



Sex and the iWorld: Rethinking Relationship beyond an Age of Individualism by Dale Kuehne

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Summary of Sex and the iWorld by Dale Kuehne

Dale Kuehne indicates three taboos which govern the iWorld, his title for the dominant culture of the West in the Twenty-first Century:

1. One may not criticize someone else's life choices or behaviour.
2. One may not behave in a manner that coerces or causes harm to others.
3. One may not engage in a sexual relationship with someone without his or her consent. (p. 71)

Thus in *Sex and the iWorld*, Kuehne contrasts three paradigms for finding meaning in life—the tWorld, traditional, the past; the iWorld, the world of postmodern individualism, the present; and the proposed relational rWorld.

It includes an examination of “humans, human relationships, and sexuality” in the iWorld. The rest of the book is devoted to describing the rWorld. The difference between the three worlds can be seen by asking of each a basic question: How does one achieve happiness? Within the tWorld one achieves meaning in life by accepting the role into which one is born, respecting the boundaries that define how one lives in that realm and then living life fully in that capacity. The iWorld is all about removing all impediments to freedom and self-expression as the means to achieving the good life. Kuehne critiques the iWorld by saying that with the breakdown of the family structure, we have created a world of great loneliness and isolation; our children are being raised deficient of the most basic of essentials such as hope, love, and a solid foundation upon which to build their lives.

In the rWorld the central concept is that we are all made to relate; we are at our best when we respect and develop relationships—with our Maker, with family, and others. While the tWorld and rWorld have some key similarities, Kuehne makes plain that he does not want to return to the tWorld. Although the tWorld contained much that was good and consistent with faith, it also contained many evils. So Kuehne is arguing for the rWorld and a rediscovery of the relational essence of Christianity, whereby freedom is found relationally in a multidimensional social structure with rules and boundaries that are anchored in personal and collective self-restraint.

The relational health of a society can be measured by the health of its relationships. The focus of the rWorld is on strengthening our relationships by enhancing our ability to love and be intimate, which are key components of human relational fulfillment. The relational boundaries and roles of the rWorld exist to protect us from harm, and provide the environment best suited to promote relational health. These serve to guide, protect, and help mature all of our varied relationships: extended family, marriage, family, neighborhood, community, and friendship.

Further Resources

e.g. www.therworld.com

Christopher Ash; *Marriage: Sex in the Service of God*, Vancouver: Regent College Publishing 2003
Guy Brandon; *Just Sex? Is it ever just sex?* IVP 2009