

WHY THE CENTER HOLDS: ON THE NUPTIAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE CORPORATION

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Students of law and business administration are perplexed by the solidarity and resilience of the modern corporation. This is because knowledge of the defining elements of the corporation—of individual interests and the nexus of contracts—cannot account for the integrity and vitality of the whole. Beginning with the seminal ideas of Mary Parker Follett about organizations, specifically her ideas about functional relating and self-creating coherence, this essay draws upon Catholic Social Theory to explain how the life of the corporation is rooted in the life of the nuptial pair. Despite its often vast complexity, the modern corporation is literally an incorporation: a joining of male and female in one body. Implications of this idea about the corporation for our understanding of corporate law and business administration are discussed. Also briefly considered are implications of this idea for a theology of the corporation.

Introduction

Mary Parker Follett was perhaps our wisest student of the corporation and of its management. She described the manager's job as leadership, not in the conventional and over-simple terms of command and control (of "bossing people around") or charisma and inspiration (of "wowing" people into commitment), but in the exacting terms of the *total situation* of the corporation in which the contributions of each and every person are articulated and valued to form an *integrative unity*. She put in for a tall order:

The leader must be the leader of a coherent group, of men who are finding their material welfare, their most effective expression, their spiritual satisfaction, through their relations to one another, through the functioning of the group to which they belong.¹

Managers who are honest with themselves must look upon their leadership in grateful wonder. Their experience is a mariner's nightmare. Tossed about on stormy seas, with the barest of charts and few guiding landmarks, they captain a ship that is complex and does not keep its

shape, and they captain a crew that is varied and not altogether unmotley. Yet, somehow, despite their miscalculations of navigation, they awake to find the crew doing yeoman's work (often on their own initiative, with little direction, and with not enough thanks) and the ship aright and mostly on course. Their mostly successful leadership must seem more happenstance than plan.

This essay is about the wonder of the corporation, that idealized by Follett and that realized by managers in spite of themselves. How does a corporation meet conditions that no one quite understands? How does a corporation survive the miscalculations of its leaders? Why are workers stubbornly faithful to their all-too-human managers? In sum: What keeps a corporation together? This essay is about what explains the integrity and perseverance of the corporation amidst its storm-tossed passage and what guidance is needed from leadership and from the law to hold the corporation to its course.

Dark Matter Mystery

These questions about the corporation are mysteries, even to students of law and business. In law, the corporation is an abstraction: "an idealized essence that has no existence outside the virtual legal space in which it is produced...the basic definition of a corporation is an investment vehicle for the pooling of money and labor whose purpose is singular—to maximize profits."² As David Millon describes, the twisting history of legal thought about the corporation has culminated in an idea of the corporation as a natural aggregate of individuals, a so-called "nexus of contracts."³ In economics, the corporation is no less an abstraction—a structure of persons joined under authority. As R.H. Coase explains, "A firm consists of the system of relationships which comes into existence when the direction of resources is dependent on an entrepreneur."⁴ In both law and economics, the corporation is held together by contracts that align inducements to contributions on behalf of the whole.⁵ The job of the manager, therefore, is to get the inducements-contributions balance right, or at least right enough. However, while this image of the corporation is matter-of-fact (for it is certainly true that the corporation is a nexus of contracts), it leaves the corporation itself unexplained. As noted long ago by the sociologist Emile Durkheim and again recently by the economist Kenneth Arrow, such reductive concepts of the corporation cannot explain how the elements of the corporation become organized—how they comprise a division of labor, needs, and goods.⁶ Economic organization cannot be its own explanation.

