Torch, Fall/Winter 2007

Cedarville University

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Making Sense of
Human Sexuality amid Cultural Confusion
In the early nineties, the sitcom *Seinfeld* was a trendsetter in social discourse. A fourth-season episode contains a scene where a college newspaper reporter mistakenly thinks that two of the characters are homosexual. Jerry Seinfeld responds passionately, “We’re not gay … not that there’s anything wrong with that!”

Seinfeld’s comeback reflects the ambivalence and conflict that exist toward homosexuality in our culture. Cedarville University’s unwavering commitment to biblical truth and biblical sexuality stands in sharp contrast. We affirm that the Bible protects sexual intimacy by celebrating it only within the bounds of marriage between one man and one woman.

Last spring, Cedarville’s policies regarding sexual behavior caught the attention of Soulforce, an organization devoted to encouraging the acceptance of homosexuality. To protest our policies that prohibit both homosexual practices and the promotion of a homosexual lifestyle, Soulforce announced their intent to visit our campus.

While we did not initiate the contact with Soulforce, we determined to use their protest as an opportunity to equip our students to articulate a biblical approach to sexuality with grace and compassion.

As we prepared our students for this challenge, we were mindful that homosexuality is one of the significant social issues confronting our culture and the church today. As believers in Jesus Christ, all of us need to be equipped to respond with wisdom, truth, and grace.

This issue of *TORCH* seeks to make sense of this critical topic and share materials that were part of the Cedarville family’s preparation for the Soulforce protest.

We pray this issue of *TORCH* will help each of us to think deeply, broadly, and biblically about this critical issue.

Dr. Bill Brown
President
Cedarville University
A View of Morality
A worldview perspective sheds new light on this watershed issue of American culture.

The Bible Is Not Silent
Though most Christians agree that homosexuality is wrong, we must be prepared for the specific arguments of those who seek to reinterpret key biblical passages.

A Ministry of Deliverance
As agents of God's redemption, we have an awesome responsibility and an intense privilege to minister, but how do we answer the tough questions along the way?

In Search of a Cause
Some struggle with homosexual attraction, and others never will. Explore current theories and research in search of a cause.

Under the Night Sky
Understanding that we are made in God's image and that our sexuality reflects His nature provides the ethical backdrop for ministry.

Homosexuality, the Constitution, and Gay Marriage
We operate from a scriptural foundation in the hope of bending our culture toward the will of God.

The Way Home
She cannot tell her son's story without tears, but the tears are a mixture of sadness and untold gratitude for God's love and faithfulness.

Make the Most of the Opportunity
Cedarville University determined to use a challenge of its policies on sexual behavior to be "salt and light."

“So from now on we regard no one from a worldly point of view. … If anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! … God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And He has committed to us the message of reconciliation.”
2 Corinthians 5:16–17, 19
Homosexuality has become a watershed issue of American culture. Sex as God intended it has been lowered from the sacred intimacy of a one-man, one-woman covenant relationship to a complex web of social, cultural, and personal issues complicated by confusing scientific and psychological studies.

Studying the topic of homosexuality from a worldview perspective provides a unique opportunity to understand the broader issues at the heart of the discussion. The three major worldviews — transcendentalism, naturalism, and theism — approach sexual behavior differently, though almost always as a product of personal morality.

Transcendental Hesitations: Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell
The transcendental worldview assumes there is no God “out there” but that the divine reality is present in all things. Morality is determined by that which promotes unity with others and the cosmic oneness of all things.

In traditional transcendental religions, there are disagreements about how homosexuality is integrated into basic beliefs and society. In most transcendental cultures, homosexuality is discouraged for both religious and cultural reasons. For example, Tibetan Buddhism bans homosexual activity but does not condemn homosexuals for their sexual orientation.
Hindu sacred texts contain little mention of homosexuality, but interestingly, the world’s most Hindu nation, India, prescribes life in prison for homosexual acts. Thailand, on the other hand, is essentially tolerant of all kinds of sexual expression.

Western forms of transcendentalism (New Age, Wicca, Scientology, etc.) usually accept and encourage homosexuality. The guiding ethic in these movements is to choose activities that are mutually beneficial, do no harm to another person, and break no commitments.

**Natural Freedom: Be All You Are**

Naturalism as a worldview holds that there are no moral restrictions outside of human reason and discourse. The idea that there is a God who directs the affairs of man is seen as dangerous. Naturalism generally follows a utilitarian ethical guideline for all sexual practice.

Since naturalism embraces the idea that all reality is physical, homosexuality, it is believed, is physically determined by genetic predisposition and social influences. Sexual orientation is thus hardwired into each person, and environmental influences mold desires and behavior. Any moral restrictions, religious or otherwise, are against these natural impulses and are viewed as backward and oppressive.

One writer noted simply, “One of the best ways to defend atheism is to defend homosexuality.” But if this were true, you would expect believers in God to oppose homosexuality. Sadly, this is not always so.

**Theistic Truth: In the Name of Love?**

The most interesting collage of views concerning homosexuality exists among those who would be described as having a theistic worldview. Most Muslims and conservative Jews reject both homosexual orientation and behavior. Liberal Jewish groups are generally more tolerant of and sometimes supportive of homosexuality.

What determines the approach to homosexuality is how moral authority is derived. Those who believe their Scriptures are the final word on sexual conduct (the Qur’an for Muslims and the Old Testament for the Jews) prohibit homosexual behavior.

The same is true for Christians. For those of us who believe that God’s inerrant Word is the ultimate authority, a normal reading of both the Old and New Testaments clearly reveals the prohibition of homosexual behavior.

To be consistently biblical, Christians also recognize the distinction between homosexual acts (which the Bible condemns) and same-sex attraction. Most of us know believers who struggle with this attraction yet wish they didn’t. They know that acting on this inclination, like any other inclination to sin, is something they must avoid (1 Cor. 6:18–20). There is freedom promised in Christ even in the midst of the struggle with sin.

The biblical view of human sexuality is clear: God designed sex as a blessing to be enjoyed by one man and one woman within the context of marriage. 

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**By the Numbers**

The campaign to present homosexuality in a positive, normal way in the media is increasing. Gay characters on television are no longer token or stereotyped. And their numbers are growing.

**Gay Characters on TV**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decade</th>
<th>Number</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1960s</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>1970s</td>
<td>58</td>
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<tr>
<td>1980s</td>
<td>89</td>
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<td>1990s – Present</td>
<td>300+</td>
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Dr. Bill Brown became president of Cedarville University in June 2003. A graduate of the University of South Florida, Brown holds a Th.M. and a Ph.D. from Dallas Theological Seminary. As a nationally recognized worldview expert, he has authored three worldview-related books and is the executive producer of the re:View worldview study (www.re-films.com). Read his blog at www.cedarville.edu/president.
The Bible Is Not Silent

by Chris Miller, Ph.D.
T

hough most
Christians
quickly agree that
homosexuality is
wrong simply because the
Bible says so, many of us are
unprepared for the specific
arguments of those who would
revise the text and claim that
key biblical passages were either
irrelevant or misapplied. After
listening to their arguments and
investigating the key texts again,
we unequivocally agree with
Stan Jones’ summary:

“… the biblical witness
against homosexual
behavior can be neutralized
only by either grossly
misinterpreting the Bible
or by moving away from
a high view of Scripture.”

