Spring 1994

The Heart of Community: Marriage, Friendship, and Sexual Love An Argument Against In Vitro Fertilization and Artificial Contraception

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The Heart of Community: 
Marriage, Friendship, and Sexual Love

An Argument Against *In Vitro* Fertilization and Artificial Contraception

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment 
of the Requirements 
for Graduation with Honors 
from Carroll College, Helena, Montana

by

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March 28, 1994
This thesis for honors recognition has been approved for the

Department of Philosophy.

[Signatures and dates]
Acknowledgments

I would especially like to recognize my parents, whose marriage has been a beautiful example of true friendship and true love. Special thanks go to my whole family for their prayers, enthusiasm, and good humor.

I owe much gratitude to my friends for their constant encouragement, and for their participation in the writing of this thesis in ways, and to an extent, that they never would have imagined. Particularly, I would like to thank Mother Francine Cardew, F.S.E., Reuben Johnson, Kiely Keane, and Natalie Graham.

Many thanks to Valerie Gager and Robert Walsh for their time and vital input. Finally, I am especially grateful to David Toole, who exceeded his role as director and taught me about friendship and character, not only through his academic instruction, but more importantly through his example.
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1. Preface

In the spring of 1993, I decided to write an honors thesis concerning the issues of \textit{in vitro} fertilization (hereafter, IVF) and artificial contraception. At that point, I was sure that I, as a Catholic, would employ natural law ethics to support my arguments against IVF and artificial birth control. However, as I began my research, I discovered that friendship has played an essential role in the understanding of marriage and sexual intercourse throughout the history of the Church. An adherence to the language of 'nature' seemingly oversimplified both the role of sexual intercourse in marriage, and the problems presented by IVF and artificial contraception. As my research continued, I found that an account of friendship in marriage did not completely circumvent the problems of 'nature', but at least such discourse appeared more true to the subject matter. I admit that I have not come to terms fully with 'nature' in this paper or in my own mind. For even in my discussion of friendship, I found that to some degree I had to invoke the idea of 'nature' in order to discuss how we ought to live. In Aristotle's language, I found that talk of friendship involved words about the "proper function of man." Yet Aristotle is also the first to admit the lack of clarity that accompanies discussions of ethics and the good. He says:

\begin{quote}
  in a discussion of such subjects . . . we must be satisfied to indicate the truth with a rough and general sketch: when the subject and basis of a discussion consists of matters that hold good only as a general rule, but not always, the conclusion reached must be of the same order. The various points that are made must be received in the same spirit. (1094b17-24)
\end{quote}

In my "rough and general sketch" of the truth, I maintain the position that I held at the beginning of this project, that is, that IVF and artificial birth control are actions against the good of humanity. However, in my attempt to follow the truth of the matter, I have found myself pondering the complexities of friendship instead of invoking laws of nature.

2. Introduction

My arguments against IVF and artificial birth control will prove to be relatively simple: community is crucial to the flourishing of human life; friendship is the most tenacious aspect of community; marriage is one of the most important types of friendship for community. A central characteristic of the friendship in marriage is sexual love. Contained in the nucleus of sexual love are the unified powers of procreation and union.² IVF and artificial birth control separate the powers of procreation and union; therefore, they destroy sexual love and mitigate the tenacity of marriage, causing the collapse of community.³

While my arguments are fairly simple, the premises I employ to support these contentions are somewhat dense. First, I turn to a short history of marriage as a sacrament in the Church to demonstrate the centrality of

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²By 'union' I mean the specific friendship between a man and a woman that is nourished by the spiritual energy generated from sexual intercourse.

³*In vitro* fertilization entails abstracting, via surgery, one or more eggs from the ovaries, and acquiring sperm through ejaculation. Then, in a petri dish, the sperm is added to the egg in hopes of fertilization. In the event that the sperm fertilizes the egg, the embryo is then implanted into the woman's uterus. Artificial contraception may be defined as an internal separation of conjugal sex from its generative powers. For my purposes, artificial contraception includes all drugs, devices and non-health related surgical procedures. Due to the unclear nature of the subject matter, it seems impossible to make definite exclusions here. However, the forms of contraception I include in my definition are rather obvious offenses against sexual love, as I hope the reader will recognize later in this paper.
friendship in the sacrament. Second, I invoke Aristotle's account of true friendship in order to establish the importance of friendship for both marriage and community. Aristotle, in the fourth century B.C., noted that: "The friendship of man and woman also seems to be natural" (1162a16). As I hope to demonstrate, the friendship between a man and a woman in marriage is not merely natural, but necessary to the vitality of community. Finally, I use the work of Wendell Berry to demonstrate the importance of sexual love in friendships of marriage. Then, because Berry also offers an insightful account of the destruction of sexual love that is underway in American culture, I use his work to set up my closing argument against IVF and artificial birth control, an argument I rehearsed above. Let me turn now to the history of marriage.

3. A Brief History of the Sacrament of Marriage in the Church

For most of Western history, beginning with Ancient Greeks, a question about the primary function and nature of marriage has existed. The obvious, and historically dominant, answer has been that marriage exists to ensure procreation. However, another answer has also been offered, and that is that the function and nature of marriage concerns friendship. It is apparent that the

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4 According to the *Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*, F.L. Cross, ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1985). 'Sacrament' can be defined variously as, "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace unto us, ordained by Christ himself, as a means whereby we receive the same," or according to St. Thomas Aquinas, "the sign of a sacred thing in so far as it sanctifies men." Debates about the definition of 'sacrament' are ongoing. I do not intend to engage in these debates. Suffice it to say that, for the purposes of my paper, I understand sacrament as an outward sign of an inward grace representing a sacred thing to the extent that it sanctifies women and men. I also assume, with the Church, that to name something a 'sacrament' is to note its essential nature for the strength and livelihood of community life. Hence, to call marriage a sacrament is to say, in part, that without it, communities do not exist.

nature of friendship has, for the most part, always been attached to marriage. Unfortunately, the friendship inherent in marriage has not consistently been given its rightful consideration. Nevertheless, the notion that friendship is a necessary aspect of marriage has survived, despite efforts to declare procreation as the primary function of marriage and sex.

In what follows, I have attempted to highlight discoveries, debates, and particular accounts of marriage that were important to the Church's recognition of marriage as a sacrament, as well as specific references that articulate the importance of friendship in marriage. For, as I noted in the Introduction, my case against IVF and artificial birth control rests upon assumptions about the sacramental nature of marriage and the role of friendship in this sacrament. I will also point out a certain ambivalence in the Church's account of marriage, as well as the places in its history where the Church missed opportunities to develop the importance of friendship in marriage.

The institution of marriage developed gradually from a secular and private family affair to a fully recognized means of grace, whereby two consenting adults pledge their lives to one another and are supported by a community of faith. Given that marriage existed before the Church, it is worth taking a brief look at what marriage was like before Christianity, in order to understand how it developed for Christians and non-Christians alike.

a. Pre-Christian Conceptions of Marriage

In the first century B.C., the criteria for marriage in the Western world were simple. It was a private, family affair, without any marriage contract, except for the bride's dowry. Although witnesses were present and gifts were given, the nuptial ceremony existed without symbols such as rings, or flowers or special dress. Most often people married for money, children, or external goods (like property) -- or for the purpose of strengthening allies.

Between the first century B.C. and the second century A.D., however, the concept of marriage changed. Instead of understanding marriage simply as a social obligation, people began to debate about and consider more carefully the institution of monogamous marriage. Paul Veyne argues that the development of this new understanding of marriage originates in the Greco-Roman ideals of self-discipline and autonomy, which were associated with the desire to exert power in public life. Those who could not govern themselves had no business governing the public.7 This was preeminently a Stoic idea that gained influence when the Roman Empire took over the Greek Republic and the independent cities of Greece.

This moral code of the second century asserted that good men could engage in intercourse only in order to have children. Requirements for marriage had apparently become more stringent than before. A good man did not live for petty pleasures and was careful in every action. To give in to desire was immoral, and the only reasonable ground for sex was procreation, though procreation involved pleasure. Such limits upon intercourse caused some people to wonder about the extra-sexual relationship between a man and woman who were married. Before the existence of this moral code, women

7Veyne 36.
existed for child bearing and were deemed part of the family “wealth.” The Stoics, however, began to wonder why men and women should spend the rest of their lives together. The Stoics concluded that marriage must be a type of friendship, an enduring affection between two people who make love in order to perpetuate the human race. They ceased to regard marriage as a sort of natural phenomenon that existed without moral considerations. Now women were considered friends or lifelong companions, though they remained inferior to their husbands and subject to them.

These considerations led the Stoics to develop a different view of matrimony. Marriage was not simply about wealth and influence, but about friendship. Husband and wife could still make love only to beget children, and even then with care not to indulge in too many caresses. But there was also more to marriage than sex and children. The Stoic influences on conceptions of matrimony is important, but so is the influence of the early Christian Church.

b. Jesus and Paul on Marriage and Friendship

In the early first century A.D., the Jewish tradition said little about marriage customs and nothing about wedding ceremonies; they were private agreements and not public religious functions. In ancient Israel, marriage was a family matter arranged by the father for his children, usually when they were adolescents. Rooted as he was in this tradition, it is not surprising that Jesus himself said little about marriage. However, he did argue, on the basis of Genesis, that man and woman are made for each other and their relationship should not be severed. In Mark 10:6-9, we hear of Jesus' instructions on marriage relationships:
But in the beginning, at the time of creation, 'God made them male and female,' as the scripture says, 'and man for this reason will leave his father and mother and unite with his wife, and the two will become one body.' So they are no longer two but one. Man must not separate, then, what God has joined together.8

Jesus taught that divorce was wrong and that it fell short of moral perfection. Jesus preached the ideal of lasting fidelity in marriage; he commanded it as a norm for those who were bound in marriage and who sought to follow his call to moral perfection.

