

Spiritual Origin and Nature of the Sexes

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Contents	Page
Introduction	2
Four Problem Areas	2
Origin of Gender, the Sexes and Conjugal Love	4
Two Fundamental Aspects of Love-Wisdom	5
Love of Creating Forms (Masculine Principle)	6
Love of Preserving and Nurturing Forms (Feminine Principle)	6
Masculine and Feminine Principles in relation to the Conjugal Principle	7
Mechanism of Human Creation	7
Emergence of the Two Sexes	8
Descent of Love-Wisdom in Human Beings	9
Celestial Level	9
Spiritual Level	10
Natural Level	11
Physical Level	12
Psychospiritual Derivation of the Female from the Male in the Writings	12
Gender v. Sexual Attraction	12
Genetic Considerations	13
The Brain and its 'Sex'	13
Foetal Development	14
Genetic Deviations from the Norm	15
Transsexuality	16
Soul gender	16
Homosexual Orientation	17
Swedenborg's Limited Scientific Knowledge	17
Regeneration of Single v. Conjugal Couples	17
An 'Internal gender Sense'	18
Men Need Women, Women Need Men	19
Levels of Attraction	19
Summary Conclusions	21

Introduction

In this paper I propose to examine a number of related problems that have emerged for me in my attempts to understand

- the spiritual origin of gender and sex,
- the relationship between personal regeneration and the conjugal relationship, and
- some resulting implications for the subject of transsexuality and homosexuality as deviations from generally accepted sexual norms.

Despite the spiritual beauty of the concept of **conjugal love**, Swedenborg's Book and doctrine of Conjugal Love have tended to bother me for a number of reasons and for many years. Both the way Swedenborg has often attempted to report the Divine revelations coming to him, and the New Church's interpretation and application of them, have been causing me increasing problems in understanding some key aspects and implications of this beautiful spiritual concept.

In particular, my more detailed study of Adam and Eve in **Gen 2:18-25** [in AC 131 – 167] (see the accompanying paper, *The Emergence of Eve*) – continued to throw up two major problems or areas of interpretive confusion as to what the Word, according to the Writings, is revealing in this key section. The first of these may at first appear not to be relevant to the above mentioned concerns, but believe me, it does turn out to be!

Q.1 Did the Fall of Man only begin with the eating of the Tree of Knowledge in Gen 3:1ff, or did it actually commence earlier with the formation of the 'helmeted' woman, Eve – said to represent the emergence of human proprium?

Q.2. Is the woman (Eve), called 'wife' by Adam, as well as representing the proprium, also in some way representing a member of the **female sex** entering into a conjugal relationship with a member of the **male sex**, Adam (as would appear to be indicated not only in CL, but also some paragraphs of the above named AC section)?

Four Problem Areas

Problem 1

Gen 2: 18-25. Decline into Evil, or Advance into Conjugal Relationship?

This section of the Arcana [131-167] which can confusingly jump frequently between the internal historical level of the MAC and the spiritual level of personal regeneration, begins with the words,

The subject here is the **descendants** of the MAC, who set their heart on the proprium.

AC 131

Man's nature being such that he is not content to be guided by the Lord but **desires also to be guided by self and the world** - that is, from the proprium - the proprium that was granted to him is the subject now, verse 18.

AC 132

This, and many later quotes, strongly suggests that the Fall begins here, rather than at Eve's succumbing to the serpent. [as I assumed in the book, *Eve: the Bone of Contention*].

However, in AC 155, 'a rib was built into a woman' is interpreted as the heavenly marriage existing in the proprium, and hence to be called 'Wife'. The biblical section ends with the phrase, "*For this reason a man will leave father and mother and cleave to his wife*", which AC 160-2 interprets in terms of the beautiful heavenly and **conjugal marriage** of good and truth, with Eve as this *heavenly* proprium – even though she was about to lead Adam dreadfully astray in the very next chapter!

Note that my attempt to tackle and 'solve' this problem is in the accompanying paper, *The Emergence of Eve*.

Problem 2

Does Regeneration need a Developing Conjugal Relationship or not?

The spiritual sense of Genesis and Exodus (and of Revelation) given in the Writings is in terms of the regeneration of the individual human mind, making no distinction between the regeneration of males as

compared to females. ‘Man’ and ‘woman’ represent distinct parts or aspects of the one non-sexually distinguished human mind. How then can they suddenly represent a man and a woman entering a conjugal relationship, with the man representing truth (or should it be ‘good’), and the woman representing good (or should it be ‘truth’) ???

The above consideration brought to the fore in my mind that the problem is actually a very broad problem affecting the whole subject of conjugal love and regeneration

Q. Is a conjugal relationship between a male and a female essential to personal regeneration or not? If it is, why does this not appear in the spiritual sense of the Word as interpreted in the Writings’ exposition of the Word and general doctrine?

Regeneration is outlined as being accomplished by the uniting of good and truth in the individual in a **heavenly marriage** or **union**. [The Latin here is ‘*conjugium*’ which originally means a union]. The conjugal relationship **on the other hand**, involves a kind of crossover between wisdom (or truth) in the man with love (or good) in the woman. Here **two** persons are needed for the union of good and truth in each individual to take place. So, can the union of truth and good take place in a single person on their own, or does it need **two** persons involved in a developing conjugal relationship?

Note on the Existence of Celibate Heavens

One does not need to be or have been in a marriage relationship to be able to enter heaven – albeit, a fringe heaven, since

Those who have lived unmarried in the world putting all idea of marrying far from their minds, remain unmarried, if they are spiritual...The unmarried live on the fringe of heaven....

CL 54

The state of marriage is to be preferred to the state of celibacy.

CL 156

What the unmarried necessarily lack would appear to be ‘completeness’.

Marriage [or union] is the fullness [*plenitudo*] of man; for by its means man becomes a complete [*plenus*] man.

CL 156

Swedenborg remained unmarried throughout his life on earth, and with rather limited contact with women, associating possibly more with women he met in the spiritual world – to whom he listened a lot, and whose views he was often content just to report! Did his lack of more intimate association with women hamper his regeneration mildly or severely? Did it debar him from entering heaven during his earthly bachelor existence? It would seem that one can reach the entrance or fringe of heaven **before** having entered into a marriage relationship. There one may become wedded to a conjugal partner which will then enable entrance into heaven fully.

But, is it perhaps only an inclination (or desire) for a conjugal relationship that is a necessary aspect of regeneration?

“the **inclination** to conjunction, which conjugal love is, exists in the same degree as the conjunction of good and truth, which is the church”.

CL 63

And the Writings frequently describe the process of regeneration as essentially the process by which good and truth become conjoined within the individual. So again the question is, Do we need some kind of spiritual relationship with the opposite sex for this conjunction and hence regeneration to take place?

As we have frequently said before, a person is in a state of truly conjugal love to the degree that he becomes spiritual.

CL 130:4

And is the male the one who is to bring the truth (wisdom) rather than the good (love) component in the relationship? According to the Writings it depends....!! According to our experience of the sexes neither such limiting correlation finds much if any real confirmation.

Problem 3

What is the true eternal gender of so-called transsexual persons?

The Writings seem to indicate that there cannot ever be any change of sex or gender, so what are we to make of persons who choose to change their sex – especially if they were to apply for ordination into our ministry, for instance?

