

The Animal Homosexuality Myth

by Luiz Sérgio Solimeo

The following article is adapted from the author's recently published book, "Defending A Higher Law: Why We Must Resist Same-Sex 'Marriage' and the Homosexual Movement."

In its effort to present homosexuality as normal, the homosexual movement turned to science in an attempt to prove three major premises:

1. Homosexuality is genetic or innate;
2. Homosexuality is irreversible;
3. Since animals engage in same-sex sexual behavior, homosexuality is natural.

Keenly aware of its inability to prove the first two premises, the homosexual movement pins its hopes on the third, animal homosexuality.

Animals Do It, So It's Natural, Right?

The reasoning behind the animal homosexuality theory can be summed up as follows:

- Homosexual behavior is observable in animals.
- Animal behavior is determined by their instincts.
- Nature requires animals to follow their instincts.
- Therefore, homosexuality is in accordance with animal nature.
- Since man is also animal, homosexuality must also be in accordance with human nature.

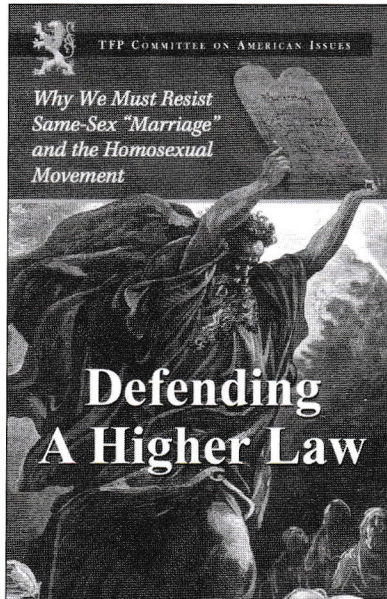
This line of reasoning is unsustainable. If seemingly "homosexual" acts among animals are in accordance with animal nature, then parental killing of offspring and intra-species devouring are also in accordance with animal nature. Bringing man into the equation complicates things further. Are we to conclude that filicide and cannibalism are according to human nature?

In opposition to this line of reasoning, this article will make the argument that:

1. There is no "homosexual instinct" in animals,
2. It is poor science to "read" human motivations and sentiments into animal behavior, and
3. Irrational animal behavior is not a yardstick to determine what is morally acceptable behavior for rational man.

There Is No "Homosexual Instinct" In Animals

Anyone engaged in the most elementary animal observation is forced to conclude that animal "homosexuality," "filicide" and "cannibalism" are exceptions to normal animal behavior. Consequently, they cannot be



called animal instincts. These observable exceptions to normal animal behavior result from factors beyond their instincts.

Clashing Stimuli and Confused Animal Instincts

To explain this abnormal behavior, the first observation must be the fact that animal instincts are not bound by the absolute determinism of the physical laws governing the mineral world. In varying degrees, all living beings can adapt to circumstances. They respond to internal or external stimuli.

Second, animal cognition is purely sensorial, limited to sound, odor, touch, taste and image. Thus, animals lack the precision and clarity of human intellectual perception. Therefore, animals frequently confuse one sensation with another or one object with another.

Third, an animal's instincts direct it towards its end and are in accordance with its nature. However, the spontaneous thrust of the instinctive impulse can suffer modifications as it runs its course. Other sensorial images, perceptions or memories can act as new stimuli affecting the animal's behavior. Moreover, the conflict between two or more instincts can sometimes modify the original impulse.

In man, when two instinctive reactions clash, the intellect determines the best course to follow, and the will then holds one instinct in check while encouraging the other. Because animals lack intellect and will, when two instinctive impulses clash, the one most favored by circumstances prevails.

At times, these internal or external stimuli affecting an animal's instinctive impulses result in cases of animal "filicide," "cannibalism" and "homosexuality."

Animal "Filicide" and "Cannibalism"

Sarah Hartwell explains that tomcats kill their kittens after receiving "mixed signals" from their instincts:

"Most female cats can switch between 'play mode' and 'hunt mode' in order not to harm their offspring. In tomcats this switching off of 'hunt mode' may be incomplete and, when they become highly aroused through play, the 'hunting' instinct comes into force and they may kill the kittens. The hunting instinct is so strong, and so hard to switch off when prey is pres-

ent, that dismemberment and even eating of the kitten may ensue.... Compare the size, sound and activity of kittens with the size, sound and activity of prey. They are both small, have high-pitched voices and move with fast, erratic movements. All of these trigger hunting behavior. In the tomcat, maternal behavior cannot always override hunting behavior and he treats the kittens in exactly the same way he would treat small prey. His instincts are confused."