Because Jesus said so little about marriage, St. Paul's letters guided Christians to a better understanding of the relationship involved in marriage. Paul, ministering between c. A.D. 41 to A.D. 65, stressed the supremacy of marital fidelity. Ideally, each Christian spouse should be a source of salvation for their marriage partner. In his letter to the Ephesians (5:21-33), Paul stressed the uncommon notion of husbands respecting their wives, and women loving their husbands, the way the Church loves Christ.9 The mutual relationship between the Christian husband and wife should be one of service, service to each other, for each other. Their relationship should reflect the relationship between Christ and the Church. As Christ gave up his life for the Church, so a husband gives up his life for his wife. In return, the Church serves Christ in awe and reverence, and so the woman serves her husband in the same manner. Paul does not speak of this relationship in terms of master and servant, but in terms of mutual service to one another in love and friendship. This is the understanding of the mutuality, love, and service that should exist

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9It is this passage from Ephesians upon which the Church rests much of its case for marriage as a sacrament. This is one of the few places in the New Testament where the Greek 'mysterium' becomes the Latin 'sacramentum'. Also, Augustine's description of marriage as a sacrament is rooted here.
in all Christian relationships of marriage.

Ephesians 5:21-33 is often misunderstood, and is better understood when placed in the context of what Jesus told his disciples in John 15:12-17:

My commandment is this: love one another, just as I love you. The greatest love a person can have for his friends is to give his life for them. . . . I do not call you servants any longer, because a servant does not know what his master is doing. Instead, I call you friends, because I have told you everything I heard from my Father. . . . This, then is what I command you: love one another.

This is the selfless love that Paul said should exist in marriage. Though Jesus may not have said much about marriage, we should heed these words on friendship. For these commandments to his apostles have an overall affect on the importance and necessity of friendship for all Christians, whether married or not.

c. The Beginning Signs of Marriage as a Sacrament

The Christian writings of the second century A.D. add little to the understanding of marriage present in Paul's letter and the Gospels. Early Christian communities apparently took Jesus' statement against divorce as a moral norm, and the fathers of the Church expressed the importance of marriage in Christian life. Nonetheless, in the early centuries of the Church, Christians married according to civil law in a traditional family ceremony, without any special church blessing on their union.

At the time of the Emperor Constantine in 313 A.D., not much was said about the institution of marriage compared to other liturgical and doctrinal matters. Marriage was not at the heart of controversy. The Christian teaching was not complex and apparently did not provoke much
disagreement. Hence, the theologians of the day were not filling volumes with their thoughts about marriage. However, the Church did harbor some common and universal agreements about marriage: sexual promiscuity and easy divorce were wrong, and marriage was a divine institution sanctioned by Christ. Still, most church leaders relied primarily on the civil government to regulate marriage and divorce between Christians and non-Christians alike. Only when the Germanic invasions led to the collapse of Roman civil authority did Christian bishops begin to take legal control over marriage and make it an official church function.

Late in the fourth century, a greater liturgical influence arose in the East. Marriage was still primarily a family and secular affair, with the bride’s father playing the major role in the wedding ceremony. In the fifth century, it became customary for a priest or bishop to give his blessing to the couple, either during the wedding feast or even the day before. Then, particularly in Greece and in Asia Minor, the clergy began to take a more active role in the main ceremony itself. The Eastern Church developed the practice of joining the couple’s hands as part of an ecclesial blessing that marked the sacramental character of marriage. Through the seventh century, this ceremony was not required, and Christians could still get married in a purely secular ceremony. By the eighth century liturgical weddings had become quite common, and they were usually performed in a church rather than in the home as before.

Meanwhile, the understanding of marriage in the Western Church was undergoing its own transformations. Bishop Ambrose of Milan, in the fourth century, firmly asserted that “marriage should be sanctified by the priestly veil and blessing.”10 His firm stance on the permanence and blessings

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10Martos 415.
required in marriage influenced St. Augustine. St. Augustine's writings on marriage would later have a major influence on the Middle Ages. Augustine's attitudes regarding marriage were somewhat ambivalent. He considered it a beneficial social institution, required for the preservation of society and the continuation of the human race; and he believed that God had sanctioned it since the creation of the first man and woman. However, Augustine also regarded sexual desire as a perilous and destructive human energy that had the potential to ruin society if not controlled. This was a common attitude among many intellectuals of his day, including the Stoics, the Manicheans, certain gnostics, and Christian ascetics.

d. Augustine's Ambivalence

As we will see, throughout the Middle Ages, from the time of St. Augustine in the fifth century and continuing into the sixteenth, the Church maintained an ambivalent position with regard to marriage. Interestingly, Augustine is the perfect example of this ambivalence. And in a sense, the history of marriage after Augustine unfolds the tensions of his own account of marriage. On the one hand, he contributed to the recognition of its sacramental nature. On the other hand, his negative attitudes regarding concupiscence kept the Church from recognizing the gift of sexual intercourse and the good it can bring to the personal and covenantal aspects of marriage. Because Augustine's attitudes toward marriage are representative of the ensuing struggles within the Church concerning marriage as a sacrament, it is worth pausing here to consider Augustine's account of marriage.

Augustine is clear that sexual intercourse in and of itself is good, but concupiscence can translate that good into an evil: "Conjugal sexual
intercourse for the sake of offspring is not sinful. But sexual intercourse, even with one's spouse, to satisfy concupiscence is a venial sin."¹¹ Michael Lawler notes that by concupiscence Augustine means, "the disordered pursuit by any appetite of its proper good, a pursuit which since the Fall is difficult to keep within the proper, reasonable limits."¹² Lawler explains that Augustine's position is "much more nuanced than many notice: sexual intercourse is good in itself, but there are conditions under which it is good and conditions under which it is evil."¹³ Regardless of Augustine's nuanced distinctions between appropriate sex and concupiscence, his negative influence was a drag on the Church's understanding of marriage as a sacrament and of the inherent goodness of sexual relations within marriage.

Nonetheless, in keeping with his ambivalence, Augustine does speak of goods found in marriage. He asserts that sexuality and marriage were created by God and cannot lose that God-given intrinsic goodness. According to Augustine, children are the first good of marriage. The procreation of children helps to counterbalance the pleasure involved in sex. Since the perpetuation of humanity is necessary, Augustine affords that sex may be pleasurable as long as it serves the necessary purpose of procreation. The second good of marriage is faithfulness, which fosters trust between the couple and deters them from seeking pleasure outside this friendship.¹⁴ These two goods can also be found in pagan relationships, but Augustine says that Christians receive a third good, first mentioned by St. Paul. This extra benefit that Christians receive is a sacred sign, a sacramentum. Joseph Martos

¹¹Lawler 33. I am quoting Augustine from Lawler's text and not from the original source.
¹²Ibid.
¹³Ibid.
¹⁴Augustine's account of the goods of marriage later becomes standard Church language; hence the Church now speaks of the procreative and unitive goods. 'Unitive' is defined as the relational aspect of marriage that is developed and nourished through sexual intercourse.
summarizes St. Augustine’s notion of *sacramentum* in marriage:

so marriage formed the soul in the image of Christ’s fidelity to the Church; and just as Christians could not be rebaptized and receive another image of Christ, so spouses could not remarry and receive another image of his fidelity. The *sacramentum* of marriage was therefore not only a sacred sign of a divine reality but it was also a sacred bond between the husband and wife. And like the *sacramentum* of baptism, it was something permanent, or nearly so.\(^{15}\)

By designating marriage as a sacrament, Augustine understood that marriage is a visual sign of the invisible connection between Christ and his spouse, the Church. Augustine is the first person in the tradition to speak clearly about marriage as a sacrament, but it took another thousand years for Augustine's insight to take firm root.

Augustine says one more thing about marriage. He speaks of a fourth good: friendship. In his work, *The Good of Marriage*, he notes:

It does not seem to me to be good only because of the procreation of children, but also because of the natural companionship between the sexes. Otherwise, we could not speak of marriage in the case of old people, especially if they had either lost their children or had begotten none at all.\(^{16}\)

Later in *The Good of Marriage*, he returns to the same notion:

God gives us some goods which are to be sought for their own sake, such as wisdom, health, friendship; others which are necessary for something else, such as learning, food, drink, marriage, sexual intercourse. Certain of these are necessary for the sake of wisdom, such as learning; others for the sake of health,

\(^{15}\)Martos 418.

\(^{16}\)Lawler 31. I am quoting Augustine’s *The Good of Marriage* from Lawler’s text, and not the original source.
such as food and drink and sleep; others for the sake of friendship, such as marriage or intercourse, for from this comes the propagation of the human race in which friendly association is a great good. 17

Had these words from Augustine had as much influence on the Church's understanding of marriage as did his words on concupiscence, the history of marriage in the Church would look quite different. Unfortunately, Augustine's negative attitudes about sexual intercourse had a much greater influence upon the tradition than did his insights about friendship. Nonetheless, it is worth noting here that he identifies friendship as a God-given good to be pursued for its own sake, and that he says of marriage and intercourse that they, too, are God-given gifts that exist for the sake of friendship. Not until the twentieth century did the Church begin to appreciate fully this relationship between friendship and marriage. Augustine thus anticipates a much later development in the Church's understanding of marriage. His words on friendship here also resonate with Aristotle's understanding of friendship, as we will see below.

**e. Union of Bodies Vs. Union of Wills**

While Augustine was writing about marriage and friendship, Rome's power was in decline, and bishops began to get involved in marriage cases. One of the problems that arose for bishops attempting to resolve marital mishaps brought to their courts was the debate over the indissolubility of marriages on the ground of consent or consummation.

According to Roman tradition, marriage existed simply by consent:

17Ibid. 31-32.
that is, following the consent given by both of the spouses or their guardians, the marriage was considered legal and binding. This tradition created a problem for marriages that were arranged by the parents years before the couple began to live together as husband and wife. Sometimes one of the individuals engaged to another through parental arrangement would betray his or her parents and marry someone else before the arranged marriage could be consummated. Also, many times young lovers who wanted to marry but could not get approval from their parents would have secret marriages. These involved few or no witnesses and were based upon no more than the pledge of one lover to another.

In the Frankish and Germanic tradition, however, the giving of consent came at the betrothal or engagement, but the marriage was not considered binding until the first act of intercourse had taken place. Clergymen called upon to settle cases of disputed marriages would follow either the Roman tradition or Frankish/Germanic one. For a long time the Church did not address uniformly the question of whether or not marriages were ratified by consent or by intercourse. The decisions made in these cases depended on the tradition that the Episcopal or royal courts were accustomed to following.