Problem 4

Can there be the formation of a true conjugal relationship within a homosexual marriage?

Some males are very feminine in character and temperament, whilst some women are very masculine. Is the conjugal relationship formed essentially only from the bonding between a male and a female, or is it essentially a bonding between the masculine and the feminine in either sex?

Origin of Gender, the Sexes and Conjugal Love

In seeking answers to the above problems and questions I believe that we need to go back to their origins in the heart of Divine Creative Love.

Have we up till now had our starting point correct? I believe not. I believe we have been making a classic proprial blunder – that of believing that all **distinctions** we can see in our minds are necessarily and actually **separated** in reality - as they so often appear to be. The chief one of course, is the proprial sense or experience we have, that the mental distinction we can make between ourselves and God represents in fact a real separation. This is rubbish, since we would not only fall down dead but disappear into nothing if that ever happened! We are necessarily *eternally* linked to God. The life in us is part of the One Life of God.

It is similar with the Love and Wisdom that are the essence of God (and hence of Divine Good and Truth). They are eternally Love-Wisdom or Good-Truth – in Reality eternally inseparable, except in thought and/or appearance. If the two were ever separated in reality they would cease to be pure Love and Wisdom. The TWO are eternally ONE, and called the ‘heavenly union’ (or marriage, Lat. *conjugium*) by Swedenborg. Hence the origin of the two sexes can NOT possibly be the dividing up of Love-Wisdom (or Good-Truth) into the one in men, and the other in women. [Realize that the Writings often assign them oppositely to the two sexes in different places – an apparent contradiction and certainly a source of great confusion.]

Love is nothing without wisdom.

TCR 387:3

There are three things which cohere and **cannot be separated**: love, wisdom, and use of life; if one is separated, the other two fall to the ground.

AR 352

If they are separated, neither is anything. Love is not anything without wisdom, but in wisdom it is formed for something.

AR 875:6

When spiritual heat, which is love, is separated from spiritual light, which is wisdom, or, in other words, charity is separated from faith, a person becomes like rank or rotting soil, in which maggots thrive.

TCR 41:3

The same is also true of good and truth, which of course derive from love and wisdom respectively.

There is no solitary good, and no solitary truth, but they are everywhere conjoined....

There is no essence without form, nor any form without essence – and good is the essence or esse of a thing, while truth is that by which the essence is formed and the esse comes into existence [manifestation].

Again, in man there is will and understanding, good belonging to the will and truth to the understanding. The will alone does nothing; it acts only through the understanding; nor does the understanding alone do anything but acts from the will.

CL 87

Now if you get your starting point wrong.....?!

So what then could be the truer starting point for the emergence of the two complementary sexes and our attempts to understand them?

The Two Fundamental Aspects of Love-Wisdom

I suggest that the origin lies in the two fundamentally distinct yet inseparable aspects of Divine Love-Wisdom (or Good-Truth) itself.

I believe that we can distinguish between two aspects of Love-Wisdom that form the origin of the duality of gender and sex - one which avoids 'destructively' dividing Love from Wisdom.

- A. the invisible Love of **creating** visible forms (both human and supportive of human)
- thus **distinguishing** and apparently creating 'many' out of the One
- B. the Love of **preserving** and **nurturing** such created forms once created..
- thus drawing the 'many' back into their underlying oneness (so '**uniting**' them).

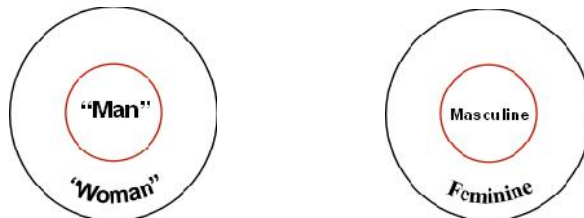
So distinct (yet inseparable in reality) are these two aspects of Divine Love that they need their own distinct label. From what we know about the general distinction in nature between the sexes, we might suitably label these as the fundamental 'Masculine' or 'Paternal' and/or the fundamental 'Feminine' or 'Maternal' characteristics of Love-Wisdom or God – the **creative** aspect as distinct from the **nurturing** aspect, the **analytic** as distinct from the **synthetic**. What we see as the male and female physical forms in nature are forms that are **representative** images of the eternal Masculine and Feminine in God.

So we would say that though God as the Divine itself cannot be either male nor female (nor even bisexual) having no form, yet 'He' is an inseparable combination of the basic Masculine and Feminine (and also Paternal and Maternal) characteristics of which men and women are in essence, created images and likenesses. In this sense both 'masculine' and 'feminine' are each an aspect of Love-Wisdom – an eternal entity that can never be separated into two - except in thought.

We can see these two fundamental aspects of creativity and nurturing represented in the prophetic text,

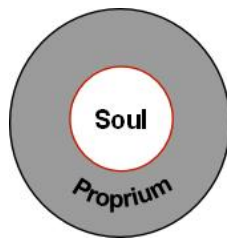
"Jehovah creates a new thing on the earth" ('Masculine')

"A woman surrounds/protects a man" ('Feminine') Jer 31:22



In Swedenborg's comment on this text, he relates it to the emergence of the proprium in the creation of the finite human mind represented by Adam and Eve in Genesis.

It is the **heavenly marriage** that is meant in this quotation too [Jer 31:22], the 'woman' meaning the **proprium** given by the Lord. The woman is said 'to surround', because the proprium by nature surrounds, just as a rib made flesh surrounds the heart. AC 155



The Love of Creating Forms (the ‘Masculine’ Principle)

– that is, the love of making aspects of the infinite and invisible Divine Life (Love-Wisdom) become visible in finite forms.

In the diagrams below, each **outer** circle is to be thought of as a form or forms emerging out of an invisible **inner** circle or essence.

“Behold I create all things new!” Rev 21:5

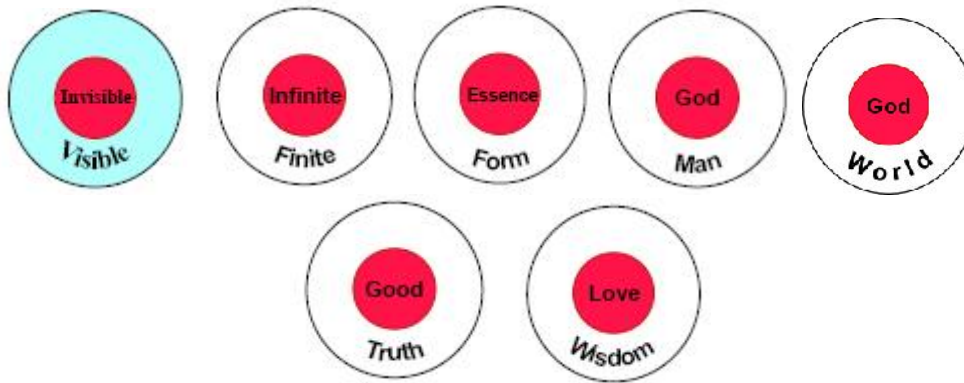


Diagram 1 The ‘Masculine’ Principle

Now, by contrast, we have the ‘surrounding’ aspect.

