



Pilling Report vindicates criticisms of Royal College of Psychiatrists by Core Issues Trust

Core Issues Trust welcomes the publication of the Pilling Report. It deeply appreciates and supports the gracious dissenting statement from the Bishop of Birkenhead

The Trust recognises the fact that its own contribution to the working group has been taken seriously. In particular it notes that some important criticisms the Trust makes of the Royal College of Psychiatrists have been vindicated.

Pilling states that homosexual people experience an "elevation of risk for anxiety, mood and substance-use disorders and for suicidal thoughts and plans ... [and, for men] high risk sexual activity" (para 205) and notes that the Royal College attributes this to "discrimination in society and possible rejection by friends, families and others" (para 206). The report states that:

"On the other hand, the Core Issues Trust point out that the three scientific papers referred to by the Royal College of Psychiatrists at this point actually refuse to attribute the causation of mental health issues among gay and lesbian people to societal factors. For example, one paper cited states, 'It may be that prejudice in society against gay men and lesbians leads to greater psychological distress... conversely, gay men and lesbians may have lifestyles that make them vulnerable to psychological disorder.'"

However the Report delicately refrains from noting the highly significant fact that both the Royal College's position and the contrasting cited scientific paper were written by the same person, Professor Michael King – the version submitted to the Church apparently being a purposeful distortion of the version published in the scientific community.

Pilling continues:

209. Is there an issue about the durability and stability of same sex relationships?

There seems to be general agreement that, while there are undoubtedly examples of long-term, stable and sexually faithful relationships, gay, lesbian and bisexual relationships have tended to be less long-lasting than heterosexual ones ... and more promiscuous ...

210. There is disagreement about the cause of these tendencies. As with the issue of health problems among gay and lesbian people, one explanation is the lack of social support until recently. Thus the submission from the Royal College of Psychiatrists suggests:

"A considerable amount of the instability in gay and lesbian partnerships arises from lack of support within society, the church or the family for such relationships".

211. However as the Core Issues submission points out, the very paper which the Royal College cites to support its position states:

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“We do not know whether gay male, same sex relationships are less enduring because of something intrinsic to being male or a gay male, the gay male subculture that encourages multiple partners, or a failure of social recognition of their relationships. The ‘social experiment’ that civil unions provide will enable us to disentangle the health and social effects of this complex question”.

But remarkably, as in the previous example, both the Royal College submission and the cited contrasting paper are written by the same Professor King. And once again, the Commission has refrained from pointing out the indelicacy of the gap between the Royal College’s submission to the Church and the scientific evidence on which it is based. Whether this (and other) misinformation from the mental health establishment may have subconsciously influenced the overall shaping of the Pilling group’s findings must remain unknown.

Core Issues Trust is grateful that the Pilling Commission has, however, recorded for history the fact that the Royal College of Psychiatrists has misled it, offering the Church *gay science* rather than *good science* and vindicating, at least in these two instances, the criticisms of the mental health professional bodies set out in the Core Issues Trust publications *Beyond Critique* and *Out of Harm’s Way*.

The Trust encourages the House of Bishops to carefully consider the consequences of continuing to ignore the eroding freedoms for autonomous individuals to seek professional, regulated, supervised and well-researched support to reduce, and where possible eliminate, unwanted homosexual behaviours and feelings. We further request the Bishops to acknowledge the ongoing, systemic societal bullying levelled against any individual or organisation dissenting from the view that homosexuality is innate and immutable.

Notes for Editors:

[Beyond Critique: The misuse of science by UK professional mental health bodies \(2013\).](#)

[Out of Harm’s Way: Working ethically with same-sex attracted persons. Questions of harm, evince and practice \(2013\).](#)

[Notes on Out of Harm’s Way publication accompanying recent distribution to MPs and Peers](#)

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