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What Is Right with Marriage

An Outline of Domestic Theory

ROBERT C. BINKLEY

and

FRANCES WILLIAMS BINKLEY

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An Outline of Domestic Theory

by

Robert C. Binkley

New York University

and

Frances Williams Binkley

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R. T. C.

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IF some one denounces a butcher or grocer for giving short weight, the denunciation implies the existence of a system of weights and measures. If some one condemns the conduct of a neighbor, the condemnation implies the acceptance of an ethical standard which the neighbor is alleged to have violated. And if it is asserted that something is wrong with marriage, there is equally implied a standard of judgment, a criterium of what, with marriage, would be right.

What then is the standard whereby marriage is to be measured? Keyserling writes as if it were character development; Hamilton plans his research as if it were primarily "sexual-reactive value"; the sociologists turn out their textbooks in the seeming conviction that marriage is to be measured by its contribution to social welfare. Is there then no standard of excellence intrinsic to marriage itself? The present essay purposes to explore the ground in search of such a standard.

Since the book has such a purpose, there are a number of things it cannot be. It cannot be a sex book, like some recent productions, with hymns to contraception and a sexological interpretation of history, for marriage involves more than sex. Neither can it range, like other discussions of contemporary morals, through all fields of ethical interest; it must be confined to the problem of marriage. It cannot be a survey of marriage in America, [p.viii] such as resulted from Judge Lindsey's long observation of the behavior of the youth of Denver, or from Dr. G. V. Hamilton's scientific study of the lives of two hundred New Yorkers, or from the interesting study of "Middletown" made by the Lynds. The marriage phenomenon is more widely distributed in space than Denver, New York, or Middletown, and in time than the twentieth century. Just as the descriptive study of marriage and family life concerns itself with particular times and places, so the normative study searches for truths that will be universally applicable, irrespective of time and place. The descriptive method presents particular facts; the normative method sets up universal standards.

Science is itself both descriptive and normative. Its product is organized knowledge. The organization of knowledge requires not only the collection of facts but also the setting up of classifications and categories. The facts are in the realm of the actual, the classifications in the realm of the ideal. Facts are tested by observation, classifications by logic. If marriage is to be treated as an object of science, these two kinds of exploration must go forward hand in hand. A science of marriage and family life can be expected to develop, as economics, political science, and sociology have already developed, in the interplay of theoretical speculation and statistical research. Research such as Dr. Hamilton's study of

what is wrong with marriage in contemporary America calls, therefore, for a complementary analysis of what is right with marriage in all times and places.

Is it not strange that among all the multitude of sciences and academic disciplines which have set themselves up in independent state, there is none which constitutes a [p.ix] science or theory of the family? It has happened, quite by accident, that the study of family relations has been regarded as a province of sociology. Books on the family are classified as sociology, and the sociological point of view has dominated the academic discussion of family life. Our best organized thought upon domestic relations proceeds from purely sociological postulates and imputes to marriage and home primarily sociological standards of excellence – to perpetuate the race, to transmit the social heritage. But the point of view and the method of sociology may after all, be ill adapted to the investigation of the essentials of family life. Doubtless if family studies had happened to grow up as appendages to economics or political theory, the methods and presuppositions of these disciplines would have been equally inadequate. May it not then be useful to experiment with sketching the outlines of a theory of the family which shall build itself up immediately from the facts and purposes that appear in marriage and home, without making use of the preconception that there are “social institutions”? Such efforts as this may lead ultimately to the creation of a new academic discipline which shall furnish more adequate *cadres* for the organization of thought upon this most pressing and intimate problem of human life.

Acknowledgments are due to many friends whose thought has been lavishly lent to this work. Among them are to be mentioned Mervyn Crobaugh, Frederic Anderson, Malcolm McComb, Cecil Pearson and Joan Wilson Pearson, Kenneth Robertson and Sidney Hawkins Robertson, Conrad P. Wright, Dr. Esther Caukin, and Professor John Morris of New York University. Miss [p.x] Katherine Beswick and Edwin R. Clapp have been especially patient in reading and criticizing the manuscript. The underlying thought out of which the book grew we owe to the stimulating intellectual companionship of Professor Robert T. Crane of the University of Michigan.

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THE authors of this little book are married. They have been married for years. Having loved each other completely, they still do not venture to dogmatize upon the probability that this love will continue through an indefinite future, but they think that their marriage has been successful, and they expect it to continue so. And they recall with indulgent tenderness the caution and circumspection with which they made the decision to marry.

They prepared the way with an extraordinary amount of preliminary thought and discussion. It was a curious argument, carried on in that spirit of mingled playfulness and earnestness which is natural to two young people who sit together in the moonlight. Their purpose was to clarify their own ideas on the problem and mystery of marriage. Their method was the method of the schools.

For both of them had been long in the atmosphere of the schools. They were familiar with the quaint attitudes which professors take toward the practical problems of life. They had learned in their classes many of the intricate theories of human conduct which are held in university circles. The language of the social sciences [p.2] flowed easily from their lips. And yet they recognized that the question then uppermost in their minds – whether to marry or not to marry – was one which the textbooks evaded and the theories missed. They set forth therefore to write their own textbook and to construct their own theory. Upon their collaboration was shed not only the light of the student's lamp but also the light of the stars. This outline of domestic theory is the result.

It is not easy to view with scholastic detachment anything so intimately personal as one's own courtship is while it is in progress. Moreover, there stands a widespread prejudice against such an attitude. It is generally believed that marriage

should result from impulse rather than from reasoned judgment and decision. A cold calculating of consequences or a mathematical estimating of probabilities is thought to be foreign to the spirit of the institution. The only frame of mind which can decently be held by bride or groom is one of naive and unbounded optimism. An atmosphere of illusion is deemed as needful as a ring and a clergyman for the conventional wedding. The privilege of attempting to see things as they are is reserved for the onlookers who exchange the stock currency of wedding jests.

If two young things nevertheless make the effort to look upon their own prospective marriage as impersonally as if it were not their own, and to scrutinize it as calmly as if it were an investment proposition, they still lack definite standards by which to judge whether their life plan is sound or unsound. They have no way of knowing what kind of conduct is normal in married life, nor of estimating which of the desired satisfactions they can reasonably hope to obtain and which they must dismiss [p.3] as illusory. They find that there is no clearly established notion of what constitutes success in marriage, no well-defined distinction between the essential and the incidental.

The smooth generalizations which are most current on this subject do not stand criticism. For instance, it is said that the test of a successful marriage is happiness; the purpose of a marriage is to attain happiness; a marriage is a failure which does not bring happiness; those persons are well mated who continue to be happy though married. But happiness is a general aim, which we pursue in marriage as in other things; it does not constitute a specific aim proper to marriage alone. If I decide to go to college or to move to New York or to trade in my Chevrolet, all these decisions are equally made in the interests of prospective happiness. Certainly then one cannot demand of a marriage that it should guarantee happiness regardless of all other circumstances. Here is one man whose marriage was perhaps the best and wisest act of his life, but who has always been dogged by misery and misfortune; here is another whose matrimonial ventures have three times ended in divorce, who nevertheless persistently takes pleasure in life. On the strength of these facts we cannot judge the marriage of the first to have been a failure and the marriage of the second to have been successful. There is truth in the idea that marriage has to do with some kind of a total product of well-being or of misery; it is more legitimate to identify success in marriage with happiness than to identify success in business with happiness. But still the generalization that happiness is the end and aim of marriage is too indefinite to be useful.

[p.4] In the maze of discussion to which every Sunday paper contributes and upon which every acquaintance has vigorous opinions there is no end of contradiction and perplexity. Is eternal and undying love a psychological possibility or a probability? Does conjugal faithfulness normally turn out to be a pleasing habit or an irksome restriction? If permanence, stability, and companionship in old age be deemed the aim of marriage, what (in view of divorce statistics) are the mathematical chances that a marriage will yield this product? Which

is to be held more sacred, love or marriage, if the two do not coincide? Should loveless wedlock be dissolved or can it be made worth while? There was the case of a student friend who lay all evening moaning on his bed: "She wanted to know if I'd love her always – damn it – I told her I didn't know – damn it – I told her she'd have to take a chance – damn it – she turned me down." Which had the more accurate and sensible understanding of matrimony, the man or the girl who turned him down?

The confusion of standards is particularly perplexing to a young woman. No formula for her conduct is unchallenged. Her duties are everywhere uncertain. How much independence can she retain after marriage? When factories and offices welcome the help of women, when schools offer to girls the same opportunities for technical training that they afford to men, when apartment houses relieve wives of most of the tasks that kept their mothers busy from dawn to dusk, must she still accept it as the normal course of things that no career is open to the married woman but the primitive round of kitchen and kinder? If a professional woman wishes to experience motherhood, must she risk the submerging of her person[p.5]ality in marriage? Shall we try to close the aesthetic enjoyment of sex life to all who are not prepared to assume the obligations of the married state? From courtship to divorce, from petting to birth control, all conduct is subjected to conflicting ethical judgments.

The situation is not explained as a mere prevalence of sin and wrongdoing in a corrupted age, for the standards by which sin and wrongdoing are to be identified are the very things that are called in question. The questioning is not the product of artful casuistry nor of conversational posing; it is deeper than the pretensions of the tea-room *précieuse*, and more serious than the speculations of a college sophist. Whether we approve or not we must accept the fact that marriage is no longer what it used to be. It has new meanings: it brings new consequences to those who undertake it. Our prevailing theories of marriage no longer fit the facts.

Perhaps the reason for the lack of a commonly accepted theory of domestic life lies in the fact that the family, no longer functioning as an economic unit, nor as a political institution, has come to rest upon a peculiarly individual sort of relationship, capable of the widest variation. We find it difficult to apply to it any set of general laws, or to fit it into logical schemes. The poet or the writer of fiction is perhaps better fitted to describe and define the elements of a domestic theory than is the logician or the scientist. A domestic relationship is at once general, like the relationship of citizen to state or buyer to seller, and particular, like the relationship of Caesar to Brutus or Héloïse to Abélard.

It may well be that an entirely new theory or scheme of domestic relationships must be drawn up by each couple [p.6] entering into them. Sometimes this theory is actually evolved retrospectively, after years of married life; sometimes it never finds expression in words, but only in conduct and attitudes. More often the development of a scheme of future relationships is a function of the courtship. And so it is with this present domestic theory – it is a courtship

now after four years written down. In it the authors have made a systematic statement of certain great banalities which were a common minimum of their belief.

They have chosen, moreover, to state these banalities as social theory. They might have put their thought into the form of a prenuptial agreement, a decalogue or a motto. They preferred the deductive procedure of the social sciences because in such an organized presentation there is a possibility, however slight, that something more generally useful may be found.

