

Detta är min kropp

Kristen tro, sexualitet och samlevnad

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Akademisk avhandling för avläggande av filosofie doktorsexamen
i religionsvetenskap vid Göteborgs universitet, som med tillstånd
av humanistiska fakultetsnämnden, kommer att offentligent
försvaras lördagen den 29 januari kl. 10.15 i Stora hörsalen,
Humanisten, Renströmsgatan 6, Göteborg

Abstract

Ph.D. dissertation at University of Gothenburg, Sweden, 2011

Title: *Detta är min kropp: Kristen tro, sexualitet och samlevnad*

English title: *This is my Body: Christian Faith, Sexuality and Relationship*

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Language: Swedish, with an English summary

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Series: Skrifter utgivna vid Institutionen för litteratur, idéhistoria och religion, 41

ISSN 1102-9773

ISBN 978-91-88348-40-1

On October 27, 2005 the Church of Sweden introduced a special blessing for same-sex unions—a decision that was rooted in an ongoing discussion on the distinction between “genuine” homosexuality on the one hand and “promiscuous” homosexuality on the other. Not surprisingly, the Church’s decision was welcomed by one group of adherents (e.g., LGBT Christians) and disparaged by another (e.g., protesting priests), thus underlining their differing views on the matter of sexuality, relationships and Christian faith.

Using archival theories in the analysis of numerous Church documents and narratological theories in the analysis of ten *protest-priest* and eleven *LGBT* interviews, this dissertation examines the development of thought that opened the way for a same-sex blessing as well as the contrasting attitudes, problems and viewpoints that have surrounded it.

The archival analysis of Church documents revealed that while some changes in policy have occurred over the years, the Church’s basic understanding of sexuality and relationships remains dominated by a monogamous heterosexual paradigm that is backed by various scientific and medical rationales (what Foucault terms *biopower*). Barring one exception, the same could be said of both groups of respondents, who, despite their differences of opinion on the matter of the same-sex blessing, nonetheless upheld similar Christian norms and assumptions, most relevantly, an unshakable belief in the sanctity of monogamous relationships and the profanity of those that are bisexual and/or polyamorous in form.

Guided by a post-structuralist analysis of the writings of de Sade and Bataille, the dissertation explores ways of framing the sexual discourse that surmount the hegemony of *biopower* and challenge existing beliefs. The Church’s refusal to give up its longstanding views on human sexuality is interpreted in the dissertation as a sign of *thanatophobia* or the fear of death. To ameliorate this condition, post-structuralist theologians urge the Church to confront its fears and fixations by entertaining notions that destabilize current gender categories and open the possibility of a Christianity that can include both committed single-partner *and* causal multi-partner forms. One such possibility involves the revival of the late medieval notion of *ars moriendi*, the art of dying, which regards death and resurrection differently than we do today. By turning from the bio-political discourse on sexuality to other forms of theological reasoning, the Church of Sweden may well be able to overcome its presently ingrained ways of thinking about this matter.

Keywords: Church of Sweden, blessing same-sex unions, sexuality, queer theory, psychoanalysis, discourse theory, archive theory