As the following analysis
demonstrates, the biblical record is
clear and consistent. The Bible is
not silent about this critical issue.

A Divine Pattern for
Sexuality
Homosexuality is unacceptable
simply because it does not
conform to the good pattern
for sexuality that God has
determined. In Genesis 1–2,
God clearly creates male and
female to be united in a one-flesh
way that reflects the unity of the
Godhead and allows them to be
fruitful and fill the earth. That
pattern is stated in the beginning
and assumed and celebrated
throughout the rest of Scripture.
The importance of couples in
the story of redemption from
Abraham and Sarah to Boaz
and Ruth; and the praise of
marriage between husband and
wife in Proverbs, Psalms, and
the Song of Songs all assume
this heterosexual foundation.
The metaphors of God marrying
Israel and the Church being the
Bride of Christ, and the promise
of that end-time event of the
wedding supper of the Lamb all
subtly, yet profoundly, point to
the divine pattern. Anything less
misses the mark, and it is simply
impossible to explain away all the
scriptures that teach this positive
message.

Careful Consideration
of the Texts
While the Bible is consistent
in calling homosexuality sin in
every passage that addresses the
issue, some texts are clearer than
others, and we would do well
to focus upon the clearest texts.
The more complex texts are:

- the story of Sodom
  and Gomorrah and
  Ezekiel’s commentary
  on it (Genesis 19:1–13,
  Ezekiel 16:48–50, and
  by literary association,
  Judges 19)
- purity laws in Leviticus
  (18:22; 20:13)
- Paul’s lists of sins (1 Cor.
  6:9–20; 1 Tim. 1:8–11).

None of these are problematic,
as most revisionists would claim,
but they are more complex
than first meets the eye because
of the historical, covenantal,
and linguistic factors involved
and should be carefully studied
(please see below for a fuller
introduction).

The Romans Record
Reviewed
The most important and
complete teaching on the
subject can be found in the
book of Romans, especially the
first chapter. Romans 1:18–32

Sodom and Gomorrah
(1 Cor. 6:9–20; 1 Tim. 1:8–11)

Purity Laws
(Lev. 18:22; 20:13)

Paul’s Lists of Sins
(1 Cor. 6:9–20; 1 Tim. 1:8–11)

Revisionist Charge: “We no longer
follow the food laws of Leviticus, so we should
not follow these outdated laws.”

Response: Some of the laws of Leviticus
were only temporary, but many are rooted in the
character of God and will never change. A close look
at Leviticus 18 reveals prohibitions against incest
and bestiality, and no one suggests that these are
obsolete! Moses also writes that these laws are so
fundamental that they should be obeyed not only
by Israelites but also by Gentiles who live in the
land (Lev. 17:10, 13; 18:26).

Sodom and Gomorrah
(1 Cor. 6:9–20; 1 Tim. 1:8–11)

Revisionist Charge: “The only sin here
was either a lack of hospitality, as Ezekiel says,
or, at most, gang rape.”

Response: Like most situations, a single
sin is rarely isolated. This story was a “perfect
storm” of sins ranging from the arrogance and
pride that Ezekiel highlights to the attempts at
forced sex and homosexuality found directly in
the Genesis and Judges texts. Homosexuality
was not the only sin, but according to the
story and the Hebrew words used, it was an
abhorrent part of the event.
The only reliable indicator of truth is God’s revealed Word, not the natural desires of our hearts.

is a rich passage that deserves detailed explanation. The general subject is Paul’s explanation of why God’s wrath is upon all mankind. As Paul describes it, man first turned from God (1:21–23), then began to experience terrible consequences as three times God “gave them over” to various sins (1:24, 26, 28). He gave them over to sexual immorality (1:24–25), to homosexuality (1:26–27), and to a depraved mind (1:28–32).

What must be kept in mind is that Paul describes here a global account of the universal fall of humanity; these are not individual life stories of pagan sinners. In addition, these are not three sequential stages through which one progresses.

These two observations have important implications as we attempt to apply them to the topic of homosexuality. For example, we should not assume that each homosexual person has descended first through the stage of heterosexual immorality (1:24–25). Nor should we assume that homosexuals are worse in God’s eyes than other sinners. Even if these were successive stages of depravity, homosexuality would only be the second of three stages, and the worst sinners would be those who disobey their parents (1:30)!

In Paul’s general description of the downward spiral of human sin, he is simply saying that mankind turned away from God and now human society has fallen apart in many ways; to wit, some are sexually immoral (1:24), some are homosexual (1:26–27), others are uselessly depraved in their thinking (1:29–31), and some probably fit more than one category! Additionally, we should not think that the statements of “giving them over” indicate that God is finished with mankind. God is not giving them over to a separate judgment per se; rather he gives them over to their sin. Paul is describing here the ways of a God who always smites in order to heal (Isaiah 19:22). The intent of God’s actions is redemptive. That is, God allows sinners to experience the fruit of their ways so that they will become aware of the resultant emptiness and return to Him. This strategy is incarnated in the prodigal who came to his senses when feeding the pigs and determined to return to the source of his life. To use colloquial language, God is not “writing these people off” because he is disgusted by them and finished with them, but He is strategically working with them to ultimately win them to Himself.
If we are to wisely partner with the Father in seeking the lost and restoring this broken world to a state of functioning wholeness (shalom) as peacemakers, who actually deserve the title “sons of God” (Matt. 5:9), we should have the same attitude toward all sinners.

**Citizens of a Broken World**

We all find ourselves in a fallen world, not a perfect one, and perhaps, more importantly, we ourselves are fallen (Rom. 3:10–20). It is true that God created everything and saw it was good in Genesis 1, but after the fall of Adam and Eve in Genesis 3, we now find ourselves in the broken world of the curse where our bodies, souls, and desires are not the way God intends them to be.

The revisionist argument assumes that whatever is must be good. They have a theology of creation but no theology of sin and redemption.

Instead, we have all been born on this side of Genesis 3. “The way I am” is technically and practically not the way God made me, but the way I find myself as a son or daughter of Adam and Eve, a member of a fallen race whose “natural” desires no longer accurately point the way to God. In short, no one can claim that their natural desires necessarily reflect the perfect will of the Creator any more than death, disease, and sin do. In Adam (Rom. 5) we are all fallen; only in Christ (Rom. 5) can we find a new and true identity.

The only reliable indicator of truth is God’s revealed Word, not the natural desires of our hearts. 

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**Dr. Chris Miller** is a professor of Bible at Cedarville University. He holds a bachelor of arts degree from Tennessee Temple University, along with a Th.M. from Grace Theological Seminary. He later received his Ph.D. from Dallas Theological Seminary. In 1992, Dr. Miller completed his graduate study at the Institute of Holy Land Studies in Jerusalem. He has been on the Cedarville faculty since 1991. Dr. Miller and his wife, Pam, have three children.
How we as committed followers of Jesus relate to people living a homosexual lifestyle can be complicated. The Bible plainly teaches that homosexual conduct is sin, and we acknowledge that sin is the universal human condition. Apart from Christ, we are all broken people trapped in sin’s crushing grip. But the Bible provides hope — freedom in Jesus Christ — and instruction for how we His redeemed ones should minister that same message of deliverance to sinners around us.

