from the growing recognition among psychoanalysts that homosexuality is a disorder of adaptation.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid; P. 16.

<sup>27</sup> J. Marmor, "Introduction", In *Sexual Inversion: The Multiple Roots of Homosexuality*; (New York: Basic Books, 1965), P. 4.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid; P. 21.

Bieber characterises homosexuality as "a disorder of adaptation, the result of hidden but incapacitating fears of the opposite sex, since the condition is basically an accommodation to unrealistic fears, it is necessarily pathological."<sup>29</sup>

Barnhouse offers a definition much like that of Marmor. "I use the word homosexuality to refer to an adult adaptation characterised by preferential sexual behaviour between members of the same sex."<sup>30</sup> The word "preferential" or even "choice" is used to describe homosexual behaviour. Buzzard defines homosexuality as "including both personal choice and psychological damage because of conditions in the home."<sup>31</sup>

Woods concludes, "sexual orientation is not, however, a function of physiology, gender identification or role characteristics, sexual preference is learned."<sup>32</sup>

Moberly prefers to see homosexuality best defined as one of ambivalence to the same sex. Having assessed the same evidence in Bieber, she concludes that it is hostility to the father that defines the true homosexual, not hatred of the mother or the opposite sex.<sup>33</sup> Her definition is based on this insight:

From amidst a welter of details, one constant underlying principle suggests itself that the homosexual — whether man or woman — has suffered from some deficit in the relationship with the parent of the same sex, and that there is a corresponding drive to make good this deficit through the medium of same-sex or "homosexual" relationships.

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<sup>29</sup> I. Bieber, *Homosexuality: A Psychoanalytic Study*: (New York: Basic Books, 1962), PP. 303 – 304.

<sup>30</sup> R.T. Barnhouse, *Homosexuality: A Symbolic Confusion*: (New York: Seabury Press, 1977), P. 22.

<sup>31</sup> L.R. Buzzard; *How Gay is Gay?* "In *Homosexuality and the Christian Faith*: (Valley Forge, PA: Judson Press, 1978), P.48.

<sup>32</sup> R. Woods, *Another Kind of Love: Homosexuality and Spirituality*: (Chicago: Thomas More Press, 1977), P.23.

<sup>33</sup> E. Moberly, *The Early Development of Gender Identity*: (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd; 1983), PP.39, 44.

Moberly continues:

An attachment to the same sex is not wrong. Indeed it is precisely the right thing for meeting same-sex deficits. What is improper is the eroticization of the friendship. Such eroticization is secondary, and not essential to the relationship as such.<sup>34</sup>

Those who see homosexuality as some kind of psychosocial maladaptation usually suggest that it is susceptible to treatment of some kind.

#### **2.1.4 Homosexuality as a Chosen Sin**

The final definition to be considered is that homosexuality is simply a sin. According to Adams “Homosexuality is the way in which some clients have attempted to solve the sexual difficulties of adolescence and later life.”<sup>35</sup> He perceives such a person as generally having a grossly disturbed view of sex and other interpersonal relations. “Since homosexuals have to lead a double life, they carry a heavy load of fear and guilt.”<sup>36</sup> He claims that his rationale is strictly

**Biblical:**

To call homosexuality a sickness, for example, does not raise the client's hope. But to call homosexuality sin as the Bible does, is to offer hope. Probably there is no more important factor in the work of helping homosexual sinners. Hope is desperately needed by them as much as anything else. It is essential to counteract every aspect of the hope destroying medical and/or genetic models of homosexuality.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> E.R. Moberly, *Homosexuality: A new Christian Ethic*: (Cambridge; MA: James Clarke, 1983), PP. 2, 20.

<sup>35</sup> J.E. Adams, *Competent to Counsel* (Phillipburg, NJ: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Co., 1970), P.36.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid*; P.139.

Adams does not believe that one is a homosexual constitutionally; any more than one is an adulterer constitutionally. Therefore, he views homosexuality not as a condition but an act, a sinful practice, which has become a way of life. This has important ramifications. The homosexual act is the reason for calling one a homosexual just as the act of adultery is the reason for calling one an adulterer.