Indeed, the mystery of the corporation deepens the more we look into it. It is not only the artificial and rational instrument described by students of law and business. It is at the same time its own being, a vital unity having its own laws and needs. This essential unity was the distinctive concern of Mary Follett who looked into organizations more deeply than most to see their inner functional relating:

Functional relating is the continuing process of self-creating coherence. Most of my philosophy is contained in that sentence. You can take that sentence, I believe, as a test for any part of business organization or business management. If you have the right kind of functional relating, you will have a process which will create a unity which will lead to further unities—a self-creating progression.⁷

Thus the corporation is more than a nexus of contracts. To the contrary, it is a complex dynamic that somehow integrates the rational imperatives of economic organization with the vital imperatives of its own organism.⁸ The corporation is something to which managers must come with a dual sensibility—with intellect to grasp its rational organization and with intuition to grasp its organism. Upon these graspings they must work alchemy—to secure organization by imposing structures and purposes and to nurture organism by giving it resources and room to grow. How this is done no one can quite say, neither students of law or business, nor practitioners.

The mystery of the corporation can be compared to that of the cosmos in astronomy. Of the cosmos there is much to see. Moons gather around planets, planets around stars, stars around galaxies, and galaxies around each other, in a texture that has been extensively mapped. The puzzle for astronomers is that these visible elements do not have the mass and therefore gravity necessary to account for their texture. This unaccounted coherence has led astronomers to postulate an invisible "dark matter" to supplement visible matter to explain the cosmos. It is a humbling idea, not least because this undiscovered dark matter is estimated to comprise upwards of ninety percent of the total. The unaccounted coherence of the corporation challenges us in the same way. Its visible elements—in particular, its collection of individual interests and its nexus of contracts—cannot account for its integrity and uncanny adaptability, for its devotion to cause, and for its resilient tolerance of mismanagement. Something else must be at work to hold the corporation together, some analogous dark matter invisible to the eye.

Of the Body

Language husbands its wisdom. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, the word *corporation* is a noun of action deriving from the word incorporation [ad. incorporationem] which it defines as: 1.a. the action of incorporating two or more things, or one thing with (in, into) another; the process or condition of being so incorporated; union in or into one body. And 2. a. the action or process of forming into a community or corporation; esp. the formation of a legal corporation or body politic.⁹ Could this definition of the corporation as “union in or into one body” be the key to the mystery of its integrity and vitality? Could it be that the corporation is literally rooted in the body, in our flesh and blood lives? Corporation and corporeal are one word; are they one idea? More particularly, and intriguingly, could it be that what is essentially “incorporated” is the one God-given division of the body, namely, that of male and female? Perhaps the matter that holds the corporation together is not “dark” at all, but is instead the “light” of love that begins where all human love begins, in bodily union of male and female.

Before the reader rejects this idea as too remote, or as too corny, or even as too racy, let us hasten back to Follett’s observation above: “If you have the right kind of functional relating, you will have a process which will create a unity which will lead to further unities—a self-creating progression.” While Follett does not say what the right kind of functional relating is, much less that it is of male and female, she supposes that for every organization there is a unity of unities and that every organization grows and develops as a “self-progression” from lower—to higher-level unities. Such a supposition is crucial because it insists upon the sort of possibility entertained here: that elementary functional relations are paramount and from them arise and develop the higher-level functional relations. With the idea of incorporation, could the elementary functional relation, the unity of unities, be that of male and female?

Although concerned mainly with the science of organization, Follett appreciated the spiritual dimension of organization as well. She wrote of the need for “spiritual satisfaction,”¹⁰ of the need for leadership that appealed to the “recesses of the spirit”¹¹ and connected one to “the hidden springs of all life,” and of the need to temper selfish interests by thinking of ourselves as “members of the highest unity with which we are capable of identifying ourselves.”¹² Such spiritual resonances suggest a bridge between science and faith. What if we brought Follett’s science of organization back to the origins of human organization in Genesis, back to the shadowy beginnings of creation known to faith?

What might faith and reason together tell us about the dark matter mystery of the corporation?