So Why Does Ministry to a Sinner Living a Homosexual Lifestyle Seem Different?

Heightening the tension is the intense national culture war around us. We are frustrated at the favorable way that homosexuality is portrayed in television programs and films. Homosexual lobby groups seem to be gaining political ground daily, having mastered the manipulation of print and digital media.
But amid the culture war, real people are trapped and struggling, in desperate need of the transforming and healing grace of God in Christ. As agents of God’s redemption of this world, we have an awesome responsibility and an intense privilege.

But What About … ?
Two questions seem to be at the back of many of our minds when it comes to relating to a friend or family member living a homosexual lifestyle:

- If I truly love someone, shouldn’t I confront their sin?
- If I befriend a homosexual person, am I implicitly endorsing their sin?

Good questions! We don’t want to be like the Corinthian church that accommodated sinful practices. We also don’t want to be like the Pharisees, separating so much that we refuse to have contact with sinners. Such a stance denies that we, too, are sinners and in need of God’s grace.

The fact is, it takes wisdom and discernment to honor God not only as Judge of sin, but also as Lover and Redeemer of sinners. Christians are right to feel tension here — wanting to conduct ourselves in ways that make it clear that God hates sin, while also relating to people caught in homosexuality so that redemptive pathways are kept open for the resurrection power of God to transform broken people.

Ministry with Integrity and Love
Homosexuality has touched almost every one of us in some way. There are no quick answers that apply to how we should respond in every situation. The following considerations are designed to help us think biblically about relating to struggling relatives and friends with integrity and with the life-giving love of Christ.

Confrontation with Commitment
First, it may indeed be the loving thing to confront a person about sin, but we must also be sure that our confrontation is matched by an intense and persevering commitment to a sustained friendship. Confrontation without an intense commitment is a failure to genuinely follow Christ’s model for redemption.

Interestingly, we are told that one of the most powerful draws of homosexual communities is that they are shelters for those who have been rejected. We need to be very careful that confrontation is not seen as angry denunciation, flippant dismissal, or final rejection. Instead, we need to create and foster church communities that embrace people who are struggling with sin or are confused about their identity. Sadly, with a few bright exceptions, many of our churches have been slow to respond in this way.

And let’s not have any illusions — such a redemptive commitment will definitely be tested and will need to persevere through a person’s failure. So, yes, let us most definitely confront sin, but let us do so with the same level of commitment that we will be part of God’s redemptive work in another person’s life.

Truth When We’re Misunderstood
Second, there is always the risk that if we reach out and love sinners, we will be misunderstood by some as endorsing the sin of sinners. It happened to Jesus, and if we do what Jesus did, it will happen to us, too. If accused, respond with truth spoken with grace and clarity. Share your conviction that homosexual conduct is sin, but that you are committed to your friendships with people who need the grace of God.

On the other hand, if friends who are living a homosexual lifestyle think we approve of their behavior, we must also respond with truth spoken with grace and clarity. We do not approve of homosexual conduct; we regard it as sin; but we will never waver from our commitment as a valued friend.

There are always risks to speaking truth. A friend may reject us. We must remain committed. They may be genuinely angry, or they may be testing our commitment.
Do not budge. Stay committed to your friend or family member in the name of Jesus. There are many stories of those caught in a homosexual lifestyle turning to Jesus because of the persistent love of a committed Christian. What if God is calling you to demonstrate His outrageous love for sinners?

**Understanding and Discernment**

Third, take the time to understand another person’s life trajectory in order to know how to relate to them with truth and love. You may need to do a lot of listening, seeking to understand past hurts, pains, and rejections. Jude 22–23 says: “And have mercy on some, who are doubting; save others, snatching them out of the fire; and on some have mercy with fear, hating even the garment polluted by the flesh.” Some people are sinning with a high hand and need strong warning and exhortation. Many others, however, are broken, feeling trapped after trying desperately to free themselves from the grip of sin. They need grace and mercy — and your help! Understanding a person’s story can help us discern how the Gospel will transform a life and how we may be part of that.

**Compassion for the Broken**

Finally, many of those living a homosexual lifestyle are broken people. Many have been marginalized and feel persecuted and trapped. They may hate themselves and their struggle. They may be bitter at God, blaming Him for “making them this way.” Many have been mistreated or abused, sent on their life journeys with no clear idea of their own identities.

What is needed most is the powerful love of Christ manifested through compassion and commitment. Isaiah 42:1–3 beautifully describes Jesus’ approach to broken sinners:

> “Behold, My Servant, whom I uphold; My chosen one in whom My soul delights. I have put My Spirit upon Him; He will bring forth justice to the nations. He will not cry out or raise His voice, nor make His voice heard in the street. A bruised reed He will not break, and a dimly burning wick He will not extinguish.”

That’s the character of our Lord in dealing with broken people trapped in sin. May God give us grace and wisdom to love sinners just as Jesus does.

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Dr. Timothy Gombis teaches at Cedarville University as assistant professor of Bible. He received his bachelor of science degree at Liberty University and his M.Div. and Th.M. at the Master’s Seminary, and he graduated from the University of St. Andrews, Scotland, with a Ph.D. in 2005. Dr. Gombis has been with Cedarville since 2004.

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**Get Practical**

by Susan Warner, Ph.D. & Christine Fulmer, M.S.W., Department of Social Work, Criminal Justice & Sociology

- **Start with an upward focus.**
  “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind” (Matthew 22:37). As we nurture our relationship with the living Christ, meditate on His Word, and obey, the supernatural outpouring of love to our Father will be the unexplainable love we will have for our neighbor.

- **Welcome a person living a homosexual lifestyle who visits your church.** As individuals come to the saving knowledge of God and grow in their relationship with Him, the Holy Spirit has a powerful way of changing us and making us more like Christ.

- **Demonstrate love in action.** We should be handing out cold water to thirsty people who need to know God loves them. Invite those living a homosexual lifestyle to your home for a meal, become involved ministering to AIDS patients, or invite those struggling to become part of your social network, since they often lead isolated lives, rejected by family and friends.
Speaking Truth on The PATH®

Every day, all day, CDR Radio, The PATH, broadcasts a biblical perspective on the critical issues of our day. When Soulforce came to Cedarville last spring in protest of the University’s policies on homosexual behavior and the promotion of a homosexual lifestyle, The PATH’s Impact News desk and FrontPage interview program were there to cover the events and inform Kingdom citizens.

Now The PATH is pleased to provide these broadcast resources to TORCH readers. Visit www.ThePath.fm/speakingtruth today to access audio, video, and web materials that will equip you to think deeply and respond biblically to this critical social issue.

Faith Community Nursing Certificate Program

May 19–23, 2008

Are you a nurse looking to use your education to minister not only to physical needs, but to spiritual needs as well? Faith community nursing is a recognized field that will allow you to put your nursing knowledge and skills to work within your church and play an important role in promoting health and healing in your congregation.