In the midst of this confusion, however, St. Ambrose—drawing upon both Roman law and Scripture—asserted his beliefs concerning consent versus consummation. He concurred with the Roman tradition when he noted that it is not the "union of bodies but the union of wills" that creates a marital union. For Christians, this is an important notion demonstrating the validity of the marriage between Mary and Joseph, who had no sexual intercourse. Ambrose makes it clear that marriage consists in a contract,

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though not simply in a contract. Speaking of Ambrose’s account of marriage, William Joseph Dooley explains:

Natural in its purpose and divine in its origin he calls marriage a certain work of God. Added therefore to the notion of contract is the definite element of sacredness in the union which brings husband and wife together in life long companionship. In this instance too, Ambrose echoes the best Roman traditions, which looked upon marriage not only for sharing things human, but also for its partnership in things divine.19

Obviously, Stoic understandings of the importance of friendship influenced Ambrose, who influenced Augustine. Nonetheless, this chain of influence did not affect substantially the Church’s understanding of marriage until centuries later.

f. Marriage Becomes a Sacrament

After the fall of Rome and the coming of the dark ages in Europe, churchmen were called on more and more to decide marriage cases; slowly the ecclesial courts were gaining exclusive jurisdiction. Eventually the secular courts came to be bypassed altogether, and by the year 1000 all marriages in Europe effectively came under the jurisdictional power of the Church. Still, there was no obligatory church ceremony connected with marriage, though, by the eleventh century, this began to change. It then became the norm to hold weddings near the church, in order that the new couple could immediately go into the church to receive the priest’s blessing. This practice insured that marriages took place legally and in front of witnesses, since there had been so much controversy over secret marriages in the past.

19Ibid. 3.
Gradually, this practice developed into a wedding ceremony that was performed at the church door and followed by a nuptial mass inside the church during which the marriage was blessed. At the start of this development, the clergy were present at the ceremony only as official witnesses and to give the necessary blessing. But, as time went on, priests started assuming a greater role in the wedding ceremony. Slowly, many of the once-secular customs in the wedding ceremony became part of the ecclesiastical wedding ritual.

By the twelfth century in different parts of Europe, the Church had established a wedding ceremony performed entirely by the clergy. Along with the Church’s liturgical and legal involvement in marriage came numerous ecclesiastical laws pertaining to premarriage kinship, the wedding ceremony itself, and the social consequences of marriage and divorce. Still, no absolute assertion regarding marriage as one of the seven sacraments existed, but this changed in the twelfth century when the Church was forced to reexamine marriage as a sacrament in the light of three developments.

First, the Albigensians, a religious sect that resembled the Manicheans of the patristic period, became popular. They preached that matter was evil; hence, marriage was sinful because it involved procreation, which brought new material beings into the world. In combating the Albigensian view of marriage, the Church started proposing more strongly than ever that intercourse for the sake of having children was positively good. Such a proposal met with resistance, however, due to the enormous concerns about concupiscence. In spite of a general recognition of the sacredness of marriage, sexual intercourse itself was still regarded negatively, as a necessary, but potentially sinful, aspect of marriage.

The arguments with the Albigensians forced the ambivalence inherent
in the Church's understanding of marriage into the open. On the one hand, marriage was a natural friendship with divine origins; but on the other, it incorporated the volatile and terribly misunderstood reality of sexual intercourse. From the time of Augustine on, instead of declaring marriage a positive means to becoming pious and good, the Church, fearing concupiscence, understood marriage mostly as a remedy against the desires of the flesh. The arguments with the Albigensians forced the Church to reconsider this negative construal of sexual intercourse.

At the same time, and this is the second development, the Church's denial of the sanctity of sexual love contradicted the liturgical development of the Christian wedding ritual. Due to the presence of the clergy and the blessing they bestowed on the couple during the ceremony, it was hard to deny that the Church officially sanctioned sexual relations in marriage. To bless the marriage was also, in principle, to bless sexual intercourse and to at least gesture toward its sacramental character.

The third development was the discovery of St. Augustine's writings about marriage as a sacrament.

These three developments forced the Church to admit that marriage was open to the same kind of analysis they gave the other sacraments: specifically, that in marriage there was a sacramentum (a sacred sign), a sacramentum et res (a sacramental reality), and a res (a real grace) that was bestowed in the rite. And indeed, late in the twelfth century, the Church finally acknowledged marriage as one of its official sacraments.

\[20\]Martos 369.
g. Defining the Sacrament

It took most of the twelfth century for the clergy and scholars to develop a satisfactory account of marriage as a sacrament. The Church understood marriage to be one of the seven sacraments, but the question remained, what part of marriage was the *sacramentum*? Rehashing earlier debates between the Roman and Germanic accounts of marriage, some argued that it was the priest's blessing, others that it was the physical act of intercourse, and still others that it was the spiritual unity of the couple. In the end, due to the growing acceptance of the consent theory of canon lawyers, and the influence of works such as those of St. Ambrose, the *sacramentum* in a sacramental marriage was defined as the consent that the spouses exchanged with each other at the beginning of their married life.

Pope Alexander III's decision in the late twelfth century—that only consent was needed for a marriage to truly exist—confirmed the consent theory as the official Catholic teaching. Consent presented a clearer criterion of an intended marriage between two people than did consummation. He declared that the consent given by the betrothed individuals themselves was all that was needed for the existence of a real marriage. From this point forward, the marriage bond was considered indissoluble, not only as a Christian ideal, but also as a rule of law. The Pope's decision, however, did not lay to rest one concern that theologians raised regarding marriage as a sacrament.

This concern had to do with the continuing problem of secret marriages, which persisted as a difficulty for the Church. It remained an obstacle and a great threat to the sacredness of marriage because secret marriages permitted couples to enter unions they could later dissolve. The
magnitude of this threat hastened the bishops' decision to take a drastic step in deterring such actions. In a separate decree, issued in 1563, the bishops attending the Council of Trent acknowledged the legitimacy of all previous secret marriages but announced that henceforth no Christian marriage would be legitimate or sacramental unless it was administered in the presence of a priest and two witnesses.

The official establishment of marriage as a sacrament in the Church influenced theologians like Aquinas, who was now able to say that marriage was a positive movement toward holiness, and not simply a remedy against illicit sexual desire. According to Aquinas, marriage as a natural institution was governed by natural laws and ordered to the good of nature and the continuation of the human race. As a social institution, it was governed by civil laws and directed toward the good of society and the perpetuation of the family and the state. This much could have been said of marriage before and outside of the Church. However, Aquinas noted that, as a sacrament, marriage was governed by divine law and directed toward the benefit of the Church. Aquinas, along with other scholastics, noted that marriage existed long before the coming of Jesus. Like the other sacraments, marriage was something natural that the Church had lifted to the level of a sacramental sign through which grace might be received.

h. Contract versus Covenant

In the centuries that followed, the legal language of canon law was further fused into the sacramental theology of marriage. Late in the thirteenth century, John Duns Scotus formulated the notion of marriage as a contract that gave people a right to have sexual relations not only for the purpose of raising
a family, but also for protecting the marriage bond by engaging in sexual activity without the purpose of having children.

For most of the Middle Ages the language of contract was present through all deliberations of marriage. By the sixteenth century, Church theologians commonly understood that not every act of intercourse had to be performed with the intention of having children. Wedded couples could have sex without blame, provided they did it not out of lust but only to relieve their natural needs. This license to engage in sexual intercourse without the sole intention of having children aided the Church in developing the positive goods of marriage. Still, this attitude lacks the full comprehension of the unitive nature of sexual intercourse, as the Church would later understand it.

Overall, the official Catholic opinion toward marriage maintained an emphasis on legal rights and social responsibilities, since that had been the European belief regarding marriage during the centuries when the formal doctrines were developed. Hence, in the Middle Ages theologians developed arguments concerning marriage as a sacrament using language that did justice neither to the true reality of marriage, nor to the depths of the Church's own understanding of the sacrament.

Through the beginning of the twentieth century, the medieval notion of marriage as a contract prevailed and was relatively unchallenged in the Catholic Church. With the rise of the individualistic and liberal theories of law in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the term "marriage contract" was open to further misunderstanding. Hence, Kant could write in the late eighteenth century that marriage is "the union of two persons of different sexes for lifelong possession of each other's sexual attributes."21

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In recent years, many Christian authors have argued that the term "institution" rather than "contract" should be applied to marriage. Indubitably, this term articulates more lucidly than the word "contract" the fact that marriage is a reality that "both embraces and transcends the partners and that is not simply placed arbitrarily at their disposal." 22 Still, the fact remains that "institution" can be rendered in many ways and can be applied to marriage only partially and analogously. Walter Kasper proposes another alternative:

'Covenant' expresses the personal character of the consensus better than 'contract' or 'institution'. It is also able to express the legitimate intention of marriage, its public character, which is contained in the term 'contract.' A covenant is both private and public. The covenant of marriage is not simply a personal bond or covenant of love--it is also a public and legal matter concerning the whole community of believers. 23

The term 'covenant', then, not only reminds us of the mysterious relationship between the human and the divine, but also better represents the necessarily public character of marriage. To be reminded both of the mysterious and the public, communal aspects of marriage is, of course, to be reminded of its sacramental nature.

i. Modern Understandings of Marriage

As Jacques Leclercq notes in his book, Marriage--A Great Sacrament, the Church has always at least sensed the sacramental nature of marriage. The Church has simply failed, until recently, to give marriage the attention it

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23 Ibid. 40-41.
deserves:

The full realization of the sacramental quality of marriage is certainly one of the achievements of the Church in the 20th century.

It is true that this has always been known. No doctrine is more constant, and fifteen centuries ago St. Augustine formulated the essential character of Christian marriage in words which have been held classic down to our own time. Among these is the sacramental character. It is, however, one thing to know a truth, to define and to teach it, and another thing to be fully aware of it. . . . Right down from the apostolic age it has been known that marriage is a sacrament, but this truth has been, as it were, buried in the consciousness of the Church, it has only been able to emerge gradually and it is only in our days that it is opening out and fully blossoming in the light.24

The achievements of the twentieth century that Leclercq refers to began after the Second World War with the Catholic personalists.

