

The 2009 Harvest (December).

Jennings, Theodore W. (2009). *Plato or Paul: The Origins of Western Homophobia.* Cleveland: Pilgrim. Jennings' conclusion that Western homophobia is the effect of Plato's later teaching (*Laws*), followed by the neoplatonists and stoics, rather than the Bible is revolutionary but well substantiated. He shows that the church fathers who introduced homophobia into the Christian tradition were influenced by platonic philosophical ideas which distorted their understanding of the Bible (see our summary in Spanish in www.fundotrasovejas.org.ar).

Pregeant, Russell (2008). *Knowing Truth, Doing Good: Engaging New Testament Ethics.* Minneapolis: Fortress. Although Pregeant concludes that exegetical treatments alone are inadequate and that only by resorting to hermeneutics can the church avoid homophobic use of the Bible, his hermeneutical approach is the most helpful to date and includes insights relevant and important to exegetical treatments of texts such as Romans 1:18-2:16. A review will be forthcoming.

Keener, Craig S. (2009). *Romans.* NCCS. Eugene, Oregon: Cascade. Like Pregeant, Keener's brief commentary concludes that exegetical treatments of Romans 1:18-2:16 lead us to the conclusion that Paul condemned all homoerotic acts as sinful. Unlike Pregeant, Keener believes Paul should be normative for the church in this conclusion, but his homophobia is mild compared to works like Robert Gagnon's.

Charles Hedrick, Hershel Shanks, Helmut Koester (2009). "Secret Mark' A Modern Forgery?" *Biblical Archeology Review.* 35/6 (Nov-Dec), 43-61, 86, 88, 90, 92, 94. When Adela Yarbro Collins wrote her classic *Mark: A Commentary* (Hermeneia. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2007), regarding the authenticity of Secret Mark she concluded that "If the jury is still out, it is seeming more and more likely that their verdict will be that the work is a modern forgery or hoax" (2007:493). Especially, however, now with Helmut Koester's article it would seem that the jury has come in with the verdict that Morton Smith's discovery was authentic.

Payne, Philip B. (2009). *Man and Woman, One in Christ: An Exegetical and Theological Study of Paul's Letters.* Payne has been the principal advocate of the case for concluding that 1 Cor 14:34-35 is a later textual addition to Paul's original letter. Now in this 500+ page work he gives his argument definitive form and also treats thoroughly the other texts, both Pauline and deuteropauline, related in the debate over equality and ordination for women (see the Apostle Junia, p. 65-67). Eldon Epp comments: "Philip Payne's treatment of New Testament manuscripts and textual criticism, especially in 1 Corinthians 14:34-35, is meticulously formulated, cogently argued, and of lasting significance" (back cover). Unfortunately, however, Payne's erudition on equality and justice for women does not extend to questions and texts related to homoerotic acts and he takes Robert Gagnon's homophobic line in his few references to this subject (176-77). Like many evangelical feminists, he must defend himself from the charge that advocating equality for women will lead to acceptance of homosexuality in the church, but interacts only with John Boswell's earlier work (1980)..

Epp, Eldon Jay (2005). *Junia: The First Woman Apostle.* Minneapolis: Fortress. In recent decades scholars increasingly are returning to the church's original position (until the 13th) that the Junia referred to as a well known "apostle" in Romans 16:7 was a woman. Epp now provides us with an entire book on Junia and the history of the patriarchal manipulations that transgendered her into a male. As Walter Wink says, "Completely persuasive and definitive" (back cover recommendation).

Yamada, Frank M. (2008). *Configurations of Rape in the Hebrew Bible: A Literary Analysis of Three Rape Narratives.* New York: Peter Lang. Yamada's revised doctoral dissertation analyzes the rape cases of Dinah (Gen 34), the Levite's nameless concubine (Judges 19), and Tamar (2 Samuel 13:1-22). This year in his presentation at the Society of Biblical Literature he suggested that David's adultery with Bathsheba might well be included and that the narratives of sexual misbehavior result in social disintegration of a family, a nation, a kingdom and the monarchy. He might well have included the attempted rape of the two visiting angels by the males of Sodom. The traditional homophobia of interpreters is well illustrated by the fact that no one concludes from the narratives of heterosexual rape that God condemns "heterosexuality," although for centuries interpreters concluded from Genesis 19 that the judgment of the sodomites for trying to rape two angels proves that God condemns sodomy/homosexuality.