Cedarville University’s faith community nursing program will instruct you in the biblical aspects of health, healing, wholeness, and health promotion; legal and ethical guidelines for faith community nursing practices; and more! The program will qualify you to start a health education ministry within your church and provide invaluable health advice and spiritual support to promote not only physical health, but also social, emotional, mental, and spiritual health.

For more information, visit www.cedarville.edu/faithcommnursing.
Human behavior is very complex. Few human behaviors have a single cause. Instead, behavior is the product of a combination of biological, psychological, and environmental factors. We call this phenomenon “multidimensionality,” and it is true of not only sexual behavior but also most other behaviors. If we ask what causes a person to be obese, or aggressive, or depressed, or friendly, or successful, the answer would always be that a variety of factors converge to make a person that way. We do not know the cause of homosexuality because it probably does not have a single cause.

We must, therefore, look for multiple causes and figure out how they combine. This is known as “integration.” Look at the cookie recipe on the next page. To produce delicious cookies, we need a variety of ingredients in the proper amounts (note that all do not contribute equally) combined in a specific developmental sequence. (If you bake the ingredients separately before you mix them together,  

by Charles Dolph, Ph.D.
your cookies will be ruined.) Notice that every ingredient is important to the cookies, but the cookie is more than just flour or sugar or baking soda. There is no way to bake cookies with just one ingredient. In the same way, it is naïve (and can be cruel) to explain homosexuality as the result of just genes, or just choice, or just abuse, or just any other single cause.

Many variables combine to make us who we are. Some play a larger role and some play a lesser role, but they all interact together. The developmental sequence is very important, too. A traumatic event, like being sexually abused or losing a mother, may affect us differently at age 3 than at age 11. We need a careful integrative approach that avoids oversimplification.

Furthermore, two persons may arrive at the same destination by different routes. We call this the law of "equifinality." Two people may each have identical IQs of 68, but one’s IQ may be due to Down syndrome and the other’s due to severe neglect and deprivation in childhood. Likewise, two persons may each be homosexually oriented but for quite different reasons. Once again, we must avoid the mistakes of oversimplifying and stereotyping. Not all homosexually oriented persons have a domineering mother and emotionally distant father. Not all of those homosexually oriented were sexually abused as children. We must avoid broad, sweeping generalizations that presume all of those struggling with homosexual orientation are the same.

Considering Potential Contributors
Now that we have developed a framework for evaluating the causes of homosexuality, let’s look at a list of potential contributors. Interestingly, the research evidence is not overwhelming for any of these factors. For some, the research evidence is actually very weak. Nonetheless, we present them all with the understanding that in an equation, some may play a rather small role while others are much more significant, and any number of the factors could be included in the equation.

Biological
Possible biological contributors to homosexuality fall into three categories — genetics, prenatal influences, and brain structures. Some studies have suggested that genetic factors may be involved in homosexuality because concordance rates (the presence of the same trait in both members of a pair of twins) for homosexuality are usually somewhat higher in identical (monozygous) twins than fraternal (dyzygous) twins. The overall concordance rates are low, however. If genes are involved, they explain a small amount of the variance, well less than half.

Prenatal influences may be the most fascinating theory of biological predispositions to homosexuality. Evidence from a variety of studies suggests that exposure to abnormal hormone levels in the womb may predispose children toward homosexuality. Elevated estrogen levels, androgen levels, H-Y antigens, stress hormones, and temperament have been suspected to be linked to subsequent homosexuality. Fingerprints, finger length ratio, handedness, and bone lengths have also sometimes been linked to homosexuality. Based on animal studies, we know that the level of hormones in utero and in early development substantially influences animal sexual behavior in adulthood.

One other biological explanation that has received a lot of press, but not much substantial scientific support, is brain structure. Some studies have suggested that various parts of the brain (interstitial nucleus 1–4, anterior commissure, and suprachiasmatic nucleus) differ in the homosexually
oriented. These studies have typically involved small unrepresentative samples and have not been widely replicated.

At this point, none of the biological factors have accrued enough scientific evidence to be considered a cause of homosexuality, but each raises the interesting possibility that it may be a contributor.

Psychological
Most of us are more familiar with psychological and social explanations for homosexuality. Parenting theories such as the dominant, close-binding mother and the absent, detached, or rejecting father trace clear back to Sigmund Freud and psychoanalysis. The famous National Health and Social Life Survey indicated that sexual abuse during childhood triples the risk for homosexuality in subsequent development. Fraternal birth order suggests that boys with older brothers are more at risk for homosexuality. A male in a male–female twin pair is more likely to act homosexually if he does not have an older brother, as compared to being a part of other sibling patterns. Young children who are gender nonconforming are more likely to act homosexually than children who identify with same-sex peers.

Social
Values, social pressures, models, conformity, labeling, and self-fulfilling prophecies probably all contribute to a person’s identification with homosexuality. A fascinating study of homosexual marriage in Denmark, where same-sex marriages have been recorded since they were legalized in 1989, showed that men in same-sex marriages were more likely to have older mothers, divorced parents, and absent fathers; to be the youngest children; and to be urban born. Women in same-sex marriages were more likely to have been the youngest children, the only children, or the only girls in their families; to have experienced maternal death during adolescence; and to be urban born.

None of these psychological or social factors are an unvarying cause of homosexuality. We all know someone who had a domineering mother, was sexually abused, had an older brother, or was urban born who did not live a homosexual lifestyle. Likewise, we know people who live a homosexual lifestyle yet did not experience any of these things. These factors are potential contributors to — not sole causes of — homosexuality.

Where Does God Fit In?
Where does God fit into this complex recipe? The answer is, He does not fit into the recipe! God is not just one of the variables. The equation is not biological factors, psychological factors, social factors, and God. How demeaning that would be! God is over the recipe. God is sovereignly using each of the influences listed in this article to make us who we are and to accomplish His will. God can ultimately use my genes, my body, my parents, my experiences, my culture — everything — to glorify Himself. Our lives (every aspect of them) are what God gives us to steward for His honor and glory. Each of us must face our sexuality and bring it captive to Jesus Christ.

Dr. Charles Dolph serves as professor of psychology at Cedarville University, where he teaches classes on intimate relationships and human sexuality. He received his Ph.D. from Georgia State University in 1982 and has taught at Cedarville since 1979.
IRA Rollover Gifts

Charitable Giving Through IRAs
Congress recently changed the rules for charitable gifts made from IRAs. If you are over age 70 1/2, the federal government now permits you to rollover amounts from your IRA to charity without tax. There is still time to take advantage of this opportunity before December 31, 2007.

To learn more about IRA rollover gifts, visit www.cedarville.edu/giftlegacy or call Dave Bartlett, associate vice president for development, at 1-800-766-1115.

My Cedarville experience was invaluable!

“Cedarville University’s nursing department prepares students to care for patients holistically — addressing physical needs while caring for emotional, intellectual, social, and spiritual needs as well. My experience at Cedarville was invaluable not only as a nursing student, but also as I grew in my walk with the Lord.