The Catholic personalists, mostly in Germany, contended that marriage and intercourse had meaning in the absence of children. They suggested that "the meaning of marriage was the unity of two persons in a common life of sharing and commitment, and the meaning of intercourse was the physical and spiritual self-giving that occurred in the intimate union of two persons in love."25 This definition of marriage and intercourse put an emphasis on the personal relationship inherent in marriage, such that children now were secondary to the meaning and purpose of marriage. Although children should be loved and nurtured for their own sake, neither children nor their absence affected the primary meaning of marital and sexual union.

The reaction from Rome was not one that favored this new meaning

25Martos 380.
and purpose of marriage. In response, the Magisterium reasserted the official Catholic teaching that the primary purpose of marriage is the begetting and raising of children. Nonetheless, Pope Pius XII, during the 1930s, saw some merit in the personalist arguments. In some of his speeches he allowed that interpersonal and unitive values like commitment and fulfillment were essential, if secondary, goods in Christian marriage.

Some theologians saw the Pope's recognition of and empathy for the new values attached to marriage as an official acceptance of their arguments, and they continued the long overdue development of the neglected personal aspects of marriage. As a result, many theologians began to participate in changing and developing the traditional views on the sacrament of marriage. They steered away from the dichotomy between primary and secondary ends in marriage and tended toward an integrated approach. In particular, they worked to avoid a legalistic theology of marriage and moved toward a theology that was more scriptural, more personal, and more related to current married life.

This reformed opinion of marriage is mirrored in the documents of the Second Vatican Council, which took place from 1962-1965. Although the documents of Vatican II do not substantially change the traditional Catholic teaching on marriage, they do reflect an enhanced personalistic understanding of intercourse and marriage. Specifically, the documents avoid speaking of marriage as a contract or legal bond and speak instead in sociological, personal, and biblical terms. The bishops refer to marriage as a social and divine institution, an intimate partnership, a union in love, a community, and a covenant.

In its document titled "Church In The Modern World", the Council maintains that love between the spouses is "eminently human" and "involved
the good of the whole person." This complete love "is uniquely expressed and perfected through the marital act," since conjugal relations "signify and promote the mutual self-giving by which spouses enrich each other with a joyful and thankful will."26

On the other hand, the Council struggled to let go of the Medieval understanding of marriage, and in broad terms the Vatican II documents reflect an ambivalence that continues to plague the Church's understanding of marriage. Hence, the documents of Vatican II at one point emphasize the procreative good of marriage, while the 1983 Code of Canon Law emphasizes that marriage is "a covenant by which a man and woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life." Rather than declare the primary purpose of marriage to be procreation, this newer code says that marriage exists for both "the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of children."27

Although the Church has not completely shaken its concern over the primary and secondary goods of marriage and intercourse, it has, in the past thirty years, certainly focused more and more on the unitive good. Thus, the old theme of friendship has moved to the fore. Indeed, the importance of the role of friendship in marriage has survived the complicated history of marriage in the Church. I will turn now to an account of friendship itself in order to better understand the importance of its role in marriage.

4. Aristotle's Account of Friendship
   a. Virtue and the Good

26Ibid. 381. I am quoting the Vatican pastoral statements on marriage from Martos's text, and not from the original source.
27Ibid. 383. I am quoting the Code of Canon Law from Martos and not the original source.
Although Aristotle was not the first person to discuss friendship, his account is one that many contemporary moral philosophers and ethicists use as a model for understanding and redefining friendship for modern times. Aristotle considered friendship an important and essential aspect of human existence. In his *Nicomachean Ethics* he says of friendship that "it is some sort of excellence or virtue, or involves virtue, and it is, moreover, most indispensable for life. No one would choose to live without friends, even if he had all other goods" (1155a1-5). As this quotation indicates, any Aristotelian account of friendship is bound necessarily to an account of virtue, so let me begin there.

Aristotle understands virtue in terms of the good. The good is "that at which all things aim" (1094a). As Alasdair MacIntyre explains: "Every activity, every inquiry, every practice aims at some good, for by 'the good' or 'a good' we mean that at which human beings characteristically aim." Unlike Plato, Aristotle does not suppose that there is a single Good. Rather, there are a variety of goods. Nonetheless, Aristotle does posit the possibility of a supreme Good, a good toward which all other goods aim, and this Good he calls *eudaimonia*. There are a variety of translations for *eudaimonia*, such as happiness, blessedness, and prosperity. MacIntyre says of *eudaimonia* that it is "the state of being well, and doing well in being well, of a man's being.

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28Ostwald translation.
29Aristotle made a distinction between two types of virtue, namely intellectual virtue and moral virtue. The distinction is made in terms of the way each are procured: intellectual virtues can be taught, but the moral virtues are developed through habitual exercise. Aristotle believed that these two types of virtue could not be separated; both are necessary components in a well-lived life. For my purposes here, however, I am concerned only with moral virtues.
30Ostwald translation.
32Ibid.
well-favored himself and in relation to the divine."\(^{33}\) For Aristotle, the *telos* of human activity is a completely well-lived life, hence the translation of *eudaimonia* as "happiness." The virtues are not only the means by which one achieves *eudaimonia*, but also, when lived out in this world, are a form of the good. Without the virtues, a person will be frustrated in his or her attempt to achieve the goal, or *telos*, of *eudaimonia*.

Aristotle's understanding of the relationship between *eudaimonia* and virtue rests upon his assumptions about human nature. Like everything in the world, humans must, Aristotle presumes, have a "proper function." Hence, he notes:

> if we take the proper function of man to be a certain kind of life, and if this kind of life is an activity of the soul and consists in actions performed in conjunction with the rational element, and if a man of high standards is he who performs these actions well and properly, and if a function is well performed when it is performed in accordance with the excellence appropriate to it; we reach the conclusion that the good of man is an activity of the soul in conformity with excellence or virtue, and if there are several virtues, in conformity with the best and most complete. (1098a12-17)\(^{34}\)

MacIntyre summarizes this important role of virtue in man's proper function:

"For what constitutes the good for man is a complete human life lived at its best, and the exercise of the virtues is a necessary and central part of such a life, not a mere preparatory exercise to secure such a life." He concludes: "We thus cannot characterize the good for man adequately without already having made reference to the virtues."\(^{35}\)

\(^{33}\)Ibid.
\(^{34}\)Ostwald translation.
\(^{35}\)MacIntyre 140. In an attempt to be aware of the problem of exclusive language, whenever possible I will opt for 'human,' but because Aristotle, or his translators, uses 'man' it becomes awkward to always do so.
As Stanley Hauerwas notes, virtue for the Greeks was "that which causes a thing to perform its function well. Virtue was an excellence of any kind that denotes the power of anything to fulfill its function." For Aristotle, then, the virtues identified those qualities necessary for man to fulfill his function or nature, and they carried names like courage, justice, truthfulness and friendship. Virtue, according to Aristotle, exists both as a purposeful activity and a rational attitude. Thus,

if the acts that are in accordance with the virtues have themselves a certain character it does not follow that they are done justly or temperately. The agent also must be in a certain condition when he does them; in the first place he must have knowledge, secondly he must choose the acts, and choose them for their own sakes, and thirdly his action must proceed from a firm and unchangeable character. (1105a30)

As Aristotle points out an essential aspect of virtuous acts is that they are done because they are worthwhile in and of themselves; they are practiced for their own sake. Such activities are not only enduring, they also contribute to, and spring from, that stability and constancy of the self that Aristotle calls 'character.' For Aristotle, one of the central activities necessary for attaining human excellence and for building the character necessary for a well-lived life is friendship. Let me turn, then, more directly to Aristotle's understanding of friendship.

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38 The circular nature here of Aristotle's argument is one of the favorite topics of Aristotelian commentators. However, I do not have time to carefully lay out the argument here. For a helpful account of the problem, see Stanley Hauerwas, "Companions on the Way: The Necessity of Friendship," The Asbury Theological Journal 45.1 (1990). (Further references to this article will be identified as COW).
b. Friendship

Stanley Hauerwas proves to be a useful guide for understanding Aristotle, so I will use Hauerwas to help focus Aristotle's account of friendship. Hauerwas stresses that, for Aristotle, an important aspect of true friendship is that it lasts. Lasting friendships can exist only when the commonalties between two companions are essentially good and worthwhile. Any relationships grounded in base activity or things of a superficial nature will not be able to sustain themselves. Hauerwas explains:

friends must share something in common, but the problem with many kinds of friendship is that what is held in common is not lasting, so that when the project or trip is over so is the friendship. In contrast, Aristotle is insisting that what friends have in common is a certain kind of friendship that is only possible because of the kind of character they have. Friendship is both a characteristic and activity by which the agents become good through the activity itself. (1168a5-7)\(^39\)

In other words, friendship is a virtue, which, like the other virtues, both makes possible, and emerges from, a mutual concern for the good. Furthermore, friendships rooted in this mutual concern are stable and constant.

At this point, I should note that Aristotle identifies three kinds of friendship, and that the kind Hauerwas speaks of here is the third and most perfect kind. Aristotle speaks of friendships of pleasure, friendships of usefulness or advantage, and friendships based on goodness and virtue. He acknowledges that the first two types of friendship are such only in a secondary sense. In these friendships the object of love is not the friend or their goodness, but the advantage a person acquires through the friendship. Of

\(^{39}\)Hauerwas, COW 40.
the friendships of utility and pleasure, Aristotle says the following:

Now when the motive of the affection is usefulness, the partners do not feel affection for one another per-se but in terms of the good accruing to each from the other. The same is also true of those whose friendship is based on pleasure: we love witty people, not for what they are, but for the pleasure they give us . . . In other words, the friend is loved not because he is a friend, but because he is useful or pleasant. Thus, these two kinds are friendship only incidentally, since the object of affection is not loved for being the kind of person he is, but for providing some good or pleasure. Consequently, such friendships are easily dissolved when the partners do not remain unchanged: the affection ceases as soon as one partner is no longer pleasant or useful to the other. (1156a 9-20)40

While I am not interested in judging the moral value or justification of friendships of use or pleasure, I am interested in pointing out (to anticipate later arguments) that these are not the friendships that should exist in marriage or that ultimately bind a community together.41

Most assuredly, the friendships that bind people together in marriage and community are friendships of virtue. Of friendships of virtue, Aristotle says the following:

complete friendship is the friendship of good people similar in virtue; for they wish goods in the same way to each other in themselves. [Hence they wish goods to each other for each other's sake.]42 Now those who wish goods to their friend for their friend's own sake are friends most of all, for they have this attitude because of the friend himself, not coincidentally.