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HE who writes a theory of marriage has no blank page to write upon. There are already among us at least four conceptions of marriage, not always clearly stated, but nevertheless widely believed. The conflict and confusion of their varying tenets echo in every casual conversation on the subject, and in our social judgments and attitudes they have their full share of influence. One theory is naive, two are sophisticated, one is pedantic. We might name them, for convenience, the *schoolgirl theory*, the *mousetrap theory*, the *tomcat theory* and the *theory of the schools*.

There is implicit in the schoolgirl's attitude toward her beau a simple but consistent view of love and marriage, which often gives the conventional marriage to which it leads a wrong start and adds to the inevitable disillusionment of middle age. According to this view, in which both sexes participate, one marries when one is in love. But one must be truly in love, and so a mistake of fact is fatal. The distinguishing characteristics of true and genuine love are that it never dies, and that it guarantees happiness if one marries, and sorrow if one does not. If, having married, one finds oneself unhappy, then it is evident that true love is lacking. The only valid explanation of such a situation is that a mistake [p.8] has been made and that love did not ever exist at all. On this account a wise young person is very careful not to marry until the fact of true love is very definitely established. Here arises the great difficulty: there is no final test of true love save marriage; to test the egg one must break it. The only test that even the most careful can make before marriage is, according to this theory, "the test of one's own heart."

This schoolgirl theory is the Western World's basic view of the relation of love to marriage. If by a feat of imagination we remove it from our mental ken, most fiction and modern drama becomes unintelligible. Even the most sordid product of the naturalist school, or such a work as Ben Hecht's pornographic triumph, *Fantasius Mallaire*, presupposes a familiarity on the part of the reader with this schoolgirl theory. All other theories are corrections and criticisms of this one. Though the sophisticated abandon it, the cigar-store cynics scoff at it, the professors overlook it, nevertheless it remains unshaken in the popular mind. Even those who reject it for themselves are likely to encourage young people to believe it, as mothers teach their children to believe in Santa Claus. Moreover – and this is the most important of all – the great majority of young

men and women who are actually doing the marrying or who are wrestling with the problem of whether or not to marry, that is to say, the great majority of people in their late teens and early twenties, govern their conduct on this schoolgirl theory.¹

[p.9] Whence came this curious imagery wherewith so many of us are accustomed to construct our views of family life? It did not come to us from scholars, like our theories of the State or of economics. The schoolgirl theory is not accredited among scholars. It has no academic standing. It has grown out of two strangely different nurseries, of the preachers on the one side and of the poets on the other.

The Provençal singers of the Middle Ages, the French and Italian courtiers of the Renaissance, drew up a delicate and fantastic view of the erotic side of life. The Church contributed a somber and serious view of marriage. The two doctrines grew up quite independently, to be finally combined in a popular morality.

The Mediaeval and Renaissance theory of love was not a theory of marriage; the Courts of Love even decreed that true love was not possible in wedlock. True love was pictured as a kind of fixed-idea phenomenon, an almost psychopathic mode of behavior, seldom met with in fact. The Church's view of marriage, on the other hand, had little regard for love but suggested the curious concept that marriage was a spiritual union similar to the union of Christ with his Church. Eroticism appeared as a necessary though somewhat degrading incident of married life. And when the Church spoke of erotic life, its language was anything but poetic: "The wife shall not deny her body to the husband, nor the husband to the wife." Such was the crude dictum. The only thing that was common to the preachers and the poets was the notion of permanence. Poets and courtiers said that true love was everlasting; the Church said that marriage was irrevocable; now the schoolgirl says [p.10] that both must be permanent and that they must coincide.

In the face of the manifest improbability that true love, rare enough in itself, should coincide with marriage, the schoolgirl resorts to the expedient of a *deus ex machina*, the "right man," the prince. If the "right man" appears, all difficulties vanish; the conjunction of true love is established, eternal felicity is assured; nothing remains but to marry and live happily ever afterward. Consequently the all-sufficient preparation for marriage is the daydream, wherein the image of the prince or the dream girl is defined. The actual identification in the flesh of prince or dream girl must be left to intuition. And a young person's thought upon marriage is considered amply developed when he has made an imaginative character sketch of a future mate.

The cult of the prince and the dream girl, the "right man" and the unknown goddess, rounds out the schoolgirl theory. The theory is dangerous to human

¹This fact is objectively demonstrated in the interesting and scholarly study of an average American community made under the direction of Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd: *Middletown* (Harcourt, Brace, New York, 1929).]

happiness because it suggests no explanation for unhappiness in marriage except the explanation that the marriage itself was a mistake; it counsels no course of action to improve an unsuccessful married life except the divorce court. It turns the minds of both man and woman back toward a single decision of their lives – the choice of each other as partners – and diverts their minds from the innumerable decisions which they make every day. It gives to every marriage the character of being saved or lost as soon as the ceremony is completed, so that all that remains is to let time reveal the wisdom or foolishness of the initial step.

What actually happens in everyday life is that people [p.11] sooner or later give up their “illusions,” as they say, and recognize that their partners are neither princes nor dream girls, and find plenty of opportunity for exercising constructive ingenuity in developing their married lives. The false evaluations of the schoolgirl theory may not wreck marriages, but do consistently give them a false start.

The converse of the schoolgirl theory is the tomcat theory. This latter is the product of disillusionment or worldly wisdom. The premises of the tomcat theory are simple. Man is a predatory creature; he is sex-minded; he requires sex satisfaction. Whether he is to seek this satisfaction in marriage or out of it depends partly on the general merits of the marriage institution. There is no expectation that the partners in marriage will be extraordinary people. Whereas the schoolgirl’s ideal marriage requires that bride and groom be exceptional and unique, the tomcat ideal reckons with the fact that all men and women are pretty much alike. Whereas the schoolgirl ideal demands true love, the tomcat ideal is satisfied if marriage is put on a sex basis. Consequently the tomcat theorists do not bother with character sketches of ideal mates – except perhaps to insist upon physical beauty or “sex appeal” – but their speculations often constitute a thoughtful judgment on the merits of the marriage relation itself.

The principles of the tomcat theory are illustrated in that memorable Rabelaisian conversation in which Panurge, seeking advice from Pantagruel upon his proposed marriage, presents arguments pro and con, while Pantagruel replies alternately, “Marry then, in God’s name,” and, “Then in God’s name do not marry.”

[p.12] “But you see,” quoth Panurge, “since I cannot get along without a woman would it not be much better for me to associate myself with some pure and honest woman rather than to get a new one every day, with continual danger of beating, or of disease which would be worse?”

“Well, then, in God’s name, marry. . . .”

As the long argument unwinds, Panurge displays the characteristic tomcat attitude: he wants to marry because he needs a woman; he hesitates chiefly because

he doubts whether he will have exclusive possession of the woman he marries. The central fact of marriage, to him, is sex competition.

When marriage is looked upon as an instrument of sex satisfaction, its superiority to the unmarried state is claimed upon the ground that it stabilizes sex relations. It offers a vested interest in sex satisfaction, in lieu of a precarious tenure. It affords an expectation that there will be permanent rather than transitory attachments, and guarantees that the children will be the objects of fixed legal rights and duties. Thus the chief *raison d'être* of marriage is its proprietary result. A husband or wife is a species of property purchased at a risk with one's own liberty. In making the purchase one seeks to give up as little liberty and to obtain as complete a possession as is possible. Marriage therefore does not end sex competition, but gives it a new orientation. Husband and wife seek each to enforce an exclusive sexual right over the other, and to resist a like enforcement as regards himself.

To the man's insistence that his wife shall not make him a cuckold there corresponds the woman's concern [p.13] that she shall "hold" her husband. She must curb his predatory predilections and monopolize his affections. The comic strips and the feature pages of the newspapers tacitly recognize this as a proper wifely preoccupation. An elaborate technique has been devised for holding a husband – a technique wherein the arts of cookery and the devices of harlotry have equally their place. This technique has been made known to the world in the racy popularizations of Elinor Glyn. It takes for granted an essential antagonism between husband and wife. By making porridge without lumps and by choosing appropriate personal perfumes; by toasting bread without burning it and by wearing silk underwear – by such means as these does a wife fulfill the purposes of a tomcat marriage. The test of success, for husband and wife alike, is the physical fidelity of one's partner to the marriage bed.

A variant of the tomcat theory is the view which Havelock Ellis has expounded as the mousetrap theory. This theory is humorously defended by H. L. Mencken, and seriously propounded by the eminent sociologist, Professor McDougall:

The essence of the institution of marriage is that custom, law and public opinion force man to submit to a bond, to give binding guarantees under penalties, as a condition of obtaining satisfaction of strong desires. . . . The young man would prefer to have his lady love entrust herself to him without other guarantees than his vows of devotion . . . but society, dominated in the main by the matrons and the graybeards, takes a more cynical and skeptical view of the devotion inspired by sex attraction. The experience of the ages has taught it that too often love is fleeting; that in the companionship of the sexes, as elsewhere, familiarity too often breeds indifference [p.14] and not seldom engenders friction and resentments . . . [hence] . . . the mothers and fathers will not give up their daughters

to their lovers without the guarantee of the marriage bond.²

If there is no better defense of marriage than that which McDougall offers here – that marriage is good because it serves to keep together people who would prefer to be apart – it may prove difficult to convince the new generations that marriage is worth while. For man may find a way to the “satisfaction of strong desires” without “giving bond,” and the mothers and fathers may find that it does not rest with them to decide whether their daughter shall be given to her lover or not. The mousetrap theory constitutes a joyless acknowledgment that marriage is a fetter.

The schoolgirl theory is aesthetically satisfying but scientifically outrageous; the tomcat and mousetrap theories are in accord with common sense observation but they insult aesthetic sensibilities. All of these theories, however, relate directly to matters which are of immediate concern to the young people who are doing the marrying. With most of the professors it is otherwise. Their theories of marriage are aesthetically inoffensive and scientifically plausible, but they have little bearing on the aspects of marriage which are in fact most perplexing. The professors declare that the family is a fundamental group in the complex of groups that make up society. They assert that the family has two functions of basic importance: the propagation of the species and the transmission of the social heritage in the education of the young. All this is very true; it is elaborated and [p.15] proved over and over again in innumerable books; it enters the doctrine of all the social sciences. It constitutes a laborious and indisputable answer to a question that nobody asks.

Of what value are these scholarly dicta to the common man? A man likes to have harmony in his family group, but he cares nothing about the fundamental position of the family group in the structure of society. He may marry in order to have children, but he certainly does not marry in order to propagate the species. He may pay for the education of his child, but he cares not one whit for the transmission of the social heritage. His real interests in the family lie on a plane of personality which the theorizing of the scholars does not touch.