“In the beginning,” according to the Book of Genesis, “... God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created him” (Gn 1:27). By defining Adam and Eve as male and female “in one flesh,” Genesis furnishes a precise definition of *sex* in both its noun form, as a division of male and female, and its verb form, as a uniting of these in the image of God. Human society is established as a single, living organism, as a whole made of the functional relating of male and female parts. Moreover, according to Genesis, by incarnating God in “one flesh,” we are distinguished from every other “thing that creepeth on the earth.” Where other animals join in couplings that typically last only as long as the acts themselves, we join in a divine union that is renewed in coupling and that lasts a lifetime in spirit if not in fact.¹³

This claim of incorporation—that human society embodies God by its functional relating of male and female—is thus a historical one that reaches back to the first seeds of society in creation. If Follett is correct that social unity is a “self-creating progression,” then we should find the functional unity of male and female in all human societies, past and present. In this unity we should find the “dark matter” that holds the corporation together. Upon this point, as upon so many others, faith and science agree. For her part the Church tells the truth that the nuptial pair is,

... the original cell of social life. It is the natural society in which husband and wife are called to give themselves in love and in the gift of life. Authority, stability, and a life of relationships within the family constitute the foundations for freedom, security, and fraternity within society.¹⁴

And for her part, science tells the (always provisional) story of how this truth has come to be. According to current thinking, it is a story both of evolutionary continuity, in which we conserve patterns of mammalian and especially primate society, and of evolutionary discontinuity, in which we take leave of these patterns to establish a pattern all our own. In total, it is the story of our human creation in the image of God, a story of a flowering of three distinct levels of functional relating of male and female.¹⁵

Love's Flower

The first or “primary” level of functional relating and unity is given by three universal elements of sexual being—female care of young, female mate choice, and male competition—that have been conserved through tens of millions of years of mammalian evolution and that comprise the primary organizing dynamic of mammalian social life.¹⁶ Together these elements comprise a functional dynamic of opposition and affirmation. These elements at once divide the sexes as to task and orientation and unite the sexes in the vital imperative to reproduce. This mutuality of male and female is the ground of sociality throughout the animal kingdom. In this we do as other animals do.

A second and higher level of functional relating and unity arose uniquely in our kind when we took leave from our mammalian ancestors by enlarging and extending the primary relation of male and female. This happened during the Pleistocene Era as a result of our move from the rich and relatively safe biome of forest trees to the hardscrabble and more dangerous biome of the open savannah, a move that brought further differentiation and specialization of the sexes and that occasioned two distinctively human adaptations of society. One was same-sex grouping: a tendency for men to group with men and for women to group with women. Although characteristic of men and women alike, same-sex grouping figured differently in the lives of each. For men, the group enabled hunting on the open savannah by coordinating efforts to stalk, mob, and overcome the big game needed to feed and clothe the community. For women, the group facilitated sharing of food and other resources (including defense) in care of children. The second and related adaptation to Pleistocene life on the savannah was family: that all-important reproducing unit of the species that consists of a woman with children attached more or less exclusively to a man.¹⁷

Family adapted the species to conditions where men in groups left the village to hunt and to explore, and women stayed closer to home to gather nearby foods and to care for children. Family promised woman a man to return with food, to defend her and her children from attack, and to help with child-care. And family promised man a woman with whom he could mate and from whom he could receive comfort.¹⁸ Thus, in this secondary sexual order of same-sex groups and family, there is again a functional dynamic of opposition and affirmation in which each creates and meets the need of the other.¹⁹

Finally, the most surprising and surpassing level of functional relating and unity is that of mind and culture. At this level, particularly, we fulfill our being in the image of God. As we've seen, the primary and

secondary sexual orders of human society are universals rooted in the body: the primary order a mammalian trait built into a body plan of reproductively central females and reproductively aspiring males; the secondary order a human trait tied to a suite of hominid adaptations to savannah life. The tertiary sexual order of human society consists of features that vary from group to group. These are not physical elements rooted in genes, but mental elements rooted in ideas about how people should live in the group. Culture is conception, an act of mind by which people use symbols to think about their participation in the group. There is culture when people act in awareness of their own and others' roles in the group.²⁰