40Ostwald translation.
41Some philosophers argue that Aristotle's account of friendships of use and advantage is not entirely realistic or correct. For instance, John Cooper notes that it is possible for these types of friendship to involve a subtle mixture of self-interested concern and genuine consideration for the other, see "Aristotle on Friendship," Essays On Aristotle's Ethics, ed. Amelie Oksenberg Rorty, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980) 305.
42All such brackets are the translator's, unless otherwise noted.
Hence these people's friendship lasts as long as they are good; and virtue is enduring. (1156b6-14)\textsuperscript{43}

According to Aristotle, then, friendships are enduring because virtue is enduring. And virtue is enduring because it is part and parcel of that constancy and stability that is attached to those activities that are done only for their own sake, or, put differently, done because without them our lives would somehow be poorer. For Aristotle, true friendship is a virtue because it is an activity that exists for its own sake; it is an enduring activity without which human beings could not live flourishing lives.

c. Friendship as Self-love

Aristotle also says that in order for a person to be capable of enjoying true friendship with others, one must be friends with one's self. Although friendship is a relationship, it does not exclude one from being friends with one's self. Necessarily, for one to be a person fitted for appreciating pristine friendship, one has to be a friend with one's self. As Hauerwas notes, paraphrasing Aristotle:

If we are not capable of being our own best friend we will lack exactly the constancy necessary to be men of character and thus cannot rightly be friends with others. That is why a wicked man cannot even be a friend even of themselves (sic) because they have committed many crimes and run away from their lives. They seek the company of others with whom they can spend their days, but they avoid their own company as they are incapable of remembering their past and they fear their future (1166b10-25). In effect, they lack the means to see and have continuity between what they are and what they do. Friendship with ourselves makes

\textsuperscript{43}Irwin translation.
And constancy, of course, makes friendship possible, for it is precisely this constancy that allows for the faithfulness and trust so necessary in friendship. Aristotle's stress on the stability and constancy necessary both for character, and for friendships of virtue, leads him to accent the extent to which friends must be like one another. Hence,

Friendship is equality and likeness, and especially the likeness of those who are similar in virtue. Because they are steadfast in themselves, they are also steadfast toward one another; they neither request nor render any service that is base. On the contrary, one might even say that they prevent base services; for what characterizes good men is that they neither go wrong themselves no let their friends do so. Bad people, on the other hand, do not have the element of constancy, for they do not remain similar even to themselves. (1159b4-12)

As Hauerwas notes, Aristotle, at the extreme, says that by being a friend with another, we are in fact friends with ourselves, since our "friend is really another self" (1166a31).

For all its merit, Aristotle's account of the equality necessary for friendship creates a problem, which can be posed as a question: How can we say we genuinely love another as other if friendship exists as a form of self-

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44Hauerwas, COW 41.
45Ostwald translation. It is important to note that although I use Aristotle's account of true friendship as a model for friendship in marriage and community, he himself did not acknowledge equality of friendship between husband and wife. As John Cooper points out, "One class of unequal virtue-friendships is that between husband and wife (1158b13-19). Here Aristotle's idea seems to be that men as such are morally superior to women, so that a friendship between the absolutely best man and the absolutely best woman, each recognized as such, would be an unequal friendship. In such a friendship the disparity in goodness does not imply any deficiency on the side of the lesser person with respect to her own appropriate excellences; she will be perfect of her kind, but the kind in question is inherently lower" (p. 307). Cooper's comments here are a nice reminder that Aristotle lived in Ancient Greece, where women were not members of the polis and where slavery was a common cultural practice.
46Ibid.
love? Hauerwas outlines the problem:

Aristotle is rightly concerned to provide an account of the moral prerequisites for friendship that make friendship endure across time and in the face of fortune. In many ways it is the same kind of problem of stability of self necessary to be a person of character. To supply such stability he wants to anchor friendship in a similar love of similar virtue—friendship, like virtue, becomes an activity that needs no reason to be. But as a result we miss any sense of what we think crucial to friendship—namely, learning to value another not because they are like us but because they are different from us.47

Certainly we need to have much in common with our friends; and certainly in our friends we do find something of ourselves. Hauerwas admits to the wisdom of Aristotle’s account of friendship for self-knowledge, but he wonders if perhaps Aristotle has not gone far enough. Hauerwas asks the question: “For if we need friends to know ourselves, how can we know what we are if there are no interesting differences between us and friends? He goes on to note the possible source of this problem in Aristotle’s thought:

I suspect this problem relates to Aristotle’s continuing Platonic assumption that there is a unity to the virtues, thus people of character will, insofar as they are moral, be the same. But if the virtues are capable of quite different arrangements within any one life, or if they may even conflict, then it seems that our friend may be quite different than we are. Moreover, such difference is not a sign of moral failure, but necessary if we are to know what we are.48

If we do not adopt Aristotle’s Platonic assumption, then we can, perhaps, surmount this problem. While it is understood that certainly friends need to

47 Hauerwas, COW 41.
48 Ibid.
share some things in common, they do not need to embody exactly the same virtues in exactly the same way. And perhaps, then, Aristotle was mistaken to say that a friend is really another self.

The problem with the notion of friendship between absolute equals, or friendship as self-love, can be stated another way, again in the form of a question: Does not true friendship require that friends recognize differences in one another, some of which bespeak a certain level of vulnerability? In other words, because friendships of virtue establish a safe and trustworthy environment, should not such friendships display an openness to weakness? Aristotle incorrectly pursues a model of friendship that denies friendships such vulnerability. Aristotle says that we should have friends around us only in times of good fortune. For it seems that when we allow our friends to see us in pain we inadvertently cause them pain. Aristotle also does not think that friends should be in debt to one another. As Hauerwas says: "We, thus, seem to have returned to Aristotle's 'high-minded man' who welcomes great risks because he desires to do good, but is ashamed to accept a good turn. He is so because by doing good he is able to put the other in his debt while providing himself with an added benefit" (1124b7-18).

Aristotle's insistence that people of character are self-sufficient seems to be the source of his assumption that friends should share fortune but hide ill luck. Aristotle wants to protect the self against the ravages of fortune, and he also wants to protect friendships from these same uncertainties. However, this insistence seems to undermine one of the crucial aspects of friendship: friends need one another. As Hauerwas puts it: "The question is not whether we need

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49Ibid. 42.
50As Cooper notes, 'need' here does not indicate that all friendships are friendships of utility after all. Rather, Aristotle's understanding of the necessity of friendship involves an assumption about certain 'deficiencies' in human nature: humans are simply not made to live alone. Nonetheless, Aristotle does stress
friends because we are vulnerable, but whether we should not be the kind of people who will the presence of other people in a manner that makes us vulnerable to their presence." In other words, the importance of true friendship is not so much that the friends are perfect in such a manner that they are completely self-sufficient and alike in most ways. Rather, because of the power of the relationship, friends can afford the risk of being "other." Hauerwas points out the mistake Aristotle makes in attempting to develop the notion of a friend that in the end is independent to a fault. He says that Aristotle,

thus searches for the means to insure the stability of friendship by insuring that friends are in a sense 'self-contained,' but in the process friends lose exactly that which is necessary for friendship--the ability to accept not just gifts from our friend but friendship itself as a gift.

Aristotle attempts to cover all bases in a manner that protects friendship against the risks of fortune, time, and change. Hauerwas's point seems to be that while an openness to the other is a risk, it is also a basic requirement of friendship. For what is friendship if not the gift that others bring to our lives.

self-sufficiency at the expense of vulnerability, and it is this that I am critiquing.

51 Hauerwas 43.

52 A reading of both Cooper and Hauerwas makes it clear that Aristotle's understanding of the equality necessary for true friendship is open to debate. Thus Hauerwas says that because the equality in question is an equality of virtue, true friendships could exist between men and women or free and slave, despite great inequalities of status. On the other hand, as I noted in footnote #45, Cooper seems to think that such friendships, though based on virtue, would remain less than perfect because of essential differences, differences that are not limited to social status but certainly are reflected there. See John Cooper, "Aristotle on Friendship," Essays On Aristotle's Ethics, ed. Amelie Oksenberg Rorty, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1980) and Stanley Hauerwas, "Companions on the Way: The Necessity of Friendship," Asbury Theological Journal 45.1 (1990). I am in no position to take sides in such debates. Obviously, I do not want to adopt Aristotle's cultural biases. But more than this, I want to call the reader's attention to how Aristotle's tendency to shy away from vulnerability undermines his account of friendship.


54 Hauerwas, COW 43.
By not exposing weaknesses to one another, we threaten the existence of true friendship. It is important to understand the implications of this threat. For as we will see clearly later, it turns out that without the vulnerability entailed in remaining open to the other, we cannot sustain community.

d. Friendship: the Bond of Community

Aristotle's discussion of virtue and friendship in the *Nicomachean Ethics* concerns not only the formation of individually virtuous people, but also the formation of a *polis*, a city-state of ancient Greece. Aristotle understood that without friendship the *polis* could not exist. Though I am not interested in Ancient Greek city-states, I am, for my purposes here, interested in the similar features between the polis of Aristotle's time and our current understanding of community. For as MacIntyre explains:

>a community whose shared aim is the realization of the human good presupposes of course a wide range of agreement which makes possible the kind of bond between citizens which, in Aristotle's view, constitutes a *polis* . . . That bond is the bond of friendship and friendship itself is a virtue. The type of friendship which Aristotle had in mind is that which embodies a shared recognition of and pursuit of a good. It is the sharing which is essential and primary to the constitution of any community, whether that of a household or that of a city.\(^{55}\)

Thus, virtue as an excellence concerns not only the individual, but also the community. And this is particularly true of the virtue of friendship. Friendship is the bond of community, and the source of this bond is a shared pursuit of certain goods.