When Molière’s Sganarelle approached the learned Pancrace to obtain advice as to whether he should marry, he got little aid. Pancrace first demanded of him whether he wished to speak Italian, Spanish, German, English, Latin, Greek, Arabic, or Hebrew, and when Sganarelle admitted that he spoke only French the Savant told him, “Please pass to the other side, for this ear is reserved for scientific and foreign languages, the other is for the mother tongue.” And after he had passed to the other side and asked his question again, he still got no satisfaction, for Pancrace insisted on talking about logic and art and the use of language. So Sganarelle went off muttering, “To the devil with these savants who will not listen to people.”

The professors are still suspected of preferring languages that are foreign to the common man. We can imagine a modern Pancrace demanding: “Do you wish

²McDougall in *The Forum*, July, 1928.

to discuss this from the legal, ethical, economic, or social [p.16] point of view?" If Sganarelle then replies that it is a personal matter, Pancrace leans back in his chair and pronounces, "Oh, that is different," knits his brows and wonders what he can say. He would find it difficult to draw upon his scholarly knowledge for any counsel that would be of real value. For the academic teaching pertaining to marriage and the family seems quite irrelevant in the solution of a real difficulty. The professors are found making definitions that do not clarify real problems, and ignoring the question upon which there is a universal demand for more light. There can still lie found those who will turn away from the schools damning "the savants who will not listen to people."

Within the past few years there have been indications that the scholars are changing their attitude. A greater number of genuinely useful books on marriage have been published since 1920 than were published in the preceding century. The Protestant Church view of sex, love, and marriage has been formulated by a national Committee on Marriage and Home.³ A survey of the social and legal branches of family law, including marriage and divorce, birth-control legislation, and the financial relationship between husband and wife, is being conducted at Columbia University. President MacCracken's Institute of Euthenics at Vassar College and Count Keyserling's great symposium on marriage, as well as Dr. Hamilton's masterly research, represent noteworthy efforts to be helpful. President MacCracken has set out to found an applied science of home-making; Count Keyserling has conducted a literary "symphony" of opinion in which the thoughtful [p.17] mind can detect certain dominant themes of a marriage philosophy. Dr. Hamilton has begun the gigantic task of describing objectively and statistically the married lives of normal people.⁴ There is a new interest and a new spirit of inquiry in matters relating to the family, but there has not issued forth from the schools any new doctrine to meet the needs of the common man, and to supplant the schoolgirl and the tomcat theories of marriage.

The material for such a new doctrine is being accumulated with great diligence. There is under way the creation of a social science which will devote itself exclusively to the study of the family. Ernest R. Groves, even though he may

³"The Protestant Church View of Sex, Love and Marriage," in *Current History*, February, 1929.

⁴Dr. G. V. Hamilton is a pioneer in the statistical investigation of the sex lives of normal married people. He selected as subjects one hundred married men and one hundred married women of New York City, trying to balance his selection in such a way that about half were happily married, half unhappily. He then took down the answers these subjects gave to a long series of carefully propounded and devastatingly intimate questions. The number of cases examined was too small, the selection too arbitrary, even the scope of the questioning (predominantly on sex matters) too restricted, to allow his findings to stand as a true statistical picture of marriage in America. The investigator himself disavows this intention. The fact remains that on many of the most significant points of fact in marriage relations, Dr. Hamilton's figures are the only ones that represent more than a guess. For Hamilton has done several things that are new. Although his approach is that of a psychiatrist, he has undertaken to study normal marriage. And he has striven relentlessly to secure results into which no surreptitious influence of the investigator's prejudices has crept. His results are published in two volumes, *A Research in Marriage* by Hamilton, and *What is Wrong with Marriage*, by Hamilton and McGowan (A. & C. Boni, New York, 1929).

not admit it, is another of the founders of the coming science. He writes on "Social Problems of the Family," but his real interest is in the personal problems of family members. A vast and chaotic literature exists. There are books by free-love writers who denounce love[p.18]less wedlock, books by socialists and feminists who resent sex inequality in marriage, enthusiastic books by eugenisists who seek by enlightened mating to prevent race deterioration, indignant books by conservatives who protest against the break-up of the home. The list of able men and women who contribute to this literature grows rapidly: C. P. Gilman, Ernest R. Groves, Beatrice Hinkle, Willystine Goodsell, E. R. Mowrer, Margaret Mead, Mary Ware Dennett, Count Keyserling, and S. D. Schmalhausen to go along with the names of such pioneers as Westermarck, Havelock Ellis, and Mueller-Lyer. The files of learned magazines which give attention to the family problem grow longer as the years pass. Whether a periodical be devoted to charities or child welfare, parentage or prostitution, its editors recognize the problem of the family as an insistent object of their attention.

Despite this apparatus of discussion and erudition, there has been so far no thorough and consistent scholarly covering of those aspects of family life which are of greatest interest to us. Neither sociology nor sexology suffices. "Our study of the family has been like the blind man describing the elephant," said Professor Eliot before a meeting of scholars and social workers. But the tendencies now clearly visible will lead ultimately to the establishment of a department of scholarly inquiry which will not ignore the romantic and personal sides of family life, but will rather focus attention upon them. The girl poet says to her lover:

Whether or not we find what we are seeking
Is idle, biologically speaking.

[p.19] The time is at hand for the laying out of a field of disciplined investigation wherein it will no longer be idle whether or not we find what we are seeking in marriage. There is room for a new branch of the social studies which can deal as amply with the problems of family life as economic theory deals with the problems of getting a living, or political science with the problems of the State.

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TO build a theory that will contain and explain the variable imponderables of the marriage relationship seems at the outset a rather shocking enterprise as well as a formidable one. Such a theory must deal with the intimate activities of two personalities in the home, a secret, sheltered region, hedged about with barriers to the outer world and cherished as the last refuge of privacy. The scholars of the Victorian age were naturally reluctant to enter its mysterious precincts. John Stuart Mill would have been aghast at the idea of placing in a scholarly context those essentials of family existence which a man and his wife discuss together after they have gone to bed. Malthus was conspicuously indifferent as to "whether or not we shall find what we are seeking," and inclined, with his brutal theory of moral restraint, to the notion that we would not find it at all.

We do not even possess a word that will cover in a general way the problems of family life as economics, for instance, covers the problems of business life.

The Greeks had such a word. It was none other than the word *oikonomia*. It was applied by them to the study of all matters relating to the household, from the family budget to the affection of one member for another. Xenophon's treatise on *oikonomia* is an essay on domestic [p.21] theory and art. It touches very little upon the subject matter of modern economics, but begins with the question: "whether the management of the household is an art, like the art of the physician . . . ," and then presents an exposition of the art in the form of a conversation between a new-wedded husband and his bride:

. . . When we were well enough acquainted, and were so familiar that we began to converse freely with one another, I asked her for what reason she thought I had taken her to be my wife, that it was not purely to make her a partner to my bed, for that she knew I had women enough already at my command; but the reason why her father and mother had consented she should be mine, was because we concluded her to be a proper person to be a partner in my house and children: for this end I informed her, it was, that I chose her before all other women; and with the same regard her father and mother chose me for a husband; and if we should be so much favored by the gods that she should bring me children, it would be our joint business to consult about their education and how to bring them up in the virtues becoming mankind; for then we may expect them to be profitable to us, to defend us and comfort us in our old age.

We need not follow the substance of Xenophon's argument; it is sufficient that we appreciate the fresh and natural point of view of the newly married who are supremely interested in their own personal destinies and not at all in the destinies of the race. The bride is to be a "proper partner in my house and children"; the children are to be brought up in virtue in order that "we may expect them to be profitable to us, to defend us and comfort us in our old age." Such homely and appealing purposes as these would be recognized as sound by all who marry, from Sganarelle to our own younger generation. [p.22] For the problems of the race and of society are apprehended in marriage as personal problems. It is our misfortune that the scholars have lost this point of view in exploring the nature of the family.

Xenophon was not the only Greek who wrote upon *oikonomia*. To Aristotle we owe a profound discussion of the same subject. An important part of the first book of Aristotle's *Politics* is devoted to an analysis of *oikonomia* and especially of the distinction between *oikonomia*, the household art, and chrematistics, the art of money-making. For *oikonomia*, according to Aristotle, is the art of acquiring what is needful, while chrematistics is the art of acquiring without limit. This profound distinction has been lost to modern thought. It is a distinction

which, had we retained it, would have preserved us from the blind absurdities of classical economics.

There is no modern system of thought – unless indeed it be in the field of ethical speculation – which presumes to treat of the art of acquiring what is needful. Modern economics is a doctrine not of the household art, but of the art of money-making. In Xenophon’s book, Socrates proves that he is really wealthier than his host, for though the host has many estates and slaves he has even more expenses and responsibilities. “Wealth,” according to the principles of *oikonomia*, is not a mere quantity of goods, but a ratio of goods to needs. And this is the kind of thinking that family life requires. But modern economics, even if it disguises itself under a new name such as “welfare economics,” is not a theory of acquiring what is needful, but rather of acquiring without limit. It corresponds to the Greek chrematistics rather than to *oikonomia*. The doctrine which once treated of the house[p.23]hold in terms of human needs has disappeared, its very name being usurped by a rival.

The history of European institutions shows clearly enough the reasons for this submerging of the doctrine of the household art. In the Middle Ages, social thinking went hand in hand with theology; not till the fifteenth century, when keen Italian thinkers were reformulating the Greek and Roman ideas which they had rediscovered, did social theorizing achieve an independent intellectual status. At that time it seemed that the Greek doctrine of the family would be revived and the Greek point of view would find new expression. Even before Machiavelli wrote *The Prince*, Alberti had written the most distinctive book on the family since Xenophon – a manuscript entitled *Della Famiglia*. His point of view was the simple and natural one that had been Xenophon’s. He was concerned with the welfare of the family for its own sake, and not for the sake of God or morality or society or the nation. He dealt with ultimate values in the domestic situation – he discussed, in short, “what is needful.” Unfortunately, Alberti had no successors.

The family of Alberti’s day was both a business enterprise and a family. The Medici bankers in the Middle Ages kept their business and household accounts in the same book. It did not occur to them that business could be a separate compartment of existence. The commercial revolution of the sixteenth century changed this attitude. “Italian bookkeeping” which rigorously separated business from family affairs became customary in all commercial operations. Business enterprise and family life took leave of each other. The attention of students fol[p.24]lowed business, ignoring the family. Scholars wrote on the principles of chrematistics, and called their product economics.

The titles of works on the family have multiplied in modern times, until they now choke fat bibliographies. We have treatments of the family as a social institution, as an educational institution, as an economic, even as a spiritual institution – but only very recently of the family as a domestic fact, existing for itself and having its own system of values, and being itself the test of “what is needful.” As one side or another of family life has projected itself into affairs,

discussions and analyses of the family have resulted. LePlay made an interesting classification of families, patriarchal, rooted, and unstable, as he considered their contribution to the stability of the nation. He made the family the starting point of a system of sociology. Luther set down in stark terms the abject position of the wife, as he discussed the relation of the home to God's plan. When the industrial revolution began breaking down the old family solidarity, a flood of dissertations on the sanctity of the home, women's sacred sphere, and the holy duties of parenthood poured forth. But there has been no passionless survey of the home from the theoretical side, as there has been, for example, of the State.

