

Resources on “Homosexuality” - Selected resources organized by the Wesleyan Quadrilateral

Compiled by J. Benjamin Roe, D.Min.

There are thousands of books, websites, and stories on the issues of human sexuality. The Wesleyan Quadrilateral is a method for theological reflection and discernment on issues important to faith. These are only a few possible resources organized into the four sources for this reflection towards an inclusive and affirming stance towards LGBTQIA individuals. (Web links are on page 2.)

Scripture

Key concept: The word “homosexual” was invented in 1868; the Bible assumes behavior, not orientation. The cultural setting was very different centuries and millenia ago. Historical-critical study of scripture is necessary.

What the Bible Really Says about Homosexuality; Millennium Edition, Updated and Expanded - by

Daniel Helmeniak; a thorough examination of what the Bible really says in its context and ours

Matthew Vines examines the Biblical passages regarding homosexuality (web speech)

The Bible and Homosexuality, by Walter Wink, 1999; a small booklet, good for basic introduction

Reading the Bible Again For the First Time; Taking the Bible Seriously But Not Literally, by Marcus

Borg, 2001; a way of looking at the Bible from the method scholars typically use

Tradition

Key concept: Christian tradition is overwhelmingly negative to homosexual practice, often based on misreading Biblical texts and settings, and blind to the integration of sexuality and human identity.

Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality: Gay People in Western Europe from the Beginning of the Christian Era to the Fourteenth Century, by John Boswell, 1980; a thorough, massively

documented (and controversial) study of original sources, showing some parts of the church were accepting

Same-Sex Unions in Premodern Europe, by John Boswell, 1994

a study showing unions between figures of the same sex and gender were socially accepted

Homosexuality and the Western Christian Tradition, by Derrick Sherwin Bailey, 1955

ground-breaking historical research on gay people in the Christian West

The Church and the Homosexual: Fourth Edition, by John J. McNeill, 1993; a scholarly analysis of the

Biblical passages, and shows that as we now understand homosexuality, it is not Biblically condemned

Reason (Science and Theology)

Key concepts: Scientific study and discoveries about sexuality are important: the earth is not flat, and sex is not binary. Disciplined and rational reflection on theology and ethics enriches and strengthens faith.

Body, Sex, and Pleasure: Reconstructing Christian Sexual Ethics, by Christine Gudorf, 1994

Proposes a sweeping challenge to traditional Christian teaching on sexual roles, activities, and relationships

Embodiment: An Approach to Sexuality and Christian Theology, by James B. Nelson, 1979

A landmark re-imagining of sexuality, theology, and ethics

Sex and Gender Special Issue, Scientific American, Volume 317, Issue 3, especially p. 50-51

Sex, gender, and sexuality are all distinct from one another, and each exists on its own spectrum.

The Erosion of Sexual Dimorphism: Challenges to Religion and Religious Ethics, Gudorf: AAR

Inherited categories of dimorphic sexuality not only are challenged but become less and less intelligible.

Science of Sexuality Article in Cosmos, November 10, 2017

The spectrum of human sexual experience is vast, and its incredible diversity is not always acknowledged.

Healthline: “What Does It Mean to Identify as Nonbinary?”

The idea that there’s male and female isn’t false — it’s just incomplete.

Christian Experience

Key concept: Much writing and discussion has been **about** LGBTQI people, not **with** them. So what is the experience of LGBTQI Christians, of allies? What have they discovered about faith and God?

Our Strangely Warmed Hearts, by Bishop Karen P. Oliveto, 2018; traces the history of the church's struggle with gay people, and provides first-person witnesses of LGBTQ United Methodists

Incompatible With Christian Teaching - DVD documentary film, 2012; detailing the stories of United Methodist clergy and laity, LGBT and straight allies

See Matthew Vines' Lecture cited above (web); Vines tells his own story in the process of the talk *Stranger at the Gate: To Be Gay and Christian in America*, by Mel White, 1995; ghostwriter for conservative evangelical leaders, White tells his story of a 25-year struggle to be whole and gay

Coming Out as Sacrament, by Chris Glaser, 1998; a gay Christian activist argues that coming out - as gay, lesbian, bisexual, or transgender - has biblical precedence and sacramental dimensions

"Reflection of an ally," Jim Palmquist, treasurer of Affirmation; presentation to an educational forum

Ruth Ellis Center: *Truth and Reconciliation in The UMC* (video); independently produced video shares experiences of Michigan lesbian, bisexual, gay, transgender, and queer people and their families

New Ways Ministries: A collection of Catholic LGBTQ Christians' stories (web)

Reconciling Ministries Network (web)

United Methodist Queer Clergy Caucus members (web)

Web addresses for above resources:

Helmeniak: <https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/188636009X/102-5522310-2838527>

Vines: <http://www.matthewvines.com/transcript/>

Wink: <http://umaffirm.org/study/Homosexuality%20and%20the%20Bible.pdf>

Borg: <https://www.amazon.com/Reading-Bible-Again-First-Time/dp/0060609192>

Boswell: <https://www.amazon.com/Christianity-Social-Tolerance-Homosexuality-Fourteenth/dp/022634522X/>

Boswell: <https://www.amazon.com/Same-Sex-Unions-Premodern-Europe-Boswell/dp/0679751645>

Bailey: <https://www.amazon.com/Homosexuality-Western-Christian-Tradition-Derrick/dp/0208014926>

McNeill: <https://www.amazon.com/Church-Homosexual-John-J-McNeill/dp/B0093N4G7S>

Gudorf: <https://www.amazon.com/Body-Sex-Pleasure-Reconstructing-Christian/dp/0829810625>

Nelson: <https://www.amazon.com/Embodiment-Approach-Sexuality-Christian-Theology/dp/0806617012>

Scientific American: <https://www.scientificamerican.com/magazine/sa/2017/09-01/>

Scientific American: <https://blogs.scientificamerican.com/sa-visual/visualizing-sex-as-a-spectrum>

Gudorf: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1466344>

Cosmos: <https://cosmosmagazine.com/science/biology/science-of-sexuality/>

Healthline: <https://www.healthline.com/health/transgender/nonbinary>

Oliveto: <https://www.cokesbury.com/product/9781501858918/our-strangely-warmed-hearts>

DVD: <http://www.ebay.com/itm/Incompatible-with-Christian-Teaching-/221658466649>

White: <https://www.amazon.com/Stranger-Gate-Gay-Christian-America/dp/0452273811>

Glaser: <https://www.amazon.com/Coming-Out-Sacrament-Chris-Glaser/dp/0664257488/>

Palmquist: <http://www.umaffirm.org/docs/JimPalmquist-HumanSexualityForumStatement.pdf>

Ruth Ellis Center: <https://vimeo.com/255394270>

New Ways: <https://www.newwaysministry.org/2018/07/22/catholic-and-lgbt-stories-of-faith-family-and-love>

Reconciling Ministries: <https://rmnetwork.org/>

United Methodist Queer Clergy: <https://www.umqcc.org/>

A web version of this bibliography with clickable links is here: jbenjaminroe.com/jbr/writings/33-a-wesleyan-quadrilateral-bibliography