\(^{55}\)MacIntyre 146.
Aristotle puts it like this: "Friendship is present to the extent that men share something in common, for that is also the extent to which they share a view of what is just. And the proverb 'friends hold in common what they have' is correct, for friendship consists in community." (1159b27-31)\textsuperscript{56}

Commenting on this passage in Aristotle, Paul Wadell notes that when Aristotle says friendship 'consists in community,' in character friendships it is a community of virtue, a relationship or set of relationships defined by the purpose from which it began and for which it continues, the ongoing growth of each friend in the good that is her life. In this way, friendship is the community of those who seek and delight in virtue, but as a community it is not just a relationship, but a moral activity.\textsuperscript{57}

Hence, friendship bonds the community, and the community is the foundation upon which friendships are built. This building of friendship and bonding of community requires the virtuous pursuit of a common goal. Both the goal and the virtues necessary to achieve it are integral to the friendships that make the community possible.

As Wadell says: "Friendship is the soil for virtue, the relationship in which a good not possible within society-at-large can be attained."\textsuperscript{58} Without friendships of character, the community dissipates, it loses its cohesiveness. "We need friendships formed from shared purposes, friendships whose activity is the mutual pursuit and embodiment of these purposes, if we are not to become disinterested with the projects upon which the self depends."\textsuperscript{59} Not only does apathy cause friendship and community to dissipate, but also, as Wadell notes, amidst such a lack of interest, we lose the sense of our own

\textsuperscript{56}Ostwald translation.
\textsuperscript{57}Wadell 63.
\textsuperscript{58}Ibid. 50.
\textsuperscript{59}Ibid. 61.
It is apparent that without friendships our lives are not complete. As Hauerwas puts it: "friendship turns out to be essential for illuminating any happiness worth having."\(^6\) John Cooper summarizes Aristotle’s arguments for the necessity of friendship:

Aristotle argues, first, that to know the goodness of one’s life, which he reasonably assumes to be a necessary condition of flourishing, one needs to have intimate friends whose lives are similarly good, since one is better able to reach a sound and secure estimate of the quality of a life when it is not one’s own. Second, he argues that the fundamental moral and intellectual activities that go to make up a flourishing life cannot be continuously engaged in with pleasure and interest, as they must be if the life is to be a flourishing one, unless they are engaged in as parts of shared activities rather than pursued merely in private; and given the nature of the activities that are in question, this sharing is possible only with intimate friends who are themselves morally good persons.\(^6\)

In other words, "according to Aristotle we value, and are right to value, friendship so highly because it is only in and through intimate friendship that we can come to know ourselves and to regard our lives constantly as worth living."\(^6\) Without these intimate friendships we are lost. To say that friendships are necessary for the flourishing of human life is also to say that community is necessary for the flourishing of human life.

The discussion so far has been concerned with the nature of true friendship and the relationship between friendship and community. As of yet, I have not considered how friendship might be "seen" or in some manner

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\(^6\)Hauerwas, COW 35.  
\(^6\)Cooper 330-331.  
\(^6\)Ibid. 332.
expressed. In order for all the virtuous aspects of friendship to be realized, they need a form of expression. Hauerwas puts it this way: "Just as a virtue is not some means to an end, but is a skill necessary for people of character, so friendship is a skill that requires concrete expression if we are to benefit from it."63 The life-long and sacred friendship between a man and a woman that we call marriage is perhaps the most perfect concrete expression of friendship. And if, as noted earlier, friendship is the bond of community, and marriage is the most perfect example of friendship, then we should not be surprised to find that marriage is particularly important.

5. Sexual Love as the Heart of Community
   a. The Sanctity of Marriage and the Bond of Community

In his book, *Sex, Economy, Freedom, and Community*, Wendell Berry insists that without the recognition and sustainment of the sacredness in marriage, communities cannot sustain themselves, and iniquities of all sorts are uncontrollably possible.

If you depreciate the sanctity and solemnity of marriage, not just as a bond between two people but as a bond between those two people and their forebears, their children, and their neighbors, then you have prepared the way for an epidemic of divorce, child neglect, community ruin, and loneliness.64

Berry articulates here the pivotal importance of marriage for the life of the community. And it seems to me that it is precisely the recognition of this importance that lead the Church to at least sense, almost from the beginning, that the friendship in marriage is somehow sacred. Perhaps now we can see

63Hauerwas, COW 40.
why the Church in the fourth century was so concerned about secret marriages. To say that marriage is a sacrament is to say that in an important way it is inherently public.

Marriage vows exchanged in public give the community an opportunity to participate in the sacrament with the couple. This participation is the concrete expression of the bond between lovers and their community. Since the sacrament does not exist for the lovers alone, their gaze needs ultimately to turn toward the community. Berry explains that the members of a community must be witnesses to the marriage, not only because of their own need to participate, but also because of the support they lend the couple in this act of mutual self-giving that necessitates great sacrifice:

They say their vows to the community as much as to one another, and the community gathers around them to hear and to wish them well, on their behalf and on its own. It gathers around them because it understands how necessary, how joyful, and how fearful this joining is. These lovers, pledging themselves to one another ‘until death,’ are giving themselves away, and they are joined by this as no law or contract could ever join them. Lovers, then, "die" into their union with one another as a soul "dies" into its union with God.65

The bond of the lovers is essentially the bond of the community. Obviously, then, the community has a vested interest in marriage. Lovers give themselves to one another and to the community, and the community in return offers, in addition to support, its protection of the exceptional form of giving found in marriage. Berry contends that, if the community cannot preserve this gift in marriage from the vices of industry or those interested in profits, it cannot protect itself from anything: "at the very heart of community life, we find not something to sell as in the public market but this momentous giving. If the

65Ibid. 137-138.
community cannot protect this giving, it can protect nothing--and our time is proving that this is so."66

b. Sexual Love

For Berry, marriage lies at the heart of community, and at the heart of marriage lies sexual love. Thus, a concern about sexual love necessarily is a concern about all the values held in community and in the larger context of our culture. Berry explains that the arrangements like marriage exist, in part, to reduce the volatility and the danger of sex—to preserve its energy, its beauty, and its pleasure; to preserve and clarify its power to join not just husband and wife to one another but parents to children, families to the community, the community to nature; to ensure as far as possible, that the inheritors of sexuality, as they come of age, will be worthy of it.67

In other words, the powers of sex are vital to the life of community; they are a sacred force to be passed on, like other hallowed things, from generation to generation.

At this point, a close look at Berry's account of sexual love, which is not unlike Aristotle's account of friendship, will prove helpful. Berry begins with a telling description of the role that eyes play in love:

Looking into one another's eyes, lovers recognize their encounter as a meeting not merely of two bodies but of two living souls. In one another's eyes, moreover, they see themselves reflected not narcissistically but as singular beings, separate and small, far

66Ibid. 138.
67Ibid. 120-121.
inferior to the creature that they together make.\textsuperscript{68}

Here Berry seems to sense something of the tension that I noted earlier in Aristotle's account of true friendship. Lovers, like friends, are separate, and yet one--bound as they are by some common understanding of the good.

Berry allows me to add to Aristotle's general model of friendship, however, an account of the role of sexual love in this particular friendship called marriage. Berry identifies the two-sided nature of sexual love the Church has struggled with for so long, namely, its role in both procreation and union: "Sexual love is . . . understood as both fact and mystery, physical motion and spiritual motive."\textsuperscript{69} Berry's concern is that this complex nature of sexual love has been reduced, in our culture, to the simple act of sexual intercourse, divorced from personal attachment and community concern. This kind of reduction has been the Church's concern almost from the beginning of its history. To try and capture exactly what is lost when sex is no longer considered solemn and sacred, Berry turns to the relationship between Portia and Bassanio in Shakespeare's \textit{The Merchant of Venice}. Portia says to Bassanio:

\begin{quote}
\textit{Beshrew your eyes,}
\textit{They have o'erlook'd me and divided me,}
\textit{One half of me is yours, the other half yours,--}
\textit{Mine own I would say: but if mine then yours,}
\textit{And so all yours.}
\end{quote}

Portia's words are by no means said quickly or loosely. Portia's trust in the love she shares with Bassanio must be without qualification in order for her to give herself away in such a complete manner. But such are the requirements of

\textsuperscript{68}Ibid. 134-135.
\textsuperscript{69}Ibid. 135.
true love and true friendship. Berry's account of Portia's words is moving:

They attest to the sexual and the spiritual power of a look, which has just begun an endless conversation between two living souls. This speech of hers is as powerful as it is because she knows exactly what she is doing. What she is doing is giving herself away. She has entered into a situation in which she must find her life by losing it.70

Berry's interpretation of Shakespeare reminds us of the Aristotelian notion of discovering one's self in another. But on this note, Berry also differs from Aristotle. For it is precisely the risks involved in this act of giving one's self away that Aristotle wanted to eliminate in his account of friendship. Berry's insight seems sound: the best friendships require an openness and a self-giving that render both parties vulnerable. Thus Berry notes that Portia's declaration encompasses all that is entailed in giving one's self away, all the celebration and all the anxiety. Berry continues his commentary on her speech:

She is speaking joyfully and fearfully of the self's suddenly irresistible wish to be given away. And this is an unconditional giving, on which, she knows, time and mortality will impose their inescapable conditions; she will have remembered that marriage ceremony with its warnings of difficulty, poverty, sickness, and death. There is nothing 'safe' about this.71

This unconditional, unsafe self-giving is the essence of marriage. Perhaps now we can see why historically the Church has placed an emphasis on consent. The consent signaled by the "I do" in the marriage ceremony marks this risky giving of one's self away to another. Such an act of self-giving is part of the mystery of marriage that makes it sacramental. Moreover, sexual love is by

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70 Ibid. 136.
71 Ibid.
its nature a losing of one's self in another, and in that way the 'marital act' is itself an integral part of the sacrament.

