

Endnotes for

John Kleinig, 'Genesis 3 and LGBT'

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1. In a social environment largely freed from strictly enforced mores, the variety of self-definition is open ended. No doubt the lack of fixity may be of concern, but it provides some indication of a diversity that I find somewhat troubling when combined in a single acronym. See Dan Levin, 'The Human Experience is Infinite', *nytimes.com*, 28th June 2019. What we should also not ignore – though it is buried within a single acronym – is a history in which the different groups that make it up have been in conflict with each other. Garrison mentalities easily develop, especially in a climate of oppression.

2. As an example of probable irrelevance, I instance the story of the destruction of Sodom – traditionally used to reflect a judgment on homosexual conduct (sodomy) – but more likely a condemnation of other behaviours, most often thought to be inhospitableness (see, e.g., Derrick Sherwin Bailey, *Homosexuality and the Western Christian Tradition*, London: Longmans, Green, 1955). Alternatively, it may reflect Lot's flouting of conventions associated with local security (see, e.g., Randall C. Bailey, 'Why Do Readers Believe Lot? Genesis 19 Reconsidered', *Old Testament Essays* 23, no. 3 (2010), 519-548. As for ambivalence, to take a popular New Testament account, consider Steve Chalke's comments on Romans 1:22-32 in 'A Matter of Integrity: The Church, Sexuality, Inclusion and an Open Conversation', *Christianity*, January 2013 (now censored by its original publication). Even I Cor 6:9-10, with its unique reference to *arsenokotai*, is less than transparent (cf. David Gushee, 'Two odd little words: the LGBT issue, part 11 (Revised)', *baptistnews.com*, 19th September 2014). In both the Romans and Corinthians passages, a tunnel-visioned concern with sexual matters, to the neglect of faults that are common but supposedly equally serious, is quite troubling. As used to be the case with biblical defences of slavery, we are inclined to approach the text with well-formed conclusions that are subsequently 'confirmed'. Ironically, we have difficulty appreciating the depth of our capacity for rationalisation. There is now a substantial literature on the effects of confirmation and implicit biases.

3. Some of the documents may even have a similar status to the 'state of nature' to which liberal theorists have appealed as a way of understanding the rationale for civil society – not as historical events so much as explanatory justifications for certain social phenomena that we appeal to for the purpose of structuring our lives.

4. Some keys to understanding may even be lost to us. For an interesting intertwining of *Weltgeschichte* and *Heilsgeschichte*, and the significance of biblical numerology, see Carol A Hill, 'Making Sense of the Numbers of Genesis', *Perspectives on Science and Christian Faith* 55, no. 4 (December 2003), 239-251.

5. My views are mostly well captured by Walter Brueggemann's lecture, 'Biblical Authority: A Personal Reflection', addressed to the 2000 Covenant Conference Pittsburgh, PA, on 3rd November 2000, and also nicely represented in George Rawson's hymn: 'We Limit Not the Truth of God'.

6. I leave aside references to this creation order in I Tim 2:11-15, which appear to draw on Gen 1-2 as a basis for subordination. As is clear, even within circles that hold a high view of Scripture, there is considerable debate. I suggest that the account of Gen 3 I develop here contributes to a less subordinationist understanding.

7. Nor should we ignore Jesus' teaching about the diminished significance of marriage in the hereafter: Mk 12:18-25; Mt 22: 23-30; Lk 20:27-36. The transcendence of gender? Is there a radical break between the intention of earthly experience and the purposes of eternity?

8. To illustrate from a different context: although most of us would now eschew slavery, the OT writers nevertheless thought it important that an ethic for the treatment of slaves be developed (rationalchristianity.net/slavery_ot.html). The same goes for the NT, in the letter to Philemon.

9. Jesus' later remarks about 'eunuchs for the kingdom's sake' (Mt 19:12) – which he may well have applied to himself (and that Paul appears to have assumed for himself) – cannot be transposed to the LGBTQIA+ context (sexual abstinence) without ignoring the narrow parsing that is given in the text.

10. For reviews, see Michael Tooley, 'The Problem of Evil', *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2019 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), at plato.stanford.edu/entries/concept-evil/; James H. Charlesworth, *The Good and Evil Serpent: How a Universal Symbol Became Christianized* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010).