The Love of Preserving and Nurturing Forms (the ‘Feminine’)

– protectively holding the new-born

“‘She’s’ got the whole world in ‘her’ hands” [viz. The Lord’s Divine Providence]

In the following diagram the contents of the **inner** circles are to be thought of as embraced and ‘nurtured’ by the content of the **outer** circles

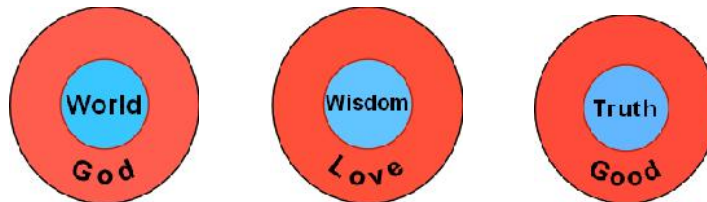
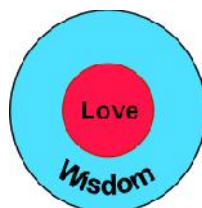


Diagram 2 The ‘Feminine’ Principle

From now on I propose we might use the diagram



to represent the Masculine Principle in the human mind, and



to represent the Feminine Principle.

Hence, both the pure masculine and feminine principles are diagrammatically represented as involving the Divine indivisible **Love-Wisdom** that is God.

Masculine and Feminine Principles in relation to the Conjugal Principle in Humanity

The **Conjugal Principle** is nothing else than that truth which can be conjoined with good, and that good which can be conjoined with truth. This joining together of good and truth is also the origin of all conjugal love. AC 3942:3

Conjugal love makes the inmost of a person's life, being the life of wisdom cohabiting with its love, and of love cohabiting with its wisdom. CL 457

This is vital teaching. The inmost of everyone's life, which is where the Lord's Life first enters the human spirit, is the eternal oneness of Love-Wisdom. Everyone, at that deepest level, is always in receipt of the Lord's inseparable union of Love-Wisdom (and Good-Truth).

Q. How then do they *appear* to become separated at lower levels in created men and women?

The answer to this I believe it to be the submergence of one or the other aspect into the finite human unconscious after the Fall and at the beginning of the Ancient Church! I will take up this point later on.

The 'Mechanism' of Human Creation

Divine Love is of such a nature that it desires (and hence needs) that there be 'TWO' that can *experience* the joy of becoming 'ONE'. And the means deployed is that of the establishment of '**proprium**', or the proprial experience – represented in the Garden of Eden narrative by Adam's rib bone and then by the woman formed from it. In Reality we are each a distinct *part* of God emerging from the infinite Divine background or 'Womb' which is the One only Life. But what if we were always to experience only that Reality? We would have no freedom to choose for ourselves – whether to love God or not. We would experience only being a finite extension of God – never experiencing separation from him, and hence never able to experience becoming reunited to him. There would be no experience of ever 'going out' and 'coming in'. Nothing would ever really change, not just for us, but also for God whose Love within his extended parts [Adam] would '**remain alone**' – something which is said to be '**not good**' by the Lord God.

"It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him" Gen 2:18.

Therefore in our creation (emerging or standing forth from God), we are each deliberately caused to 'forget' who or what we really are. Our deepest levels of awareness are brought into a state of spiritual 'sleep', [Gen 2:21], i.e. a **state of unconsciousness**, so that the new-born baby has no recollection of his or her origin in, and eternal connectedness to, God.

This is what that wonderful foundation stone of all human creation, '**proprium**' achieves for us – an appearance and sense of having an existence independent from God and each other. The wonderful 'woman, Eve' enables us to believe in our freedom to choose a life for ourselves, and who or what to love. So we feel and believe (thanks to Eve) that we really are independent, and so are each our own person. We take the means that the Lord God has provided (the 'Tree of Knowledge', the 'serpent' and of course the 'woman Eve'), to experience our independence and freedom. But then, as the Lord God prophesied, we then, as a consequence, 'die' as to the Reality of Life itself (with its Tree), and our awareness of our inseparable

connection to Life itself. We are born ‘fallen’ from our awareness of the Reality of our oneness in God, and our inseparability from him except as it appears to the illusions of our external senses.

Nevertheless, our ‘Eve’ is also said in the Writings to be a representative of the ‘**Church**’ within us [AC 287-291] where we can choose to become consciously reunited with the Lord in what is called the ‘Divine Union’ (or **Marriage**) between the Lord and his Church, where he is represented by the Bridegroom, and the Church (formed of males and females) is represented as his Bride.

The Emergence of the two Sexes, ‘Male and Female’

The above explanation has made no distinction between men and women. But exactly the same spiritual ‘mechanism’ is used by the Lord in distinguishing the human race into two types – male and female, which represent the fundamental principles of masculinity and femininity within ‘himself’.

“So God created man in his own image...male and female he created them” Gen 1:27

“When God created man, he made **him** in the likeness of God.

He created **them** male and female...and called them, man [= ‘Adam’]” Gen 5:1

Translational Note

In all that follows, we need to be aware of an ambiguous translational point that has not so far been brought overtly to the fore. It is this: that unfortunately, Latin uses the same **adjectives** to mean either ‘male’ and ‘masculine’ gender [*masculus* and *masculus*], and the same adjectives to mean either ‘female’ and ‘feminine’ gender [*foemina* and *foemininus*]. Therefore it is up to the translator of Swedenborg’s Latin to choose one or the other according to the context and his interpretation.

I shall be making a very important interpretive distinction between these two options, since our experience confirms that different persons (male and female) have varying combinations of masculinity and femininity in their natures – some males being very effeminate, and some females being veritable ‘blue-stockings’.

[Also note the terminological point made by the NOED where it states that

sex tends to refer to biological differences, whereas
gender tends to refer to cultural or social ones]

In relation to the above two biblical quotes Swedenborg writes,

The Most Ancient Church called the understanding in the spiritual man, Male [better, Masculine] and the will Female [better, Feminine], and when the two acted as one, they called it Marriage. From that Church sprang the common usage of referring to the Church itself, because of its affection for good, as a ‘daughter’, and also ‘a virgin’....and ‘a wife’ as well. AC 54

“Male and female’ means the union (marriage) of faith and love....That is to say, ‘male’ [or better, masculine] or man means the understanding [or intellect] and what belongs to the understanding, and so what belongs to faith, while ‘female’ [or better, feminine] means the will [or voluntary], or what belongs to the will, and so belongs to love....’Female’ [feminine] also means the Church..., and ‘male’ [masculine] the man of the Church. AC 476

In a general sense **everyone** is called man who has understanding, for a person is man, one person more so than the next, by virtue of his understanding. AC 477

How much less confusing it might have been if the translators had used ‘masculine’ rather than ‘male’, and ‘feminine’ rather than ‘female’ in passages such as the above. However, it should be clear that ‘male’ and ‘female’ are being interpreted as representing the will and understanding in both men and women, and that they are being regarded as ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ respectively. So males may have both masculine and feminine elements in their personal makeup, as may females.

The Descent of Love-Wisdom in human beings

The Masculine-Feminine Lord as Love-Wisdom (or inseparable Good-Truth) enters each person in pure form, so that it is true to say that at that deepest level in the human, it is the Lord dwelling within that person. But what happens when the Masculine-Feminine Love-Wisdom descends to the next level of the human – the celestial degree?

