Same-Sex Marriage, ‘Homosexual Desire,’ and the Capacity to Love

The issue of legalized same-sex marriages has been a hot-button issue in the United States. For example, it was one of the issues that mattered most to voters in Ohio in the 2004 presidential election, with Ohio’s electoral votes going to President Bush (an opponent of same-sex marriage), which decided ultimately decided the election in his favor. As of my writing this paper, only five states offer the possibility of same-sex marriage: Vermont, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Iowa. Six other states offer some kind of domestic partnership or civil union status to same-sex couples: Washington, Oregon, California, Nevada, and New Jersey, and Hawaii. And six states, plus Washington D.C., offer some protections and benefits for same-sex couples (with New York and Rhode Island recognizing same-sex marriages performed out of state). Most of the remaining thirty-three states have some kind of provision explicitly prohibiting same-sex unions of any kind.

A wide variety of reasons are given for denying marriage rights to same-sex couples: homosexuality is unnatural and should not be promoted through the legalization of same-sex marriage; legalizing same-sex marriage will destroy “the” family; legalizing same-sex marriage will harm the institution of marriage; legalizing same-sex marriage would start us on the slippery slope to legalizing marriage between humans and non-human animals, or even humans and inanimate objects; and so on and so forth. Unfortunately, when it comes to the public discourse many of these reasons end up functioning more as slogans and bumper sticker sayings rather than premises in arguments or invitations to reasoned debate, and this has made constructive dialogue about same-sex marriage difficult.

The foregoing considerations notwithstanding, many of the objections to same-sex
marriage rest on the premise that homosexuality (both what might be called “homosexual behavior” and what has been termed by some as “the homosexual lifestyle”\(^1\)) is immoral. Though there are a variety of reasons given in defense of the view that homosexuality is immoral,\(^2\) one in particular has added significance for the debate over same-sex marriage, namely the assertion that homosexual relationships are disordered or unhealthy because homosexuals themselves are incapable of proper, healthy, mature, loving relationships. Though no one to my knowledge has explicitly admitted so, I think it is this conviction about the inability of homosexuals to love that lies at the heart of worries about the way in which same-sex marriages would (and are) harming the concepts of marriage and of the family. And this objection is significant not merely because it is often cited by opponents of the movement to legalize same-sex marriage; more importantly, if the objection is cogent, it provides very good grounds for not legalizing same-sex marriage.

My aim in this paper is to refute the claim that homosexuals are incapable of having genuine loving relationships (hereafter the “Incapable of Love Objection,” or ILO, for short), and I aim to do so by arguing that ILO rests on a philosophically erroneous conception of desire. I proceed as follows. First, I address two very important preliminary concerns: (1) the vocabulary

\[^1\] See, for example, David Bradshaw, “Reply to Corvino.” in *Same Sex: Debating the Ethics, Science, and Culture of Homosexuality*, ed. John Corvino (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1997), pp. 17-30. Bradshaw distinguishes three levels of objections to homosexuality, only one of which he takes to rest on explicitly moral grounds.

\[^2\] For a fairly comprehensive review of the variety of reasons offered in favor of the view that homosexuality is immoral see John Corvino, “Why Shouldn’t Tommy and Jim Have Sex? A Defense of Homosexuality,” in *Same Sex: Debating the Ethics, Science, and Culture of Homosexuality*, ed. John Corvino (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 1997), pp. 3-16. Interestingly, Corvino does not address the main focus of this paper, namely the objection that homosexual relationships lack affective complementarity.
used in the paper with respect to “homosexual” and its cognates, and (2) the fact that ILO is often motivated by explicitly religious concerns, which seem to preclude rational debate about the matter. Second, I review the nuts and bolts of ILO with special reference to the way in which the Catholic Church has articulated it (since, to my knowledge, this institution is one of the few sources for arguments in defense of the ILO), and I draw special attention to the way in which the Catholic Church invokes so-called “homosexual desire” in defense of ILO. Third, by relying on the arguments of Gareth Moore, I demonstrate how the Church’s defense of ILO rests on a philosophically erroneous conception of desire that fails to take into account what Moore calls the intensionality of desire. I conclude by drawing attention to the implications of my critique of ILO for the debate over same-sex marriage in the United States.