Despite its seemingly endless variations across time and place, the tertiary order of mind and culture retains its roots in the incorporation of male and female. This is true in two crucial respects. First, the tertiary order is dedicated to the primary and secondary orders upon which it is built. Cultures sanction ideas about social life, especially about relations between the sexes, to enable people to live peaceably in the best interest of the group. Thus, for examples, values of chivalry support respectful competition among men and respectful treatment of women; marriage vows sanctify women's mate choice and reinforce monogamy and family; and community laws about rape, sexual harassment, sexual perversion, incest, child abuse, child custody and child support protect men and women from each other. Second, the tertiary order is itself an incorporation of male and female. Mind and culture are animated and organized as a functional relating of male and female elements. The human mind is, in everything that it knows, a play of reason and intuition. As psychoanalyst Karl Stern has observed, this duality of mind results from a sexual companionability that begins in the body and extends to our whole encounter with the world:

The polarity of the sexes is based on body-build and organ function but not confined to it. The male principle enables us to master our relationship with reality, to solve our problems rationally. Woman acts and reacts out of the dark mysterious depths of the unconscious; i.e. affectively, intuitively. This is no judgment of value but a statement of fact.²¹

By the same token, culture is, in every one of its incarnations, a play of hierarchy (born of male concern for position and status) and natural community (born of female concern for life and nurture). As anthropologist Margaret Mead observed, the sexual organization of culture is universal, even while it varies in details (here a strong family

structure, there a weak one, here powerful male groups, there weak ones, here strong monogamy, there mild polygamy, etc...).²² This sexual dynamism of culture recalls that of the corporation (noted at the outset of the article) between organization and organism. We saw that the manager brings to this dynamism a twofold sensitivity that grasps organization by reason and organism by intuition. In this we now see a meeting of mind and culture in the functional relating of male and female.

Thus the creation of man as male and female in God's image let loose a flowering of functional relating that has culminated in the societies we know today, including the corporation. To be human is not only to stand apart from other beings in divine splendor; it is to stand with other beings in an evolutionary continuity. Culture and mind are definitive human images of God's creative will, and same-sex groups and family are distinctive human forms of society, but these could not exist apart from mammalian sexual order—of female care of young, female mate choice, and male competition. Human history consists of the progressive functional relating of male and female. Design a human life without the primary elements of sexual order—without women choosing mates wisely and caring for children, or without men competing fairly for women's attention and favor—and you design a life without same-sex groups and family, a life without mind and culture, a life hardly human. Remote though this deep human history may seem, we bring it to mind unconsciously when we speak of a corporation, as we often do, as a "family." This is no metaphor, but a truth wiser than we know. The alchemy of organization and organism of today's well-functioning corporation elaborates and extends that of the first family of creation. It is a conservation of our life and good.

To Garden Eden

Although founded upon a great insight about functional unity, Mary Follett's ideas about the corporation were limited by their silence on two questions: What is the primary unity of human being? (With what does functional relating begin?) And, what is the final unity of human being? (To what does functional relating lead?) Ever the worldly philosopher, Follett may have thought such questions too big or too existential to occupy a manager. But lacking answers to these questions, she was puzzled by conflicting interests of unity across units and levels of the corporation. How could demands for integration within a work group or department be squared with demands for integration across work groups or departments? Or, how could demands for integration

within a corporation be tallied with demands for integration across corporations? Unless founded upon a common primary unity and unless oriented to a single final unity, the demands for unity across units and levels are likely to conflict. Integration in one place is likely to come at the expense of integration in another. Concerned by such unproductive conflicts, Follett urged contesting parties to qualify their selfish interests by thinking of themselves as "members of the highest unity possible" so that they together might achieve the greatest integration possible.

Follett's puzzlement is answered by faith. The highest unity possible, in a corporation or anywhere else, exists when primary and final unity are the same, namely, when we are formed in the image of God in union of male and female. History began with the perfect unity of Genesis, of Adam and Eve in one flesh. History since has been a struggle to reclaim paradisiacal perfection.²³ It has been a struggle because, since the fall of Adam and Eve in Eden's Garden—since their rejection of God in favor of themselves—we are ever losing sight of God and thereby of our highest unity. But the purpose of history is to learn so that it will not be repeated. In everything we do there is opportunity for redemption. This is true even—and perhaps especially—of the corporation. In and through its activity, we are called to incorporation, to the divine mystery of love in male and female.