Celestial Level

As we have been noting, Love-Wisdom cannot ever be broken down into separate parts without ceasing to be pure Love and Wisdom, yet it appears differently in a typical man to how it appears in a typical woman, with the ‘masculine’ aspect of the Divine Love predominating in the man and the ‘feminine’ aspect of that Love predominating in the woman. Remember, that both ‘masculine’ and ‘feminine’ must involve **both** Love and Wisdom (both Good and Truth). So the One Love-Wisdom appears as apparently two - one aspect appearing predominantly in the celestial level of a masculine person, and the other predominantly in the celestial level of a feminine person.

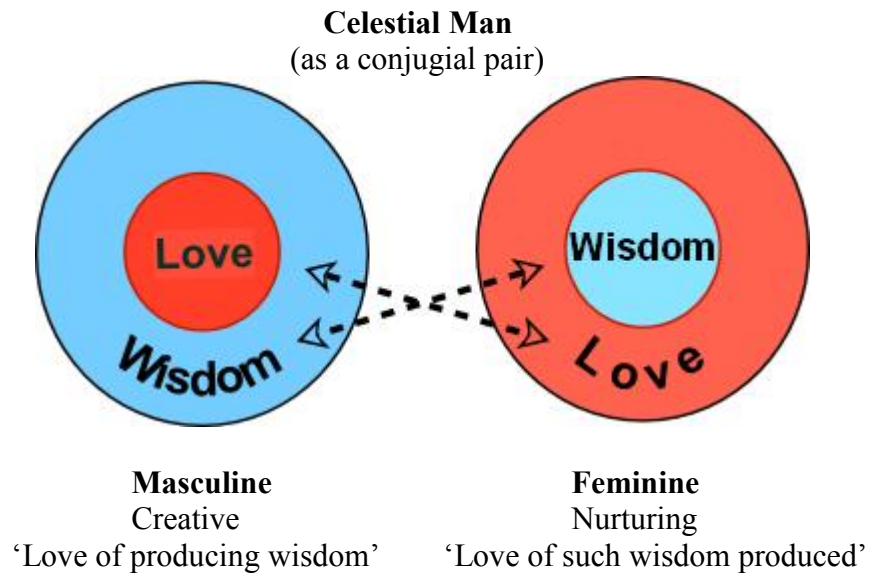


Diagram 3 Celestial Man

That it is essentially the love aspect that is being received in both masculine and feminine types of person is strongly and clearly stated in the following quotes.

The inmost core of the masculine is love, and its envelope is wisdom, or what is the same thing, it is love enveloped in wisdom. The inmost core of the feminine is the wisdom of the masculine, and its envelope is the love from it. But this is a **feminine love**, which the Lord gives a wife by means of her husband's wisdom. The other love is a **masculine love**, a love of being wise, given by the Lord to the husband to the extent that he acquires wisdom. Thus it is that **the masculine is the wisdom of love** and **the feminine the love of that wisdom**. There is therefore implanted in each from creation a **love** of being joined into one. CL 32

The love wives have for their husbands in that [third] heaven comes from and is focussed on their wisdom, and the love husbands have for their wives comes from and is focussed on that love for themselves, so that it unites them. CL 42:4

And the presence of both good and truth in both sexes is clearly stated in the following.

The truth of good or truth from good is in the male and is the masculine itself, and the good of truth or good from truth is in the female and is the feminine itself, and there is a conjugal union between these two. CL 61

Nevertheless,

It is masculine to perceive from the intellect, and feminine to perceive from love. CL 168

The masculine form is an intellect-oriented one, and the feminine form a will-oriented one. CL 223

There is something conjugal in the very minutest particulars with man, both masculine and feminine; but this conjugal is one thing with the masculine and another with the feminine. In the masculine conjugal there is something conjunctive with the feminine conjugal, and vice versa, and this in their most single parts. CL 316:4

[The MAC] called the understanding in the spiritual man Masculine [Elliott: *Male*] and the will feminine [Elliott: *Female*], and when the two acted as one, they called it Union [Elliott: *Marriage*] AC 54

At this celestial level a conjugal pair are able to instantly recognize each other as their ‘other half’

The male **man** is created to be firstly a form of love, and secondarily to ‘be’ the wisdom he ‘produces’. The female **woman** is created to be firstly a form of wisdom, and secondarily to ‘be’ the nurturing love of that wisdom that is produced. Thus they finitely share in the same finite aspect of infinite Love-Wisdom, and know they are together one (an angel of the Lord).

Spiritual Level

Next, what happens when the Divine Masculine-Feminine Life-Spirit descends to the Spiritual Level - which is a discrete step further removed from Divine consciousness? Now the deeper (inner) level of Love-Wisdom is submerged into the dark unconscious that is endemic of the mind of spiritual man. [This is represented in Genesis by the great ‘flood’ that represented the blotting out of the celestial level of consciousness in subsequent humanity with the rise of the Ancient Church].

Spiritual Man
(A spiritual man and woman feeling deeply attracted to the other)

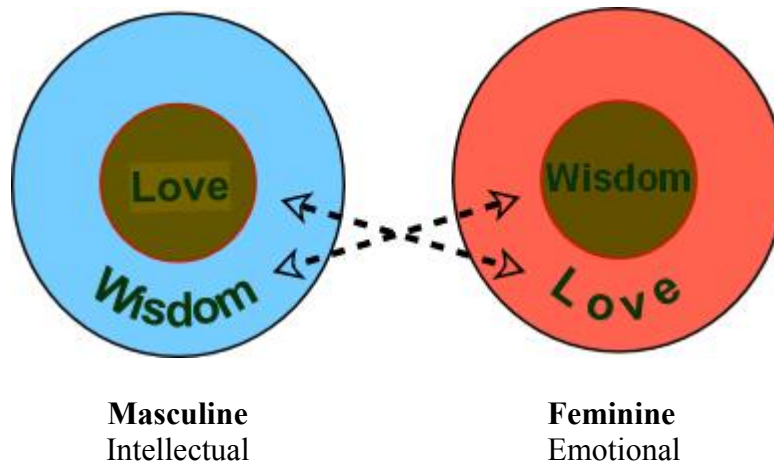


Diagram 4 Like Attracts Like

Can you see how this now changes how we see ‘man’ and ‘woman’? Wisdom ‘becomes’ intellect, and Love ‘becomes’ emotion [‘affection’]

Note however, that the above diagram is somewhat idealized, since

[Spiritual] Man is born to be the understanding of truth, consequently that **predominates** in him, and woman is born to be the affection of good, consequently that **predominates** in her.

AE 1121

In other words, there is still understanding of truth ('wisdom') and affection for good ('love') in both sexes, but in differing proportions.

Spiritual Attraction

At this lower spiritual level a man and a woman may sense some deep **hidden** attraction between them, and gradually grow into a conjugal couple, each feeling fulfilled and an integrated person as a result.

Note that only if it is genuine does 'truth' (or 'wisdom'), seek 'good' (or 'love'), and it can only do this if what it seeks is already present and connected unconsciously within. The same applies to 'good' seeking 'truth', or 'love' seeking 'wisdom'. So the desire to 'seek' can be explained as due to the unconscious desire to cause what is unconscious in you to become known and experienced consciously: in other words, 'to find the hidden part of yourself', or seek out who you really are deep down.

