

a reason girls sit by the phone, wondering whether the guy they hooked up with the previous night will ever call them again.

When we treat sex as just recreation our sex partners become means to that end – they become consumer goods. And we all know what we do with consumer goods that don't satisfy us: we get rid of them.

John Paul II, in the “theology of the body” and in his earlier work *Love and Responsibility*, makes it very clear that it is always wrong merely to “use” another person to serve our own purposes. And, of course, our own experience shows us the problem with using other people. No matter how much fun we think we're having during casual encounters, the truth is that no one wants to be on the receiving end of the “use and be used” culture.

Another common pitfall is cohabitation. Many earnest young people live together because they are afraid of divorce.

But the social sciences have shown that living together is not good preparation for marriage: people are more likely to divorce if they lived together before marriage than if they did not. Sex is and ought to be an act of complete self-giving. But cohabiting couples often hold back on each other. Instead of giving with abandon, they calculate whether it is in their interest to stay in the relationship or leave it. They practice not trusting. They practice conditional, not unconditional, love.

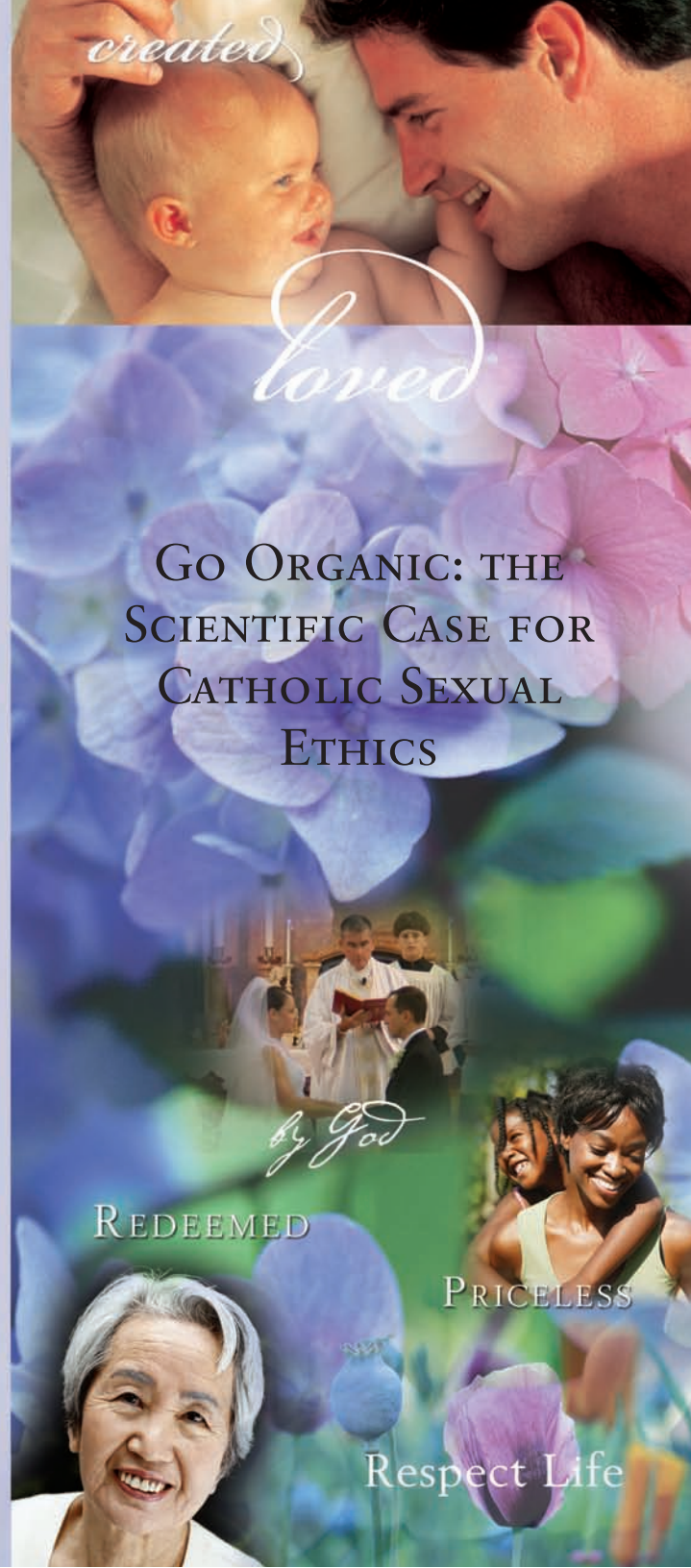
The cohabiting relationship enshrines a “use and be used” consumer approach to dealing with each other. Once again, social science validates Church wisdom. Cohabitation is a bad idea.

For two millennia, Holy Mother Church has been trying to tell us that marriage is the only appropriate context for sexual activity and for child-rearing. The Church has been trying to tell us that Organic Sex is the path that will make us happy. Today, science shows that she has been right all along.

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The Catholic Church has taken more heat over its teachings about sex than any other topic. You may be surprised then to learn that modern science is on the Church's side.

So, here is a quick quiz. Which demographic group has the most sex? The best sex? What kinds of relationships face the most sexual violence?

Answers: Married people have more frequent and more satisfying sexual relations than the unmarried. As for sexual violence, marriage is by far the safest kind of sexual relationship, both for women and their children. Rates of domestic violence for cohabiting and for dating couples are higher than for married couples. Children are more likely to be abused by their mothers' boyfriends than by their mothers' husbands, even when the boyfriend is their own biological father.

The key to understanding these politically incorrect facts is to get past the modern vision of sex that I call "Consumer Sex." That view holds that sex is a private recreational activity with no moral or social significance. Sex is just for fun. Don't take it too seriously. Just stay safe and don't get pregnant.

I call the alternative vision "Organic Sex." This view of sex, which happens to be the Catholic view, is that sex is an

organic reality, with two natural purposes written into the human body. The first purpose is procreation. The second is to build up and solidify the couples' relationship.

The procreation part of this equation ought to be self-evident. The widespread acceptance of contraception and abortion has obscured the reproductive purpose of sex for many people. Since even Planned Parenthood calls the sexual aspect of our bodies "the reproductive system," let me not dwell upon it.

Let me say more about the bonding part. Science can now show the physiological pathways by which we attach to our sex partners. During sex, women secrete a hormone called oxytocin, the same hormone we experience when we give birth or are nursing our babies. Some experts refer to oxytocin as the attachment hormone, because this hormone causes us to both relax and connect with the person we are with.

Oxytocin, the bonding hormone, has a survival value. Connecting with our sex partners increases the chances that we will stay together long enough to build a stable home and raise a baby to adulthood.

What about men? At least one psychologist argues that jealousy helps men to connect with their sexual partners. A

man doesn't feel jealous or possessive toward every woman he sees, or even toward every woman he finds attractive. He feels jealous over women he has had sex with.

Men must compete for women and the fact that women have a choice compels men to be more faithful, and less philandering than they might otherwise like to be. The evolutionary payoff for men to settle down with particular women is the assurance that the children he invests in are indeed his own.

Possessiveness is the dark side of male attachment. The bright side of the very same tendency to attach is loyalty. Men are capable of heroic loyalty to their wives and children, to their teams, companies and countries. Loyalty is the desirable trait which is signaled by male jealousy. Most women are looking for men who have the capacity to commit.

Biblical authors and Church fathers recognized that sex has a procreative purpose and a unitive purpose. Now, science can show that they knew what they were talking about.

This biological tendency to bond with each other means that, in a very real sense, casual sex isn't even possible. There is a reason guys come unhinged when they find out their "friend with benefits" has another "friend." There is