This lack of an independent domestic theory is due largely to the absence of a real need for such a theory in the past. The theories of economics, political science, and sociology were evolved in response to genuine problems of conduct and belief; they did not arise out of the idle play of intelligence; they were forged to be the tools of kings and the weapons of parties and parliaments. [p.25] The family presented no issue of conduct to the European mind; men took it for granted.

Our own generation has seen a problem of the family arise in an insistent and thought-compelling form, and has seen the collapse of the sex-discussion taboo which once vitiated all analyses of domestic matters. Thus we are prepared for a revival of the ancient study of the art of the household.

This revival is coming about largely in response to pressure from below. Newspaper subscribers expect daily counsel on family and marriage problems as a part of their newspaper purchase. The Lynds, in the survey of "Middletown," found that 68 out of 109 wives of working men and 26 out of 29 wives of business men read regularly or occasionally the Dorothy Dix syndicated column of advice. Masses of sophisticated women who graduate yearly from universities and masses of taxpayers who support the public schools are demanding education for married life. Sganarelle now sits on the school board, or even on the board of trustees of the university, where he can make Pancrace do his bidding. And he is insisting that something be done about this tangle of misconceptions and uncertainties which we encounter in marriage. High schools have established courses in home economics – Xenophon's old word lent back to the household whence it came. Universities have offered courses, and organized departments to study some of the related problems. In the Vassar Institute of Euthenics, *oikonomia* comes once more into its own. The outline of the summer session announces lectures on "Social Problems of the Home," "Child Guidance," "Household Technology," and "The Manipulation of [p.26] Batters and Doughs." Aristotle's broad conception of the rightful place of the family in the subject matter of social thought, and his keen intuition that in the family one has to do with a balancing of the necessities of human nature, are still sound.

But the family has changed indeed since Greek times; especially has it changed within the memory of the present generation. The trend has been ever in the direction of freedom. The element of consent has become increasingly important. The arrangement of marriages by parents is looked upon as an anachronism. The

dissolution of marriage has become easier. Marriage begins with the engaging of two free personalities, and continues as long as there is mutual consent to its continuance. No mystery in marriage is greater than this: that just as the coming together of two bodies can create new life, so the interplay of two free personalities engenders new personal values and realizes new and higher levels of conduct. This is the fact toward which the schoolgirl gropes with her crude belief in "the right man" and the consummate personal relationship of love.

Perhaps it is best that the scholars of the past neglected domestic theory, for their labors might have served only to confuse and obscure the problems which confront us today. A theory based on the notion of status and duty would now be a useless encumbrance, for it is the personal element in the modern family that calls for an explanatory doctrine. It is this personal aspect of family life which the three great systems of the social sciences leave out of account. Political theory is primarily interested in human conduct as related to the will of the State, economics in the situation where each individual seeks [p.27] his own advantage, sociology in the complex total of influences which people exert on each other by living in groups. They do not concern themselves with the personal relationship.

The situation suggests that we draw up a theory of marriage, which will explore conduct that springs out of that relationship; which will examine attitudes like jealousy or friendship as they occur between specific persons; which will describe the interplay of activity when an individual finds himself in the presence of no such generalized entity as a "state," a "market," or a "society," but simply in the presence of another individual like himself. Can we not undertake to study the family as the State has been studied ever since Bodin and Hobbes laid down the foundations of modern political theory, and as the business world has been examined since Quesnay and Adam Smith propounded their theories?

Here we make the basic assumption of domestic theory. Let it be, if you will, a fictional assumption; it may none the less be an enlightening one. We assume that the relationship of husband to wife is one of personalities. We will make the experiment of deducing the consequences of this assumption, of following out its corollaries, and explaining its meanings. This experiment will involve, at least tentatively, the setting apart of an independent field of social study, which will be related to the other main fields of the social sciences somewhat as is indicated in the chart on the following page.

In exploring the nature of the family from these postulates we will have to take into account political, economic, and social facts, just as political theory, economics, and sociology have each something to say about [p.29] the family. We will recognize frankly the limitations of all theorizing: that theory cannot take the place of wisdom. And yet we feel the driving need for a rigid and self-consistent analysis of the domestic problem. Moreover, we are confident that theories relating to human affairs, however logic-bound they may be, do not remain mere neutral intellectual exercises, but develop a profound usefulness. As soon as they gain general credence they serve not only to describe conduct,

but also to justify and determine it. If we say that an act is illegal or uneconomic, a complete theory of jurisprudence or of economics lends its wealth of meaning to our judgment. Similarly, in our theory of the family, we will hope to give meaning to the idea that certain kinds of conduct are domestic, whereas others are nondomestic. Such is our ultimate goal. Our starting point is the personal character of the relationship of man to wife.

[p.28]

	<i>Science or Discipline</i>	<i>Relationship</i>	
Social Sciences: deal with man in relationship to other men	Sociology	Social influence	7
	Political theory	Political domination	7
	Economic theory	Economic interest	7
	Domestic theory	Personal	7

DOMESTIC THEORY AND THE SOCIAL SCIENCES [p.29] In writing an Outline of Domestic Theory one would endeavor first to define this personal relationship on which marriage is based, just as the political scientist puzzles the freshman by a definition of sovereignty on the first page of his textbook. What does the lover mean who says, "I love you for yourself alone?" Can this love be transferred to another person? Will it remain constantly the same? Must it include all the activities of the loved one? These questions must all be taken into account.

What is a family? How are its members bound together? Should they be subject to the authority of a dominant member, or is the family self-governing? What is one to expect of his partner in marriage, and what may be required in turn? Why marry at all? And perhaps most difficult of all: Whom shall I marry?

[p.30] Let the professor of domestic theory ponder these questions, and study the answers systematically. He may perhaps create a "domestic man" as the economists have created in the "economic man" a fictitious being who figures as a norm of behavior. He will discover laws of domestic behavior that will correspond to such coinage as "the law of diminishing returns" in the sister sciences. He will provide a terminology for precise discussion of domestic problems. His cool, impersonal theorizing will furnish a refuge from the bitterness of personal disagreement in family life, and be helpfully at hand in lovers' conversations.

[p.31]

No offense is greater in a lover than this: that he should treat his love "impersonally." No lapse is more final and devastating in courtship or domestic life than a lapse from personal feeling between those who have known the pitiless intimacy of love or marriage. Anger, hatred, and jealousy, so long as they are fraught with personal meanings, are likely to dissolve in unaccountable ways or

transmute themselves into love according to strange laws of their own. They are frequently no further removed from passionate affection than the width of a hair.

The distinction between personal and impersonal relationships is a vital one in human affairs. Personal relationships, be they those of friend to friend or of husband to wife, be they motivated by love or by hatred, be they transitory or permanent, stand apart and in a class by themselves. They cannot be explored by the social sciences, they are alike inexplicable to political theory, sociology, and economics. Theirs is a special level of being, a peculiar order of existence, which must be especially studied, defined, and described.

The most obvious and inevitable quality of a personal relationship is that it is not transferable. It attaches to determinate individuals who cannot be duplicated nor replaced. A new personal relationship can be established, [p.32] an old one can be abandoned, perhaps the driving force that initiated the relationship may give way to another, but no substitution can be made of one individual for another in the same relationship. If Helen leaves Menelaus and flees with Paris, it is absurd to describe the new situation as a continuation of the personal attachment of Menelaus and Helen, with Paris acting as a substitute. The personal relationship between Helen and Menelaus continues, with love changed to fear and resentment. The attachment of Helen and Paris is a new entity, a new relationship.

On the other hand, any relationship which can be transferred from one individual to another is to that extent impersonal. When citizens enter and leave the allegiance of a State, when laborers enter and leave the employ of a factory, when men supplant each other in all the diverse functions of organized society, their personality is only incidental to the political, economic, or social tie which they assume or avoid. We consider that these relationships themselves are constantly in being, whoever may be the persons bound therein. Generation after generation follows each other in the life of the State, and the order of political relationship perdures, oblivious to these innumerable personal replacements. But not so with relationships of personality. If a friend dies the friendship is at an end, even though new friends be found; if the wife deserts and obtains a divorce, the marriage is at an end, even though a new marriage ensues. This non-transferable character of a personal tie is so obvious that to state it is to prove it.

The second characteristic of a relationship of personality is that it is variable. Love can give place to hatred, [p.33] understanding to misunderstanding, respect to loathing, between the same two persons. Likewise affection can increase, love can become more intense, an intellectual attachment can become an erotic attachment, and the relationship continues a personal one. Such variations are not merely possible; they are normal and necessary. They can no more be avoided than change can be prevented in the life of an individual. Just as human beings mature and grow old, so must their personal relationships run a gamut of change. When a virgin becomes a bride she may imagine that her

attitude toward her husband is fixed for all time, yet in fact she is standing on the threshold of unavoidable novelty and discovery. If her erotic personality is aroused and developed, a wealth of new meanings will cluster around her attitude; if there is no such awakening of erotic life, new tensions inevitably appear. There are infinite possibilities before her; the only thing she cannot do is to remain just as she is, with her love for her husband continuing to be exactly as on the wedding day. The very meaning of the verb *to love* changes with ripening experience. So it is with friends. Friendship can deepen or it can become attenuated; it cannot remain unchanged. When two friends who have not seen each other for years are reunited by some chance meeting they speak to each other with the same language that they were wont to use in earlier days, each tells the other that there has been no change, but the sense of change is actually overwhelming. They inquire for news and they resort to reminiscences, and it may be that the absence seems to have deepened the regard of each for the other. But the change is there, whether it is brought about by sharing each other's life or by not sharing each [p.34] other's life, by remaining in contact or by not remaining in contact.

The variation in a personal relationship is not only inevitable; it is also continuous. It proceeds historically, the present being continuously built upon a past. In this respect personal relations must be viewed as growing or unfolding things which develop with indescribable intricacy toward loves or hatreds, or toward their own dissolution in indifference and oblivion. Every love and every friendship has its own case history, to which harsh words as well as kind actions contribute. The quarrels, pacts, and promises of lovers are all parts of the continuity of their love. No one fact or event can permanently fix or define a personal relationship – not even so critical a fact as a betrothal, a marriage, a divorce, or the birth of a child. The trivial and the commonplace events of life constantly contribute to the flow of variation. As every lover who is not a bungler knows, there is no external distinction between great things and trivial things in matters of love.

The third thing we know about a personal relationship is that it is *free*. It involves an element of consent and free will. In this respect it differs from a relationship of status, wherein the element of freedom and consent is of no consequence.

