are "mutually informing," or "cohere with" each other. Sure enough, our human sexuality "corresponds to" or "reflects" something of God. Not that God has gender; "He" does not, and Grenz provides a very helpful roundup of the debate over inclusive language for God. But God has interior relationality. The formula: "God *is* love," means that the inner life of the Trinity is characterized by loving relations—and is expressed toward creatures. In sum, the life of love in the ecclesial community "marks a visual, human coming-to-representation of the mutual indwelling of the persons of the Trinity."

Grenz's argument has some novel elements, obviously, but it is coherently put together, backed by immense learning, and careful—sometimes painfully careful—textual analysis. Agree or not, the book is certainly a profitable read, well worth the time it takes to follow the many currents of thought that it weaves together so skillfully.

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Modern Catholic Social Documents and Political Economy

Albino F. Barrera, O.P.

Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2001 (340 pages)

While some sections are simply solid and well-done, other sections are outstanding, and I do strongly recommend this book for students of Catholic social thought. It makes good theoretical sense of the tradition, weaving the most important concepts into an intelligible body of thought focusing on the goal of economic "participation" for all.

Albino F. Barrera offers a thorough and balanced review of what he calls the "treasure trove of teachings" in *Catholic Social Thought* (CST) beginning with *Rerum Novarum* (1891) and running through *Centesimus Annus* (1991). Part 1 of the book emphasizes the insistence found in CST for balanced and integral development within and among nations. In a somewhat novel emphasis, Barrera focuses on the (disadvantaged) agricultural sector in the developing economies. The unbalanced favoring of the industrial base and the urban areas has left the rural areas unfairly impoverished. Otherwise, Part 1 simply does a commendable job at covering material that one finds in any good review of the teachings, as well as sets a stage for his latter discussion (Parts 3 and 4) of the problem of relative inequality and, especially, participation.

Part 2 is background reading in which Barrera traces the development of (what we now call) "economic ethics" from Scholastic times to the present. For example, the change of circumstances from times that were feudal and agrarian to the situation of the modern economy brought about dramatic shifts in concepts of just price and the demands of social solidarity. The concern today is still to preserve "the stability and integrity of the community, but not by way of preserving a hierarchical economic order. Rather, it seeks to establish a minimum base, below which, no one is allowed to fall"

(78–9). The minimum base necessary for social solidarity today is the well-known right to a family living wage for labor. We have therefore shifted from concern with an organic hierarchy to concern with individual rights—met through *participation* in the economy. This section is well-done, and I would assign it for any class in theological ethics considering such subject matter.

Part 3 does what any work about CST must at some point do: It discusses theological anthropology. It also contrasts that understanding of the human person with what is found in orthodox economics. Such a section is essential, since CST claims to put its own understanding of the human person at its theoretical center. Positions on various economic issues are then viewed here as conclusions reached deductively from the respective anthropology. Barrera avoids stereotyping the classical school (he finds plenty of evidence that the classical economists saw the need for some governmental intervention and most certainly were not purely laissez-faire in their thinking), and also presents a nuanced interpretation of CST as well. My main criticism here is that many (if not most) economists would certainly not want to defend their limited anthropology as complete and accurate. The economic anthropology only serves a small part in their economic models, which then have (it is hoped) good predictive ability.

In Parts 3 and 4, it is refreshing to read a discussion favorably inclined toward CST that can still recognize that it "says very little about the practical requirements of implementation (of its moral demands), nor does it examine these proposals against empirical evidence" (164). For example, according to Barrera, the problem of inequality is worsening in the new economy. CST, on the other hand, demands greater equality in the distribution of societies' benefits. Unfortunately, CST says very little about how to increase equality, to what degree equality must be pursued, and in what manner to do this. CST also seems oblivious to the dynamic nature of the economy and the impact of redistribution on production itself. He concludes that an ethic of equality has weak foundations and, instead, develops the tradition in the direction of an ethic of *participation*. It is here that the book will make its real contribution.

Barrera develops the theory in a direction that is appropriate for today and in light of the "signs of the times." For Barrera, today we may speak of material and *immaterial* (such as information) property. Instead of an ethic of equality (property, wages, transfers), we need one of participation in the new economy. The key to equity in the case of immaterial property is *participation*. Furthermore, his analysis shows that this participation must go beyond that required for meeting "basic needs." Participation in the new knowledge economy must reduce relative inequality and provide for the attainment of human excellence and genuine flourishing. Equitable participation in the new economy is the new ethical Archimedean point. What nagged at me a bit was the distributive mentality, even in the new information economy. It was as if, in the old and new economies, a central authority (the government, I assume) distributes benefits and burdens from above. There could be more empirical work and discussion of subsidiarity.

Though far removed from actual application, in principle, goods and services may be categorized and distributed according to their functionality: Goods can be *constitutive* for survival, *regulative* of life prospects, or simply *life-enhancing*. Claims for more equal participation in sharing of the goods and services are stronger for constitutive goods than life-enhancing goods. These distinctions are helpful in the abstract, though little is said about how to implement these guidelines.

In Part 5 (the final part) Barrera presents a framework for understanding modern Catholic social principles. It is here that one finds a well-organized discussion of important foundational principles such as the creation in the image of God, redemption, human flourishing, integral human development, subsidiarity, the primacy of labor, solidarity, the common good in its various aspects, and others. These chapters will prove invaluable to any student of Catholic Social Thought, looking for an organizing hermenutic for the tradition. On the other hand, Barrera himself might have been more in touch with empirical issues and with "the signs of the times." This would apply to contemporary issues outside of the Church such as NAFTA, the meltdown of the dot coms, the ethical role of a CFO (I am thinking of Enron), tax cuts, and other concrete issues. The application of the teaching *within the Church* is also important for issues of accountability, checks and balances, and so forth. Can anyone talk about Catholic Social Thought in these times without addressing its behavior in the largest and most jarring crisis in *centuries*? I predict that application of the social teachings of the tradition to the Church itself will and should occupy much more space in future works that want serious credibility.

Overall, Barrera has written a very helpful book, especially on a theoretical level, as it provides an organizing hermenutic of the many social ethical principles contained within the tradition.

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The Clash of Orthodoxies: Law, Religion, and Morality in Crisis

Robert P. George

Wilmington, Delaware: ISI Books, 2001 (387 pages)

Over the past three decades, we have witnessed something of a renaissance of natural-law thinking among Christian scholars. Certainly, many Christians continue to be skeptical of any significant appeal to sources of moral truth beyond Scripture. It remains, however, that the most interesting challenges to secularist assertions about questions as profound as the nature of the person have not come from divine command theorists or strict biblicists. Rather, they have been articulated by Protestants and Catholics attempting to present their case on the very territory that post-Enlightenment thinkers have long proclaimed to be their own—human reason.