The homosexual may commit homosexual sins of the heart just as one may commit adultery in his/her heart. The homosexual may lust after another man as the adulterer lusts after another woman. For Adams the key point is that precisely because homosexuality, like adultery, is an act, it is learned behaviour into which men with sinful natures are prone to wander. "Homosexuality is a sin that can be forgiven by Christ."<sup>38</sup>

#### **2.1.5 Conclusion on the definition of homosexuality**

I do agree with this definition of Adams that homosexuality is an act, a sinful practice which has become a way of life, it is a learned behaviour into which men with sinful nature are prone to wander.

The homosexual condition is part of the post-fall evil of which mankind is heir. It is however important to note that the homosexual is responsible for any same-sex acts that he practices which are therefore considered immoral. It is very true that to call homosexuality a condition that is separated from the act, that is

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<sup>38</sup> Ibid; P.132 – 139.

natural, a sickness, or even a psychological issue, for example, does not really raise the homosexual's hope. But to call homosexuality sin as the Bible does, is to offer hope to the homosexual. Probably there is no more important factor in the work of helping homosexual sinners; hope is desperately needed by the homosexuals as much as anything else. It is essential to counteract the hope destroying medical and/or genetic models of homosexuality.

## **2.2 The causes of homosexuality**

The causes of homosexuality are divided into three categories in recent literature, namely genetic factors, hormonal or endocrine influences, and psychosocial elements.

### **2.2.1 The genetic thesis**

The theory that hereditary — genetic or chromosomal factors — cause homosexuality has been proposed by some researchers. It has been suggested by Lang that “Klinefelter syndrome, characterised by possession of an additional female chromosome, may predispose some individuals to homosexuality. Based on this assumption some have argued that homosexuals are females in male bodies.”<sup>39</sup> Lang's research has come under considerable scrutiny and been found inconclusive. West surveys the material and gives this summary, “one may safely conclude that the presently recognised sex chromosome and endocrine anomalies do not play a significant part in the cause of homosexuality.”<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> T. Lang, *Studies In the Genetic Determination of Homosexuality*: (New York: Grune and Stratton, 1968), P.9.

<sup>40</sup> I. West. *Homosexuality*: (New York: Basic books, 1963) P.166.

Likewise, “Kallmann's studies with monozygotic (identical) homosexual twins, have not been verified by further studies.”<sup>41</sup> “Not all pairs of identical twins are both homosexual as would be expected if it were a genetic condition. Genetic studies in general have not thrown much light on the causes of the homosexual phenomenon.”<sup>42</sup>

### **2.2.2 Hormonal factors**

Another influence on sex determination proposed as a cause of homosexuality involves hormone concentrations. During maturation the equality and concentration of hormones in the circulating blood has great influence on the growth and function of sex organs. Even persons with normal chromosomes rely upon the endocrine glands maturing at the right time and secreting into the blood the required amount of the right chemicals to promote normal sexual development. “A number of experiments have shown, however, that increase of testosterone for male homosexuals, far from producing a curative effect, simply increases desire for their accustomed sexual object”<sup>43</sup>

Perloff reaches the same conclusions:

In our experiences, no patient, either male or female, has shown any consistent reversal of endocrine pattern to explain homosexual tendencies. We have never observed any correlation between the choice of sex object and level of hormonal excretion.<sup>44</sup>

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<sup>41</sup> F.J. Kallmann, “Comparative twin Study of the Genetic Aspect of Male Homosexuality” *Journal of Nervous and Mental Disease* 115 (1952) PP. 283 – 298.

<sup>42</sup> G.K. Klintworth, “A Pair of Male Monozygotic Twins Discordant for Homosexuality,” *Journal of Nervous and Mental disease* 135 (1962) PP.113 – 125.

<sup>43</sup> H.S. Barahal, “Testosterone in Psychotic Male Homosexuals,” *Psychiatric Quarterly* 14 (1940): PP. 319 – 329.

<sup>44</sup> W.. Perloff, *Hormones and Homosexuality*: (New York: Basic Books, 1965), P.57.