It is necessary to insist at this point that the "personality" of which we speak is not the legal or sociological abstraction which sometimes goes by that name. From the legal point of view a person is a subject of legal rights and duties. A corporation can be a legal person. From the sociological point of view a person is a subject of social rights and duties. "An individual is born into the [p.35] world, he acquires status, and becomes a person." So writes Park in developing a definition of personality. These conceptions are useless for domestic theory because in outlining such a theory we are trying to uncover facts which lie beyond the range of legal and social status. The pure metaphysical definition offered by Boethius is better suited to the purpose of domestic theory: "Personality is

the individual substance of a rational being,” and hence the ultimate unit of any ethic. In this sense a person is a complete and total individual, in all aspects, biological, psychological, and rational. Better yet is Kantor’s conception of personality as the complete psychic organism in action. Here is the person we know in everyday life, who acts willfully and responsibly, and whose welfare is a matter of ethical value.

Only those beings can participate in a personal relationship who are capable of acting as free agents. A German philosopher has bid us imagine a mechanical sweetheart who should in every respect except one resemble a human individual. This monstrous mechanism would have beauty and softness and warmth and all the external qualities of a human being, but would lack autonomy. She would do nothing whatsoever of her own will. All her actions would proceed from immediate external causes. It would be impossible for our minds to ascribe any action whatsoever to herself as its author. If she responded to an embrace, the response would be a mere reaction to our own act, like the rebound of a ball thrown against a wall. There would be nothing that originated within herself. Truly such a sweetheart might be valued, as a lovely picture or a vase or an ivory is valued, and the possession of her might give rise to aesthetic enjoyments, [p.36] but she could not enter completely into a personal relationship.

Even when two persons are wont to act freely and autonomously toward each other, it may be that certain of their particular actions are performed under constraint. Usually such actions are more or less indifferent and inconsequential in developing their personal relations. The husband who contributes to his wife’s support by order of the court receives no thanks for his bounty. The friend who merely pays a lawful debt does not normally expect to have his payment counted as an act of friendship. Even if actions done under constraint should enter into the fabric of a personal relationship, it would still be true that no personal relationship could maintain itself on these alone. The qualities of consent and free action must be present; the hypothesis of free will must be accepted; otherwise the relationship is not personal.

Finally, a personal relationship is *comprehensive*. It involves the complete personality of one who engages in it. It extends itself to his whole being, because he is not only a subject but also an object in the relationship. As a subject he has autonomy; as an object he has value. And his value attaches not to any particular aspect or activity of himself but to his whole self. In this respect a personal relationship differs fundamentally from the social relationships which are described in other social studies. For social relationships do not usually involve complete personalities, and social theories isolate for discussion this or that capacity or aspect of a personality.

In describing the relationship of citizen to state, buyer to seller, individual to community, no attempt is made to account any individual a complete person. Human conduct is discussed as if each man were made up of segments, like an orange. The purchase of a cigar is an economic act and concerns man in his economic capacity; the casting of a ballot is a political act and concerns man

in his political capacity. If we undertake to give an account of Henry Ford's economic behavior we will be much concerned as to whether he oversupplies a demand, whether or not he employs men, whether he buys or sells stock, whether or not he is honest in business engagements. But we will not concern ourselves as to whether he is happy or sad, religious or irreligious, handsome or ugly.

But where relationships are personal, everything matters. Account must be taken of everything that a man may do, and of everything that may be done to him. His reputation and his tennis stroke, his indigestion and his bank account, his stock of after-dinner stories and his secret discontents – all these are matters of moment to his friends and to his family. The facts and experiences of office and shop which the husband does not mention to the wife none the less enter into the domestic relationship because they affect the personal totality of his self. They produce exaltation or rheumatism, wisdom or weariness, jocularly or tuberculosis, and all of these enter into a personal reckoning.

Young people contemplating marriage are sometimes terrified by the all-embracing character of this personal relationship which they are to establish, for better or for worse, before the world. They imagine that they are entering into a sort of bondage, the one to the other; that the personal relationship, because it takes all interests into account, must dominate all interests. They hedge themselves about with reservations and declarations [p.38] of autonomy. "I love you," says the man, "but I object in advance to any suppression [*sic*] of my passion for red neckties. I reserve the right to select my own haberdashery." "I love you," admits the woman, "but I certainly do not engage to admire you while you are shaving, or to be amused at your parlor talk. My aesthetic sensibilities must not be coerced."

We know of a young couple who took this matter very much to heart. They agreed before they were married that if it should turn out that matrimony was a bar to the young man's career, a divorce would be freely granted, with good will on both sides. They tried to mark with a sharp line the extent to which each partner was to assume an interest or responsibility in the affairs of the other. They thought that in this way they were guaranteeing to each other an autonomy which would otherwise be sacrificed. In fact, it is not uncommon for partners in marriage to make extraordinary efforts to retain for each such complete independence. Husband and wife live in separate apartments and meet only once a week for dinner, to the end that the personality of the one may not infringe on the personality of the other.

We are here confronted by a paradox. For we have described the new marriage as being free because it is personal, and at the same time we have perceived that a personal relationship reaches comprehensively to every interest of the persons who participate in it. How does this freedom permit comprehensiveness, and how is this comprehensiveness consistent with freedom? The solution of this paradox requires that we analyze more carefully that personal value which he has who is the object of a personal relationship.

[p.39] It is obviously necessary that those who are personally connected should have a kind of value for each other. This is the truth that calls forth the perpetual protestation: "I love you for yourself alone." For if I do not love you for yourself alone, I do not love you at all. If I love you for your money, or for your social position, it is these I love and not you. If I love you as a means to anything whatsoever and not as an end in yourself, then I do not love you personally. Likewise, if I hate you for your position, because you are a capitalist or a policeman, I do not hate you personally. If I love or hate you personally it is because my attitude focusses on the totality of yourself. You in all your completeness are the object to which I attach value. And thereby I am led indirectly to take note of everything that concerns you, because it concerns you, and only in so far as it concerns you. Your world becomes my world, but only indirectly. If I am interested in the externals of your business or social success, it is because these are factors in your welfare. Only those rays from outside which are caught up and refracted from your personality can light our relationship.

But if I try to pick and choose among those of your interests that I will make my own, then I degrade the personal character of my interest in you. If I say that I will concern myself about your cooking, but not about your painting, about your appearance but not your reading, I replace my interest in you with a mere interest in some of your accomplishments. In principle my attitude degenerates to the level of his who loves you for your income or social position.

The lovers who strove so diligently to limit the range [p.40] of their interest in each other did not understand this intricate and beautiful dialectic by which a personal attachment ramifies and extends itself to all fields. "If I interfere with your career, I will leave you," promised the girl. This promise cannot be viewed as a limitation of her interest in her lover; it is not a renunciation of interest in his career, but rather an assumption of unlimited interest in it, based on a recognition that the career is a matter of first importance to her beloved.

The freedom and comprehensiveness of personal relationships are not contradictory qualities; rather they are complementary. Without the possibility of free autonomous action by the *subject* of a personal relationship there could be no effective appreciation of personal value in the *object* thereof.

These four qualities: nontransferability, continuous variation, freedom, and comprehensiveness are the characteristics of every personal relationship. To the extent that these are present, the relationship is personal; to the extent that they are lacking, the relationship lacks personal character.

Is this capacity for entertaining personal relationships a universal and inevitable human quality? Anthropologists of the old Morgan school used to depict savage society as if the individual therein was "completely dominated by the group, the horde, the clan or the tribe – [as if] he obeyed the commands of the community, its traditions, its public opinion, its decrees, with a slavish, fascinated, passive obedience."⁵ Malinowski has helped to change the picture of savage life

⁵Paraphrased from B. Malinowski, *Crime and Custom in Savage Society* (Harcourt, Brace,

and to portray primitive [p.41] man as neither an extreme collectivist nor an intransigent [*sic*] individualist, but “like man in general, a mixture of both.”

The unitary, self-determining individual human being is an ultimate datum which the social sciences find it difficult to dispense with. His very existence connotes the possibility of personal relationships.

True enough, personality concepts may be differently colored in different cultures. The close association which the Western mind makes between *personality*, *motivation*, and *freedom* may be an accidental historical product of the Christian-Teutonic fusion. A study of Samoan culture by Miss Mead suggests that the personality concept of the Samoan adolescent links personality with overt achievement alone, and is indifferent to the introspective world of motivation. The variations in the notion of personality may modify, but cannot extinguish, the general pattern of personal relationship in human affairs.

In some civilizations the most distinctive imprint of this personality pattern is borne by friendship groups, age groups, or erotic groups. The kinship group may be a relatively impersonal establishment. But in the contemporary Western World the pattern of personal relationship is most fully realized in the family group of parents and children. This fact will appear as we explore more carefully the nature of marriage and the family.

[p.42]

MARRIAGE is a personal relationship between a man and a woman, involving sex intercourse between them, and having an aspect of permanence or duration. There are many personal relationships which are not marriages: there are, of course, the personal relationships of men or of women among themselves; there are also personal relationships between men and women but not involving coitus, and relationships accompanied by coitus but having no aspect of permanence. These last are love affairs, not marriages.

Marriage in this sense seems to have its counterpart in the mating habits of certain birds and animals. It is anterior to human custom and law. The primitive and universal quality of marriage is derived from the sex situation rather than from social influences. The species reproduces bisexually by a method which requires a separate sex act for each fertilization. The sex act is pleasurable, and to that extent constitutes an end in itself. It is aesthetically a thing complete in its own transitory moment. But it is also something more than a thing of ephemeral beauty. Taken in connection with its consequences over a period of time, it has an entirely different meaning, for it results in the situation of parenthood. Hence the significance of that aspect of duration which is present in marriage, but not in the love affair. The essen[p.43]tial elements of the marriage problem are already posed by this difference between the aesthetic value of coitus and the biological value of fertilization.

New York, 1926), p. 3.

Marriage in nature being so simple a fact, it is confusing to the mind to turn to the complexity of marriage as a social institution, where it becomes tangled up with problems of property, government, law, and religion.

Every human society imposes some standard form upon the marriage relationship. There are social rules governing coitus just as there are social rules governing eating. The sex situation is of course no more a product of these rules than hunger is a product of dinner table etiquette. But we necessarily think of the sex situation in terms of the social rules which are applied to it in our own environment. These social rules generally distinguish between coitus which takes place within and without a marriage union. Marriage in all societies constitutes a standard system of duties and privileges existing between persons designated as husbands and wives. There is also provided a standard means whereby persons can be so designated. So diverse are the systems of responsibilities assumed in marriage, and so various are the means whereby marriage is effected, that the differences among matrimonial institutions are more impressive than the similarities.

