

Rationality needed to criticize homosexuality

Jonathan Henry's "Religion prohibits passing judgment" opinion piece, which appeared in the March 21 issue of *The Collegian*, is disturbing. At first, it seems as if he were merely making some innocuous statements about society and homosexuality from a good Christian's point of view. With the gospel in one hand and faith in the other, Henry says that he believes that no one, including homosexuals, should be discriminated against and that he does not believe he is more righteous than the average homosexual (whatever that may mean). But before criticizing his use of religion to justify his stance toward homosexuality, the article's first paragraph deserves some attention.

The first paragraph's anecdote about Henry's family life presents this moral: worry about yourself, and let homosexuals worry about themselves. This point made, Henry immediately says that the same applies to homosexuals. He's telling homosexuals, "Don't whine, don't complain, and worry about yourselves in the same way my father told me and my siblings." The text's patronizing tone is thus established here.

Moreover, the laissez-faire, I-worry-about-myself-and-let-them-worry-about-themselves attitude is apathetic and does not address the problems society has with homosexuality, discrimination and intolerance. It is just a matter of looking at state legislation, listening to people's comments and attitudes about homosexu-

ality, to realize that homosexuals are constantly harassed, if not brutalized, in the Land of the Free. And yet, Henry says that it does not concern him; homosexuals should worry about themselves.

His assertion, that he can't say that those who criticize homosexuality are wrong, but many of them should be paying attention to their own actions, is even more baffling. Several questions arise: if Henry is not saying that those who criticize homosexuality are wrong, is he saying that they are right? And if this is not what he means (he is simply being diplomatic and trying not to make certain judgments), what is he saying? Who should be paying attention to their actions homosexuals or those who discriminate against them?

Then, Henry says he does not often speak **against** homosexuality (which makes me think maybe he sometimes does) for deeply religious reasons. Although he explicitly says that he does not believe humans sinless and sinful should be subject to unjust treatments and that he is not the epitome of righteousness, he then states he is not required to love, like, accept or even respect actions that have been deemed sinful. Say, homosexuality. And if Henry is not willing to accept or respect homosexual behavior, he is not only being intolerant, but also indulging in an act of passive discrimination.

His argument is, hence, non sequitur. It does not follow.

But, Henry does not only criticize homosexuality. He then starts pointing out deviant behavior, such as pre-marital sex and lust, found in "Married With Children" and "Martin." In an excess of Puritanism, he says that there is too much sex in this society. But, what is too much sex? And how does this convoluted critique on pop culture pertain to his argument **against** homosexual behavior?

The only relationship between his condemnation of homosexuality and other deviant sexual behavior is that these, according to Henry, are sinful. In his defense of the impeccable, of the pure, he says Biblical law is the law. But, how? Or, why? Henry's Thomism, that we answer to an authority who is much higher than public sentiment or political correctness, does not answer how or why Biblical law is the law.

Henry says that he won't accept homosexual behavior because it has been unacceptable and an abomination for thousands of years. But it is even more unreasonable to abide by something simply because it has been around for thousands of years. In that case, we should instead follow Hammurabi's code of laws.

If Henry wants to discuss and develop a coherent argument, he should argue within the realm of rationality. Religion is irrational, and therefore, it cannot be used to sustain an argument.

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