

Sexuality, Desire, and Human Rights

European countries are experiencing secularisation at different rates and in different ways, which impacts how each society thinks about sexuality. In this session, we will explore an influential secular theory of desire that transforms discussion about sexuality. We will address questions arising from this transformation, particularly in regard to how it impacts appeals to human rights. We will also investigate what this change in thinking regarding sexuality means for Christian engagement on the topic, as well as consider what new challenges arise, and what new spaces may have opened up for Christian dialogue with society about sexuality because of this change in thinking.

Daniel R. Patterson lectures in theology and ethics at St. Trivellius Institute in Sofia, Bulgaria, and is an adjunct researcher at Sheridan College in Perth, Australia. He recently completed a PhD in theological ethics at the University of Aberdeen under the supervision of Brian Brock and Stanley Hauerwas. His research interests include gender, sexuality, and the body, particularly where theology and the gender theory of Judith Butler intersect. Dan and his wife, Katie, live with their two daughters in Bulgaria. He blogs at www.danielpatto.com.

I. Introduction

A. A changing world

B. Sexual Revolution

1. An effect

2. A cause

C. Gender Revolution

II. The Old Frame

A. The desire for life

B. Means

1. Inalienable Rights

2. Democracy

III. The New Frame

A. The desire for life

1. The relationship between desire and life

2. Re-framing the discussion

B. Means

IV. Reflecting from a Christian perspective

A. Enter the discussion

B. Desiring another's life?

Suggested Readings:

Linn Marie Tonstad, *Queer Theology: Beyond Apologetics* (Eugene: Cascade, 2018).
[Note: I'm not endorsing the contents of this book. It is an affordable, readable, and concise entry point on the topic.]

Peter Sanlon, *Plastic People: How Queer Theory is Changing Us* (London: The Latimer Trust, 2010). [Note: This book is dated and misses some important themes and emphases.]