11. See, for example, Heather Murphy, 'At 71, She's Never Felt Pain or Anxiety. Now Scientists Know Why', nytimes.com, 28th March 2019. Cf. Ariel Levy, 'World Without Pain', *New Yorker*, 13th January 2020, 18-24. This would not amount to an argument for genetic manipulation, as (in this world) there may also be upsides to pain.

12. Not that our history – including our Christian history – has been lacking in advocates of such practices. The fact that we have – for now and for the most part – moved beyond such understandings should make us wary of legitimising discriminatory practices or condemning what is culturally unpopular. Only 'for the most part': consider this recent statement from Georgia (USA): 'I'm a Christian and my Christian beliefs are you don't do interracial marriage. That's the way I was brought up and that's the way I believe', [Hoschton, GA Councilman Jim Cleveland] said. 'I have black friends, I hired black people. But when it comes to all this stuff you see on TV, when you see blacks and whites together, it makes my blood boil because that's just not the way a Christian is supposed to live', in Michael Brice-Saddler, 'A Mayor Reportedly said her City isn't Ready for a Black Leader. A Council Member Went Further', washingtonpost.com, 8th May 2019. Or consider another recent example, in which a wedding venue refused an interracial couple: P.R. Lockhart, 'A Venue Turned Down an Interracial Wedding, Citing 'Christian Belief'. It's Far from the First to Do So', vox.com, 3rd September 2019.

13. Immanuel Kant, *Idea for a General History with a Cosmopolitan Purpose* (1784), Proposition 6.

14. For access to some of the literature reviews, see Jack Drescher et al., 'The Growing Regulation of Conversion Therapy', *Journal of Medical Regulation* 102, no. 2 (2016), 7–12. Even those who have voluntarily sought conversion therapies have frequently been discouraged by the results.

15. However, the individual and moralised meaning given to that epithet by conservative writers tends to be different from that with which I associate it.

16. This issue extends beyond that of sexual identity. There is a related debate over how to handle situations in which people suffer from what is called Body Integrity Identity Disorder (BIID), in which healthy limbs are perceived as alien to the person who has them. See Rianne M. Blom, Raoul C. Hennekam and Damiaan Denys, 'Body Integrity Identity Disorder', *PLoS One* 7, no. 4 (2012).

17. I appreciate that this requires some delicacy. Although there is no magic about the age of 'consent', it can hardly be denied that development is progressive and that serious mistakes have been made through premature as well as unnecessarily delayed decisions. For a recent discussion of transitioning, see Tey Meadow, *Trans Kids: Being Gendered in the Twenty-First Century* (Oakland, CA: University of California Press, 2018), and, in a more journalistic discussion, her 'Restricting Care for Transgender Teens Would Be a Terrible Mistake', washingtonpost.com, 6th February 2020.
18. See Catherine Healy, 'Living on the Edge: Parallels Between the Deaf and Gay Communities in the United States', swarthmore.edu, 2007.
19. For starters, see Is 35:5; Matt 11:5; Mk 7:32-37; Lk 7:22. Note, however, (a) that deafness is sometimes categorised along with blindness, lameness, leprousness and muteness; and (b) the condemnation of those who oppress the deaf (Lev. 19:14).
20. Compare Ex 4:11 with Jn 9: 1-12 and Lk 13:1-5.
21. Rebecca Kelsall, 'An Isolated People: What the Deaf Need You to Hear', cru.org, 19th October 2016. More theologically oriented is Marcel Broesterhuizen, 'Faith in Deaf Culture', *Theological Studies* 66 (2005): 304-329.
22. See Christina Lisk, 'Children of a Lesser God, Children of a Different Choice', HearingLikeMe.com, 6th September 2014.
23. See Bob Ayres, 'Created Deaf in the Image of God', YFC Blog (yfc.net), 15th November 2010.
24. Within conservative circles, J.I. Packer's stand is frequently referenced. See J.I. Packer, 'Why I Walked: Some-times Loving a Denomination Requires You to Fight', *Christianity Today* (1st January 2003), 46-50. It is also referenced in larger splits, such as some of the reactions to Proposal 84 within the Uniting Church of Australia ('Sexuality and Leadership - Documenting the History', assembly.uca.org.au, August 2009. Maybe we can learn from the debate between 'originalists' and 'developmentalists' in law as well. The words of a Constitution may stay pretty much the same; but how we understand them is a lesson in contestation.