I gave my first gift to the Cedarville Fund to help provide scholarships for students with financial need. It is my prayer that this gift will help other students deepen their relationship with Christ and become experts in their fields of study.”

—Andrea Smith Gruber ’06

Andrea Smith Gruber ’06 is a pediatric intensive care nurse at Dayton Children’s in Dayton, Ohio, and a new donor to the Cedarville Fund. Thanks, Andrea!

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Imagine a warm summer evening. The sky is crystal clear, and there is a slight wind to cool the skin. David, the shepherd, is caring for his flocks on a quiet Israeli plain under a black velvet sea of stars. It was a sight like this that inspired David to write Psalm 8.

**Under the Night Sky**

*An Image Bearer’s Ethical Response to Homosexuality*  
by Dennis Sullivan, Ph.D.

---

**O LORD**, our Lord,  
how excellent is your name  
in all the earth,  
Who have set Your glory  
above the heavens!

Out of the mouth of babes  
and nursing infants You  
have ordained strength,  
Because of Your enemies,  
That You may silence the  
enemy and the avenger.

When I consider Your heavens,  
the work of Your fingers,  
The moon and the stars,  
which You have ordained,  
What is man that You are  
mindful of him,  
And the son of man that  
You visit him?

For You have made him a  
little lower than the angels,  
And You have crowned him  
with glory and honor.

---

Although it may seem an odd passage for a discussion on ethics and homosexuality, the first five verses of Psalm 8 provide a “big picture” perspective on the issues. Here we read of the great value God places on mankind, His creation.

**How Does God Confer Such High Value on You and Me?**

For the answer we turn to the creation account. In Genesis 1:26, God said, “Let Us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness … .” The next verse confirms, “So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.”

Two critical words, “image” and “likeness,” confer significant value on us as human beings. Often used interchangeably in Christian ethics, the clear implication of these words is that mankind resembles God intellectually, morally, and socially. Genesis 1:26–27 also affirms that our gender and sexuality are part of what it means to be God’s image bearer. Introduced just one chapter after the creation account, the intimate relationship of marriage is also part of our imaging and representing God to others.
Walter Brueggemann writes, “There is one way in which God is imaged in the world and only one: humanness!” (Genesis, 1986). What a tremendous responsibility to image God to a lost world, even those who misunderstand their sexuality and express it in homosexual relationships. We are mindful that, even in this disagreement, we are interacting with fellow image bearers.

**What is the Biblical and Ethical Response?**

Back in the 1990s, my family served as missionaries in the Central African Republic. We became very familiar with driving on narrow roads with deep ditches on both sides. To avoid the ditches, we learned to drive in the center of the road. As I look at the ethics of our sexuality, I see a comparison. There are ditches on the “right” and “left” sides of this issue. As believers we must proceed carefully.

**The Ditch on the Left: Our Tendency Toward Compromise ... and Intolerance**

The ditch on the left is the tendency to compromise on God’s standard. We cannot advocate for same-sex marriage because marriage was not defined by you and me. It was ordained by God as being between a man and a woman, and His design is built into the very fabric of our human nature. We also cannot lobby for minority status for those living a homosexual lifestyle. Homosexuality is a behavior, not a racial category. All Americans are already entitled to equal protection against discrimination and injustice. In this ditch we also find a new definition of “tolerance” that seeks to eliminate any differences (and any strong opinions) among people. Every single thing conceived in the heart of man should be tolerated. Ironically, while waving this banner of tolerance, there is great intolerance toward God’s design and those seeking to live it out. A real tragedy, this kind of intolerance demeans a commitment to resist sexual temptation and live morally pure lives, and fails to appreciate the redemptive value of suffering. As one writer describes it, dealing with and overcoming temptation is part of our “unique path to holiness.”

Tonight, if the sky is clear, look to the heavens and marvel. The God who created the starry hosts made you and me. He created us male and female, to represent Him. We are made in His image, and our sexuality reflects His nature. Let’s live our lives as image bearers of our Creator God!

Dr. Dennis Sullivan serves as director of Cedarville University’s Center for Bioethics and is also a professor of biology. Before coming to Cedarville in 1996, he served as a medical missionary in both Haiti and the Central African Republic. Sullivan received his B.S. from Youngstown State University, his M.D. from Case Western Reserve University, and an M.A. in Bioethics from Trinity University. A member of the American Medical Association, the Christian Medical Association, and the Center for Bioethics and Human Dignity, he has been honored as a diplomate by the American Board of Surgery (1985) and as a fellow by the American College of Surgeons (1996).
Political issues do not appear in a vacuum. While it may seem the controversy swirling around gay rights is new, several decades of legal, political, and social trends have joined to create this quarrel. As evangelical Christians, we operate from a scriptural foundation in the hope of bending our culture toward the will of God. How we begin to accomplish this audacious agenda is a matter of discernment. Three questions must be addressed as we ponder the sources of, and our response to, gay rights in general, and gay marriage in particular.

**Can We Legislate Morality?**
There is no question we can use the law to enact our moral perspective. Even seemingly mundane policies, like government budgets, are full of moral decisions. The very act of choosing to fund one program (say environmental regulation), as opposed to thousands of others, reflects moral beliefs and a sense of priorities. To a degree, all legislation has a moral component, so our government is constantly “legislating morality.”

There are limits, though, to what legislation can accomplish. Laws and public policies will neither change hearts nor create revivals. Only God’s grace can transform societies and cultures, so to hope that a policy, however right, will make people more godly is misplaced. While law is limited in its effect, we are also constrained by what we can attempt to do through the law.

**Can We Discriminate Against Those in a Homosexual Lifestyle?**
The Constitution defines appropriate uses of government’s power. If you think of politics as a game, the Constitution is the rulebook, with the Supreme Court as the referee. Even though a majority of citizens and legislators might espouse strong beliefs, if the policies that flow from those beliefs are contrary to the Constitution, as interpreted by the Court, those policies and laws are null and void.

The Supreme Court, through a series of decisions, has
determined that the government has little power to regulate sexual behavior, or even the consequences of that behavior. In *Lawrence v. Texas* (2003), the Supreme Court determined that the Constitution forbids the regulation of private homosexual conduct. In *Romer v. Evans* (1996), the Court severely limited government’s ability to discriminate against the homosexually oriented in public settings. These decisions, in addition to the general right to privacy the Court has articulated since 1965 (*Griswold v. Connecticut*), largely remove sexual behavior and orientation issues from the reach of the law.

In America, marriage is a *state*, as opposed to a federal, issue. Under the U.S. Constitution, states may define marriage and its legal benefits (such as inheritance, medical visitation, and adoption). According to the Full Faith and Credit Clause (Article IV), contracts are transferable across state lines, so marriages that occur in one state are given legal status in others. This reality has created the pressing political issue of gay marriage.

As states, most notably in Massachusetts and Hawaii, began to ponder the possibility of gay marriage, there was the potential that other states would be forced to honor those contracts even though they did not define marriage in the same way. Congress, under the authority of the Constitution, may determine exceptions to the Full Faith and Credit Clause, and in 1996, it passed the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA), which allows states to refuse same-sex marriages performed in other states. As it became obvious that one state, either through legislation or a court ruling, would soon redefine marriage, Christians governments have refused, until very recently, to recognize same-sex, incestuous, bigamous, polygamous, or adult–child marriages.