My contention [said the second of three former French lecturers] is that wisdom is the source of beauty. In women it is **a wisdom deeply buried and hidden away**, in men a wisdom open and plainly visible. What is it but wisdom which makes a human being human? But for this he would be a sculpture or a painting. What does a young woman look for in a young man but how wise he is? And what does a young man look for in a young woman but what sort of affection she has for his wisdom? I mean by wisdom true morality, since this is the wisdom of life. This is how it is that when the **hidden wisdom** approaches and embraces the **open wisdom**, something that occurs inwardly in the spirit of each, they kiss and couple with each other; that is what is called love.

CL 383

A young woman does not love wisdom in herself, but in the young man; and this makes her see him as beautiful. When a young man sees this in a young woman, it makes him see her as beautiful. Love therefore by means of wisdom forms that beauty, and wisdom as the result of love receives it. ...

Love is red with its own fire, and wisdom is white with its own light. I have seen both of these plainly shown in the faces of a married couple in heaven, the blush of whiteness in the wife and the whiteness of blushing in the husband. I noticed that it was looking at each other which gave their faces such splendour.'

CL 384

Note that this is not really a case of complementaries attracting each other, but that of 'Like Attracting Like'. As we know young boys tend to regard girls as 'soppy', and young girls tend to find boys too boisterous and rough. And there is a natural tendency in both men and women to feel most comfortable and at home in the company of their own sex – and often to find the opposite sex irritating, frustrating and difficult to comprehend - even to the point of possibly hating the other sex, exclaiming, "All females are bitches!", or "All men are bastards!"

But the above analysis may help to explain the 'strange' attraction to the often frustratingly differently thinking and behaved opposite sex [from 'Mars or Venus'] that arrives only at puberty, and which can become submerged again under the natural liking and understanding for one's own type, or after particularly bad experience of the opposite sex.

Natural Level

Next, the Divine Masculine-Feminine of the Life-Spirit of the Lord descends further down into the even 'darker' Natural Level of the human mind where what is spiritual within you may remain unconscious for quite a long while.

This is the level of distinguishable and observable personal and behavioural characteristics such as:

Masculine

analytical
focused
greater spatial ability
self-assertive
self-reliant
competitive
aggressive
tough

Feminine

synthetic (relational)
wholistic
greater verbal ability
sensitive
dependent
non-competitive
non-aggressive
gentle

And finally, the Divine Masculine-Feminine descends to the bottom by becoming clothed in flesh on the material plane.

Physical Level

Physical Man

Masculine

male genitals
taller
broad shouldered
narrow hipped
higher protein/fat ratio
harder
hairy-skinned and balding
deep broken voice

Feminine

female genitals
shorter
narrow shouldered
broad hipped
higher fat/protein ratio
softer
smooth-skinned and non-balding
unbroken voice

Males tend to have a higher proportion of (or be above average in) the masculine type of personal/behavioural and physical characteristics, and v.v., though there are many (and some extreme) exceptions to this rule.

Gender (Personality) v. Sexual Attraction

Gender Attraction

Each (masculine or feminine person) is attracted to elements in the other that are unconscious in him or herself. In this way each is drawn towards becoming more integrated (masculine-feminine) – a whole person.

Sexual Attraction

This physical attraction, however, is based on physical ‘chemistry’, but nevertheless remains capable of *representing* heavenly and conjugal union with its heavenly joys.

Psychospiritual Derivation of the Female from the Male in the Writings

As well as interpreting Adam’s rib and the woman formed from it as the human proprium, the Writings also interpret this biblical incident as representing how a key aspect of the feminine mind [‘woman’] is formed not simultaneously with the masculine [‘man’], but formed *out of it* – through the conjugal relationship.! Having previously declared in AC 152 that ‘anyone paying scant attention may see that woman was not formed out of the rib of a man’, they explain in CL the following:

It is said in [Genesis], that the woman was created out of the rib of the man, and that when she was brought to him, the man said,

This is bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh; and she shall be called Ishah (woman), because she was taken out of Ish (man). Gen. 2:22, 23.

In the Word in its spiritual sense, by a **rib** of the breast nothing else is signified than **natural truth**..... By the **breast of a man** is signified that essential and characteristic thing which is distinct from the breast of a woman. This is **wisdom**.... for truth supports wisdom as a rib supports the breast. These are the significations because the breast is the region in which everything belonging to the man is present as in its center.

From the above it is evident, that **woman was created out of man** by the transcription of his proprial wisdom, which is **wisdom from natural truth**; and that the love of this wisdom was transferred from man into woman that it might become conjugal love; also that this was done, to the end that in the man there may be, not self love but love of his wife, and she from her innate disposition cannot do otherwise than convert the self love with the man into his love to her. Moreover, I have heard that this is effected by the wife's love, neither the man nor the wife being conscious of it.

Hence it is that no man can ever truly love his partner conjugally if he is in the pride of self- intelligence from love of self.

When this arcanum of the creation of woman out of man is understood, it can be seen that **in marriage woman is likewise created, as it were, that is, is formed from man**; and that this is effected by the wife, or rather through the wife, by the Lord, it being the Lord who infuses into women the inclination so to act; for the wife receives the man's image into herself by appropriating to herself his affections; also by conjoining the man's internal will to her own will; and, moreover, by appropriating to herself the propagations of his soul.

From this it is evident, that in accordance with the description in the Book of Creation **interiorly understood, a woman is formed into a wife** by means of such things as she takes from her husband and from his breast and inscribes on herself. CL 193:7

With the male, **love** veils itself with wisdom; and with woman, this **wisdom** veils itself with love; thus woman is the love of the wisdom which is in man, and thus **she was taken out of man**. Marr Index 2:12

That Swedenborg was aware of giving a different interpretation of Adam's rib and the woman, is clear from CL 156f, though unfortunately he does not explain this striking variation in interpretation.

An inclination and also a capacity for conjunction as though into one was implanted in man and woman from creation, and man and woman still have this inclination and capacity in them. That this is so appears from the book of creation, and at the same time from what the Lord said. In the book of creation, which we call Genesis, we read:

Jehovah God fashioned the rib, which He had taken from the man, into a woman, and He brought her to the man. And the man said, "This one, this time, is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh. She shall be called woman ('ishshah), because she was taken from man ('ish). For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and cling to his wife, and they shall be as one flesh." (Genesis 2:22-24)

The Lord also said something similar in Matthew:

Have you not read that He who made them from the beginning...male and female..., said, "For this reason a man shall leave father and mother and cling to his wife, and the two shall be as one flesh"? Therefore they are no longer two, but one flesh. (Matthew 19:4-6)

It is apparent from these verses that woman was created out of man, and that they each have both an inclination and a capacity for reuniting themselves into one....

But as for the meaning of the rib of the man which was fashioned into a woman, of the flesh which was closed up in its place, and consequently what is meant by "bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh," also what is meant by the father and mother which a man is to leave when he marries, and by his clinging to his wife - this we showed in Arcana Coelestia (The Secrets of Heaven), where we explained the two books, Genesis and Exodus, in their spiritual sense. We established there that a rib does not mean a rib, nor flesh flesh, nor a bone bone, nor cling cling, but that they mean spiritual things, to which they correspond and which they therefore symbolize.

CL 156f

Genetic Considerations (according to modern science)

Now that we have descended to the physical level we are ready to examine some of the relevant current scientific knowledge and belief – unknown of course to Swedenborg in his day.

But firstly, a reminder of the need to make a clear terminological distinction between male and masculine, female and feminine.

