

Traditionalism Is The Future

Blithering Genius

2013 October 9

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Am I a traditionalist? Apparently I am. I have been labeled as such. What does this label mean? Well, in my case, it means that I believe in evolutionary theory and its implications for human nature. It means that I believe that human existence depends on men and women having sex and cooperating to raise children. It means that I believe that men and women are different, and that asymmetry in male-female relations is a natural and efficient form of cooperation, not oppression or exploitation of one sex by another.

I use the term “sexual contract” to refer to the exchange of production for reproduction between a man and a woman. This contract is encoded in our genes, mediated by our emotions, and reinforced by laws and customs. Men and women are different because we evolved to be different, not so we could fight over who is superior, but so we could fit together into a functional unit and reproduce our genes.

It takes a lot to make a human being: 10 minutes of sex, 9 months of pregnancy, 2 years of caring for a helpless infant, and 10 to 15 years of caring for a dependent child. The large brain of a human being requires a long gestation and long childhood. It also requires a large birth canal. The human female is adapted primarily for giving birth and raising children. A human female cannot survive and bear children without help from others. Thus, being human means that women and children depend on men.

Some people believe that the sexual contract is obsolete in a modern, technological society. With modern technology and the welfare state, a woman can have as many or as few children as she wants. Society can take care of those children. Men no longer need to play the role of protector and provider. That role can be played by either society or technology. But this is an illusion.

Children require a lot of care, and that care cannot be automated or provided in a factory setting. Someone needs to provide that care, and since mothers get pregnant and have the breasts, they are usually the best option. In modern societies we have achieved the high level of women working outside the home only by reducing the number of children being born, not by substituting technology for parenting.

It is true that, with the modern welfare state, some women can have a lot of children without a father's involvement. But this is only made possible by the far greater number of women who have one or no children. A society with an average of 1.5 children per woman can afford to subsidize a few women at the expense of other men and women. But this does not demonstrate that women can reproduce independently from men in a modern society. It only shows that the state can

support a small number of irresponsible people by distributing the cost to a much larger number of productive people. And the welfare state has the unfortunate consequence of promoting whatever genetic and cultural factors cause social and parental irresponsibility.

Now that I have covered the sexual contract, let me explain my idea of the sexual revolution.

By “sexual revolution”, I mean more than just the so-called “sexual liberation” that occurred in the 1960s and 70s in the developed world. I mean something bigger: the decoupling of sex from procreation. Easy to use birth control, combined with changing cultural attitudes, is profoundly changing human behavior across the world. It is causing fertility rates to drop far below replacement in those places where two things have happened:

- Birth control has been widely adopted.
- Traditional values and ways of life have been widely abandoned.

Japan, Russia, Canada, and Germany are examples of such places.

The sexual revolution is the counterpart of the industrial revolution. The industrial revolution caused death rates to fall, and thus led to a population explosion. The sexual revolution is causing birth rates to fall, causing a population implosion. Because both revolutions have been taking place at different times in different places, world population charts are misleading. To see the effects of both revolutions you need to split out fertility rates by country.

Some people believe that declining fertility rates in the developing world are due to economic growth. It is actually the modernization of those cultures and societies that produces both economic growth and lower fertility. Of course, lower fertility can also be due to top-down population control measures. But in most places, it is due simply to modernization.

In the developed world, we have subreplacement fertility even though there are no top-down population control programs. The way of life we have adopted is thus not sustainable. This reality is hidden from us by immigration. So most people don't understand this important fact. Our modern way of life is based on not having children.

So, we have a revolution sweeping the world that is lowering fertility and moving women into the workforce. You might think that traditionalism is on the way out, if by traditionalism you mean a division of labor between men and women for the purpose of raising children. But I don't think so.

And here is the reason why.

People who have children pass on their genes and culture to their children. Genetic and cultural factors that cause people to have children thus tend to increase in any population. They are selected for. Eventually, a population of non-breeders will be replaced by a population of breeders. This can happen in many different ways: by genetic evolution, cultural evolution, immigration, or social collapse and replacement. One way or the other, it will happen.

The sexual contract is not going away. Traditionalism is the future.