The call to incorporation begins in the union of male and female. As we have seen, social life is a consummation of male and female—at the lowest level of bodies, in sexual intercourse; at a higher level of persons, in the play of sex roles; at a still-higher level of groups, in the play of same-sex groups and family; and at the highest level of mind and culture, in the play of reason and intuition and in the play of organization and organism. Thus the flower of love between male and female is to recognize and cherish. At the primary level of male and female reproductive roles, this is to guard female mate choice (e.g., by corporate policies against sexual harassment, by enforcement of civil laws against rape), to sanction free and fair competition of males for females (e.g., by encouraging and recognizing merit in organizations), and to support female care of young (e.g., by family-friendly policies such as maternity leave, flexible and part-time employment; by a *family* wage that allows husbands to support wives who choose to stay home with children). At the secondary level of same-sex groups and family, this is to recognize men's and women's instinct to join their kind in mutual support and to meet their opposite member in a family (e.g., by allowing the sexes to coalesce and segregate in the workplace, by supporting family life among employees). And at the tertiary level of mind and culture, this is to encourage both male and female values and

sensibilities (e.g., in mind by tempering male analysis and reason with female judgment and intuition, and in culture by leavening male structure and system with female compassion and spontaneity).²⁴ In sum, the good of the corporation is the good of the union of male and female in God. The good is to let men and women be true to their bodies, to let them find sanctuary in male and female groups, and to let them complete one another in the family. To let men be men and women be women is to let them be gifts to one another.

These ideas matter because how we think about the corporation determines the laws we make about it and the mores we bring to its management.²⁵ In a word, these ideas comprise a moral foundation for the corporation. In relation to God's plan for us, the corporation can be either a consecration or a desecration. It is a consecration when, as described above, it affirms and fulfills God's image of male and female in one flesh. It is a desecration when it denies or depletes this image. Sadly, too much thinking about the corporation today desecrates this image by regarding people abstractly and instrumentally as "litigants" or as "human resources" rather than concretely and essentially as male and female persons. By isolating them from one another in abstraction, this thinking denies their complementary union in body and soul. The error in such thinking is not simply that it is cold and calculating, but that it is inhumane. Where God created human love and life in the one flesh of male and female, such thinking destroys this love and life. By not incorporating male and female in God, such thinking robs the corporation of the functional relating and essential dynamism of human life.²⁶

Today this desecration is allied with a "political correctness" that denies sexual being altogether. Here the idea is that being male or female is a "social construction," a subjective incidental of "gender," not a truth of being in God.²⁷ In strict formulations this view forbids all but the most undeniable differences between the sexes, on the grounds that these might be used to justify inequalities in organizational roles and/or outcomes (which to this view can never be justified). Thus sexual equality does not mean what it would mean in a total view of human life, namely, that men and women should take equally important parts in society. It means instead that men and women should lead the same lives with the same outcomes and that this should be true in every corner and at every level of society. To this way of thinking, there can be no general functional relation between men and women, because there are no general differences between them to relate and put to work. That humankind is divided into male and female parts is supposed not to be important, except perhaps to heterosexuals who enjoy the pleasure and occasional offspring that come of their meeting.

In less strict formulations of this view, differences between men and women are acknowledged in complaint. Most often this takes the form of a bias for men's lives, in the belief that men get the better of life, both at work and at home. This desecration of our being in God is harder to dismiss because it contains a grain of truth. If one judges all human life in the terms by which men are judged (both by themselves and by women)—namely, in terms of accomplishment, wealth, or status—then men will be favored and will be judged superior to women. It could hardly be otherwise because, as noted earlier, women do not care about the same things and do not play the same games as men. But such a reckoning ignores the half of life to judge in the terms by which women are compared (both by themselves and by men), namely, in terms of nurture in care and concern for others. This is to forget that human being depends upon the reciprocity of male and female and, therefore, that one half cannot be more important or more worthwhile than the other.