Some people, especially homosexuals themselves, find the biological theory appealing. In many cases it appears no less for genuinely scientific reasons than for the implication that sexually deviant individuals bear no personal responsibility for their condition and consequent acts, for they are biologically determined. Nevertheless, although there is a constant refrain in literature from Kinsey to Secor that we need a better knowledge of homosexuality, there is also a general consensus of opinion that the cause is not wholly biological. The Wolfenden Report states, "Biochemical and endocrine studies so far carried out in the field have, it appears, proved negative."<sup>45</sup> Speaking to Goldschmidt's theory of a biologically determined intersex, Kinsey remarks,

Those who have accepted this interpretation have assumed without asking for specific evidence that an individual's choice of sexual partner is affected by some basic biological capacity. No work that has been done on hormones or any other physiological capacities of the human animal justifies such a conclusion (Kinsey, 1941).<sup>46</sup>

The committee responsible for the Presbyterian Blue Book reached the same conclusion after their study, writing, "However, psychosocial factors rather than biological factors appear so primarily determinative."<sup>47</sup>

Many scientists involved in the study of homosexuality claim that sexual orientation arises from psychosocial factors related to development of gender

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<sup>45</sup> The Wolfenden Report: Report of the Committee of Homosexual Offence and Prostitution, Authorized American Edition (New York: Stein & Day, 1963), P. 32.

<sup>46</sup> A.C. Kinsey, Sexual Behaviour in the Human Male: (Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders, Co., 1965), P.658 – 659.

<sup>47</sup> B.E. Shafer, The Church and Homosexuality: (New York: Julian Press, 1966), PP.63, 115 – 16.

identity and role with postnatal biological and endocrinological factors having perhaps some mediating influence in certain cases.

The general consensus is that transmission studies in single families have failed to indicate a clear genetic basis for homosexual preference. Likewise, postnatal endocrine studies have, for the most part, failed to establish a physiological basis for sexual behaviour. In particular, they have failed to shed light on homosexuality and choice of sexual objective in humans.

### **2.2.3 The Prenatal Thesis**

During the past decade the major focus of the psycho-endocrine theories of sexual orientation has shifted from the hormone situation in adulthood to the role of prenatal hormones. As early as 1971 Fieldman and Macculloch theorised that “primary male homosexuals have sexually undifferentiated brains of a female pattern due to a lack of hypothalamic exposure to androgens during intrauterine life.”<sup>48</sup>

In humans the embryonic process leads automatically to the production of females unless something is added to produce a male. In the absence of gonads or hormones the fetus differentiates autonomously as a female, it can only differentiate as male if something is added, that is, the secretions of the fetal testes. External morphologic sex changes which produce male physical characteristics are the final step in the embryonic development of sexual

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<sup>48</sup> M.P. Feldman and M.J. Macculloch, *Homosexual behaviour*: (Oxford Pergamon Press), 1971.

morphology. Organisation of the brain as male or female occurs at about the same time in human fetal development that the hormones from the testes begin the development of male sexual morphology. In animals masculinisation of brain cells seems to occur in the small part of the brain called the hypothalamus. This segment of the brain is most immediately involved in the regulation of sexual activity and most sensitive to sex hormones. "It serves as a gate or funnel for eroticism and mating behaviour"<sup>49</sup> All later behaviour as male or female is determined by the presence or absence of male hormones during a critical brief period of prenatal life. "The exact mechanism is not known, but it seems to be the removal of chemical blocks that allow transmission of impulses from one cell to another."<sup>50</sup>

The prenatal hormone theory was developed to explain the puzzling observations of male (human) homosexuals. Its pursuit in the laboratory naturally is heavily dependent on extensive animal studies on sexual dimorphism. The theory states that a hormone (androgen) deficiency during a critical period of prenatal life, that is, when sex differentiation occurs, results in an otherwise normal male developing a female differentiated brain. Dorner states the theory in terse language:

An absolute or relative androgen deficiency in the first hypothalamic organisation phase, that is intra-uterine, Leydig cell degeneration, results in a predominantly female brain differentiation. A normal or at least approximately normal

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<sup>49</sup> J. Money, *Man and Woman, Boy and girl*: (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1972), P.238.