Berry points out, using John Donne's poem, "The Ecstasy", that love's power also transcends the physical motion of sexual intercourse, and by its essence sexual love cannot be reduced simply to sex.

'This Ecstacy doth unperplex'
We said, 'and tell us what we love;
We see by this it was not sex;
We see we saw not what did move.'72

Sexual love involves much more than physical sex; it entails the total realities of two people. And it exists not only in the bedroom: its sweetness is found in a tender look, a soft touch, or simply a quiet moment.

But, as Berry notes, the risks of sexual love, so construed, are not only the obvious risks connected with the potency inherent in sexual love: "Because it is so powerful, it is risky, not just because of the famous dangers of venereal disease and 'unwanted pregnancy' but also because it involves and requires a giving away of the self that if not honored and reciprocated, inevitably reduces dignity and self-respect."73 A reduction of dignity and self-respect loosens the bond in marriage and permeates into the community as shame and contempt.

c. Sex as a Commodity

The community as a whole, then, is threatened when sexual love is no longer deemed sacred and is then reduced to a simple sexual act. According

72Ibid. 135
73Ibid. 143.
to Berry, such a reduction is most apparent in our time in the commercialization of sex, in the failure of our 'public' discussions about sex, and in a misconstrued notion of sexual freedom. In our culture, the exorbitant energy of sexual love is promoted as a commodity that can be bought and sold by interested groups in private and public life. Communities now more than ever must protect their members from the corruption of an industrial-minded public that tricks the individual into thinking sex is an individual right and an autonomous pleasure. In America in particular, people are obsessed with their own freedom and have become the slaves of an industrial economy.

This industrial economy, which is the current force behind public life, supports such iniquities as IVF and artificial birth control. Public attitudes rape the intimacy and beauty inherent in sexual unions. This violation threatens sexual love, which, as Berry says, is "the heart of the community." The loss of the sanctity of sexual love is also a loss of the mystery essential to marriage. And, as noted earlier, if we cannot protect marriage we cannot protect anything. Hence, what Berry identifies as the commercialization of sex, of which both IVF and artificial contraception are a part, puts us in the frightening position of losing all that is sacred to us, of losing everything that makes us human.

We need to look no further than magazines, television, and current attitudes advocated by the public to see that the preciousness of sex has fallen under major attack from those concerned with profit and false liberation. Exposing the intimacy and union of sexual love to strictly public and private

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74Berry means something quite specific when he uses the terms 'private' and 'public.' By private he means "a sort of reserve in which individuals defend their 'right' to act as they please and attempt to limit or destroy the 'rights' of other individuals to act as they please" (p. 120). By 'public' he means "simply the arena of unrestrained private ambition and greed" (p. 121). My use of these terms will mirror Berry's.
interests leads to competition and exploitation: competition between scientists and those thirsty for profits, exploitation of the body and of the sexual intimacy necessary for community life.

Berry insists that the power of sex should not be accessible to industry for its selfish benefit:

Sexual energy cannot be made publicly available for commercial use—that is, prostituted—without destroying all of its communal or cultural forms: forms of courtship, marriage, family life, household economy, and so on. The devaluation of sexuality, like the devaluation of a monetary currency, destroys its correspondence to other values.\(^7^5\)

People who do not concern themselves with the ramifications of sex on the larger reality of community cannot participate in the beauty of sexual love that is the heart of the community.

It is apparent, then, that the commercialization of sex is a threat to sexual love. So who can protect the value of sexual love? Since the public is interested in profits and those in private lives are interested in their own gratification, protection must come from the community. As Berry says:

It is the community, not the public . . . that is the protector of . . . tender, vulnerable, and precious things—the childhood of children, for example, and the fertility of fields. These protections are left to the community, for they can be protected only by affection and by intimate knowledge, which are beyond the capacities of the public and beyond the power of the private citizen.\(^7^6\)

Because in our culture and in our time public and private interests lack the affection and intimate knowledge of marriage and sexual love, such matters

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\(^7^5\) Berry 134.

\(^7^6\) Ibid. 168.
cannot be discussed appropriately in the public arena.

d. The Failure of Public Language

As involved as the public is in matters of sex, it is unable to address effectively the real issues of sexuality. In the public arena, the language of sex is devoid of moral content and is misused. Self-interest hinders the understanding of the integral relationship between sexual love, marriage and community. Berry says of this public language that it "can deal, however awkwardly and perhaps uselessly, with pornography, sexual hygiene, contraception, sexual harassment, rape, and so on. But it cannot talk about respect, responsibility, sexual discipline, fidelity, or the practice of love."77 Attempts at sexual education also fail:

'Sexual education,' carried on in this public language, is and can only be a dispirited description of the working of a sort of anatomical machinery--and this is a sexuality that is neither erotic nor social nor sacramental but rather a cold-blooded, abstract procedure that is finally not even imaginable.78

Put simply, our public language falls short drastically of the awesome and wonderful realities surrounding sex. Our public language cannot articulate the complex relationships between sexual love, marriage and community. But in the absence of an account of these relationships all that is left is mechanical sex.

77Ibid. 122.
78Ibid. 122.
In addition to the commodification of sex and the failure of our public language to capture the richness and complexity of sexual love, Berry notes a third arena where the reduction of sex is evident. This reduction has crept into our lives under the name of 'free love.' However, as the case turns out, this form of freedom is not true freedom at all:

Seeking to 'free' sexual love from its old communal restraints, we have 'freed' it also from its meaning, its responsibility, and its exaltation. And we have made it more dangerous. 'Sexual liberation' is as much a fraud and as great a failure as was the 'peaceful atom.'

To understand Berry's point here, we need to look more closely at Berry's understanding of freedom.

Berry contends that the freedom of the self-interested individual is far from emancipating. His discourse on sex, freedom, and community insists that sexual love cannot be made 'free' under the conditions sought by those in public and private life. The freedom of the individual is an unchecked pursuit of one's own self-interest that can be defended legally in the public domain. But, as Berry argues, the divorce of the individual from community in the name of freedom releases him or her from the activities that define who that person is and from characteristics of what it means to be human. The freedom held by the individual is inclined "to see itself as an escape from the constraints of community life--constraints implied by consideration for the nature of a place; by consideration for the needs and feelings of neighbors . . .

79 Ibid. 142.
by respect for privacy, dignity, and propriety of individual lives."\textsuperscript{80}

Unfortunately, with this popular approach to freedom, people find themselves more dependent on commercialism and limited in their happiness. The more stress put on individual liberty, the less freedom people really have. By seeking to escape the constraints of community, people are left only to adopt a "rootless and placeless monoculture of commercial expectations and products."\textsuperscript{81} These products destroy and shatter the elements of self-giving, mystery and sanctity inherent in sexual love, strip the body of its dignity, and ultimately threaten the notion of freedom natural to sexual love. In Berry's words:

\begin{quote}
Where the body has no dignity, where the sanctity of its mystery and privacy is not recognized by a surrounding and protecting community, there can be no freedom. To destroy the dignity of the body--the dignity of any and every body--is to prepare the way for the enslaver, the rapist, the torturer, the user of cannon fodder.\textsuperscript{82}
\end{quote}

With dignity and sanctity so destroyed, women and men do not meet on grounds of trust and honor; rather, an air of fear and defensiveness accompanies all encounters. What looks like freedom is in fact a prison:

\begin{quote}
According to its claims, sexual liberation ought logically to have brought in a time of "naturalness," ease, and candor between men and women. It has, on the contrary, filled the country with sexual self-consciousness, uncertainty, and fear. Women, though they may dress as if the sexual millennium had arrived, hurry along our city streets and public corridors with their eyes averted, like hunted animals. "Eye contact," once the very signature of our humanity, has become a danger. The meeting
\end{quote}

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\textsuperscript{80}Ibid. 150.
\textsuperscript{81}Ibid. 151.
\textsuperscript{82}Ibid. 166-167.
ground between men and women, which ought to be safeguarded by trust, has become a place of suspicion, competition and violence. One no longer goes there asking how instinct may be ramified in affection and loyalty; now one asks how instinct may be indulged with the least risk to personal safety.83

Of course, part and parcel of this 'sexual liberation' is the promise of birth control. 'Free love' in part means that sex is now safe, since one can avoid the 'risk' and 'constraint' of pregnancy. Berry argues, "in the midst of all this acid rainfall of predation and recrimination, we presume to teach our young people that sex can be made 'safe'—by the use, inevitably, of purchased drugs and devices. What a lie! Sex was never safe, and it is less safe now than it has ever been."84 'Free love' has in fact made sex more dangerous. The fact that individuals cannot look one another in the eyes anymore without fear of being attacked or violated is only the beginning. For, as Berry points out:

Because of our determination to separate sex from the practice of love in marriage and in family and community life, our public sexual morality is confused, sentimental, bitter, complexly destructive, and hypocritical. It begins with the idea of "sexual liberation": whatever people desire is "natural" and all right, men and women are not different but merely equal, and all desires are equal. If a man wants to sit down while a pregnant woman is standing or walk through a heavy door and let it slam in a woman's face, that is all right . . . promiscuity is all right; adultery is all right. Promiscuity among teenagers is pretty much all right, for "that's the way it is"; abortion as birth control is all right; the prostitution of sex in advertisements and public entertainment is all right.85

Berry goes on to say that somewhere down the road, however, we decide that

83Ibid. 141-142.
84Ibid. 142.
85Ibid. 140.
offenses like child molestation, sexual violence, sexual harassment, and teenage pregnancies are not all right. He articulates the ludicrousness of trying to prohibit exactly what "free love" endorses: "Trying to draw the line where we are trying to draw it, between carelessness and brutality, is like insisting that falling is flying—until you hit the ground—and then trying to outlaw hitting the ground."\textsuperscript{86} These are the ramifications of sexual love divorced from community concerns. This freedom is a prison where we are chained to the inability to experience or express love free from harm or fear; it is the freedom to scream scared but have no one hear you because everyone else is screaming scared too. This is not the true reality of sexual love, nor does it have to be. By getting back to community concerns and responsibilities, we can save ourselves from this frightening evil and return to the freedom of true love.

f. Threatened Communities

Berry's vision of community is not unlike Aristotle's vision of the polis. For Berry, a community defines itself by a distinguished mutuality of interests, and it exists to the extent that it embodies the common virtues of trust, goodwill, forbearance, self-restraint, compassion, and forgiveness.\textsuperscript{87} According to Berry, to the extent that a community embodies these common interests and virtues, it is neither a 'private', nor a 'public' body.