1. Preliminary Considerations

One of the main difficulties facing anyone who writes about same-sex marriages concerns terminology. Specifically, it is very difficult to get clear about what we mean by “homosexual” and “homosexuality.” For example, people distinguish between homosexual sexual acts, on the one hand, and homosexual feelings, desires, and interests. One might also reasonably talk about homosexual culture (or cultures). All of this is confounded by the ways in which social scientists have helped us understand the complex constituents of sexual identity. And when one keeps in mind that there are a number of terms used to refer to different sexual identities (e.g., gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, transgendered, intersexual, etc.), things get even more complicated. One way to navigate these difficult straights, and the way that I will adopt, is to follow the categories and uses as articulated by sociologists. According to the *Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology*:
Homosexuality refers to sexual behaviors and desires between males or between females. Gay refers to self-identification with such practices and desires. Gay and homosexual are both terms mostly used only for men. Lesbian is its female counterpart. Such definitions have run into major problems, and nowadays the concept queer is used to indicate the fluency of sexual practices and gender performances.3

Because the particular objection to same-sex marriage that I wish to critique rests on a certain conception of homosexual desire, throughout the paper I will use the term “homosexual,” which should be taken to denote sexual behaviors and desires between males or between females.4 This still leaves one with the problem of determining what counts as “sexual behaviors” or “sexual acts/activities”. One might be tempted to define “sexual behavior” as behavior that involves at least one person’s genitals, but this restriction quickly shows itself to be inadequate. For example, does kissing (what kind?) or hugging count as a sexual behavior? Holding hands? Gazing lovingly into another’s eyes? Such examples seem to indicate that “sexual behavior” is a family resemblance concept (i.e., a concept for which there is no sharp demarcation regarding what it denotes).5 With this in mind, I will stipulate that “sexual


4 I should note, however, that more often than note, opponents of same-sex marriage articulate their objections by reference to male (rather than female) homosexuality. I draw attention to this fact, not because these objectors think same-sex behaviors and desires between females is morally permissible, but because there may be certain conceptions of gender roles and gender identity at work behind some of these objections. See, for example, Gareth Moore, A Question of Truth: Christianity and Homosexuality (London and New York: Continuum, 2003), pp. 84-85.

5 The notion of a “family resemblance” originates with Ludwig Wittgenstein. See, for example, Philosophical Investigations, trans. G.E.M. Anscombe (New York: The MacMillan Company, 1953); “we see a complicated network of similarities overlapping and criss-crossing:
behavior” include, but is not limited to, behavior that involves the use of genital organs and/or is performed with sexual intent.” I am aware that this definition leaves much to be desired, but for my purposes it suffices, since most objections to homosexuality concern activities or behavior that is captured by the definition (e.g., penile-anal intercourse or male-performed fellatio).

In addition to the foregoing considerations regarding terminology, there is a further, even potentially more significant problem facing those who wish to challenge moral objections to homosexuality, namely the way in which such objections (at least in the U.S.) often rest on and are motivated by religious considerations, particularly and especially so-called Christian considerations. It is not uncommon for opponents of same-sex marriage to cite passages from the Christian Bible (from both the Old and New Testaments) as substantiating their belief that homosexuality, as well as same-sex unions, are immoral and, so, should be eliminated and discouraged as far as possible. The reason such appeals to religion tend to preclude debate is because they often are made from what I will call a fundamentalist approach to the relationship between faith and reason. To articulate the matter crudely, fundamentalist approaches maintain that faith (which I take to include any truth claims based on Christian revelation) and reason

sometimes overall similarities, sometimes similarities of detail” (§ 66), and “I can think of no better expression to characterize these similarities than “family resemblances”” (§67).

I slightly modify Gareth Moore’s definition of “sexual act,” A Question of Truth, p. 39. I understand, as does Moore, that “sexual intent” also offers difficulties with respect to articulating a satisfactory definition. I do not have a satisfactory way of clearly distinguishing “sexual intent” from other kinds of intent. That said, an example may suffice to illustrate what is meant by the term: when I kiss my lover in order to express affection to him or her qua my lover, I act with sexual intent. Whereas no such intent is operative when I shake my colleague’s hand.