**What About Gay Marriage?**

Marriage is a civil and a religious institution. Biblically, marriage is clearly defined as between a man and a woman. As we recognize this sacred bond within our churches, many of us forget that the government views marriage largely as a contract.

Throughout history, governments have defined marriage as between a man and a woman. By implication, governments have refused, until very recently, to recognize same-sex, incestuous, bigamous, polygamous, or adult–child marriages.

1965 *Griswold v. Connecticut*. The Supreme Court articulates a right to privacy, which is at the root of the right to an abortion and to personal, sexual conduct.

1986 *Bowers v. Hardwick*. The Court upholds Georgia’s anti-sodomy laws, which allow government to restrict some sexual conduct.

1996 *Romer v. Evans*. The Supreme Court strikes down a Colorado constitutional amendment that sought to remove any special, legal protections for the homosexually oriented.

1996 Congress passes the Defense of Marriage Act, which allows states to refuse same-sex marriages from other states.

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2003 The Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court rules that the state constitution requires same-sex couples be given the right to marry. This eventually leads to a proposed state constitutional amendment that eliminates gay marriage. It will be voted on in 2008.

2004 President Bush, in his State of the Union Address, argues that the sanctity of marriage must be defended.

2004 San Francisco Mayor Gavin Newsome authorizes city officials to issue marriage licenses to same-sex couples even though state laws, and court decisions, forbid him from doing so.

2004–2006 Forty-three states pass constitutional amendments or laws that ban same-sex marriage.

2006 An effort to amend the U.S. Constitution to limit same-sex marriage fails in the House.

**Timeline of Related Events**

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and others began to press for explicit, traditional definitions through state laws or constitutional amendments.

As of now, forty-three states have codified a traditional, male–female view of marriage. Massachusetts, through its Supreme Judicial Court, has imposed gay marriage based on its interpretation of its own constitution. Six other states have recognized civil unions between same-sex couples. These unions provide some of the legal benefits of marriage, but without the formal recognition of marriage.

Christians have played an important role in this political response to gay marriage, and I think our activism has been appropriate. Marriage is an institution founded by God, so it should not surprise us that the social science data overwhelmingly indicate that God’s definition of the institution — as between a man and a woman — is conducive to stable societies and healthy, productive children. Our actions have also been consistent with the Constitution. While we, as of now, may not discriminate against homosexual conduct, nor deprive those in a homosexual lifestyle of the equal protection of the law, we may define marriage traditionally, particularly at the state level.

The political success of protecting marriage, however, is not final for two reasons. First, there is the possibility that the Supreme Court, based on its recent precedents, will strike down those state laws and constitutional amendments. If this occurs, the only recourse will be to amend the federal constitution so that it defines marriage traditionally. This was attempted, and failed, in 2006.

Second, our defense of marriage, as Christians, has uncovered some of our collective hypocrisy. As agents of change, we ought to strive for laws that honor and glorify God. Our pursuit of those policies is public. As our arguments for traditional marriage are heard, our opponents drown in our cries for this sacred bond God has forged. Our actions, however, often fall short of our rhetoric. So long as divorce rates within Christendom correspond to those outside it, our words appear hollow, ungodly, and merely political. Our inability to practice privately what we rarely fail to preach publicly undermines the Gospel, which alone has the power to transform hearts and minds. This recognition, that the Gospel drives us and that our political agenda is only a supplement, should foster both confidence and caution.

We can accomplish what God has set out for us, for He works through us. We must realize, with fear and trembling, that our public, political face ought to reflect God’s glory. If our words and actions correspond, even our opponents will recognize His authentic presence in us. If they do not, the world will see yet another political agenda and little else.

Dr. Mark Caleb Smith is assistant professor of political science at Cedarville University and director of the University’s Center for Political Studies (www.cedarville.edu/cps). He holds degrees from Bryan College, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, and the University of Georgia. His primary research interests are religion and American politics. Dr. Smith has provided commentary to various news outlets and organizations, such as Focus on the Family. He and his wife, Denise, have three children.
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Did You Know?
The Centennial Library has accumulated a collection of rare English Bibles and Bible pages from the 16th and 17th centuries that trace the development of the English Bible from Tyndale’s New Testament in the early 1500s to the major milestone of the King James Version in the early 1600s.
As Christians, we know the Bible says homosexuality is sin; as human beings, we know how deceptive and seductive the enemy can be in his efforts to destroy lives. We also know that none of us are immune. And behind all the politics and rhetoric, that is what we must remember — that we are all the same, and there are hurting, even dying, human beings who have been shanghaied by lies and who need hope and compassion to find their way back home.

Cedarville University graduate Rusty King died of complications from AIDS more than 10 years ago after engaging in a homosexual lifestyle. He was only 31 years old. Those are the cold facts. But there's far more to this story of sin and heartache, love and redemption because Rusty had something many in his situation don't have — people who loved him enough to rescue his soul.

Rusty was the beloved son of Elvin and Joyce King, two people who have been connected to Cedarville since the early ’60s. Elvin has been coaching cross country and track at Cedarville for nearly 40 years, and he passed that love of athletics on to his son. Rusty ran a 5K with his dad when he was only three and was the youngest to complete the race. The two also bonded while fishing together. Skidding feet first into high school, Rusty kept running — all the way to all-state in cross country and track.

Rusty's other love was music. He studied piano and played trumpet in the elementary band, then became drum major for the high school marching band.

It seemed everything Rusty touched turned to gold. The success continued into college, where he was all-American on Cedarville's cross country team, played tuba in the concert band, took over as captain of the cheerleading squad, and was elected class president his freshman and sophomore years. Life was good, and his parents couldn't have been more pleased. In fact, their biggest concern was that Rusty might succumb to pride and arrogance.

by Sharyn Kopf
After graduating, Rusty accepted his first teaching job in Springfield, Ohio. Within the next two years, Elvin and Joyce made the painful discovery that their son was living a homosexual lifestyle. “It made us realize,” they explain, “how a bad choice can lead you down a path you did not intend to travel … and how hard it can be to repent and seek God’s forgiveness.”

Until that time, homosexuality was a subject that had never confronted them. In fact, they would both say the situation with their son put a face on something neither had ever considered before. Where they once may have crossed the street to avoid dealing with a sin they couldn’t tolerate, the Kings now have a longing to minister to those trapped by homosexuality — those who, like their son, need compassion and truth to be set free.

“These are people,” says Joyce, “who are just as in need of love and spiritual care as anybody else.” They were often reminded of 1 Corinthians 10:12, “Therefore let him who thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.”

As for Rusty, he moved to Mobile, Alabama, in 1991. He coached cross country at a college for a couple of years, then went into food service management. Within a few years, it became obvious that he was having health problems — getting sick several times, but blaming his ailment on the southern humidity. Hoping to spare his parents, Rusty never let on how sick he was — even when he returned home for Christmas in 1996, wearing a device that pumped a continuous supply of antibiotics into his damaged cells.