Regarding animal cannibalism, the Iran Nature and Wildlife Magazine notes:

"Cannibalism is most common among lower vertebrates and invertebrates, often due to a predatory animal mistaking one of its own kind for prey. But it also occurs among birds and mammals, especially when food is scarce."

Animals Lack the Means to Express Their Affective States

To stimuli and clashing instincts, however, we must add another factor: In expressing its affective states, an animal is radically inferior to man.

Since animals lack reason, their means of expressing their affective states (fear, pleasure, pain, desire, etc.) are limited. Animals lack the rich resources at man's disposal to express his sentiments. Man can adapt his way of talking, writing, gazing, gesturing in untold ways. Animals cannot. Consequently, animals often express their affective states ambiguously. They "borrow," so to speak, the manifestations of the instinct of reproduction to manifest the instincts of dominance, aggressiveness, fear, gregariousness and so on.

Explaining Seemingly "Homosexual" Animal Behavior

Bonobos are a typical example of this "borrowing." These primates from the chimpanzee family engage in seemingly sexual behavior to express acceptance and other affective states. Thus, Frans B. M. de Waal, who spent hundreds of hours observing and filming bonobos, says:

"There are two reasons to believe sexual activity is the bonobo's answer to avoiding conflict.

"First, anything, not just food, that arouses the interest of more than one bonobo at a time tends to result in sexual contact. If two bonobos approach a cardboard box thrown into their enclosure, they will briefly mount each other before playing with the box. Such situations lead to squabbles in most other species. But bonobos are quite tolerant, perhaps because they use sex to divert attention and to diffuse tension.

"Second, bonobo sex often occurs in aggressive contexts totally unrelated to food. A jealous male might chase another away from a female, after which the two males reunite and engage in scrotal rubbing. Or after a female hits a juvenile, the latter's mother may lunge at the aggressor, an action that is immediately followed by genital rubbing between the two adults."

Like bonobos, other animals will mount another of the same sex and engage in seemingly "homosexual" behavior, although their motivation may differ. Dogs, for example, usually do so to express dominance. Cesar Ades, ethologist and professor of psychology at the University of São Paulo, Brazil, explains, "When two males mate, what is present is a demonstration of power, not sex."

Jacque Lynn Schultz, ASPCA Animal Sciences Director of Special Projects, explains further:

"Usually, an un-neutered male dog will mount another male dog as a display of social dominance—in other words, as a way of letting the other dog know who's boss. While not as frequent, a female dog may mount for the same reason."

Dogs will also mount one another because of the vehemence of their purely chemical reaction to the smell of an estrus female:

"Not surprisingly, the smell of a female dog in heat can instigate a frenzy of mounting behaviors. Even other females who are not in heat will mount those who are. Males will mount males who have just been with estrus females if they still bear their scent.... And males who catch wind of the estrus odor may mount the first thing (or unlucky person) they come into contact with."

Other animals engage in seemingly "homosexual" behavior because they fail to identify the other sex properly. The lower the species in the animal kingdom, the more tenuous and difficult to detect are the differences between sexes, leading to more frequent confusion.

"Homosexual" Animals Do Not Exist

In 1996, homosexual scientist Simon LeVay admitted that the evidence pointed to isolated acts, not to homosexuality:

"Although homosexual behavior is very common in the animal world, it seems to be very uncommon that individual animals have a long-lasting predisposition to engage in such behavior to the exclusion of heterosexual activities. Thus, a homosexual orientation, if one can speak of such thing in animals, seems to be a rarity."

Despite the "homosexual" appearances of some animal behavior, this behavior does not stem from a "homosexual" instinct that is part of animal nature. Dr. Antonio Pardo, Professor of Bioethics at the University of Navarre, Spain, explains:

"Properly speaking, homosexuality does not exist among animals.... For reasons of survival, the reproductive instinct among animals is always directed towards an individual of the opposite sex. Therefore, an animal can never be homosexual as such. Nevertheless, the interaction of other instincts (particularly dominance) can result in behavior that appears to be homosexual. Such behavior cannot be equated with an animal homosexuality. All it means is that animal sexual behavior encompasses aspects beyond that of reproduction."