Male/female - relates to physical form and **sexual** characteristics

Masculine/feminine - relates to personal and behavioural **gender** characteristics

And, secondly, we should note how the physical forms of the two sexes, male and female, are *representative* of the mental, emotional and spiritual characteristics of masculine and feminine souls respectively – despite the not infrequent presence of strong masculine characteristics in women, and vice versa in men.

Like all representatives in a person's form of function, the actual nature of the person representing, may not **correspond** to what is being represented by his form or function. [cf Swedenborg on the representation of and the Israelites and their kings AC 1361, 1097:3, and also see AC 2988].

So in principle at least, we should be able to accept that a more feminine type of person might be housed in a male body, and vice versa, as now strongly appears to be the case.

The Brain and its 'Sex'

It has been established that the right half or lobe of the brain is associated with visual, spatial, abstract, overall 'picture' skills, whilst the left half is associated with verbal, linguistic, concrete, details, skills. They are connected by the cluster of fibres known as the corpus callosum which determines the degree of connectivity between the two halves of brain functioning. But it has now been discovered that there is a male/masculine brain (normally to be found in males), which is clearly distinguishable from a female/feminine brain (normally to be found in females).

There are at least the following two major physical differences between these two types of brain.

Male/Masculine Brain

Right hand cortex is thicker
Corpus callosum is thinner

Female/Feminine Brain

Left hand cortex is thicker
Corpus callosum is thicker

Also recent studies are revealing some differences in parts of the hypothalamus (a structure at the base of the brain that controls the flow of the hormones) between man and women, and also differences in the case of some sexual deviations from the norm.

But does a male body necessarily house a male brain, and a female body a female brain – as we would expect? To answer this we need to review some of the main elements now known to be involved in foetal development.

Foetal Development

In the womb the foetus is not distinguishable as male or female. But then, due to a hormonal surge after about 6 weeks, it starts to develop sexual characteristics such as the specific genital organs. It is only after that that there are further hormonal surges that cause its brain to develop into either a male or female form. A simple and clear account of this has been given in an epoch-making book entitled **Brain Sex** (by Ann Moir and David Jessel).

It is not until six or seven weeks after conception that the unborn baby 'makes up its mind', and the brain begins to take on a male or female pattern....

The mother contributes an 'X' chromosome to the egg... If the father's contribution on fertilization of the egg is another 'X' chromosome, the outcome will – normally – be the formation of a girl baby. If the father's sperm contains a 'Y' chromosome, normally a baby boy will be born.

But the genes alone do not guarantee the sex of the child. That depends on the intervention, or the absence, of the other factor in sex-determination – the hormones. Whatever the genetic make-up of the embryo, the foetus will only develop as a male if male hormones are present, and it will only develop as a female if male hormones are absent....

If a female foetus, genetically XX, is exposed to male hormones, the baby is born looking like a normal male. If a male foetus, genetically XY, is deprived of male hormones, the baby is born looking like a normal female.

In the first few weeks in the womb, the tiny foetus isn't noticeably a miniature girl or a miniature boy....

It's now, at around six weeks, that sexual identity is finally determined – when the male foetus develops the special cells [in the female ovaries or male testicles] which produce the male hormones or androgens, the main one being testosterone. The hormones instruct the body not to bother with developing a feminine set of sexual equipment, while stimulating the development of embryonic male genitalia.

At about the same time, if the baby is female, genetically XX, the reproductive machinery develops along female lines, produces no significant amount of male hormone, and results in a girl baby....

In broad terms, the natural template of the brain seems to be female. In normal girls it will develop naturally along female lines.

In boys it is different. Just as male gender depended on the presence of male hormone, so a radical intervention is needed to change that naturally female brain structure into a male pattern....the intervention of the hormones....

Embryonic boy babies are exposed to a colossal dose of male hormone at the critical time when their brains are beginning to take shape....A vast surge of male hormone occurs at each end of male development: at adolescence, when his sexuality comes on stream, and six weeks after conception, at the moment his brain is beginning to take shape.

Brain Sex pp.21-24

Genetic Deviations from the Norm

However, it is also now known that due to various causes, it is possible for the brain to develop into the opposite 'sexual' form to that of the rest of the body, or at least to be partially altered in such a way.

Michael Cowley [a New Church minister writing on the General Church Cybercouncil, May 09] points us to the following deviation from the norm.

AIS (Androgen Insensitivity Syndrome) - Male XY "Females"

This is a genetic condition striking early in fetal development resulting in **baby "girls" who are actually male.**

They are XY genetic males whose SRY gene did not set in motion the androgen sensitivity and resultant hormonal production needed to "make" a male baby. So female traits develop by "default."

Their femininity is so "clear cut" that they themselves often only discover they are not totally female when they fail to menstruate.

Perhaps you are aware of such individuals in the church. AIS women look and act particularly feminine, since their bodies are particularly insensitive to androgen and thus hormones which are responsible for masculine traits. So they usually marry as wives, and adopt children as mothers. Though their soul is that of a man. Or is it? Given that they are identified and socialized as female, they "pass" as such. In fact, a number of studies show that they do very well as super models.

However, they present a doctrinal stumbling block, in that the sperm which conceived them was unquestionably male, and I assume that they would then have a male soul. Without looking too far for

trouble, our system could be faced with a very difficult situation should an AIS apply for the ministry! What is the doctrine to determine the answer? Does she have a female mind because she has a female brain and body?

For example, it appears that in some persons their gender may develop differently to that of their genes – XX for female sex, XY for male sex.

There are cases of XX persons who look totally female

There are cases of genetically XXY persons (Klinefelter's Syndrome) who look male, but have a number of bisexual characteristics.

There are persons who are missing an X chromosome, which is labeled XO Turner's Syndrome). They tend to be excessively feminine.

Some persons may have XX cells in some parts of their body and XY in others, and may have sex organs of both types.

Transsexuality

Whereas the *body's* physical characteristics define a person's **sex**, it is the *brain's* physical characteristics that are related to a person's personal/behavioural characteristics or **gender**. And it turns out that these can sometimes *not* be in correspondence, i.e. a masculine brain may develop in a female body, or vv.

And whereas it is normal for the relative amounts of masculinity and femininity in a person to vary around a norm for each sex, it can occur that an essentially masculine type of person finds themselves 'trapped inside a female body, or vice versa, due to something causing a hormonal imbalance in the womb at the stage of the brain's formation. This is sometime classified as AIS (Androgen Insensitive Syndrome) where there has been insufficient male hormone to develop the male brain.

But as with the development of the rest of the body, things can go wrong. A male foetus may have enough male hormones to trigger the development of male sex organs, but these may not be able to produce the additional male hormones to push the brain into the male pattern. His brain will 'stay' female, so he will be born with a female brain in a male body. In the same way, a female baby may be exposed in the womb to an accidental dose of male hormone...and end up with a male brain in a female body.

Brain Sex pp.24-25

Klinefelters Syndrome

Some men are born with three, instead of two, sex chromosomes. They have an extra female XX pattern, and the male XY. They look male, are raised as males, but suffer a lack of libido and a loss of potency. In adult life they have low testosterone levels – something which has been correlated with low testosterone levels during development in the womb. These XXY's report confusion about what sex they are, and how they ought to behave. They are hesitant about assuming a masculine role, and this confusion and diffidence often expresses itself in transvestism, transsexualism, homosexuality, bisexuality and non-sexuality. What seems to have happened is that, with a confused genetic message giving contrary instructions to the gonads, not enough masculine hormone has been dispatched to the developing brain to make it match its male body.

