

challenges in the last 40 years. The book could have offered a more practical approach by showing the value of Ramsey's thought when facing current social issues. H.'s work is more centered on intra-academic discussions that are not so evident for the readers. In any case, this is an important study that helps lay the foundations of other modern public theologies.

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*More Than a Monologue: Sexual Diversity and the Catholic Church.* Edited by Christine Firer Hinze and J. Patrick Hornbeck II. Vol. 1. *Voices of Our Times.* New York: Fordham University, 2014. Pp. xiii + 221. \$90; \$26.

*More Than a Monologue: Sexual Diversity and the Catholic Church.* Edited by J. Patrick Hornbeck II and Michael A. Norko. Vol. 2. *Inquiry, Thought, and Expression.* New York: Fordham University, 2014. Pp. xiii + 247. \$100; \$28.

These two volumes are the result of a series of four conferences, two at Jesuit universities, Fordham and Fairfield, and two at nondenominational divinity schools, Union Theological Seminary and Yale. They address sexual diversity and the Roman Catholic Church. The theme of listening is foundational for authentic conversation and sets the tone for all four conferences. To listen is not only to hear but also to discern and to act on what is valuable and true in what one hears (vol. I, 8). Those voices include the wisdom of the Catholic tradition, Scripture, the biological and social sciences, and experience, especially of the marginalized, in historical and cultural contexts that attempt to discern the "signs of our times." When some voices are heard and others are not heard, there can be no authentic conversation; there is no dialogue but only a monologue. Though the conference organizers leave open the question of whose monologue needs to be changed, the essays in the collection leave us in no doubt about the answer to this question. Collective and individual hierarchical church voices, and the power structures they utilize, have consistently engaged in a monologue on issues of sexual diversity and have attempted to silence voices that disrupt that monologue. The conferences attempt to remedy this situation and to "change the conversation about sexual diversity and the Catholic Church" (vol. II, 5).

The *More Than* in the title of these volumes indicates a commitment to move beyond the *Monologue* of ecclesiastical teaching on sexual diversity, and those who defend that teaching, and engage the voices and lived experiences of people. Listening to "the signs of our times" (vol. I: *Voices of Our Times*) is a point of departure for more systematic theological reflection (vol. II: *Inquiry, Thought, and Expression*) on what it means to be a sexual person and to live in responsible, just, loving, faithful relationships, with God, neighbor, partner, and self within, and outside of, the Church. These voices comprise a wide spectrum of perspectives including LGBTQ and heterosexual people, pastors and pastoral ministers, teachers, students, theologians, journalists, and

activists, who variously identify their relationship with the Church as “remaining,” “dissenting,” “post-diocesan,” and “post-Catholic.”

Vol. I is divided into four parts. Part I, “Practicing Love: Listening to Singles, Families, Couples, Parents, Children,” details complex relational narratives surrounding sexual diversity, revealing hurt, alienation, rejection, and discrimination as well as acceptance, embrace, solidarity, and friendship, all of which have sometimes led to a deeper ability to love God, neighbor, and self.

Part II, “Practicing Church: Listening to the Voices in Pastoral Ministry,” explores experiences of church that are often compartmentalized between doctrinal “truths” and the lived experiences of those who are, or minister to, sexually diverse people. This compartmentalization, and the ecclesial power structures that support it, create a climate of fear (Bryan Massingale), alienation, and suspicion that are antithetical to Jesus’s central message of love and the Church’s message of intrinsic human dignity.

Part III, “Practicing Education: Listening to Voices of Students and Teachers,” explains the moral “dance” (Teresa Delgado) that students and teachers must perform when addressing sexual identity issues or presenting Catholic sexual teaching. Catholic social teaching (Jeanine Viau) can be a more apt dance partner for discussing such issues and is supported by Pope Francis’s own focus on social ethics.