It Is Unscientific To "Read" Human Motivation And Sentiment Into Animal Behavior

Like many animal rights activists, homosexual activists often read human motivation and sentiment into animal behavior. While this anthropopathic approach enjoys full citizenship in the realms of art, literature, and mythology it makes for poor science. Dr. Charles Socarides of the National Association for Research and Therapy of Homosexuality observes:

"The term homosexuality should be limited to the human species, for in animals the investigator can ascertain only motor behavior. As soon as he interprets the animal's motivation he is applying human psychodynamics--a risky, if not foolhardy scientific approach."

Ethologist Cesar Ades explains the difference between human and animal sexual relations:

"Human beings have sex one way, while animals have it another. Human sex is a question of preference where one chooses the most attractive person to have pleasure. This is not true with animals. For them, it is a question of mating and reproduction. There is no physical or psychological pleasure...The smell is decisive: when a female is in heat, she emits a scent, known as pheromone. This scent attracts the attention of the male, and makes him want to mate. This is sexual intercourse between animals. It is the law of nature."

Even biologist Bruce Bagemihl, whose book *Biological Exuberance: Animal Homosexuality and Natural Diversity* was cited by the American Psychological Association and the American Psychiatric Association in their amici curiae brief in *Lawrence v. Texas* and is touted as proof that homosexuality is natural among animals, is careful to include a caveat:

"Any account of homosexuality and transgender animals is also necessarily an account of human interpretations of these phenomena...We are in the dark about the internal experience of the animal participants: as a result, the biases and limitations of the human observer—in both the gathering and interpretation of data—come to the forefront in this situation....With people we can often speak directly to individuals (or read written accounts)...With animals in contrast, we can often directly observe their sexual (and allied) behaviors, but can only infer or interpret their meanings and motivations."

Dr. Bagemihl's interpretation, however, throughout his 750-page book unabashedly favors the animal

homosexuality theory. Its pages are filled with descriptions of animal acts that would have a homosexual connotation in human beings. Dr. Bagemihl does not prove, however, that these acts have the same meaning for animals. He simply gives them a homosexual interpretation. Not surprisingly, his book was published by Stonewall Inn Editions, "an imprint of St. Martin's Press devoted to gay and lesbian interest books."

Irrational Animal Behavior Is No Blueprint For Rational Man

Some researchers studying animal "homosexual" behavior extrapolate from the realm of science into that of philosophy and morality. These scholars reason from the premise that if animals do it, it is according to their nature and thus is good for them. If it is natural and good for animals, they continue, it is also natural and morally good for man. However, the definition of

man's nature belongs not to the realm of zoology or biology, but philosophy, and the determination of what is morally good for man pertains to ethics.

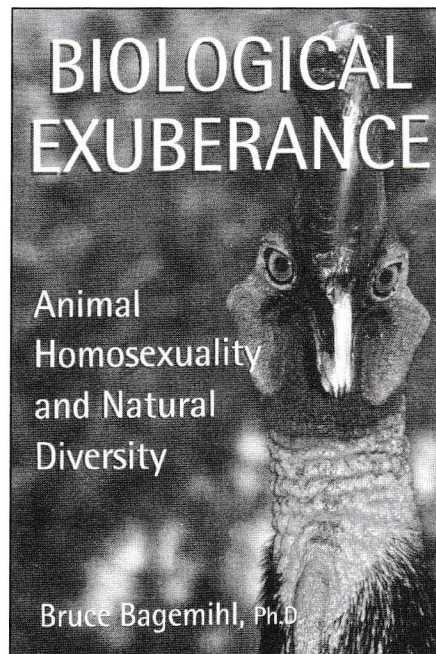
Dr. Marlene Zuk, professor of biology at the University of California at Riverside, for example, states:

"Sexuality is a lot broader term than people want to think. You have this idea that the animal kingdom is strict, old-fashioned Roman Catholic, that they have sex to procreate. ... Sexual expression means more than making babies. Why are we surprised? People are animals."

Simon LeVay entertains the hope that the understanding of animal "homosexuality" will help change societal mores and religious beliefs about homosexuality. He states:

"It seems possible that the study of sexual behavior in animals, especially in non-human primates, will contribute to the liberalization of religious attitudes toward homosexual activity and other forms of nonprocreative sex. Specifically, these studies challenge one particular sense of the dogma that homosexual behavior is "against nature": the notion that it is unique to those creatures who, by tasting the fruit of the tree of knowledge, have alone become morally culpable."