<sup>50</sup> F.A. Beach, "Experimental Studies of Mating Behaviour in Animals" in *Sex Research*: (New York: Holt Rinehart and Winston, 1965), P. 127.

androgen level during the second phase, that is, post-pubertal Leydig cell generation, then exerts a sex non-specific activating effect on the predominantly female differentiated brain. Thus a genetic as somatic phenotypic male with a predominantly female differentiated brain is primary sexually excited by another male.<sup>51</sup>

This theory suggests that a positive estrogens feedback effect, characteristic of normal females, should be present in primary (constitutional) homosexuals. Dorner's experiments demonstrated that in 13 out of 21 homosexuals this was the case. In contrast, "only two out of 25 secondary (non-constitutional) homosexuals showed this response."<sup>52</sup> This suggests that secondary homosexuality may arise from psychosocial influences acting in accordance with learning theory.

The prenatal hormone theory also is subject to test by the study of human individuals with prenatal hormonal abnormalities such as prenatal hypoandrogenized males and hypoandrogenized females. "In these cases the individuals are found to be heterosexual to the sex of assignment and rearing."<sup>53</sup> "Homosexuals did not predominate among even the most extreme cases of women whose treatment did not start till adolescence or adulthood and who experienced pre and postnatal virilisation."<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> G. Dorner, W. Rhode et al., "A Neuroendocrine Predisposition for Homosexuality in Man" Archives of Sexual behaviour 4 (1975): 2.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid; PP. 4 – 5.

<sup>53</sup> H.F.L. Meyer-Bahlberg "Effects of Prenatal Sex Hormones On Gender-Related Behaviour," Science 211 (1981): 1315.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid; P. 382.

This evidence from offspring of hormone treated pregnancies of human beings shows that prenatal hormones may contribute to but do not actually determine the development of sexual orientation. "None of the studies done so far allow one to exclude completely the fact that there may be a confounding of prenatal hormone influence with putative social factors."<sup>55</sup>

Dorner's theory suggested also that "a positive estrogens feedback (luteinising hormone feedback, LH) would be present in homosexuals as in females."<sup>56</sup>

Meyer-Bahlberg suggests two major problems with the research approach however. One is that it is unlikely that L.H. dynamics are necessarily correlated with sexual orientation. He point two studies of gonadally intact genetic males with a complete syndrome of androgen insensitivity who have an L.H. response that is typically masculine — "this despite the fact that these patients have a female gender identity and feminine heterosexual orientation toward males in direct contrast to their LH dynamics."<sup>57</sup>

Despite these difficulties, the prenatal hormone theory is currently the dominant biological hypothesis. This is due to the fact that the anatomical structure of genitals and sex behaviour — related areas of the brain as well as the role of sex hormones are similar throughout the mammalian class. In addition, available information on patients with prenatal hormone abnormalities appears to implicate prenatal hormones as a contributing factor, although the exact

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid; P. 386.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid; P. 389.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid; P. 389 – 390.

mechanisms are not known. But as Meyer-Bahlberg observes, "The larger number of hypothetical neuro-endocrine mechanisms that must be considered in the search for an explanation of homosexuality makes it unlikely that a single mechanism underlies all forms of homosexuality."<sup>58</sup> He suggests the inter-sex rationale applies at best only to a subgroup of homosexuals and that if valid for this subgroup, it is likely to be multi-factorial in itself."<sup>59</sup>

The consensus appears to be that prenatal hormone conditions alone do not rigidly determine homosexuality. However, prenatal hormone influences have to be considered along with other factors as contributing to sex dimorphic behaviour. Evidence concerning the exact role of prenatal hormones and how they exert their influence is inconclusive at the present time.

#### **2.2.4 Psychosocial Factors**

Leaving biological factors aside, we turn our attention to researchers who focus on psychosocial evidence that may provide clues to the etiology of homosexuality. In the nature versus nurture debate over the origin of homosexuality, these investigators show a decided preference for the nurture theory. Because no consensus has been reached about what psychosocial factors are determinative, or how they are determinative, this does not mean that every theory mutually excludes the others.