The variety of institutional forms which marriage assumes is such that ethnologists are overwhelmed. They try to order their knowledge by sorting marriage institutions into groups and classes. Thus monogamy is distinguished from polygamy, polyandry, and group marriage. Or it is observed that some peoples regard marriages as commercial transactions in which brides are pur[p.44]chased, others think of them as warlike forays in which brides are captured, still others imagine that a marriage is a religious sacrament, or a contract between bride and groom, or a legal status. The wedding ceremony in America is often regarded as chiefly significant in that it serves as an index of the station in life assumed by the families concerned. In the presence of such multiplicity we do well to focus our thought upon those aspects of marriage which are universal.

Not marriage only, but the love affair also, is institutionalized in a variety of forms. Whatever may be the form of the marriage institution, its very existence implies that the community makes a distinction between marital and extra-marital sex intercourse. Some societies require, others permit, others try to forbid sex relations outside of marriage. The enforced requirement to submit to prostitution was characteristic of the temple cults of Mesopotamia; the free permission to indulge sex appetite outside of wedlock was usually a corollary of the institution of slavery which allowed the purchase and use of slave girls for this purpose; a license to sex indulgence was also a part of seasonal festivals such as the Saturnalia. The comprehensive ban upon coitus outside of marriage is especially characteristic of Christian ethics, which are savage upon this point, assuming toward fornication and adultery an attitude of horror comparable to that which most civilizations have reserved for incest.

In consequence of this peculiar bias, all who consider marriage from the Christian point of view place tremendous emphasis upon the sex monopoly aspect of wedlock. To such lengths is this idea carried that permanence itself is often sacrificed to sex monopoly. An act [p.45] of infidelity results in a divorce even

when there are children to be cared for. Thus the marriage institution sometimes defeats its natural intent. It is a mistake to regard sex monopoly as a universal characteristic of marriage.

Despite the severity of official Christian ethics toward coitus out of wedlock. Christian communities often temper their condemnation with a tolerant recognition that fornication and prostitution are an inevitable result of the frailty of human nature. And thus in Christian communities as elsewhere there is a tendency toward the standardizing of those sex unions which are not marriage. The duties and privileges of the Christian prostitute, the Roman concubine, the African slave girl, or the Japanese geisha tend to become as clearly defined as those of the wife. A variety of socially defined sex relationships appear. In the old Roman law full legal marriage or *justae nuptiae* could be contracted only by Roman citizens; the slaves, freedmen, and provincials had to be satisfied with a less formal status. The law of Egypt enforced a contract for a prostitute's services, but this contract did not constitute a marriage. In the underworld of America the reciprocal obligations of Frankie and Johnnie, according to the well-known ballad, were so well understood that the bar-keeper and the sheriff both recognized "that he was her man, and he done her wrong." Some of these relationships are so distinctly defined that one hesitates whether to call them marriages or not. So it was with *concubinitas* and *contubernium* (slave marriage) in Roman law, and so it is with the common-law marriages in modern America.

In general, it is safe to correlate permanence with [p.46] marriage. That sex institution which looks furthest into the future is the marriage institution; the others are institutions of concubinage or prostitution. A Roman citizen could purchase a slave girl and marry a wife. The slave girl was his as long as she lived, or until he disposed of her. There was permanence of a kind in his relations with her. But the marriage with the wife looked even further into the future. The progeny of the marriage was the heir who would continue the family corporation, administer the ancestral property, worship the domestic gods. The Roman wife was not a slave, for legally her status was that of a daughter (*in loco filiae*). But in some societies slave purchase is the only sex tie which has any aspect of permanence at all. As to such a culture we say that slave purchase is the marriage institution.

The social institution of marriage seems to be devised in order to put some certainty into sex unions. But it often defeats its purpose, and nowhere more conspicuously than in America, where a slender legal technicality often determines whether one is married or not. The courts are often called upon to decide whether some poor mortal entangled in the law is married or free. A man who has secured a divorce in Mexico from a wife living in New York cannot be sure whether he is married if he happens to be lingering upon the soil of Massachusetts. Two people touring America together may find that as their train crosses state boundaries they are automatically married and unmarried time and again. They pass over rolling prairies as man and wife; the train comes to an iron bridge and presto, they are only lover and mistress; the train moves on

through another state and for a few [p.47] tense hours the man is a bigamist; another state boundary is reached, and the two are again legally married.

Even where the legal marriage unquestionably exists, the characteristics of natural marriage may be lacking, so that the marriage has no meaning at all. This is illustrated in the career of Don Juan, whose innumerable marriages were never intended to be anything but transitory love affairs. The same moral can be seen in the story cited from family case records as follows:

Jacob McDaniel and Mary Murphy were reared in the uninspiring atmosphere "Back of the Yards," and grew up in a community not conducive to highest morals. In fact, the fathers of both were drinking men, and Jacob's father, especially, had the reputation of being unkind to his wife. The couple had been neighbors and schoolmates from infancy but were in no sense betrothed at the time Jacob became engaged to another girl who had moved into the community. Before the day set for the wedding, however, Mary's mother discovered that her daughter was pregnant and that Jacob was the one responsible for her condition. Pressure was brought to bear, and five days before her baby was born Mary Murphy became Mary McDaniel. Aside from the gloomy satisfaction of giving the child a name the marriage was a farce, for Jacob never pretended to make a home for his wife and baby. He continued his attentions to the other girl, who was receptive. Eventually they eloped, going to a large city in the Middle West, where they lived as man and wife.⁶

We might conceivably find something in the nature of marriage in Jacob's relations to the girl with whom he eloped, but as between Jacob and Mary no real marriage ever existed. It is wrong to consider this an instance of [p.48] a marriage dissolved by desertion; it is rather an instance in which the law describes as marriage something that lacks the essence of the marriage situation.

For there is certainly in marriage a reality which runs deeper than the definitions which our institutions, or the institutions of any society, give to the marriage relationship. This fundamental reality is compounded of three elements: persons, sex, duration.

The development of Western civilization in the past few decades has gone far to strip marriage of all but its elementary meanings. The entanglement of the marriage institution with the institutions of government, religion, and property is rapidly dissolving. The State no longer upholds the husband as the administrative despot of his household, nor permits him to beat his wife with a stick the size of his thumb. The Church sees marriages made without its consent or collaboration. The property rights of husband and wife need not be merged

⁶Cited in E. R. Mowrer, *Family Disorganization* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1927), p. 183.

by the act of marriage. Even the social consequences of parenthood tend to be distinguished from the responsibilities of marriage, for the community takes over more and more of the function of educating the young, and the tendency of legislation is to place the legitimate and illegitimate child on an equal footing as regards rights against parents. Moreover, the widespread knowledge of birth control methods is making possible the deliberately childless marriage. If we abstract from marriage its consequences in government, religion, property, and parenthood, what remains?

There remains the fact that certain definite persons are designated as man and wife. This is the rationale of all wedding ceremonies. Whether in form the wedding be a [p.49] purchase, a capture, a sacrament, or a contract, and whether the man be taking his first wife or his tenth, the effect of the ceremony is invariably that certain persons are thereby designated as being thereafter husband and wife, which previously they were not. Thus marriage is primarily a thing of definite persons.

There remains also the fact of sex intercourse (though not necessarily sex monopoly or parenthood). There is no form of marriage which denies this to husband and wife. Even Roman Catholic Christianity, with its strong animus against sex, yields to this universal rule in one of its curious enactments. If two are married, and take a vow that their marriage will be spiritual only, their vow is permitted by the Church. But if they then have intercourse they are not guilty of the sin of fornication, but only of the sin of breaking a vow.

And further, there remains the fact of duration. This does not mean that a marriage is essentially indissoluble. The extreme limit to which a society might go in carrying out the idea of permanence in marriage is to forbid divorce and kill the spouse which survives the death of the other. No marriage custom goes so far as to apply this rule equally to man and wife, though some societies encourage the ritual murder or suicide of a surviving wife. Somewhat less emphatic with respect to the permanence of marriage is a custom which prohibits the remarriage of widows though it permits them to live. And finally there is the attitude which insists on permanence only to the extent of forbidding divorce. And beyond this there are the innumerable devices for terminating a marriage, with a variety of distinctions between the rights of a husband to cast out a wife and the right of a wife to free [p.50] herself from her husband. The marriage which cannot be terminated is the exception among marriage institutions; the marriage which permits divorce is the rule. Both kinds of marriage, however, point to the same conclusion: that marriage is a thing of duration. The persons designated as husband and wife are assumed to continue in that relationship through a period of time. A positive act is required in order to terminate their marriage union, whereas sex relations under conditions of rape, prostitution, or seduction (*vide* Don Juan), terminate themselves in their own moment. Sex life in marriage is assumed to be continued through time, just as sex life outside of marriage is assumed to consist of separate completed episodes. And when the idea of permanence enters nonmarital sex relations, these approach the status

of marriage. As the prostitute becomes a mistress or a concubine her position approaches that of a wife.

If these three things – person, sex, duration – are the essential elements of marriage, it follows that marriage has universally impressed upon it the four-fold quality of personal relationships: nontransferability, continuous variation, freedom, and comprehensiveness. That it is nontransferable follows from the fact that the persons married are specifically designated; if one party marries some other person, he does not thereby continue his first marriage, but makes a new one. That it is continuously variable follows from the fact that it has duration, and must therefore build up a history in which a present is derived from a past. That it is free is a consequence of the sex element, for there is a natural freedom in coitus. This act normally fulfills the desires of both parties. Even the proprietary conception of marriage cannot annul this freedom. Was it not a slave girl whose emotion overflowed in the Canticles? And there is comprehensiveness in the marriage relationship because it is anterior to that sophistication which divides and distinguishes between the different capacities and qualities of a human being. Sex grasps the total psychological person just as procreation engages the whole biological individual. In the presence of such elemental facts as birth, death, and sex the multiplicities of culture dissolve away. The marriage relationship stands before us, therefore, as essentially a personal relationship, more primitive and general than society itself.

[p.52]

THE word *family* has never been adequately disciplined and defined. It has not been invested with precise meaning. In common usage it may mean many things: one's self and ancestry; one's wife and mother-in-law plus sisters, cousins, and aunts; all persons who live together under one roof, however they may be related; or simply parents and their children, however they may be domiciled. In the social sciences the word is equally protean: the varieties of kinship groups to which it can be applied are legion; it can be used to describe a household which includes persons who are not kin, as in the case of the Greek family which included slaves. Not all of these meanings given to the word are equally useful to those who sit together under the moon to discuss the founding of a family.

If domestic theory is to be helpful to those who need its help it must discuss as "the family" that entity which is created by marriage. Some writers hesitate to admit that a family exists unless there are children as well as husband and wife. But in following their lead, we should neglect the investigation of what may well be the most critical period of married life – the period of the honeymoon. The entity which is created by marriage obviously consists of the members, husband and wife: nor is there anything novel or startling in this observation. The husband-wife membership is necessarily primary, the parent-child membership secondary and derivative. So much at least is guaranteed by the physiology of reproduction.