Lost on many legal and business scholars today is a truth about our being an image of God in the union of male and female, namely, that there is and can be no sexual equality of sameness. We cannot expect to find sexual sameness in the corporation any more than we can expect to find it in the home, or in the nursery, or in any other corner of life. We are joined in society everywhere by the functional relating of male and female, a functional relating made possible and productive by their differences. We cannot choose this for it is built into our being. This is not to deny that men and women can and should be allowed every opportunity to take part and succeed in whatever life they wish for themselves—that is, that their dignity and rights as individual persons must be primary. But it is to recognize that as society everywhere arises and seeks its end in the incorporation of male and female in God, men and women are bound to seek and enjoy different lives.²⁸ Such is the difference of life; *viva la difference*.

Finally, we can note that by identifying the nuptial foundations of the corporation we add our affidavit to those of the Church in support of a theology of the corporation. With the deepening of her social doctrine, especially in the last century with Pope Pius XI's encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno* and Pope John Paul II's encyclicals *Laborem Exercens* and *Centesimus Annus*,²⁹ the Church has emphasized the crucial role of the corporation in salvation history. Following in this vein, theologians today describe the corporation as a "community of work" patterned after the community of the Holy Trinity;³⁰ as a "double finality" oriented both to natural and supernatural ends;³¹ and as a "mediating institution" of moral solidarity and common good in keeping with God's will for man.³² These ideas share in the conviction that the

corporation must be ordered to God, and in particular, that its familiar concerns for profit and shareholder-wealth must not be taken as its ends in themselves, but must instead be taken as its means to the end of fulfilling man's being in God.³³ This essay is one more effort to bring the corporation—an institution of immense power in our lives—into the light of the faith that illuminates and informs all things. To see the foundations of the modern corporation in the nuptial pair is to see the corporation more fully as an instrument of God's plan for us.

Conclusion

To the question of what keeps the corporation together, and to the question of what law and business must take care to protect and nurture, comes a simple answer: love. Human unity is incorporation, is God imaged by the union of male and female. This union may be the one flesh of the nuptial pair, or it may be the body of the Church, or it may be the body of a corporation or any other social institution. But always it is a body of male and female elements, a unity developed upon their functional relating. Our human being in God is the ground of what Follett called the “continuing process of self-creating coherence.” But we can and must be more precise than Follett, and recognize that the coherence of the corporation is not literally “self-created” but is a realization of the love built into our being male and female. Thus faith informs and enlarges scientific reason. Where Follett delineates the key concept of functional relating, faith teaches what functional relating is and where it comes from. According to faith, the corporation images God in its union of male and female.

Love enjoins us to God: “Thy will be done.” Our relation to God began with His creation of us in His image and thus with His investing in us some of his creative power. Our responsibility in everything we do is to enlarge and extend His love through this gift of grace. As described in Genesis, our creative power begins in the union of male and female in which we are an image God. As we have seen again and again, ours is a twofold power that involves at once the creative agency of the female to nurture and let things grow by their own laws and the creative agency of the male to make things by reason and will. This is the twofold power upon which legal scholars and corporate leaders must rely if they are to take the full measure of the functional relating and unity of the corporation. With this clarification of what scholars and leaders must appreciate, we are returned to Mary Follett who saw for the leader the greatest aim of all, an aim that recalls Christ's commandment of love to us all:

... businessmen can ... put into practice certain fundamental principles. They may be making useful products; in addition to that they may be helping the individuals in their employ to further development; but even beyond all these things, by helping in solving the problems of organization, they are helping to solve the problems of human relations, and that is certainly the greatest task man has been given on this planet.³⁴