Nevertheless, as strong as the community is, it is not absolutely safe from disintegration. It can fall apart from within and from without, "by

\textsuperscript{86}Ibid. 141.
\textsuperscript{87}Ibid. 120.
internal disaffection and external exploitation."\textsuperscript{88} When a community disintegrates all the entities protected by it are exposed and endangered. When Berry expresses concern for the fall of the community to the industrial economy, he articulates the danger that threatens the "heart of the community":

For when community falls, so must fall all the things that only community life can engender and protect: the care of the old, the care and education of children, family life, neighborly work . . . but of all the damaged things probably the most precious and the most damaged is sexual love. For sexual love is the heart of community life.\textsuperscript{89}

If we are to save what is so precious to us, then we must at all costs defend and protect sexual love. And to defend sexual love is, among other things, to recognize that IVF and artificial birth control are dangerous.

6. Saving Sexual Love
   a. Closing Arguments Against IVF and Artificial Contraception

   Sexual love is crucial to friendship in marriage. Friendships in marriage are crucial to community. And community is crucial for the flourishing of human life. If any one of these collapse, community ruin seems inevitable. Most of all, sexual love must be protected from destruction due to its central role in binding and securing the life of community. IVF and artificial birth control destroy sexual love. Therefore, they should be avoided.

   IVF not only reduces the power of sexual love, but also denies the parents and the child the opportunity of experiencing true friendship. Without

\textsuperscript{88}Ibid. 125.
\textsuperscript{89}Ibid. 133.
the child's independence to be another "I," the parents and their offspring will struggle unnecessarily to participate in perfect, true friendship. To recognize the other as other is a crucial aspect of friendship. Indeed, \textit{in vitro} babies are "other," but in this particular otherness there resides a problem. O'Donovan makes the point:

A being who is the 'maker' of any other being is alienated from that which he has made, transcending it by his will and acting as the law of its being. To speak of 'begetting' is quite another possibility than this: the possibility that one may form another being who will share one’s own nature, and with whom one will enjoy a fellowship based on radical equality.\footnote{O'Donovan, \textit{Begotten Not Made} (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1984) 2. 'Begotten' for O'Donovan indicates the natural means of conceiving a child, that is, when the procreative and unitive aspects of sex are not separated, and the couple engages in natural intercourse. 'Making' refers to that technological project where the maker is separated and far removed from the thing made. O'Donovan says that what is 'made' by man cannot "take its place along mankind in fellowship, for it has no place alongside mankind in fellowship, for it has no place beside him on which to stand: man's will is the law of its being" (p.1).}

This passage perhaps contains a hint of the problem noted earlier in Aristotle's account of friendship, regarding the tension between friendship as a form of self-love and friendship as openness to the other.

O'Donovan argues that children conceived through IVF are qualitatively different than those conceived naturally. It is easy to see how this might be misconstrued, but he has a good point. O'Donovan does not mean to suggest that the child itself is somehow deformed, that it somehow falls short of being human. Instead, his point is that, as a product of a commercialized, technological process, and not the complex relationship of sexual love, the child will inevitably stand in a relationship with his or her parents that is distorted. Given O'Donovan's assumption about the necessary link between procreation and the unitive good of sexual love this conclusion is

\textit{...}
not surprising.

O'Donovan poses a crucial question: "is there a moral unity which holds together what happens at the hospital and what happens in bed?" Given that what happens at the hospital is a commercialized, technological procedure, which does not involve the unitive powers of sexual love, moral unity seems impossible. The technological production, or 'making', of a baby is procreation in the absence of the necessary element of union; but even the word 'procreation,' used in this context, is incorrect. Procreation denotes begetting. IVF is a process of separate biological procedures that add up to nothing more than fertilization. As a technological process that takes place in the hospital, IVF distorts procreation itself.

Stepping out of "the bed"--the locus representing sexual love, family, and community--hopeful parents using IVF are forced into an arena of cold, sterile, commercialized relationships that pervert the marriage friendship, and the friendship between the parents and the child. Granted, there is a strain on the friendship between a husband and wife who conceive naturally, but this strain is somehow God-given and exists amidst the nourishing, caring environment of family and friends, rather than amidst the cold and sterile relationships of the hospital. The procedure of IVF perverts the friendship

91Ibid. 77.

92Since most of the couples using IVF are infertile, I need to point out that the sexual love expressed between individuals who are unable to conceive naturally is not reduced or threatened by the fact that procreation is not biologically possible. This was addressed by the Church when they regarded consent and not consummation as the 'sacrament' of marriage. Those couples are not lacking any of the beauty held in sexual love; rather, the problem lies in the set of relationships they put themselves in when they attempt conception through IVF. If it were possible, in the confines of this paper, for me to adequately address the alternative solutions for infertile couples desiring to have children, I would suggest adoption as a more appropriate means for having children. It appears to me that through adoption there is the possibility for a child to be received into a community of relationships that are familiar and supportive. However, current adoption procedures look similar to IVF. Like IVF, the adoption process involves extensive interviews; it is commercialized; and it occurs in a cold, legalistic environment. Also, many couples interested in adopting have attitudes that mirror those using IVF, namely, the unwillingness to be open to another that is not a biologically 'perfect', white, newborn baby.
that exists as part of the wonderment of sexual love and changes the essence of procreation from a sacred self-giving into "a cold-blooded, abstract procedure," involving the donation of genetic material to 'produce' a baby.

In sum, IVF creates two problems for friendship and marriage. First, the child exists as the wrong kind of other in its relationship with its parents. Second, IVF warps the friendship between husband and wife because the child is produced not in the familiar environment of loved ones, but in the unfamiliar, sterile environment of the hospital. The problems artificial birth control poses to friendship and marriage are not unlike those posed by IVF.

While IVF is an inappropriate means to conception, artificial birth control is an inappropriate means to avoid conception. Like IVF, contraception involves a separation between the unitive and the generative powers of sexual intercourse, and is thus a closure to the other, both in the form of the child and the spouse. The exorbitant nature of sexual love may be experienced only when both the powers of procreation and friendship are present. Only in this setting is there an absolute physical openness to the other (as child), which signals an absolute spiritual openness to the other as spouse. Only when procreation and friendship are bound as one is there a complete giving away of self that transcends the physical reality of sex and leads to the consummation of the spiritual reality of friendship.

By separating the unitive and procreative powers of sexual intercourse, artificial birth control denies that the bond of sexual love requires acts of both body and spirit. Contraception reduces sex to a reality that is manipulated to serve individual desires. Not only does it separate lovers from a union like no other, it alienates them from their own community. O'Donovan

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93Again, as I noted in footnote #92, sexual love that does not involve the possibility of procreation due to biological circumstances is not reduced. I am arguing against the intended and purposeful separation of the unitive and procreative powers made by a couple using artificial birth control.
mirrors Berry's efforts to demonstrate that sex without community attachments cannot serve its profound ability to bond the couple in friendship and nourish the community. O'Donovan says:

> When erotic relationships between sexes are conceived merely as relationships—with no further implications, no 'end' within the purposes of nature—then they lack the significance which they need if they are to be undertaken responsibly. They become simply a profound form of play, undertaken for the joy of the thing alone, and depending upon the mutual satisfaction which each partner affords the other for their continuing justification.94

By separating the power of friendship from the power of procreation, contraception denies the opportunity to give and receive each other as "gift." Contraception inhibits the faithfulness necessary to lose one's self in another; it turns sexual love from a gift of life and of love to a commodity and a form of autonomous pleasure.

To be open to the other is to take risks. As I noted in my discussion of Aristotle, true friendship necessitates vulnerability. Artificial birth control inhibits the complete physical and spiritual expression of vulnerability between lovers through sexual love. Artificial contraception involves a subtle degree of mistrust that has serious ramifications concerning the essence of sexual love. With the use of artificial contraception, lovers hold back a powerful, yet precious part of themselves, namely, the power to generate new life in the form of a child. By using artificial contraception, lovers communicate to one another that the trust and constancy necessary to maintain an openness to the possibility of a child does not exist presently either in their relationship with one another, or in their relationship with the community.95

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94 O'Donovan 17.
95 For example, even if lovers trust one another, in our time it is not likely that they trust their community to
Without such support from community, couples are afraid to risk having children, or to risk having too many children, and there is an added closure between a couple, since having children offers a way for the friendship between a husband and wife to be nourished.

Without the sanctifying powers of procreation and friendship, communities will ultimately fold in the face of the evils of private gratification and the public obsession with power. IVF and artificial birth control are offenses born of these private and public attitudes; IVF and artificial birth control exist and are ready to consume the vitality and strength of community life. Due to the pain and havoc these iniquities bestow upon the lives of those living in community, they should cease to exist.

If the eyes are the windows to souls, but we no longer see the souls of others because of the fearful aversion of our eyes, then the reality of friendship as a means to understanding ourselves, experiencing sexual love, and ultimately bonding communities, quickly dissipates. If there is any hope of looking again into each others eyes without fear, of seeing again into the soul of another, then we must give back sexual love its value and purpose. We must re-attach those restraints upon sexual love that are in fact the only means to sexual freedom that we will ever have.

the same degree. With the loss of relatives living in close vicinity, couples now find themselves in the position of raising their children without the support of family and friends. We no longer have those tight-knit communities that enabled young couples to raise more than two or three children. Couples now cannot afford economically or emotionally to raise large families in the absence of such communities, which assist in the care of their children. Again, if it were possible in the confines of this paper to propose alternative means to avoiding conception, I would suggest Natural Family Planning as an appropriate practice. While addressing concerns couples have about raising large families, Natural Family Planning also enriches the friendship between husband and wife, since it allows sexual love to be expressed without the separation of its procreative and unitive powers.
Bibliography