The three returned to Mobile after Christmas — Elvin and Joyce were going along to help Rusty move into a new apartment. Instead, Rusty was kept in the hospital after a blood transfusion. “I won’t promise what will happen,” he told his father. On New Year’s Day they watched the Rose Bowl. The next day, Rusty’s doctor confirmed their suspicions: their oldest child and only son was dying of AIDS.

Returning to Cedarville, the Kings tried to get their lives back to normal, starting the winter quarter while calling their family together for encouragement and prayer. Having obtained permission from Rusty to share his story, they reached out to loved ones and, in return, were offered understanding, concern, and shoulders to lean on. “God gave us incredible people,” Joyce says. “We received tremendous support from our family, church, the college, and our community.”

The call came only two weeks later. Rusty was dying and might not make it through the weekend. The Kings hurried back to Alabama, where they spent more than a week with their son. During this amazing time, the family had a chance to witness the true mercy and love of their heavenly Father. In the presence of the family’s home pastor, Rusty was able to find the strength to confess his sin, repent of his lifestyle, and ask for forgiveness from the Lord, as well as his parents, his pastor, and his church.

“We never stopped loving Rusty. Though we couldn’t condone the activity, he had to know we loved him. We’re thankful God gave us the opportunity to hear Rusty’s confession,” says Joyce, “and to hear him say he had made peace with God.”

Then, just that fast, their son was gone. God, in his goodness, had granted them ten days with Rusty — ten days filled with music, love, Scripture, and prayer. A blessed time of grace that allowed all three to draw closer to each other — and to the Lord.

Joyce still cannot tell her son’s story without tears, but the tears are a mixture of sadness and untold gratitude for God’s immense love and faithfulness.

Most of the sadness comes from thoughts of what might have been. “Every once in awhile I think he would have been a great dad. Rusty was a talented young man,” Joyce says. ‘I don’t have all the answers, but I do know it’s all in God’s hands.”

The Kings take comfort and encouragement in Isaiah 41:10: “Do not fear, for I am with you; Do not anxiously look about you, for I am your God. I will strengthen you, surely I will help you, surely I will uphold you with My righteous right hand.”
Most of us are familiar with the adage “love the sinner but hate the sin.” For many of us, it has been the guiding principle of how we treat those in our lives involved in activities that violate Scripture. While this adage is a principle that provides some general guidance in relationships, it doesn’t give practical suggestions. In reality it is much easier to hate the sin of homosexuality than to love the homosexually oriented sinner. Why? Love — the kind of love that Jesus demonstrated and spoke of — is hard work. It is practical, tangible, and sacrificial. It is merciful, humble, and active. It is supernatural and unexplainable.

But never is this kind of love more needed than when homosexuality hits home — our own home.

**Responding with Grace**

It is painful when there is a person living in sin in our own family. It is hard on parents when children, after being raised in a loving Christian home, reject the Word of God. Hurt, sadness, and disappointment are often the first responses. These emotions are so painful that all too quickly they can be replaced by the secondary response of anger.

Family fights can erupt when people are angry. We need to be encouraged to speak the truth as God desires, but to do so in love. The principles of Ephesians 4:29—5:2 are important reminders:

- Remove unwholesome words from the conversation.
- Build others up according to their needs.
- Speak words that benefit the listener.
- Get rid of bitterness, destructive speech, and angry actions.
- Be kind and compassionate.
- Forgive like Christ forgave.
- Live a life of love.

These are comforting and powerful words. As a defense against bitterness, consider memorizing these verses and let their truths sink deep into your soul. The Scriptures are a strong tower in a time of trouble. When we are weak, Christ is strong.

**Responding in Community**

Another common response is to blame ourselves or other members of our family. At a time when we need each other most, negative thoughts and words like these tear us apart. Give condemning thoughts to the Savior, ask Him to relieve us of the burden, then leave it at the foot of the cross. We need to humble ourselves, pray with our families, pray individually, study the Scriptures, and believe God’s Word. Galatians 6:2 tells us to carry each other’s burdens, fulfilling the law of Christ. Isolating ourselves from others is not a healthy or God-honoring response. In addition to family, this is the time we need fellow believers. Being vulnerable and sharing our pain with those we can trust may be incredibly helpful to our own mental and spiritual stability.

**Responding with Wisdom**

Be encouraged to maintain a caring relationship with the struggling person in your family despite the individual’s iniquity. We need to seek God’s wisdom, guidance, and direction as we compassionately interact. As promised in James, God will give us wisdom when we ask for it. It is our role, like the Good Samaritan in Luke 10, to demonstrate love to the wounded one in tangible, practical ways. Jesus’ ultimate goal whenever He encountered sinners was to bring them to Himself, to enfold them in His love, and to invite them into a personal relationship with Him. As we love and follow our Savior, His love will be demonstrated to our family member through us.

And when the burden seems too hard to bear, the promise of Philippians 4:13 encourages, “I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

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**Caring for the Homosexual in Your Family**

by Susan Warner, Ph.D. & Christine Fulmer, M.S.W., Department of Social Work, Criminal Justice & Sociology

Through this experience, it was inevitable that the King family would change. They were blasted by the horrors of AIDS. They came face to face with homosexuality and realized it is not the unforgiveable sin. And they learned that the grace of God is boundless; His love, unconditional.

Sharyn Kopf enjoys her new role as assistant director of public relations at Cedarville. She has worked previously as a newspaper reporter and spent more than seven years as an award-winning radio writer for Focus on the Family. She has also written numerous articles for various publications, including Boundless Webzine, as well as several drama scripts, two of which were published by Concordia Publishing House. Sharyn graduated from Grace College in Winona Lake, Indiana, with a communications degree.
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The University is pursuing accreditation for the School of Pharmacy by the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education, the Ohio Board of Regents, and the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools.
Q: Why did Cedarville University choose to respond in the way it did?

We believe that God has placed Cedarville where it is today to equip Christian leaders who will be salt and light in the most important and controversial arenas of our day. Whatever the contemporary issue, God’s Word provides timeless truth. Our role as a Christ-centered learning community is to prepare students to skillfully and attractively communicate biblical answers to tough social, political, and cultural problems. We believe that a posture of engagement best positions Cedarville to contribute to the work of the church in the 21st century.

Q: What do you mean by “engagement?”

Engaging important social issues means that we face them directly, we listen very well, and we communicate with grace and compassion.

Last spring Cedarville’s commitment to biblical truth and biblical sexuality caught the attention of Soulforce, a lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender advocacy group. Soulforce came to campus in protest of the University’s policies against homosexual behavior and the promotion of a homosexual lifestyle. While the University did not initiate the contact with Soulforce, we determined to use their protest as an opportunity to equip our students to articulate a biblical approach to sexuality with grace and compassion.

Dr. Carl Ruby, vice president for student life, coordinated Cedarville’s response to the Soulforce protest. He reflects on what we as a University family learned about “making the most of an opportunity,” and engaging our culture for Jesus Christ.