I write “so-called” because not all who identify as Christians would accept the appeals to Christian doctrine and scripture as faithful expressions of Christianity.
(which I take to include all truth claims not based on Christian revelation) are utterly separate and, therefore, have nothing to say to each other. In its most extreme forms, fundamentalist approaches to faith and reason pit reason against faith, depicting the former as an enemy of the latter; in its more moderate incarnations, fundamentalism merely holds that reason and faith have nothing to say to one another, so that beliefs grounded in revelation are unimpeachable (and indefensible) by appeal to reason. The problem posed by such religious opposition to same-sex marriage is obvious. If one’s objection to same-sex marriage and homosexuality is motivated by religious beliefs that are either opposed to reason or mutually exclusive with reason, then reasoned debate is ruled out from the start.

For the foregoing reasons, I will ignore directly addressing those who would qualify as what I have identified as “Christian fundamentalists.” Fortunately, for my purposes, the Catholic Church does not espouse a fundamentalist view of faith and reason. In fact, the Catholic Church has a long and rich intellectual history regarding the relationship between faith and reason. To summarize the Catholic Church’s position all too briefly, when it comes to matters of faith (e.g., the teaching that God is three persons in one substance), although these doctrines are not susceptible to rational demonstration, believers can use reason to defend such doctrines from the charge that they are contradictory or nonsensical. This consideration is

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8 For a good discussion and critique of three influential thinkers who hold what I’ve called a fundamentalist view of the relationship between faith and reason, see Brian Davies’ “Is God Beyond Reason,” *Philosophical Investigations* vol. 32, issue 4: pp. 338-359.

important since the Catholic Church is one of the few sources for an explicit and extended defense of ILO. It is to their defense that I want no to turn.

2. The Catholic Church and the “Inability to Love Objection” to Homosexuality

The Catholic Church, like other forms of Christianity, relies on Biblical teaching as a source of truth regarding the immorality of homosexuality and of homosexual relationships, but the Catholic Church also relies on reasoned arguments regarding what they identify as the natural moral law. These natural law arguments, Catholics contend, do not rely in any way on Christian revelation. So, we find in the following claim in the 2003 document, “Considerations Regarding Proposals to Give Legal Recognition to Unions Between Homosexual Persons”: “Since this question relates to the natural moral law, the arguments that follow are addressed not only to those who believe in Christ, but to all persons committed to promoting and defending the common good of society.”\textsuperscript{10} The moral arguments put forth by the Catholic Church that do not rely on revelation are meant to function as cogent, philosophical arguments that appeal to anyone, regardless of her or his religious beliefs (or lack thereof), and, therefore, these arguments are susceptible to rational critique.\textsuperscript{11}

The Catholic Church’s position regarding the morality of homosexuality is nicely


\textsuperscript{11} I purposefully leave unaddressed the cognitive dissonance a Catholic may have upon discovering that the Catholic Church’s reasoned moral arguments on an issue conflict with the position it puts forth on the basis of revelation.
summed up in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, which states:

Homosexuality refers to relations between men or between women who experience an exclusive or predominant sexual attraction toward persons of the same sex. It has taken a great variety of forms through the centuries and in different cultures. Its psychological genesis remains largely unexplained. Basing itself on Sacred Scripture, which presents homosexual acts as acts of grave depravity, tradition has always declared that "homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered." They are contrary to the natural law. They close the sexual act to the gift of life. They do not proceed from a genuine affective and sexual complementarity. Under no circumstances can they be approved.\(^\text{12}\)

Though the *Catechism* makes reference to Sacred Scripture, the heart of the philosophical argument concerns the way in which homosexuality (understood in this document to denote a certain kind of sexual attraction or desire) and homosexual sexual acts\(^\text{13}\) (which, in this document, covers all acts motivated by homosexual desire) are contrary to the natural law. In fact, the Catholic Church’s philosophical objection to homosexuality may be understood to contain three components: (1) homosexual sex acts are “intrinsically disordered,” (2) homosexual sex acts are closed to the gift of life, (3) homosexual sex acts do no proceed from a genuine affective and sexual complementarity. It is on the basis of these philosophical arguments that the Church maintains that legalizing same-sex unions is contrary to the common good, would harm the concept of marriage, as well as the family.\(^\text{14}\)

In order to answer these arguments, I need first to explicate each of them. Fabian Bruskewitz, the Catholic Bishop of Lincoln, Nebraska, quite clearly explains the elements of the


\(^{13}\) I have taken the liberty of more precisely stating what is meant by the phrase “homosexual acts” in the church document.