Part IV, “Practicing Belonging: Voices within, Beyond, and Contesting Ecclesial Borders,” emphasizes the importance of solidarity as an essential foundational principle for listening to excluded voices. Excluding voices threatens communal belonging and the Church’s very identity and credibility. What is striking about many of the essays in vol. I is the number of people who have experienced alienation because of Catholic teaching on sexual diversity, yet who remain within, and faithful to, the Church.

Vol. I concludes with a systematic essay on ecclesiology and practical theology (Bradford Hinze and Tom Beaudoin), which segues nicely into vol. II’s more systematic reflection on sexual diversity in theology, ecclesiology, ethics, law, and ministry. Power structures (Kelby Harrison, Mark Jordan) within the Church are an impediment for any constructive and authentic conversation to move the institutional Church forward on issues of sexual diversity. Sociological data clearly demonstrate the non-reception of Catholic sexual teaching by a large majority of the faithful and invite the hierarchy to listen to the faithful’s discerning voices. Women’s voices, both lay and religious (Jeannine Gramick, Elizabeth Dreyer, Jamie Manson), are essential to the conversation, as is a revised theological anthropology (Gerard Jacobitz, Patricia Jung, Winnie Varghese, vol. I) that would define the “good” as human dignity and recognize sexual orientation, homosexual, heterosexual, or bisexual, as part of that dignity.

All of the essays, in one way or another, touch on ethics. Ethics address, among other issues, official Church teachings on sexual diversity, the importance of conscience for listening to numerous voices, discerning what is valuable and true in those voices and what is not valuable and false, and the importance of including voices of the marginalized in the conversation.

Essays on law and policy (vol. I, Janet Peck and Carol Conklin, Michael Norko, vol. II, Michael John Perry) examine legal rulings on sexual ethical issues, and analyze and evaluate the proper role of the Church in relation to government in a pluralistic society. Perry's essay on religious and moral freedom and same-sex marriage deconstructs the bishops' claims that religious freedom is being violated by creating such laws and justifies the claim that their own advocacy against such laws is a violation of religious and moral freedom.

I have several comments on the volumes. First, the editors note the challenges they faced in systematically arranging the essays in vol. I. Although the two volumes complement one another very well—the first volume focusing on narrative, experience, and practice and the second volume focusing on systematic theological reflection on those aspects—it would be helpful for their use in undergraduate and graduate courses on Catholic sexual and gender ethics, which I highly recommend, if vol. II aligned along similar divisions as vol. I. Second, there is no balance of conversation partners in the essays. Eve Tushnet's essay in vol. I is the closest to a "traditionalist" voice. While the essays engage in conversation it would be helpful not only to reflect on and critique official Church teaching on sexual diversity but also to include hierarchical apologists and their voices in the collection. Third, the editors note that "attempts at conversation frequently remain more like monologic ships passing in the night" (vol. II, 14–15). Such attempts reflect deep and profound ontological and epistemological differences in looking at theological reality, and shape the analysis and evaluation of that reality anthropologically and normatively. The fundamental theological, semantic, anthropological, and normative differences in those perspectives reflect the plurality of conversations within the Church (Lisa Sowle Cahill) and invite individual and communal critical reflection to discern more or less adequate sexual theologies and anthropologies. There should be a presumption of good faith on the part of all participants in the conversation and that those participants are following their consciences. However, it is the responsibility of conversation partners to analyze and evaluate arguments in the course of the formation of conscience. Such a process of analysis and evaluation of arguments can reveal underlying perspectives that are more or less credible and can move us closer to a comprehensive definition of sexual human dignity.

There is an overarching commitment in these volumes to realize the Second Vatican Council's "People of God" ecclesiology by listening to the *sensus fidelium* on sexual diversity, and to do this from the holistic and personalist moral approach reflected in documents like *Gaudium et spes*, to read the "signs of the times" as they relate to experience and human sexual diversity, and to empower the faithful and all people of good will to form their consciences and trust the authority of a well-formed conscience. Sadly, ecclesiastical leadership has too frequently ignored the *sensus fidelium* and attempted to silence the voices and consciences that comprise it. These volumes prophetically and profoundly present those voices and consciences and they will help to advance the Church's conversation.

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