

Review of *Sexual Authenticity: An Intimate Reflection on Homosexuality and Catholicism*

Melinda Selmys is a marvelous writer. She traces her discovery of the Transcendent, as it brought her through a lesbianism into the fullness of Life with God through the Roman Catholic Church.

She details the grimy aspects of all parties in the contemporary debate on homosexuality – and general sexuality itself. Overwhelmingly effective “homosexual strategies,” detailed in *After the Ball* by Kirk Madsen, are exposed as press and media promotions, shamelessly and unethically manipulating the people and readers. “Right wing preachers” are also taken to task cogently and correctly. The grotesque exploitation by television executives “with their eyes on the bank roll” (Pg. 26) are also seen to be First Amendment frauds as they exploit people by the bigotry known as “political correctness.”

Selmys describes her transcendental conversion of “self-hatred” (a phrase repeatedly and unconsciously slipping into homosexual writings) into genuine love and understanding. She attributes it to John Paul II’s *Theology of the Body* as a primary force just slightly greater than *The Seven Story Mountain* by Thomas Merton. Both books are mandatory reading for all struggling with the homosexual concept and sexuality in general.

Sex is not a more or less irrelevant toy. It is a life-making technology; an intense form of interpersonal communication; a tool for joining together disparate human persons into one; a transcender of subjectivity; it is a work of art, full of symbol and purpose, created by the highest of all Artists, and then given to humanity as a gift, in order to allow us to participate in the transmission and creation of our own species. It is not a bit of biological flotsam to be disposed of how we will (Pg. 93).

Consistent with “sex is sacred in marriage,” Selmys goes on to focus on “the body as a gift”: The first sense in which the body is a gift is not deniable. You received your body on the first day as a gift from your mother who received it as a gift from your father, both of whom received their bodies as gifts from their parents, and so on and so forth, back to the dawn of creation – when, if you believe in any sort of Creator, the first man and the first woman received their bodies as gifts from God. There was no sense in which you could possibly be construed to have “earned” your body: You didn’t even exist before it became into being..the body is a gift, given to the child at the moment of conception. (Pg. 98).

She goes on to describe the second sense in which the body is a gift through which “all other gifts from the world are given and received”. And, of course, “the third sense is the body is a gift which we can give to another” (Pg. 101), i.e., the sense in which “love” comes of age. (Pg. 101).

Opinion

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I was relieved that she spoke of sex in terms of “humor – a reality check” (Pg. 102). My efforts to add humorous satire to help young people cope with sex are consistently rejected and only in print in my book *Everybody for Everybody* since many are so fearful of sex that they allow only a humorless, somber attitude. Selmys has more sense, understanding and transcendental wit about her. I suspect she would agree with my theory that **sex outside of marriage** is an “excretory relief experience” and not an identification function, unless it is an obsessive/compulsive disorder in which anyone or anything could help the secretions along.

This is a marvelous book, informative, accurate, deep, essential to understanding and it elevates with the beauty of transcendental life.