\(^{14}\) “Considerations Regarding Same-Sex Unions.”
Catholic argument against the morality of homosexuality. Regarding the charge that homosexual sex acts are “intrinsically disordered,” Bruskewitz asserts that this is so because “they lack an essential and indispensable goal.” The essential and indispensable goal that is missing is the end of creating a human life, which picks up on the second component of the Catholic Church’s objection to homosexual sex acts (namely, that they are closed to the gift of life). When it comes to fleshing out the third objection, Bruskewitz relies on Livio Melina, a professor of moral theology at the John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family at the Catholic University of America:

In the homosexual act, true reciprocity, which makes the gift of self and the acceptance of the other possible, cannot take place. By lacking complementarity, each one of the partners remains locked in himself and experiences contact with the other’s body, merely as an opportunity for selfish enjoyment. At the same time, homosexual activity also involves the illusion of a false intimacy that is obsessively sought and constantly lacking. The other is not really other. He is like the self; in reality, he is only the mirror of the self which it confirms in its own solitude exactly when the encounter is sought. This pathological narcissism has been identified in the homosexual personality studies of many psychologists. Hence, great instability and promiscuity prevail in the most widespread model of homosexual life, which is why the view advanced by some, of encouraging stable and institutionalized unions, seems completely unrealistic.

I am not concerned to address the assertion that psychologists have empirically verified Melina’s position, nor the assertion that instability and promiscuity prevail in the most widespread model of homosexual life. This is for (at least) two reasons. First, neither Melina nor Bruskewitz identify the empirical studies that are meant to substantiate these claims. Second, there have

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16 Ibid., p. 222.
been a number of studies that have shown their assertions to be false. I am more concerned with Melina’s and Bruskewitz’s explication of what I’ve identified as the third component of the Church’s philosophical objection to homosexuality. According to them, to say that homosexual sex acts lack genuine sexual and affective complementarity is just to say that such acts are essentially hedonistic and narcissistic, and this is why it is “unrealistic” to try to promote stable homosexual relationships—such relationships are impossible, since homosexuals are incapable of love.

3. A Reply to ILO: Sexual Intercourse and “Homosexual Desire”

I want to start my critique of the foregoing arguments by pointing out how the first two components of the Catholic objection to homosexuality are basically restatements of the claim that homosexual sex acts lack sexual complementarity. So, it will be enough for me to refute the Church’s arguments if I am able to address the third component of the their position.

Since I want to focus on the charge that homosexual sex acts lack affective complementarity, I will quickly point out the flaws in the charge that homosexual sex acts are immoral because they lack sexual complementarity. The foundation of this objection is the belief that the sole proper purpose of sexual intercourse is to procreate. On this view, any sexual intercourse that does not have procreation as its end is unnatural and immoral, since procreation

17 See, for example, John Corvino’s “Why Shouldn’t Tommy and Jim Have Sex,” pp. 7-12.

18 I do not have the space to investigate what it means to love someone properly. For the purpose of my argument, I will assume that loving someone, at minimum, entails being genuinely concerned with her/his good.
clearly is the purpose of our genitals. Homosexual sex acts (of any type whatsoever, not merely male-male and female-female sexual intercourse) are immoral. As a number of thinkers have pointed out, this argument rests on a false assumption. The assumption is that procreation is the purpose of sexual intercourse and that any kind of sexual activity involving organs that does not aim at the purpose of sexual intercourse is intrinsically disordered, since it is inconsistent with the essential and natural aim of sexual intercourse. It is easy to see where the argument goes wrong by using an analogy. Let’s take the tongue. One might ask, “What is the purpose of the tongue?” But reflection shows this question to be misguided, insofar as there are a number of different uses of the tongue, none of which offer themselves up as the purpose. For example, we use our tongues in order to talk, in order to taste our food, in order to swallow, in order to whistle, blow bubbles with bubble gum, lick stamps, etc. Have we good reason for asserting that any of these should be singled out as the purpose of the tongue? Arguably not. And even if one were able to formulate an argument that sought to demonstrate that (for example) the purpose of the tongue is to aid in digestion, this argument would not rule out other legitimate (and, hence, morally permissible) uses of the tongue. My point here is a logical one: establishing that some organ has X as an end does not entail ruling out the organ also has other ends such as A, B, and C, unless A, B, and C are logical contradictories of X. Assuming that procreation is a purpose of sexual intercourse, those who wish to argue that homosexual sex acts are immoral because they lack sexual complementarity must establish that such acts are logically contradictory to penile-vaginal intercourse. I know of no such argument, nor do I see how one can be cogently

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19 See, for example, Corvino, “Why Shouldn’t Tommy and Jim Have Sex,” pp. 6-7, and Moore, A Question of Truth, pp. 216-239.
articulated.