Notes

1. Henry C. Metcalf & L. Urwick, eds., *Dynamic Administration: The Collected Papers of Mary Parker Follett* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1942), 268.
2. D. Stephen Long, “Corporations and the common good,” *Ave Maria Law Review* 1 (Winter 2006): 87
3. David Millon, “Theories of the corporation,” *Duke Law Journal* 40 (November 1990): 201–262
4. R.H. Coase, “The nature of the firm,” *Economica* 4 (November 1937): 393.
5. James G. March and Herbert H. Simon, *Organizations* (New York: John Wiley, 1958)
6. Emile Durkheim, *The Division of Labor in Society*, translated by G. Simpson, (New York: Macmillan, 1933); Kenneth Arrow, “Methodological individualism and social knowledge,” *American Economic Review* (American Economic Association Papers and Proceedings) 84 (May 1994).
7. M.P. Follett, *Dynamics of Administration*, 200.
8. See W. Richard Scott and Gerald F. Davis, *Organizations and Organizing: Rational, Natural, and Open-systems Perspectives* (New York: Prentice-Hall, 2007).
9. <http://dictionary.oed.com>
10. M.P. Follett, *Dynamics of Administration*, 268.
11. *Ibid.*, 294
12. *Ibid.*, 218
13. This Old Testament idea of union in God is enriched by the New Testament idea of the Trinity. As God is a unity of divided persons—of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—we are an image of God in a unity of divided persons—of male and female.
14. *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (New York: Doubleday, 1995), 590.
15. For a more extensive description of how the forms of human society

originate in and are sustained by the functional relating of male and female, see Lloyd E. Sandelands, *Male and Female in Social Life* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2001). In that book, however, I had not yet come to see that this relating depends for its integrity upon a unifying third term. In a word, I had not yet come to see that this relating rests in God.

16. The discussion in this section borrows from my *Man and Nature in God* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2005), 32–40.

17. The precursors of family appear in the primary order of mammalian and primate social life described earlier. Among our mammal ancestors the hubbub of hierarchy-obsessed males clamoring to impress choosy females produced only brief impersonal assignments—“flings with no strings.” Females mated the highest-ranking males (in some species the alpha male almost exclusively) and, once pregnant, left the sexual stage to care for the young in the female group. Later, females of certain primate species (including the precursors of modern baboons, chimpanzees, and humans), granted sexual favors also to males who consistently helped them with food and children—males that could be described as ‘friends;’ see Barbara Smuts, *Sex and Friendship in Baboons* (New York: Aldine de Gruyter, 1985). Thus was inaugurated a sexual economy in which males were sexually rewarded not only for being dominant, but also for being reliably helpful. This development was crucial because it meant that a great many more males could gain access to females. In principle, if not in fact, every male could befriend a female and thereby gain mating chances that otherwise belonged to the dominant male.

18. So congenial is family to human existence that we might wonder if it was a consequence of hominid migration onto the savannah or a factor contributing to this migration. With family to stabilize relations between the sexes, hominid females could cooperate in mutual support with minimal concern for who among them would capture the attention and resources of which males, while hominid males could cooperate for mutual gain in group tasks with likewise minimal concern about which of them would mate which females. Family facilitates cooperation within and between sexes; see H.E. Fisher, *The Sex Contract: Evolution of Human Behavior* (New York: William Morrow, 1982).

19. The psychology of this functional unity is perhaps familiar. In the most robust men’s or women’s groups there is a hint of family, and likewise in the warmest and coziest domestic scene there is a brooding presence of single sex groups. One enters a men’s or women’s group in part to leave family behind and in part to prepare for a return. Men learn to compete fairly with other men so as to be attractive to women. Women

learn to make wise choices and to care for young so as to be attractive to men. By the same token, one seeks a family life in part to leave the men’s or women’s group behind and in part to set the stage for a return. In the family, men and women learn how the other feels, thinks, and acts. However, while love of mate and love of children make man and woman whole, this comes at the risk of losing one’s sexual identity, which must be reclaimed in the same sex group.

20. This awareness is unprecedented in animal life and changes everything about human social life. Where other animals *have* parts in species life (think of castes of social insects or sexual divisions of labor in mammals), people *play* parts in species life. Where a worker bee never worries about its destiny and never thinks to throw off the chains that bind it to the hive, people worry all the time about who they are and about their duties to others. A man is no pigeon in a pecking order; he is a self- and socially-aware member of a group. Hierarchy for him is both a bodily fact and a cultural idea. Places in the hierarchy are “roles” played by more or less interchangeable group members.