Other researchers feel compelled to point out the impropriety of transposing animal behavior to man. Although very favorable to the homosexual interpretation of animal behavior, Paul L. Vasey, of the University of Lethbridge in Canada, nevertheless cautions:



"For some people, what animals do is a yardstick of what is and isn't natural. They make a leap from saying if it's natural, it's morally and ethically desirable. Infanticide is widespread in the animal kingdom. To jump from that to say it is desirable makes no sense. We shouldn't be using animals to craft moral and social policies for the kinds of human societies we want to live in. Animals don't take care of the elderly. I don't particularly think that should be a platform for closing down nursing homes."

The animal kingdom is no place for man to seek a blueprint for human morality. That blueprint, as bioethicist Bruto Maria Bruti notes, must be sought in man himself:

"It is a frequent error for people to contrast human and animal behaviors, as if the two were homogenous. The laws ruling human behavior are of a different nature and they should be sought where God inscribed them, namely, in human nature."

The fact that man has a body and sensitive life in common with animals does not mean he is strictly an animal. Nor does it mean that he is a half-animal. Man's rationality pervades the wholeness of his nature so that his sensations, instincts and impulses are not purely animal but have that seal of rationality which characterizes them as human.

Thus, man is characterized not by what he has in common with animals, but by what differentiates him from them. This differentiation is fundamental, not accidental. Man is a rational animal. Man's rationality is what makes human nature unique and fundamentally distinct from animal nature.

To consider man strictly as an animal is to deny his rationality and, therefore, his free will. Likewise, to consider animals as if they were human is to attribute to them a non-existent rationality.

From Science To Mythology

Dr. Bagemihl's *Biological Exuberance* research displays his fundamental dissatisfaction with science and enthusiasm for aboriginal mythology:

"Western science has a lot to learn from aboriginal cultures about systems of gender and sexuality... To Western science, homosexuality (both animal and human) is an anomaly, an unexpected behavior that above all requires some sort of 'explanation' or 'cause' or 'rationale.' In contrast, to many indigenous cultures around the world, homosexuality and transgender are a routine and expected occurrence in both the human and animal worlds..."

"Most Native American tribes formally recognize—and honor—human homosexuality and transgender in the role

of the 'two-spirit' person (sometimes formerly known as berdache). The 'two-spirit' is a sacred man or woman who mixes gender categories by wearing clothes of opposite or both sexes And often engaging in same-sex relations.

"... In many Native American cultures, certain animals are also symbolically associated with two-spiritedness, often in the form of creation myths and origin legends relating to the first or 'supernatural' two-spirit(s)... A Zuni creation story relates how the first two spirits—creatures that were neither male nor female, yet both at the same time—were the twelve offspring of a mythical brother-sister pair. Some of these creatures were human, but one was a bat and another an old buck Deer."



Luiz Sérgio Solimeo

Dr. Bagemihl applies this androgynous myth, so widespread in today's homosexual movement, to the animal kingdom with the help of Indian and aboriginal mythology. He invites the West to embrace "a new paradigm:"

"Ultimately, the synthesis of scientific views represented by *Biological Exuberance* brings us full circle—back to the way of looking at the world that is in accordance with some of the most ancient indigenous conceptions of animal (and human) sexual and gender variability. This perspective dissolves binary oppositions.... *Biological Exuberance* is... a worldview that is at once primordial and futuristic, in which gender is kaleidoscopic, sexualities are multiple, and the categories of male and female are fluid and transmutable."

Conclusion

Thus, we see that the homosexual movement's attempt to establish that homosexuality is in accordance with human nature, by proving its animal homosexuality theory, is based more on mythological beliefs and erroneous philosophical tenets than on science. ■

Luiz Sérgio Solimeo joined the Brazilian Society for the Defense of Tradition, Family and Property (TFP) in 1959. As a researcher and writer, he specializes in philosophical and theological topics and has several published works. Mr. Solimeo has been in the United States assisting the American TFP since 1999.

In this article, Mr. Solimeo develops a section of Chapter 11, "Answering the Movement's Scientific Arguments," of the new book *Defending A Higher Law: Why We Must Resist Same-Sex "Marriage" and the Homosexual Movement* (Spring Grove, Penn.: The American TFP, 2004) • ISBN 1-877905-33-X • 232 pages • paperback • \$14.95 (s/h included) • To order, call toll-free (866) 661-0272.