Brain Sex p. 118

Soul Gender

In view of the above cases of variation from the norm of a mostly masculine type of person housed in a male body, or vice versa, we may well find ourselves asking theologically, what actually then determines the gender of each person's eternal soul? Which physical element determines which sex/gender such a person really is in eternity – the body (with its sexual organs), or the brain if it is of the opposite sex?

I would have thought that whether or not a person is truly a man or a woman should be determined not by the sex of their body (which could be female, and could be made more male with hormone treatment, and vice versa), but by the personality characteristics associated with the gender of their brain. That latter gender is presumably what will remain after death, when the sexual form of one's spiritual body will be or become the one that corresponds to their eternal gender - whether or not their earthly body ever did.

Certainly, the following quote from the Writings emphasizes just how much a person's bodily appearance will inevitably change after a relatively brief initial period in the spiritual world after death.

When the spirit of man first enters the world of spirits, which takes place shortly after his resuscitation, as described above, his face and his tone of voice resemble those he had in the world, because he is then in the state of his exteriors, and his interiors are not as yet uncovered. This is man's *first* state after death. But subsequently **his face is changed, and becomes entirely different**, resembling his ruling affection or ruling love, in conformity with which the interiors of his mind had been while he was in the world and his spirit while it was in the body. For **the face of a man's spirit differs greatly from the face of his body**. The face of his body is from his parents, but the face of his spirit is from his affection, and is an image of it. The spirit comes into this affection after life in the body, and then **exterior things are done away with** and interior things are uncovered.

This is man's *second* state. I have seen some who have recently arrived from the world, and have recognized them from their face and speech; but seeing them afterwards I did not recognize them. HH 457.

So, why would a person with strongly feminine characteristics ('affection' or 'ruling love') be forced to remain in a *non-corresponding* male spiritual body just because their physical body in the world had been an essentially male one? As Swedenborg points out above, "exterior things are done away with" in the next life.

Homosexual Orientation (and their potential regeneration)

We turn now to the specific controversial subject which gave rise to the study and research for this paper. It is of course a very complex subject due partly to the fact that homosexual persons cannot all be put in one simple category.

For example, it seems to be the case so far, that some may be born such due to certain hormonal imbalances in the womb (like those that result in transsexualism), whilst others may acquire it through social contact. There is now evidence that a part of the hypothalamus (at the base of the brain) named the bed nucleus of the stria terminalis (BSTc), is twice as large in heterosexual men than in women, but is actually slightly smaller still in homosexual men.

Some male homosexuals are still very masculine, whilst others are relatively effeminate, and correspondingly so for lesbians. Some homosexuals are very chaste, whilst others (especially males) tend to be very promiscuous. Again, the science of hormonal effects on sex and gender development is complex, not fully agreed on by the scientific community, and still in the early stages of its discoveries. So we can look for no hard and fast conclusions, though we should perhaps look again at our attitude to persons not of heterosexual orientation.

However, in faithful gay and lesbian relationships one partner often tends to be the more masculine one, and the other the more feminine. If in view of the above genetic and spiritual world considerations that the sex of the physical body may not be as determinant for soul gender as the sex and gender of the brain, could such a couple be perhaps well able to develop a true conjugal relationship (uniting of good and truth between them) which would be matched after death by one developing a corresponding male spiritual body, and the other a female body?

Swedenborg's Limited (and at times faulty) Biological Science and/or cultural beliefs

We have to face the fact that just as the Divine revelation contained in the creation story of Gen 1 contains faulty science, so can the Divine revelation of the Writings. Swedenborg appears to be unaware of cases of transsexuality, and of course of the many more detailed discoveries of biological science since his day. He was quite unaware, for example, that the skin colour of the offspring of a black and white couple is mixed.

The soul of everyone is from the father, and it is only clothed with a body from the mother. That the soul is from the father follows not only from what has been mentioned above but also from many other indications; as from this circumstance, that a child born of a black father, for example an African, by a white mother, for example a European, is black, and vice versa. DP 277:3

He rightly often turns to scientific knowledge to illustrate and confirm divinely revealed spiritual principles and truths, but in this area, as in the above instance, he is sometimes demonstrably provable to have been mistaken in his scientific notions.

This would also clearly seem to be the case here for example, when he states that every male person is absolutely male (or masculine) throughout every part, and vv. for the female.

There is masculinity in every part of the male, down to the smallest part of his **body**, and also in every idea he thinks of and every spark of affection he feels; and the same is true of the femininity of the female. Since therefore one cannot change into the other, it follows that after death the male is male and the female is female CL 33

Perhaps Swedenborg's error was in assuming that what is the case *after* the casting off of the physical body at death, is also the case *before* that event. But the following quotes remain somewhat ambiguous on this point.

The reason why a person's sexual love remains **after death** is that a male remains a male and a female remains a female, and the male's masculinity pervades the whole and every part of him, and likewise a female's femininity; and the impulse to be joined is present in every detail down to the smallest. CL 37

After death a man is a man and a woman is a woman; and there is nothing in the soul, mind or body which is not masculine in the man and feminine in the woman. CL 46

Regeneration of Single v. Married (Conjugal) Partners

Let us return now to the question raised earlier concerning any difference between the regeneration of the individual as compared with that of the man and woman in looking to a conjugal relationship with each other.

Apart from the book *Conjugal Love* and the section in the book *Heaven and Hell* on Marriages in Heaven, we are presented in the Writings with a consistent picture of the process of regeneration taking place in the human mind and revealed in the genuine spiritual sense of the Word. This is said to be an eternal universal sense that transcends matter, space, time and any distinction between persons. According to this, the pattern of regeneration makes no distinction between the sexes. The human mind is regenerated by the conjoining within it, of good and truth (or love and wisdom). It is an involved complex process involving deep personal temptation combats.

But in CL and the above-mentioned section of HH on the other hand, we are presented with a fundamental distinction between men and women, and in how good and truth are conjoined in them through the intimacy of their relationship, the woman receiving her wisdom from her husband, and the man receiving his love (that is, conjugal love) from his wife. They need each other for such conjunction to take place, and there is a difference in how this happens in the male as compared with the female. The universality of the genuine spiritual sense is lost! What has happened here?

An 'Internal Gender Sense'?

Remember how Swedenborg switches (often disconcertingly) between the spiritual (or celestial) sense and what he later called the **internal historical sense** in the early chapters of AC which were concerned simultaneously with non-historical human regeneration and the historical rise and fall of the Most Ancient

Church? Here we have a similar situation – though one unrecognized or unacknowledged by Swedenborg. The subject of conjugal love is not part of the pure spiritual sense since it distinguishes between two types of person – just as the internal historical sense distinguishes between different groupings of persons (MAC, AC, IC, etc.). But confusingly, Swedenborg did not make this distinction for us, nor gave us a label to help us keep the distinction.

Therefore I propose that we might call this newly identifiable level, the ‘**internal gender sense**’, not to be confused with the deeper genuine **spiritual sense** of the Word. So when Swedenborg tells us, for example, that in the creation of the difference between the male and female sexes, ‘woman was indeed taken from man, just as is described in Genesis’, this is **not** the spiritual sense! And when we are told that ‘*a man leaving his father and mother and cleaving to his wife*’ represents a man marrying his wife in conjugal marriage, this is **not** the spiritual sense that actually reveals how the image of a ‘wife’ here universally represents the proprium in the human mind of any and every person - regardless of sex or gender.