We can agree with Secor that far too few data cards appear on the table of honest

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<sup>58</sup> Ibid; P. 392.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid; P. 393.

investigation. Secor's statement epitomises the views of this group. "The only fact that appears with some certainty is that homosexual identification and practice are learned in the human growth process, much the same way as are all personality identification and practices."<sup>60</sup>

Money, one of the foremost experts in the field, agrees. Although Money's clinical studies were used to support experimental evidence linking prenatal hormonal influences on the fetal brain to subsequent masculine-feminine behaviour, Money and his co-workers, the Hampsons, emerge as the chief proponents of the nurture theory. Money concludes "that erotic outlook and orientation is an autonomous psychological phenomenon independent of genes and hormones and, moreover, a permanent and ineradicable one as well."<sup>61</sup>

The Hampsons agree with him:

The evidence militates too strongly against a theory of innate, pre-formed, and inherited behavioural imperatives, hormonal or otherwise — instead the evidence supports the view that psychologic sex is undifferentiated at birth, a sexual neutrality in the place of the Freudian bisexuality, and that the individual becomes differentiated as masculine or feminine, psychologically, in the course of the many experiences of growing up."<sup>62</sup>

If the nature versus nurture debate appears inconclusive, an even more difficult feat is to determine the amount of conscious participation the person exerts in

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<sup>60</sup> N.A. Secor, "A Brief for a New Homosexual Ethic" *The Same Sex: An Appraisal of Homosexuality*, (Philadelphia/Boston: Pilgrim Press, 1969), P.77.

<sup>61</sup> J. Money, *Sex Hormones and Other Variables In Human Eroticism*: (Baltimore: Williams Wilkins Co., 1961), 2: 1397.

<sup>62</sup> John Hampson, *The Ontogenesis of Sexual behavior in Man*: (Baltimore: Williams & Wilkins Co., 1961), 2:1413, 1428.

becoming homosexual. Some suggest that "a person is not conscious of the psychosocial factors which shape his/her sexual orientation. These processes, it is claimed, begins at such an early age that in essence sexual orientation cannot be said to be chosen."<sup>63</sup> Oberholtzer, however, presents the opposite view in a forceful manner and suggests that homosexuals are responsible for their lifestyle.

It is bad faith to pretend that homosexuality is necessary when it is in fact partly conscious and voluntary. Gay attractions are not sneakily created while Jack is out of the room. He becomes gay with his consent, although not without the consent of others — Gay persons remember only what happened. They forget what might have happened. Thus, instead of remembering the choice among possibilities that was actually experienced in the past, they fasten upon the single action chosen and baptize it as inevitable — an exercise in bad faith.<sup>64</sup>

Weltge has commented also on the ambiguous stance taken by a number of homosexuals who claim that the condition is the result of a blind determinism ensuing in practices of a compulsive nature, in all of which they are innocent and powerless. At the same time they claim homosexuality is a responsible, morally good choice biologically and psychologically natural and normal. Weltge points out that these self deceptions become noticeable when the ideology transforms the homosexual into a veritable saint and claims fellatio as a sexual sacrament.

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<sup>63</sup> B.E. Shafer and J.F. Harvey, *Pastoral Responses to Gay World Questions*, "is Gay Good? Ethics, Ethology and Homosexuality: (New York: Julian Press, 1966) P. 125.

<sup>64</sup> W.D. Oberholtzer, "Introduction: Subduing the Cyclops – A Giant Step Towards Ethics," *Is Gay Good? Ethics, Theology and Homosexuality*, P. 28.

He continues, "what reason is there to believe that homosexuals are necessarily more honest about themselves, or less prone to self justification, than other men?"<sup>65</sup> Other researchers do not see homosexuality as either a grim determinism or deliberate conscious choice.

This meditating position interprets the condition as a subconscious decision or maladaptation taking place during childhood. Harvey, discussing the guilt that many homosexuals experience, sees it as more than the guilt placed on the homosexual by the heterosexual society. He detects a deeper disorientation going back to the early years of life that may be the result of a skein of factors which is difficult to disentangle. "But no matter which factor is stressed, it is a disorder in the due psychological relationship of the child to some significant person or group."<sup>66</sup> Others agree that this is the most likely origin of homosexuality. Among them, Barnhouse, Moberly, Bierber, Joner, Marmor, Von Rohr, Shafer and others who believe that early psychosocial factors are predominant in the formation of homosexual orientation.

Kinsey's challenge to psychologists who posit a psychosocial origin still stands in many respects, for in his view it must account not merely for an all-or-none condition, as homosexuality once was thought to be but for a continuum found,

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<sup>65</sup> R.W. Weltge, "The Paradox of Man and Woman," *The Same Sex: An Appraisal of Homosexuality*, P. 64.

