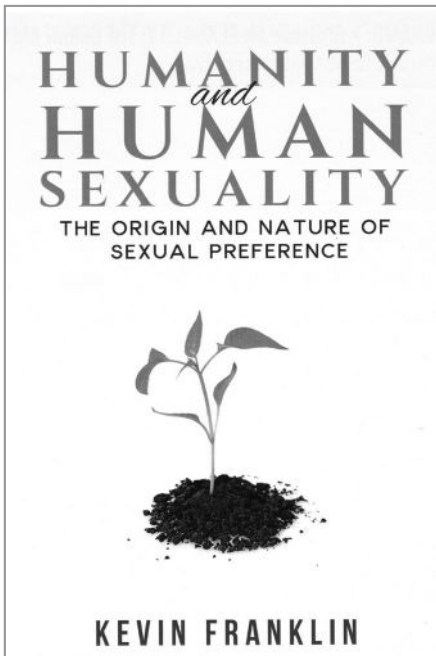


Book review



*Humanity and Human Sexuality:
The Origin and Nature of Sexual
Preference*

By Kevin Franklin
Austin Macauley Publishers Ltd
London, 2024

Reviewed by

Elizabeth Synnot

This scholarly book stimulates my thinking and deep reflections, challenges my knowledge base, expands my lexicon, and builds my capacity for role reversal. It presents action research of a scientific and academic standard relating to the

origin and nature of sexual preference. For those who enjoy scientific epistemology, logical and rational writing, who delight in J L Moreno's approach, whose curiosity is aroused by a cogent world view, or who want to improve the world for individuals and the whole of society, this is a book for you.

As a longtime colleague of Dr Franklin, Kevin to me, I delight to see his application of J L Moreno's role theory, spontaneity theory, his theory of personality and his group focus in both the research design and interpretation of findings. The author presents the particular significance of Moreno's concept of role taking, role playing and role creating. I gained significant understanding of applying this to the imposed fraudulent approach to role taking of another's identity. Kevin points out that gay men are often coerced to be *role takers* of a heterosexual man's roles, i.e. their identity. The horror dawns on me that there is no learning in this imposed pretend identity. There is no congruence with one's psyche and sense of inner self. There is no role development that expands our inner being.

I warm up to Kevin's life and worldview early on in this book as he boldly includes his own life experiences. Imaginatively I deepen my ability to role reverse with being a gay man in Australia from the 1950s through

to today. From my own life I am aware that, unlike in 2024, homosexuality was a crime with imprisonment a reality or the real threat of it: when loving another was responded to as unnatural and an abhorrence, when many families were ashamed and rejected their gay child; when same sex couples were not considered as prospective parents, and when open attempts were made to drum gay men out of the workplace, when being stabbed or bashed to death was a real possibility, and when homosexuality was synonymous, in some quarters, with being a pedophile. The evidence is abundant that there is a devastating toll of being shunned as a social pariah, a sexual deviant, a criminal, and not suited for employment or parenthood.

Kevin makes a central tenet of this book that a person's well-being requires psychological order in the self and socius. The creating and shaping of a unifying world view that supports life's fullness for us all and the building of a new social order are fully argued. A way forward is outlined throughout the book.

Kevin documents the historical explanations that have been believed for same sex sexual preference and gender identity: genetics, adaptation to trauma, sexual seduction, and moral degradation, to name a few. These religious and culturally agreed beliefs have no scientific basis. However, in this book Kevin's research is scientifically valid and he finds that sexual identity does not correlate with sexual preference. The central finding here is that our subjective gender identity predicts our innate sexual preference.

The treasures in *The Labyrinth*, Chapter 2, are many. To name a few: adam and eve, gender identity, individuation, neurosis, and the psychosocial third universe. Deconstructing misinformation and culturally agreed stories and building an ordered and healthy perspective takes some 420 pages. I deeply reflected on many of the author's notes. For instance, the author makes a case for the term 'sexual preference' rather than 'sexual orientation' (Franklin, 2024, pp. 339-343).

I can see Kevin's perspective and his value for words to be precise and their meaning to be consistent with life-fullness. It is a bold move to include the term 'sexual preference' in the book's title as some may be put off from reading on. I have been coached to use the term 'sexual orientation' by my gay clients for a couple of decades. I understand that sexual orientation as a phrase has been adopted for some time by the gay men's movement.

While I gained from reading this book, I found some paragraphs dense and some ideas not engaging. For instance, a central platform of the way forward is a Theory of Person. I cannot see how it improves on J L Moreno's spontaneity theory, social and cultural atom, group emphasis, and encounter.

This book would benefit by scholarly journalists, psychodramatists and other professions, digging and delving and finding the many treasures here,

and presenting them to be accessible to those grappling with their sexual identity. For others, the contemplation of a revolutionary perspective on humankind and how to live well with one another will be your reward. I commend this book to a place on your bookshelf near your favourite reading spot.