An Interview with Dr. Carl Ruby, Vice President for Student Life

Make the Most of the Opportunity
carefully, we work hard to understand other viewpoints, and we express truth with compassion, humility, and gentleness. Some people feel that these qualities are inconsistent with the confidence that we should have in biblical truth. On the contrary, these are biblical Christian virtues [Eph. 4:2, Col. 3:12] that attract people to the Gospel.

**Q: How did you prepare?**

It’s impossible to overemphasize the critically important role that prayer played in preparing our campus for the Soulforce visit. We received so many notes promising prayer support from parents, alumni, and even grandparents during the months before the visit. While people away from campus were praying, we were busy preparing our students. I can’t say enough about the involvement of our faculty. Scholars from different academic disciplines [many of whom have contributed to this issue of TORCH] worked together to present workshops and chapel presentations to prepare our students to articulate a biblical response to this critical social issue, to respond biblically when facing opposition, and to share the Gospel with those who would be on campus.

**Q: What resources did you provide for students?**

At the beginning of the process, we published a website [www.cedarville.edu/speakingtruth] with resources not only for students, but also for alumni, parents, and churches who are facing this issue. We distributed printed materials (The Gay Debate by Stanton Jones) to every student. Melissa Fryrear from Focus on the Family spoke in chapel in December, and we invited Chad Thompson, author of Loving Homosexuals Like Jesus Would, to be on campus for training the day before the visit.

**Q: Based on Cedarville’s experience, what advice could you give to churches about ministering to those who are struggling?**

Churches and organizations like Cedarville need to focus on providing resources, role models, and relationships. Organizations like Exodus [www.exodus-international.org], Love In Action [www.loveinaction.org], and Focus on the Family [www.family.org] are great resources for information and referrals. We also need to be more intentional about providing role models of people who have successfully overcome homosexual temptation. In the spirit of 1 Corinthians 6:9–11, the organizations listed above provide speakers and testimonials from those formerly caught in the homosexual lifestyle who have experienced repentance and forgiveness and are now fully included in the life of the church. And finally, people who are dealing with homosexual temptation need healthy relationships with godly people who are willing to draw alongside them with friendship, prayer, patience, and affection as they seek to overcome this temptation.

**Q: How did the day go?**

A day that could have been marked with loud exchanges, arrests, and conflict ended with tears, handshakes, and a few hugs. At the end of the day, a group of faculty, staff, students, one trustee, and I sat in the DeVries Theatre of the Stevens Student Center with the 25 representatives from Soulforce. Everyone in the room was silent, and a few were in tears. Sara [name changed], a member of Soulforce, spoke. Sara was not gay, but she was an atheist. She had come to campus braced for arguments, angry exchanges, and a long day of dirty looks and hateful clichés. Cedarville surprised her. People treated her with kindness and respect. She said that the students were good listeners and that they asked very tough, probing questions. She went so far as to acknowledge that her conversations with students stirred up questions that she would have to explore.

Then the day ended and the Soulforce visit was behind us. The bus left campus, but those of us who remained in the theatre prayed. We prayed for the 25 young people who had just heard and hopefully experienced the Gospel. We prayed for each other. We prayed for students who might be struggling with temptation in this area, and we prayed for alumni and friends of the University who in one way or another are touched by this issue. Our preparation started with prayer. It was fitting to end the day that way.
Continual quality improvements have led to another top-tier ranking for Cedarville University. This year the editors of **U.S. News & World Report** ranked the University third in the Midwest region. Last year's ranking was 14th. *U.S. News* used peer assessment along with objective factors such as graduation rates, class size, and student/faculty ratio to determine the rankings. "Academic excellence is a significant component of Cedarville University's mission statement, and we are extremely pleased by this positive, independent evaluation of our quality and value,” shared Dr. Bill Brown, Cedarville's president.

**Honored by Alma Mater**
Cedarville University President Dr. Bill Brown was honored to speak at Dallas Theological Seminary’s 2007 commencement ceremony, held at Prestonwood Baptist Church on May 12. Brown holds a master of theology degree and a Ph.D. from the school.

**Super Gas Mileage**
With gas prices on the rise, the pressure to find alternative fuels and improve fuel economy just keeps increasing. To encourage creative research on these issues, the Society of Automotive Engineers (SAE) held its 28th Annual SAE International Supermileage competition June 7–8 to see which engineering students could come up with the best “supermileage” on their self-designed and self-built vehicles. At the Eaton Corporation Marshall Proving Grounds in Marshall, Michigan, Cedarville’s *Gold Lightning II* took second place with 1,240 miles per gallon. To put this into perspective, the car could have driven from Cedarville to California on less than two gallons of gas.

**Geology Education for the Future**
Creation geologists and earth science teachers were invited to attend the first Geology Education for the Future conference at the end of July on the campus of Cedarville University. The conference was presented in conjunction with the Creation Research Science Education Foundation of Columbus, Ohio. “Attendees were challenged and encouraged by current research,” shared Dr. John Whitmore, CU associate professor of geology and this year’s conference coordinator.

**Conference Brings Top Players to CU**
Nearly 180 researchers, representing top-rated academic institutions like Columbia, UCLA, Emory, and Syracuse, were introduced to Cedarville University as they came to campus for the 19th annual Ethnographic and Qualitative Research in Education (EQRE) Conference. More than a dozen of Cedarville’s psychology faculty and students joined together in cowriting and presenting papers for submission. Dr. Michael Firmin, chair of the Cedarville University Department of Psychology, explained, “Hosting a long-standing conference of national repute indicates to the world of academe that Cedarville has significant influence in the research world. We are a player and make substantial contributions in this higher education domain.”
Upcoming Events  Visit www.cedarville.edu/events for more information!

**November**
16, 30  CU Friday

**January**
8–10  Missions Conference
18–19  Alumni Basketball Weekend
25–26  High School Leadership Conference
31 – Feb. 2, 7–9  Winter Play: *Alice in Wonderland*

**February**
1  Choral Masterworks
8–9  Song of Solomon Conference
21–23  Music Showcase

25–26  Evangelism Celebration

**March**
14  CU Friday
14–15  CedarMania
28  Pops Concert

**April**
3–5, 10–12  Spring Play: *Crossing Delancey*
4  CU Friday

**May**
3  112th Annual Commencement

CU on the Road  The following is just a sampling of CU events on the road. Visit www.cedarville.edu/reps for more events and information.

**November**
1  College Fair
   St. Louis, Missouri
13  Alumni Chapter Event
   Grand Rapids, Michigan
17–18  Lifeline Players
   Columbus, Ohio
18  HeartSong
   Fort Wayne, Indiana

11  Coach Ray Slagle
   Battle Creek, Michigan
20  HeartSong
   Canton, Ohio

**December**
29–30  Dr. Paul Dixon
   Naples, Florida

**January**
11  Alumni Chapter Event
   Cleveland, Ohio

**February**
2  Alumni Chapter Event
   Wake Forest, North Carolina
16–19  Men’s Glee Club
   Atlanta, Georgia

**March**
9  Dr. Bill Brown
   Des Moines, Iowa
16  HeartSong
   Huntington, West Virginia
28 –  Jubilate
   Apr. 1 Chicago, Illinois
the Center for Biblical and Theological Studies

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