<sup>66</sup> J.F. Harvey, "Pastoral Responses to Gay World Questions," *Is Gay Good? Ethics, Theology and Homosexuality*, P. 124.

ranging from those exclusively homosexual to those who are exclusively heterosexual.

Whatever factors are considered, it must not be forgotten that the basic phenomenon to be explained is an individual's preference for a partner of one sex, or for a partner of other sex, or his acceptance of partner of either sex. This problem is, after all, part of the broader problem of choices in general. The choice of the road that one takes, of the clothes that one wears, of the food that one eats, of the place in which one sleeps, and of the endless other things that one is constantly choosing.<sup>67</sup>

From a layman's perspective, it seems that Morberly's work is doing much to answer these questions as she pulls together the various theories and observations into a more coherent picture.<sup>68</sup>

Finally, if homosexuality is experientially determined, hence consists of learned behaviour, what chances are there of reversing the experience and unlearning the behaviour? According to most experts, the prognosis is not good for the essential adult homosexual with a great deal of homosexual experience. Bieber "reports on 72 exclusively homosexual patients who had undergone psychotherapy, and only 14 (19.44%) had become exclusive heterosexuals."<sup>69</sup> It was also reported that 42 (59.33%) had remained exclusively homosexual. Hatterer followed up 143 patients who had undergone psychotherapy. Of this number, "49 (34.27 percent) were said to have "recovered" and 76 (53.15 percent) to have remained

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<sup>67</sup> A.C. Kinsey, W.B. Pomeroy, C.E. Martin, *Sexual behaviour in the human male*: (Philadelphia: W.B. Saunders., Co., 1965), P. 661.

<sup>68</sup> Moberly, *Psychogenesis*. (Cambridge, MA: James Clarke, 1983), PP. 22.

<sup>69</sup> Bieber, P. 276.

homosexual."<sup>70</sup> The Wolfenden Report, however, concludes that "the outlook for adolescent and transitional homosexuals often is very good, and complete pessimism in all regards is justified only for long-term homosexuals."<sup>71</sup>

In order to make ethical or moral judgements on homosexuality, one would have to prove the existence of a man whose sexual condition or orientation is homosexual. At that point such a person would be in himself a deviation from the normal heterosexuality of most men, that is, to that extent abnormal. The questions are (1) Do such people really exist? (2) If so, is their condition morally reprehensible or is homosexuality of such a nature to be beyond the conscious control of the person so afflicted?

The answers seem to be (1) In a minority of homosexuals, sometimes referred to as essential homosexuals or inverts, the factors that make them homosexually orientated are subconscious and may be influenced by some biological factors.

Their homosexuality is caused by early environmental factors and influences outside the scope of conscious memory (2) Such persons cannot be held morally responsible for the condition, although they are accountable for their acts. Some who are unhappy with their orientation may be helped by psychotherapy.

Other homosexuals called perverts, acquired or situational homosexuals, are those in whom the tendency to commit homosexual acts is predominantly

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<sup>70</sup> Hatterer, PP. 465 – 483.

<sup>71</sup> The Wolfenden Report, P. 124.

determined by new factors arising late in life, that is later childhood, adolescence, or manhood. Their homosexual acts are not motivated so much by deep, subconscious personal needs. Some individuals in this category are not essential homosexuals in any sense of the word. Buckley points out that "at times it is extremely difficult to distinguish the "essential" from the "acquired"."<sup>72</sup> A man in middle life who commits a homosexual offence for the first time initially might be thought to belong to the acquired group. Further investigation might show that he is actually an essential homosexual whose resistance and self-discipline only recently weakened. On the other hand, acquired or situational homosexuals with incidental homosexual experience frequently are simply labelled homosexuals.

Giving someone a negative identity like "homosexual" usually prepares him/her in our society for a destiny of dehumanisation. As we said at the beginning of the section on definitions, the word "homosexual" covers a wide variety of experiences. We need to be extremely careful that we define just what we mean by it.

The next chapter will address homosexuality in East Africa, analyzing its cultural practices and standards.

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<sup>72</sup> M.J. Buckley, *Morality and the Homosexual: A Catholic Approach to a Moral Problem*: (Westminster, MD: Newman Press, 1959), P. 17.