By “*a man shall leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and they shall be one flesh*”, is meant that a man will leave the evil and falsity which he has from his religion and which defile his understanding, thus that which he has from father and mother, and that his understanding being separated from these, will be conjoined with the correspondent affection of the wife; by this means the two become one affection for truth and good. This is meant by the one flesh in which the two will be; for flesh, in the spiritual sense, signifies the good which belongs to love or affection....
AE 710:26

We can regard the term ‘heavenly union (marriage)’ as a true spiritual sense concept (i.e. non-gender specific), whilst the term ‘conjugal relationship (or couple)’ should be regarded as a gender specific concept related not to the genuine spiritual sense, but to the less universal ‘internal gender sense’.

Men need Women, and Women need Men

So, we may ask again, Does man need woman and v.v. to be able to regenerate? My answer is paradoxically, Yes and No!

According to the spiritual sense of the Word, no. But according to the internal gender sense, yes.

But where does that paradox get us in practice?

Notice the plurals involved in my sub-heading above.

I am suggesting here that the answer could well be that men and women each regenerate separately (have good and truth conjoined within their individual minds), but that to do so they need to draw on contact with the opposite sex in some way or other. But only in the **conjugal** relationship between one and one woman can their be a **complete** conjunction of the good and truth within them that enables them to cross the threshold into heaven proper – rather than remaining in areas such as the heavenly fringe communities of the celibate – or those where their so-called ‘wedding’ was about to take place. Of course, I am assuming that in such single persons there is an ‘inclination to the conjugal’ – without which, I would imagine, their spiritual progress would be severely limited or non-existent.

So, a woman does not only draw on the ‘wisdom’ of one man, her husband, to find her hidden inner ‘Wisdom’ self, but may find some of it through masculinity to be encountered in other persons of either sex for whom she feels a respect or attraction. Likewise, a man may find aspects of his hidden inner ‘Love’ self through femininity to be found in other men and/or women. This then would allow Swedenborg for example, to make some way forward in his regeneration – depending on the company he had as a bachelor - in this world and/or in the spiritual world.

Levels of Attraction

I believe that it will be helpful for us in our thinking and discussions to distinguish carefully between the following types of attraction between one person and another.

We can distinguish three levels of special attraction between one person and another of either sex - one that goes beyond simple platonic or brotherly friendship by tending towards the eventual involvement of a romantic or sexual component.

Spiritual (as above) – based on traits of heavenly love and/or wisdom in the other
(albeit perhaps not recognized as such at first)

Personal (Romantic) – based mainly on natural personality (being more prevalent in women)
[Note that strangely, Swedenborg makes no mention of this ‘romantic’ level]

Physical (Sexual) - based mainly on physical form and appearance (being more prevalent in men)

Spiritual Attraction – can lead to conjugal conjunction (of good and truth), and spiritual marriage.

Romantic Attraction – may eventually lead to conjugal union, or conversely to adulterous relationships

Physical Attraction – tending to lead to promiscuity (especially in the male)

This would be especially helpful, I believe, in any discussions on homosexuality or any other more extreme sexual deviations from the norm.

Finally, is there not a danger that **spiritual** attraction to others than one’s spouse may tend to lead on to romantic and sexual attraction (in heaven especially, where everyone is so, so beautiful and attractive at all levels!)?

[Said two angelic spirits to three novitiate spirits], "Angelic love for the opposite sex, or the kind of love that exists in heaven, is still full of the deepest delights. It is a most pleasant swelling of everything in the mind and consequently of everything in the breast, and **within the breast it is as if the heart were sporting with the lungs**. From this sport comes a breathing, tone and speech which cause the **companionships** between the sexes, or between young men and women, to be heavenly sweetness itself, which is at the same time pure.

"You do not know at all what a chaste love between the sexes is, because you are not yet chaste! That love is a true delight of the mind and so of the heart, and not at the same time of the flesh below the heart. Angelic chastity, which is found equally in both sexes, **prevents that love from passing beyond the confines of the heart**. But within those confines, and above them, the morality of the young man and the beauty of the young woman find delight in the delights of a chaste love for the opposite sex - delights which are deeper and richer for their pleasantness than can be described in words. CL 44:3, 5

Summary Conclusions

There is only One Life. All else are diversely receiving receptacles of that Life - or are illusions.

Love and Wisdom are eternally and hence inseparably united as Love-Wisdom – as are Good and Truth as Good-Truth.

Origin of Finite Humanity with its Two Sexes

In endeavouring to understand the origin of human creation and the two sexes, we need to look not to a dividing of Love from Wisdom) something that is impossible), but of distinguishing two fundamental aspects of Divine Love.

Two Aspects of Love-Wisdom

Divine Love-Wisdom can be mentally distinguished into the Love of Creating [finite forms], and the Love of preserving and nurturing such forms. The first may be named, the ‘Divine Paternal or Masculine’, and the other, the ‘Divine Maternal or Feminine’. Both are eternally one in Divine Love-Wisdom, and are the origin of all the typical Masculine and Feminine Principles or Characteristics.

Sex and Gender. A radical distinction needs to be made between Sex and Gender, and hence between Male/Female and Masculine/Feminine – a distinction not clearly made (or even makeable) in the Latin of the Writings. **Sex** relates to the physical form, whilst **Gender** to personal and behavioural characteristics, and may well be the determining factor as to whether a person is to be recognized spiritually as a ‘man’ or a ‘woman’.

Apparent Separation of the Inseparable

The apparent separation of the inseparable Divine-Love Wisdom (or Good-Truth) to distinguish two sexes in human creation, is achieved by one or other of the two aspects of Divine Love-Wisdom becoming unconscious in the male or the female – the same process which enables finite human creation to appear separate from God. Therefore despite some appearances there is always love (or emotional aspects) and wisdom (or intellectual aspects) clearly or not so clearly present in varying degrees in all men and women.

The Law of Conjugal (Spiritual) Attraction is not essentially that of complementary attracted to complementary, but is in Reality, that of

Like Attracted to Like
(conscious) to (unconscious)

Masculine and Feminine Characteristics. There are varying admixtures of masculine and feminine characteristics in the psychological makeup of both men and women, the norm being that males are mostly masculine, and females mostly feminine.

Physical Form. The male form – is an image representing the masculine principle, but may house a more or less feminine brain and person [and vv.]. Even evil spirits can appear in beautiful bodies in certain situations.

Brain Gender. There is a ‘masculine’ brain which is physically distinct from a ‘feminine’ brain, and which may develop within a female body, and vice versa. Where there is a difference this is more likely to be in correspondence with a person’s **soul gender** than that of the physical body.

The **Doctrine of Conjugal Love** is to be found in the Word, though not in its genuine spiritual sense, but at a lower ‘internal gender sense’ (in some ways comparable to the non-universal internal historical sense).

Personal regeneration – which is the conjoining of good and truth in the individual - (and as revealed in the universal (genderless) spiritual sense of the Word) – does nevertheless depend on appropriate contact with complementary gender characteristics in other persons of either sex. However, such personal regeneration can only reach its heavenly ‘completion’ in a fully conjugal relationship with one member of the opposite gender.