So, the argument that homosexual sex acts lack sexual complementarity does not hold water and, so, does not establish that homosexual sex acts are \textit{prima facie} immoral on those grounds (though there may be particular instances of homosexual sexual acts that are immoral; their immorality, however, would not stem from the fact that they are \textit{homosexual sex acts}—i.e., sexual acts between two males or between two females). What about the charge that homosexual sex acts lack affective complementarity? This, I think, is the more important objection, since it gets after what the Catholic Church is keen on calling “the homosexual condition.” One has (or is in) the homosexual condition if one has what the Church identifies as “homosexual desire.” It is this conception of homosexual desire that lies at the root of the moral problem of homosexuality, according to the Catholic Church, since it is this desire that motivates homosexual sex acts, and it is this homosexual desire that precludes people in homosexual sexual relationships from achieving genuine affective complementarity. In order to understand why this is so, one need only realize that homosexual desire is understood as the desire to have sexual relations (of any kind) with someone who is the same sex. So, homosexual desire in males is the desire to have sex with a man; homosexual desire in females is the desire to have sex with a female. If my desire to have sex with someone is because he is a man, according to the catholic Church’s argument, this shows me to have an essentially narcissistic desire, since what I really want is to have sex with myself (and anyone will do as a surrogate self, so long as that person is male).

There are two main strategies in arguing against the claim that homosexual sexual relationships essentially lack affective complementarity. The first strategy picks up on and
critiques an assumption of the argument, namely that males and females are natural, essential kinds that were made to complement each other. David Bradshaw articulates this assumptions well. “Every lover knows,” Bradshaw avers,

that love is more than simply a delight in the other qua [sic.] individual; man also delights in the femininity of woman, and woman delights in the masculinity of man....the [sexual] act is a reenactment [sic.] at a personal level of the drama of the mutual need, attraction, and union of man and woman that has been repeated in countless times and countless ways throughout human history.\(^\text{20}\)

Though I think there are a number of problems with this assumption (problems that have been identified by work in history, sociology and anthropology), I pass over it in this context, since I think the assumption is an empirical, sociological one, not a philosophical one.

The second strategy one can use to show the error of viewing homosexual desire is narcissistic because it is desire for the same is a philosophical strategy. To put it briefly, the concept of homosexual desire with which the Catholic Church operates makes philosophical errors about desire. To use Gareth Moore’s way of putting the point, what the concept of “homosexual desire” fails to recognize is that desire is intensional, and instead construes desire to be extensional.\(^\text{21}\)

The best way to illustrate Moore’s (and my) objection to the argument is by way of an example. Let’s suppose that I have a long day at work, and I am sorely in need of a drink. What I want is a rusty nail, and after work I seek out, buy, and consume a rusty nail. Were someone to try to explain my behavior, she might say, “Chris had a bad day and wanted a rusty nail.” In this


\(^{21}\) *A Question of Truth*, pp. 49-55. I am greatly indebted to Moore’s treatment of desire. Although Moore critiques the view that homosexuals are incapable of love *qua* homosexuals (pp. 157-163), he does not make the argument I make here.
example, the object of my desire is a rusty nail, and a person who describes my desire as a desire for a rusty nail would describe it correctly. But as philosophers have noted, an object or action can often be described in a number of ways. For example, I might object to something a colleague says at a department meeting, and this action may alternatively described as “raising an objection,” “prolonging the meeting,” “winding up Vasquez,” etc. The same holds for me wanting a rusty nail. The object of my desire can be truly described in a number of ways, but not every true description is going to capture what Moore calls “the point” of my desire (i.e., what it is I am aiming at when I act). Were every true description of the point of my desire equally substitutable, then desire would be extensional. That, however, is not the case. To see what I mean, let’s return to the example of wanting a rusty nail. Let’s suppose that I buy the necessary ingredients and head home in order to make one for myself. I have rocks glasses with polka dots that I quite like, and let’s suppose that in my example, I make myself a rusty nail in one of my polka dot glasses. One might say, with this in mind, “Chris wants what is in the polka dot glass.” Yes, the rusty nail is in the polka dot glass, and, yes, I want to drink the rusty nail—so, yes, I want to drink what is in the polka dot glass. But describing my desire as a desire for what is in the polka dot glass misconstrues my desire. It misconstrues it because it implies that I want what is in the polka dot glass because it is in the polka dot glass. But the fact that the rusty nail is in the polka dot glass is contingent and utterly inconsequential to the point of my desire. I would want it just as much if it were served in a bowl or a pint glass. To see that only some (but not all) descriptions of the point of my desire correctly capture it is to see that desire (or, more precisely, descriptions of the point of desire) is intensional.

