sexualities; that the only sexuality, in the strictest sense, is that 'sexuality imprinted in our natures'" (HAPL, p. 166). Those who have - by some combination of predisposition, psychological damage, and choice - become separated from nature are the unhappiest among us. They live a lie, risk their own spiritual and physical destruction through promiscuity and disease, and fail to find authentic love. Here is the terrible, bitter sadness in the "gay life," which is not gay at all. The prospect of healing, of overcoming, or at least of struggling to be chaste in resistance to homosexual passions, is the great hope that the authors here hold out to the readers they wish most to touch, in charity and true friendship.

I have no idea what possibility of success there is for the project of cultural recovery attempted in these pages. But I commend the authors for the courage of the attempt. Those who share their sense of urgency about the crisis they see, those merely curious to know more about the shape of what is at stake, and especially those already convinced of the opposing view, can do no better than to start with the essays in these volumes.

Matthew J. Franck
Professor and Chairman
Department of Political Science
Radford University


At the close of the twentieth century Archbishop Fulton J. Sheen was considered, according to a poll taken by the internet Catholic Daily, the fourth most significant Catholic of the century. The only people who received more votes were Pope John Paul II, Mother Teresa, and Blessed Padre Pio. Sheen was considered to be the most electric orator of our times, and he was described by Billy Graham as one of the greatest preachers of this century. Reeves list a number of awards received by Archbishop Sheen, including the Emmy award for Most Outstanding Television Personality. He was featured on the covers of Time magazine, T.V. Guide, and Look. There is no doubt, then, that Sheen deserved a comprehensive scholarly biography. Reeves is not an amateur. He has written and edited a dozen books, and his articles have appeared in The New York Times and The Wall Street Journal.

But one might ask why a biography was needed since Sheen wrote an autobiography, Treasure in Clay, in 1980 (Garden City, New York: Doubleday and Co.). The autobiography was well written and enjoyable. I re-read it
myself before reading *America's Bishop*. Archbishop Sheen answered this question himself: "But the way I see my life in conformity with my vocation is different from how others might see it. That is why there are biographies and autobiographies." Later in the book he said that he had resolved not to touch in the book any sufferings that came to him from others.

Reeves covers very well the public story of Fulton Sheen presented in the autobiography, but he also covers a good deal of the private life and sufferings caused by others, especially Cardinal Spellman. For much of this material he depended upon interviews with sixty-two people who knew Sheen well. He also made use of the sensationalistic biography of Cardinal Spellman by John Cooney and the unfortunate book on Sheen by D.P. Noonan. Reeves comments that both these books left some insiders leery of talking to him.

Reeves notes that steps have been taken in New York City by Cardinal O'Connor to initiate formally the process for Sheen's beatification, but he insists that his "book is not an effort to bolster or defeat that effort." One wonders, however, what effect the book might have, apart from Reeves's intention.

On the negative side there is a constant refrain about the Archbishop's vanity. Sheen himself, at the end of his life, repented for sins of vanity, and many of the examples used by Reeves seem to reflect the autobiography. Nevertheless, the examples given in both the autobiography and the biography are the kinds of behavior often reported in the lives of canonized saints. Perhaps a little too much has been made of them.

One interesting point that Reeves discovered was that Sheen often listed among his academic degrees an S.T.D. or a D.D., but no record could be found that Sheen ever received either an academic S.T.D. or an honorary D.D. Sheen says in the autobiography that he went to Rome for a year after receiving his Ph.D. at Louvain while he was working on the dissertation for the higher degree Agrege. He said: "I went to Rome for a year and entered the Angelicum . . . as well as the Jesuit Gregorian University studying theology." Reeves holds that Sheen received the Bachelor of Sacred Theology S.T.B. at the Catholic University of America. The Appendix to the autobiography says that he received the S.T.L. (Licentiate in Sacred Theology). If the latter is correct, Sheen might well have received the S.T.D. in Rome after an oral examination and the submission of a brief paper. A chapter from his Agrege dissertation could easily have satisfied the requirement of the paper. It would be interesting to have someone go through the records of both the Angelicum and the Gregorianum to see whether Sheen had ever signed up for any courses or taken any examinations for the doctorate, even if he had never formally received the diploma. This happened to many Roman students, including Karol Wojtyla.

Reeves tries to explore the controversies and ill will in the relationship between Sheen and Spellman. The comment that the problems between them
were between two primadonnas seems a bit harsh on both of them. Conflicts they had, and over a number of years, and Reeves brings out the reason for the controversies: the use of money contributed to the Propagation of the Faith. Perhaps it might be better merely to describe the controversies as disagreements of two conscientious men over the use of money contributed to the Church’s missionary work.

One great value of Reeve’s biography of America’s Bishop lies in his treatment of Sheen’s short tenure as Bishop of Rochester. Without ever having spent any time studying the matter, I had accepted the consensus among many that Rochester was a disaster for Sheen. Apparently he did make some mistakes there, but Reeves’s treatment forced me to rethink my opinion of Sheen’s stay in Rochester.

The description of Sheen’s return to New York does, I believe, serve his cause. His deepening understanding of the Cross and of his joining of his sufferings to Christ’s would seem to justify the efforts to have him beatified.

If you have ever seen Archbishop Sheen on television or heard him on radio or tape, you will find America’s Bishop a fascinating story of a fascinating personality.

Msgr. George P. Graham
The Church of St. Bernard
Levittown, New York