21. Karl Stern, *The Flight from Woman* (New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1965), xx. See also Sandelands, *Male and Female in Social Life* (New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction, 2001).

22. Margaret Mead, *Male and Female* (New York: Morrow, 1949).

23. From the ages-old and heavenly wisdom of Genesis we come to the late and hellish distortions of Sigmund Freud and others who likewise put sex at the center of human life but in an inhuman way. Sex is significant, not for its polymorphous perversity, but for its realization of the divine. The human heart longs for God and takes joy in moments of divine communion.

24. These several ideas about incorporation are consolidated in the social teaching of the Catholic Church under the principle of subsidiarity. According to this principle the full and total aim of all human society, including those of business, is to image God, which it must do in two ways: 1) by honoring the dignity of the human person (who is made in the image of God); and 2) by honoring the human family (which in union of male and female is also the image of God). This honoring of person and family must take place at every level of human life.

25. David Millon, “Theories of the corporation,” op. cit.

26. We compensate for the deadening abstractions of such modern thinking by cheap sensation and empty pleasure—we fill our lives with exciting images, tellingly with images that are often sexual in nature. However, instead of answering the true call of our male and female being (the call to love by God), we seek to control sex for ourselves to make

its power our own. It is a monumentally arrogant undertaking that is both hopeless and wrong. We fail to see that love is a sacramental image of our being in God. And we fail to see that power has divine roots in love, in the attraction and influence of male and female—that the overt power of male differentiation (reflected in assertions of one kind or another) is elicited, met and matched by the covert power of female unity (reflected in receptivity and nurture), and vice versa. In sin we do not see that we have lost our connection to the source and true meaning of incorporation, namely that we are male and female in God. As a result, our sexual energy and power, which cannot be denied, lose their moorings and needful limits and take grotesque forms in character neuroses of hyper-activism, icy rationalism, and narcissism, as well as in sexual cruelties and harassments of various kinds.

27. As noted by theologian Joyce Little: “Scientific/technological man (Big Brother) and feminist woman (Big Sister) both operated on the same principle and for the same reason: both are in thrall to abstraction, abstraction from the limits of nature, from the limits of history, from the limits of human bodiliness.” *The Church and the Culture War* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1995), 62.

28. This is *not* an argument for or against equal opportunity in the workplace, but is instead an argument for living in truth. It her wisdom, the Church distinguishes the lives of men and women in society. Of men, Pope John Paul II writes in his apostolic exhortation *Familiaris Consortio* (December 16, 1996): “Within the conjugal and family communion-community, the man is called upon to live his gift and role as husband and father” (p. 17). And of women, John Paul II writes: “While it must be recognized that women have the same right as men to perform various public functions, society must be structured in such a way that wives and mothers are ‘not in practice compelled’ to work outside the home, and that their families can live and prosper in a dignified way even when they themselves devote their full time to their own family. Further-more, the mentality which honors women more for their work outside the home than for their work within the family must be overcome” (pp. 16–17).

29. Pope Pius XI, 1931, Encyclical Letter *Quadragesimo Anno*, ; Pope John Paul II, 1981, Encyclical Letter *Laborem Exercens*,; and Pope John Paul II, 1991, Encyclical Letter: *Centesimus Annus*; all online at www.vatican.va/

30. Jean-Yves Calvez and Micahel. J. Naughton, “Catholic social teaching and the purpose of the business organization.” In S.A. Cortright & M.J. Naughton eds., *Rethinking the Purpose of Business* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 2002), 3–22.

31. D. Stephen Long, “Corporations and the common good,” op cit.

32. Timothy L. Fort, “Business as a mediating institution.” In Cortright and Naughton, eds., *Rethinking the Purpose of Business*.

33. This is an idea that has for many years and in many ways been championed by Robert Greenleaf. See Anne T. Spears, Larry Greenleaf and Robert Fraker, *Seeker and Servant: Reflections on Religious Leadership* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996).

34. Mary Follett, *Dynamics of Administration*, 269.