

# Book review : R.O.D. Benson : in defense of homosexuality : male and female

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## Book Review

*R.O.D. Benson. In Defense of Homosexuality: Male and Female.*

R.O.D. Benson, in the preface of his book, states that his purpose was to examine the theory that heterosexuality is the only normal way to have sex and to see if this theory could withstand critical analysis. To disprove this exclusive heterosexuality theory, he adopts a contrary theory, namely, the theory that homosexuality is also a normal way to express the sexual desire. If he can prove this theory concerning homosexual behavior, then the theory that only heterosexual behavior is normal is false.

To accomplish this, he adopts the following procedure: He examines the basic and root arguments from which every argument against homosexuality arises. All arguments against the normality of homosexual behavior stem from these 4 myths: Homosexuality is unnatural. Homosexuality is against God's Laws. Homosexuality is a mental disease. Homosexuality cannot be defended ethically. Benson's analysis of these myths involves asking and answering probing questions such as: What is meant by nature, by natural? Does man accept «nature» or does he change or seek to change nature? If he seeks to change nature, what criteria does he use? How are God's Laws made known to man? Are God's Laws ever obsolescent? Who determines obsolescence? Does the concept of a disease imply a norm? How are norms selected? Does a concept of norm involve a definition of the «nature» of men? What is man and how is his «nature» discovered? Is the concept of values implicit in our «definition» of the «nature» of man?

If every question and answer of Benson's is understood, this reviewer believes that no homosexual need ever feel that he cannot scientifically and factually defend homosexual behavior.

Yet, Benson goes a step further, and by this step makes not only a contribution to the problem of homosexuality, but a contribution to human understanding. Benson shows that science, logic and the facts are not «sufficient» to make a final judgment in any field of human knowledge, whether this field be the abstract studies of mathematics or logic or the practical studies of physics, chemistry, medicine, psychology, etc., etc. Benson calls our attention to the non-rational, an omnibus term to cover all of the factors which play a decisive role in our general judgment, yet, which lies outside of science, logic and the facts. Benson's emphasis upon the non-rational will enable anyone to know when an argument has reached a cul-de-sac—when an argument cannot be further discussed.

The reader may wonder if Benson's book is too difficult, too intellectual. My answer to this is simple: Every homosexual had better begin to think. He is the victim of ignorance and stupidity—and the only way he can break his chains is to destroy the myths which keep him in bondage. Benson's book destroys every myth which presumes to state that homosexuality is not one possible way to have sex.

Yet, appearances are deceiving: Benson's book is much easier than it appears. Every idea of his book has an italicized paragraph heading, therefore, merely through a reading of these italics, one could form a fairly accurate concept of Benson's book. However, all this is besides the point. Benson's book is the first book which ruthlessly destroys all the myths concerning homosexuality. Through an understanding of Benson's work, no homosexual need be ashamed of having

chosen homosexuality as a way to express his sexual desires; no homosexual need feel at a loss when homosexuality is discussed: he will be able, if he masters Benson's work, to discuss intelligently every meaningful facet of homosexuality.

James Forrester

## Student Use as Homo 'Bait' Hit in Florida

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (UPI)—State and Florida State University officials blasted police Tuesday for hiring college students to act as bait and informers in a crackdown on homosexuals.

University Dean of students Harry Day said the use of students here as police informers in morals cases was «altogether wrong» and should be stopped.

Gov. Haydon Burns and university Board of Regents Chairman Chester Ferguson also deplored the practice.

The officials' reaction was sparked when Police Chief Frank Stoutamire confirmed reports that FSU students were hired to loiter at local bus stations and tip police when they were approached and propositioned by sexual deviates.

«As great as the need may be to expose sexual deviates, the procedure of involving college students in the process seems altogether wrong,» Day said. «It is hoped the practice will not be continued.»

Assistant Police Chief Robert Maige, who said students are paid \$10 for each homosexual who is convicted, defended the program.

«It's like buying bootleg,» Maige said. «You've got to have somebody to get the evidence, and homosexuals will proposition young college students.»

Ferguson said the program should have been cleared with the university administration, which has a program of helping students find part-time jobs.

«I am sympathetic with the elimination of homosexuals from educational institutions,» Ferguson said. «But it should be done with the full approbation and approval of the administrative authorities of the university involved.»

Maige said most of the student informers were over 21 years of age and were sound, mature and trustworthy. He added that many of them are studying criminology at Florida State.

The assistant chief said only «two or three» student informers work at one time and their main beat is the local bus stations, which are favorite hangouts of homosexuals in Tallahassee.

from: Hollywood Citizen-News / 29 December 1965

## Three Letters to the Sunday Times, London, Dec. 1965

Sir,—Mr William Shepherd, M P, complains of emotion, propaganda and lack of knowledge of homosexuality in discussions about law reform.

These attributes have indeed been much in evidence in utterances by opponents of the Wolfenden proposals—nor least those of Mr Shepherd himself. Among his past statements are the following:—

«Incest is a much more natural act than homosexuality.»

«Every homosexual is a potential danger to young persons.»

«I want to discourage the homosexual by the discouragement of the law because the homosexual in society has a very difficult place indeed . . . The more