Ethnologists, moreover, are prone to regard as families many kinds of groups

which are more complex or extensive than the simple union of husband, wife, and children. There are families which include totem-ancestors and family gods, as well as several generations of living members. But even in such complex groups, the husband-wife-child unit exists as a component part of the larger organization. There are many families without totems, gods, or patriarchs, but none without a union of husband and wife, and the possibility of children. Therefore, if we apply the word “family” to those groups which consist of husband and wife, with children as possible additions, we bring before ourselves the facts which are at once the most universal as applied to the families of all times and places, and the most essential, as applied to the families of to-day.

It is strange indeed that the sociological writers, with all their flair for coining new words, have not thought to invent a word to designate precisely this group of parents and children, to the exclusion of all other persons. Kinship-group nomenclature is still in a chaotic state, like botanical nomenclature before Linnaeus. If the anthropologists had invented the necessary word we would welcome it, but we hesitate to burden the already overloaded vocabulary of the social sciences with a new term. It is preferable to use the ancient word, but to understand it in the restricted sense. Whenever there is danger of ambiguity we can use the expression “natural family” to make clear that we refer to parents and children alone, [p.54] and not to any broader group. The natural family is the group which most concerns us. We have only to imagine the situation of a courtship to see that this is true.

Here are two who are about to marry. What, in their understanding, is this “family” which their marriage will create? They remember that in sociology classes they learned that the family is a kinship group. Economics professors told them that it was a consuming household. Their thought rejects these classifications. The family which holds their imagination is the primal, atomic family of husband and wife. If they have relatives they will regard them as outside the intimacy at their domestic enterprise. They have little use for the genealogical conception of a family as a thing extending back through their ancestors – something which they must perpetuate. The family that interests them is not either of the families of which they are already a part; but rather the new family which they together are about to establish. This leads them to a very precise and narrow conception. The family is *themselves* in a new relationship. The fact that they, the two persons there in presence, are to be united in the new family is so important that it overwhelms all other facts and considerations. As Louis XIV said, “l’état, c’est moi,” so may they say, “the family – it is ourselves.”

The family as they see it, is the group created by a marriage: husband, wife, and possible children. This seems to them a natural and inevitable conception. Thus they lay down the limits of their own household and thus they envisage the families of their friends. It follows as a corollary from this conception that the same [p.55] individual can be at once a member of more than one family. The wife may be “daughter in her mother’s house and mistress in her own,” and

have membership in two distinct families, each having some kind of claim upon her. The “relatives” who form the nebulous kinship groups of contemporary society are held together by just such ties of dual membership.

In many civilizations the dominant kinship group is one of these, aggregations of families – such as the Chinese household or the Roman *familias*. These complex groups are often antagonistic to the integrity and independence of the natural family. The Chinese bride, who must obey her mother-in-law while filling a subordinate role in a great household, has less opportunity for real family life than an American wife who is full partner with her husband in a two-room apartment. The impending disintegration of the Chinese household institution may mean the actual emergence of the natural family in China. Chinese conservatives are already complaining of the threatened “disruption of the family,” while from our standpoint there is no disruption, but rather an emancipation of the family.

There are trends in our own society which seem similarly ambiguous. The tendency of young people to find their own mates is an evidence that another vestige of patriarchal organization is disappearing. It is sometimes cited to prove that domestic ties are being loosed, but it does not indicate any weakening of the natural family. Rather it indicates that the natural family is crowding out the kinship group organization. We will, therefore, inspect with caution all those generalizations which assume that the family is diminishing in importance in our civilization. It may well be that the groups which are diminishing in importance are these nonfamily kinship groups.

This conception of the family, like any other, has its border line cases. If the father dies and the widow continues to care for the orphans, is the household still a family? According to our definition it is not. It is indeed a kinship group, and in many ways its structure and nature may resemble that of a family, but it is not one in the strict meaning here given to the term family. And what of the polygamous family? It would seem that under conditions of polygamy or polyandry the family is created by the first marriage, and subsequent marriages increase its membership, just as births increase the membership of a monogamous family. So strict a definition may do violence to an emotional attachment to the word family, but it is necessary in order to bring to light useful general truths.

In the natural family, membership is fixed and definite. Marriage and birth designate certain individuals as members of the family. Some of these (the husband and wife) are primary in the sense that without them there is no family. If they separate the family is extinguished. Others (the children) are secondary. The family can exist without them, and they can leave it without destroying it. But no member of the family can transfer his membership to another person. All members are definitely designated; their family membership is a part of themselves.

The family is, therefore, a union of persons, not of capacities; it is a closed system; it is unlike other groups. Of some groups one can be at one time a

member and later not, without affecting the continuity of the group [p.57] life. Societies and corporations maintain their identity from generation to generation, but the family cannot outlast the life of its primary members. The membership of husband and wife comes to an end only in the dissolution of the family. Consequently the family, within the span of a human life, must pass with its members from youth to old age.

If we compare the family with the groups which are the subject matter of other social studies this difference will strike us continually: that we can never say, "Such and such determinate individuals constitute this State or this society," whereas we must always say, "Such and such determinate individuals constitute this family". The State outlasts any of its subjects, and the continuity of society exceeds the length of human lives. But no family lasts longer than the determinate members who compose it. If citizens transfer their allegiance or hermits withdraw from all intercourse with their fellow man, the resulting situation is of minor importance in the study of State or society. Contrast with this the importance of divorce in the family situation. The difference between the fundamental problems of domestic theory and of other social studies can be summed up in these words: *In the study of most groups we are called upon to explain a constant relationship between a succession of individuals; in the study of the family we are called upon to explain a variable relationship between the same individuals.*

Family membership involves interaction among members; it is not an inert status but a matter of life and growth and change. When the members lose all touch with each other, the family ceases to exist. If a husband [p.58] and wife should separate after their wedding night, and their child be brought up in an orphan asylum, out of touch with its parents, there would be no family, although there would be legal marriage and biological parenthood. Just as real marriage has an aspect of duration, so real family membership requires interaction with other members. The members need not live together; it is only necessary that they should have some personal contact and that in their thoughts they should take each other into account. The mother can go abroad, the child to school, but such separation does not impair the existence of the family as long as personal interaction continues.

Here there is another element of the definition of the family: The family consists of the designated members provided personal interaction goes on between them. Here again, posed with all the terrible intensity of life, is the whole problem of personal conduct in marriage. Does this interaction of family members follow any known laws? Can it be understood and controlled? Can we apply to it the ordered manner of thought that we use in other great problems? Or must we content ourselves with rule-of-thumb catalogues of advice no better than the "ten commandments for wives" which a divorce court judge publishes, or the reiterated counselings of newspaper feature writers?

The Chinese have maintained for twenty-five centuries as a basic text of their literature a discourse upon the reciprocal rights and duties of the members of

a household. Their household, of course, is not the same thing as a natural family. But the Confucian doctrine of domestic life is in its way systematic, comprehensive. Nevertheless we do not find in it the expression of any [p.59] inner law of family life. Like the divorce court judges, the feature writers, and the sociological field workers, Confucius was concerned with preventing the disruption of the household, with the pathology of family life, and not with the laws of health and growth. Lao-tse, the contemporary rival of Confucius, criticized the Confucian teaching on this very ground:

When Family ties begin to gall
Then come Piety and Parental Indulgence.

In the same way the Round Table on the Family at a recent meeting of the American Sociological Society echoes the criticism that the study of the family has been too much an investigation of failure and domestic disease; too little an inquiry into domestic success and well-being.

That successful family life is a definite accomplishment to be planned, striven for, and achieved by a continuous effort of art and will is an idea apparently less active in the minds of married people than the idea of possible separation. Courtship aside, most of our discussion of family life takes a negative tone. The discussion over the teacups is of the latest divorce. People are always referring, either in jest or in earnest, to a possible dissolution of the marriage. How often the heavy laugh that follows one of the witticisms about getting another mate has a taint of bitterness in it! There are women who talk and plan dreamily of what they would do if their home should break up, much as they previously talked and planned of what they would do when married. There are men who find the principal field for the exercise of their feeling of ambition in thinking of what they would [p.60] accomplish if they were not tied down by a wife and family. This pernicious habit of mind is due in part to such things as the tomcat theory of marriage, or the sex- monopoly obsession, but it is also due to the lack of a definite and positive ideal of family membership, capable of engaging our powers of workmanship.

Let us see clearly what is meant by successful family life, and we will turn our minds and energies to it. In order to know what the meaning of successful domestic life may be, we must know the laws of this interaction among members which is the essential of family existence. This interaction is, first of all, personal. The primary members find this character impressed upon their relationship by marriage itself. For if marriage is personal, so also is the family relationship, since it is but another side of the same thing. The secondary members, that is to say the children, cannot in infancy enter fully into this relationship. As they grow older they become free agents and establish a complete personal relationship with the other family members.

The assumption that the relationship of family members is essentially personal is the basic dogma of domestic theory. It has implications as wide as the range

of human achievement. It means that spontaneity rather than conformity is the principle of success in marriage. It means that the natural family is the inevitable refuge of personality in a mechanized civilization.

In the light of this assumption we can weigh and compare different marriage institutions by observing whether they encourage or obstruct the interplay of personality among family members. In the family of an old Roman, or in the harem of an Oriental monarch, we should expect [p.61] to find much more importance attached to considerations of status, much less significance given to personality than in the family of to-day. But no matter how deeply the natural family may be submerged in a larger group, and no matter how comprehensively the duties of wife and husband may be catalogued and dictated by the community, there is always a margin of possibility for free personal interaction. Cato the Elder, the stern guardian of the strictest *mores* at old Rome, who denounced a Roman senator for embracing his wife in public, delighted to help in bathing his infant son, although this was by no means a duty of a *paterfamilias*. Certainly that civilization which gave us the stories of the *Arabian Nights* must have been perfectly familiar with the personal character of a family relationship. But the Occidental household of to-day is especially well-suited to be the locus of this personal relationship because it has cut loose from almost all functions save those of the natural family,

The significance of the natural family as a place for the play of personality is especially marked in these days when almost all other contacts are being dehumanized. Employers and employees are no longer personally acquainted with each other. The chain-store replaces the individual tradesmen who knew his customers by their first names; the corporation supplants the business which was previously run by a proprietor who felt personal responsibility for everything that went on. The machine crowds out the talent of the artisan until even the musicians go on strike against the radio, as the hand-weavers once broke up the power looms. The mechanical regimenting process goes so far that even the children's play [p.62] is standardized, supervised, and controlled. The household alone holds out against this process. The very fact that it does hold out, that it refuses to be standardized and controlled and reduced to rule, is a fact which leads some critics to fear that the family is on the wrong track, that it is endangered and may disappear.

As regards some of these kinship groups which are called families this fear may be well founded. But as to the natural family there is no danger. Like marriage, it is anterior to society itself, and in one form or another will survive. It serves today a very real need, and is adapting itself to that need.