Ipsen, Avaren (2009). *Sex Working and the Bible*. London: Equinox. Norman Gottwald comments: “A stunning book that breaks all stereotypes about sex workers by allowing them to speak for themselves as they dialogue with biblical stories about prostitutes. Ipsen convincingly shows that the integrity of liberation theology is at stake in continuing to exclude sex workers from its defense of and advocacy for the oppressed” (back cover). Together with activist sex workers Ipsen interprets the stories of Rahab (Joshua 2:1-24; 6:22-25), Solomon and the two prostitutes (1 Kgs 3:16-28), the anointing woman of the gospels (Jn 12:1-8; Lk 7:36-50; Mk 14:3-9; Mt 26:6-13), and the whore of Babylon in Revelation (17:1-19:10). Succumbing to the political correctness of recent feminist scholarship, she does not include Mary Magdalene, holding that Mary was not a prostitute (cf. my treatment in *The Subversive Gospel*). Also excluded are texts referring to male-male prostitution and contemporary male prostitutes as potential Biblical interpreters.

Noegel, Scott B. and Gary A. Rendsburg (2009). *Solomon’s Vineyard: Literary and Linguistic Studies in the Song of Songs*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature. Contrary to most recent scholarship that dates the Song in the Persian or Greek period, Noegel and Rendsburg “conclude that the poem was written during the period of the two monarchies, probably circa 900 B.C.E. somewhere in northern Israel, with the goal of censuring King Solomon and his descendants on the throne in Jerusalem” (back cover). Such early dating probably will convince few, since most are convinced the Song bears evidence of Persian and even Greek linguistic influence and most probably will continue to interpret the Song as love poetry rather than political propaganda, but we might well recognize that certain sections of the love poetry might well include a dimension of political censure, which best explains the occasional appearances of Solomon in the book..

Bernat, David A. (2009). *Sign of the Covenant: Circumcision in the Priestly Tradition*. Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature. “The first and only full-length scholarly study of circumcision in the Hebrew Bible” (back cover). Given the importance of circumcision in the Hebrew Bible and the controversy over the practice in the New Testament documents and even down to the modern period (in addition to patriarchal male customs, modern medical debates, see female circumcision in Africa), Bernat’s revised doctoral dissertation deserves attention.

Kugle, Scott Siraj Al-Haqq (2009). *Homosexuality in Islam: Critical Reflections on Gay, Lesbian and Transgender Muslims*. Blue Ridge Summit, PA: Oneworld. “*Homosexuality in Islam* is the first book length treatment to offer detailed analysis of how Islamic scripture, jurisprudence, and Hadith can not only accommodate a sexually sensitive Islam, but actively endorse it.” (Publisher’s description). 344 pp PB \$29.95. www.oneworld-publications.com.

Danker, Frederick William (2009). *The Concise Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*. Chicago: University of Chicago. Defines *arsenokoites* as “a male who engages as dominant entity in same sex activity; pederast, sodomite” (p. 55). In BDAG 2000, where he admitted the “impropriety” of the RSV’s definition “homosexuals,” Danker’s definition was “a male who engages in sexual activity w. a pers. of his own sex, pederast.” The addition of the phrase “as dominant entity” implies anal sex with a passive partner, presumably the previously mentioned “soft males” of 1 Cor 6:9.

Davidson, James (2007). *The Greeks and Greek Love: A Radical Reappraisal of Homosexuality in Ancient Greece*. London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 634 pp. \$45.00. A monumental study which, in effect, replaces Kenneth Dover’s classic *Greek Homosexuality* (1978/89), arriving at quite different conclusions (emphasizing love, not sex, and the diversity of expressions, including lasting adult relationships rather than pederasty. Davidson’s work already is being cited by all sides in the debates over the “clobber texts.”

A significant new book on David and Jonathan will be published 2010.