22 *A Question of Truth*, p. 51.
To say that homosexual desire is essentially a desire for the same is to say that the point of homosexual desire is to have sexual relations with someone of the same sex. When it comes to finding out what someone wants (i.e., when it comes to finding out the point of someone’s desire), the typical way to do so is to ask her or him, all things being equal. It stands to reason, then, that the way to find out the point of someone’s desire to have sexual intercourse with someone else is to ask the person in question, “Why do you want to have sexual intercourse with person X?” And typically, answers to this questions make reference to a person’s good looks, or charm, or wit, or sensitivity, etc. It would be odd, indeed, were one to answer the question by saying, “I want to have sexual intercourse with person X because person X is male (or female).” In other words, in cases where someone wants to have sexual relations with someone else, the desire is not motivated by the sex of the object of one’s attraction. To say, for example, that Tim wants to have sex with David because David is a man is to miss the point of Tim’s desire completely. Tim most likely wants to have sex with David for any number of reasons, none of which have to do with David’s being a man. Sure, David is male, and perhaps Tim tends to want to have sex with people who happen to be male. But to say that Tim desires David because David is male is akin to saying I want the rusty nail because it is in the polka dot glass. The concept of homosexual desire construes the point or object of desire to be extensional, but this is grossly mistaken.

23 Of course, I mean to exclude cases where someone is ill (e.g., suffering from Alzheimer’s Disease) or is lying.
5. Conclusion

Homosexual desire is a myth, one that rests on a conceptual confused picture of desire as extensional. Once one recognizes that desire is intensional, one can see that there is no reason to believe that there is such a thing as “homosexual desire” (just as there is no such thing as “heterosexual desire,” or “bisexual desire”). Moreover, one can see that there is no prima facie reason for believing that the desires of homosexuals are essentially desires to have sex with the same, and, therefore, the Church provides no good argument in support of the view that the sexual desires of homosexual people are essentially narcissistic. There is a fairly obvious objection to my argument, which can be formulated as follows: if male homosexual desire is not the desire to have sex with a man (and female homosexual desire the desire to have sex with a woman), then why do homosexual men only have sex with men (and homosexual women only have sex with women)? But this objection misses the force of the argument showing that desire is intensional. That homosexual men tend to have sexual relations with men (and homosexual women with women) is no more pertinent to the point of the sexual desires of homosexuals than the fact that I tend to drink rusty nails out of glasses is to the point of my desire for rusty nails. There might be some interesting empirical investigations about the ways in which humans come to form our sexual desires, but such investigations are not pertinent to understanding what it is a homosexual male or female want when they have sexual desires.²⁴

²⁴ I recognize that my analogy with the rusty nail may invite a challenge. For example, one might say that I drink rusty nails because the nature of a rusty nail is to be liquid, and, so, drinking a rusty nail out of a glass is part and parcel of wanting to drink a rusty nail—just as wanting to have sex with a man is part and parcel of homosexual desire. The problem with this rejoinder is that it still fails to see the intensionality of desire. That a rusty nail is liquid is not why I drink it (I’d consume one if it were made into a popsicle). And that David is a male is not why Tim is attracted to him and wants to have sexual relations with him.
If my foregoing arguments work, particularly the argument regarding desire, then it is quite clear that the most common moral objections to homosexuality do not stand up to rational scrutiny. And if that is the case, then these moral objections to homosexuality cannot reasonably found objections to same-sex marriages. Of course, people whose opposition to same-sex marriage rests on moral objections to homosexuality may try to formulate new arguments. But the foregoing arguments against homosexuality, which I think are the best arguments available to opponents of homosexuality, seem to me not to be cogent.

25 I think my argument also works against some objections to same-sex couples adopting children, insofar as those objections assume that same-sex couples are incapable of loving because they are essentially narcissistic.