[p.63]

IT is an axiom of courtship that a man and a woman can best make love to each other when they are isolated from the rest of the world. The presence of another person inhibits them. Three is a crowd. The crowd, be it three or a thousand, imposes upon lovers a type of conduct to which they may not inwardly consent,

and operates upon their minds in a subtle negative way. They recognize this influence and seek to escape from its restraint. Their breaking away is an anti-social gesture of great symbolic significance. Simply by being alone together they defy the world, and protest that in the deepest interests of their lives they desire no intervention by their fellow men. In this anarchic spirit families are born.

Nevertheless, the natural family runs in mesh with the system of conventions which community opinion defines. We continue to be sensitive, in family life as elsewhere, to the opinions of people who personally mean nothing to us. The little sidewalk bully stops tormenting his playmate when the casual passer-by pauses to look at him with disapproval. A wife or husband can be goaded to fury by the remarks and gossip of neighbors. Even the independent spirit who defies criticism or holds himself aloof from praise is still conscious that the community has an opinion of him. The man who delights in shocking [p.64] the neighbors is taking account of the fact that there are neighbors to be shocked. Whoever would escape from the pressure of community opinion must renounce completely the society of his fellow men. But in love life and in family life such renunciation is only partial and incomplete. Vain is the hope of the tenor who proposes to

Find perfect peace
Where joys never cease
And let the rest of the world go by-y-y-y!

The two conflicting principles of conformity and independence are present in the organization of every home. On the one hand, there is always the standardized conduct which the community imposes upon family members; on the other hand, there is the privacy of the home which shelters the married couple from the community.

Whenever in the course of the daily adjustments of family life the objection is put, "but people will make remarks," or the interrogation is heard, "but what will people say?", the whole subject of the relation of family to society is brought to issue. For in some ways the family must take account of the opinion of the community, and to some extent it must leave society out of the reckoning. It must make some gestures of acquiescence to convention, and it must also withdraw beyond the reach of convention. Where is the line to be drawn?

It is purposed here to set forth three principles which the family may use in dealing with the social conventions; namely, the principle of *creative workmanship*, the principle of *isolation*, and the principle of *autonomy*.

[p.65] The intricate mechanism by which the community imposes its standards upon the household is explained by certain doctrines of sociology. The sociologists happen to be more interested in the social functions of the family than in the functioning of the family itself, but their doctrine is none the less valuable in this connection, for whether we study the significance of the family in society,

or of society in the family, we encounter the same basic laws of human behavior and the same fundamental dilemma of conformity versus individual freedom.

Sociological doctrines assume that the opinions and conduct of individuals are largely determined by the influence of other people around them. The white child reared in the Indian camp learns the Indian language and shares the opinions of the tribe. He looks at the world and sees there what Indians see. He forms habits that conform to the habits of those around him. The same child in another environment would have learned a different language, held different opinions, seen other things in the world, and formed different habits. From such simple illustrations as this we form the concept of the *socially-given* which involves the collateral concepts of the group, the culture, the institution, the social process, and perhaps the social force. There is, in this sense, a socially-given element in the family.

In every culture there are standardized ideals of domestic conduct which each individual learns from his social environment. Society teaches each individual his proper role and status. In our own culture there is the ideal of the stern and just father, the dutiful daughter, the tender wife and loving mother, the obedient son. One learns these standards of conduct just as he learns [p.66] the meanings of words, and in fact these ideals do actually become a part of the language. The word wife or husband includes in its meaning some notion of the standard correct conduct for wife or husband.

Naturally these meanings are distinctive for each culture. Here the wife must fetch food from the market, there she must not be seen on the street; here she must wear a wedding ring, there she must veil her face; here she must give herself to her husband's guest, there she must be chaste above suspicion: here she must obey, there she may command; and all these notions of what constitutes wifely conduct are incorporated with the meaning of the word wife, by the society wherein they respectively prevail.

Such concepts of rule and status form the *socially-determined* element of family life. They are the guaranty of uniformity and recurrence in the behavior of individuals; they make a social institution of the family organism which has its origin in an anti-social impulse. The youth who defies his elders in marrying a girl of his own choice nevertheless yields to them unconsciously when he expects in his bride the qualities and behavior they taught him to expect in a good wife.

The ideals are socially-given, but the concrete application to bare fact is left to the individual to accomplish. The conventional code of domestic behavior is a tool which husband and wife may use in fashioning a family organization. It cannot create a family organization; nothing but the personal activity of husband and wife can do that. Those families to which husband and wife bring different ideals of domestic conduct exemplify this fact.

[p.67] Helen, modern and American, marries Henry, old-fashioned and German. Helen wishes to get a job and live in a better apartment. Henry believes that women should confine themselves to the three K's, *Kinder, Kueche, und Kirche*.

They dispute about it. Helen complains that Henry does not earn enough money to enable them to live decently; Henry replies that Helen is extravagant. When they then go to the divorce court, the social service worker who looks up the case needs but a glance to perceive that their socially-determined conceptions of their respective roles in the family have been so contradictory that they have been unable to collaborate. Or, as we may put it, the tools society gave them for home-building were so badly assorted that they could not construct a satisfactory family.

But suppose they continue to get along nicely together despite their divergent ideals; they melt into tenderness after every quarrel; they meet each situation as it comes along, on some matters fight their way to agreement, on others never reach a compromise. Out of it all they make a successful marriage. It would be difficult to regard this successful family as a thing created for these people by society; rather we would think of it as something they themselves have created, just as truly as a poem or picture is the creation of the poet or artist. It is an achievement of creative workmanship.

Social convention sets before us the language which domestic activity must speak, but not the speaking of the language: society formulates the meanings which attach to wifhood or parenthood, but does not govern the expression of these meanings. Society gives to acts their meanings as symbols, but it does not go behind the sym[p.68]bolic significance nor control the personal attitudes which the symbols express. If a wife lies with her husband's guest her act receives its meaning from society. The Eskimos call it an act of compliance, the Americans an act of rebellion, just as the syllable *nine* stands for a cardinal number in English and its sound equivalent *nein* for a general negative in German. Yet the thing which makes or mars family life is not so much the act as the attitude expressed in the act, not so much overt behavior as personal motive. Any attitude or motive, be it compliance, rebellion, appreciation, or resentment, must have as its source a personality; it cannot originate in society. All that society does is to provide a medium of expression.

Just as each people has its language, so also each culture has its domestic institution. Words are not always necessary for communication; nor is the conventional pattern of a family institution necessary for domestic life. The deepest uniformities of human thought find universal expression in laughter or tears, not in words. That aspect of family life which touches us most nearly may have nothing to do with institutional forms. Soldiers on foreign soil speak of an "international language" of sex – but this is not a socially-given system of symbols; it is something that wells up from beneath socially-given forms.

Luther used this fact to illustrate the nature of faith: "When husband and wife are fond of one another, and live together in love and in confidence in one another, who shall teach them how they should act or not act, say or not say, think or not think?" Who indeed!

This is a truth which liberates us, and makes us masters [p.69] of our domestic

destiny. Just as any language can be used by poet or story-teller to create a work of literature, so also any system of domestic institutions affords symbols for the expression of good domestic life. Halide Edib has opened the eyes of Westerners to the fact that the married life of a Turkish woman is not so very different from the married life of a Western woman.

[But] when one compared the married Turkish women with the married American women . . . one saw that, whatever the laws of society are concerning marriage, men and women are home builders by nature and they create social units under the name of family and strive to keep these units as stable and happy as human nature allows them to be. Hence, the position of Turkish women in the family compared not too unfavorably with American women, in spite of the legend of fantastic harems. . . . The setting was different, the characters varied, but it was the same old story. . . .⁷

These remarks should be conned over by all those who represent to us that they can save the family by tightening divorce laws or loosening them, by raising the age of consent, by requiring the publication of the banns, by giving women extensive property rights, by increasing the penalty for desertion or by legalizing “companionate marriage.” Such changes as these affect the real life of the family only superficially.

It may be that some institutions serve better than others to accomplish satisfactory family life, just as some languages are better adapted than others for literary uses. A modification of existing institutions might or might not provide us with a more useful fabric of symbols [p.70] and meanings than that which we already possess. Such changes can neither save nor destroy the family. The important thing about the family is not its institutional structure, but the use that is made thereof. None of us stand condemned by our institutional system to lead a thwarted or unsatisfactory family life.

The critical fact in marriage, in so far as convention is concerned, is, therefore, the agreement or disagreement of husband and wife upon these conventions, whatever they may be. The “emancipated woman” and the “old-fashioned woman” have each an adequate equipment in ideals; each can work out in her own way a satisfactory life, provided her partner in marriage is a man who understands and sympathizes with her ideals. When two who marry have acquired widely different ideals, it is necessary for them to make a special effort to understand one another. Just as one can write best in a language with which he is familiar, so they can construct the best family life who best understand the meaning of each other’s acts and aspirations.

Thus the principle of creative workmanship is applied to family life. The family organization is created by using social convention as a tool.

⁷Halide Edib, “A Turkish Feminist Views Women Here,” *New York Times Magazine*, October 7, 1928.

The community brings about conformity to its standards, not only by instilling ideals of conduct in the minds of family members but also by imposing its will directly upon a household. If husband and wife are always wrangling and scolding in loud tones, the neighbors will criticize and ridicule the quarrelsome pair. To avoid this direct, external pressure, the family can withdraw into itself.

The isolation of the family cannot withdraw it, how[p.71]ever, from the influence of those ideals of domestic conduct which we have acquired from the community and which have become a part of ourselves. It can merely serve to assure us an opportunity to apply these ideals in our own way. The principle of isolation is thus a corollary of the principle of creative workmanship.

It sometimes happens, in a crisis of domestic life, that one spouse appeals to society against the other. The domestic relations court is a forum especially created to hear such appeals. And every community, every circle of gossips and story-tellers, is, in effect, an informal domestic relations court, before which aggrieved wives and husbands lay their causes and complaints. When an appeal is made to society, whether formally to a court of law or informally to the moot court of neighbors, the privacy of the home is sacrificed, and the family ceases to be a sanctuary within which one can shield himself from the tyranny of the community. He incurs a heavy responsibility for domestic disaster who thus lets down the barriers and exposes his home life to the neighbors.

It is inevitable that husband and wife should reckon with their community, but in this reckoning they must regard themselves as conspirators who plot together against an opponent, not as litigants who appear before a judge. They may conspire to impress their neighborhood, but they must not call it into their house as umpire. "Do not confide the interior of your home to any one," wrote Diderot to his daughter upon her marriage, "I do not wish myself to know whatever it would be that you would tell me; let it then be a mystery to all others."

The principles of creative workmanship and isolation express respectively the use which the family makes of [p.72] convention, and the resistance which it offers thereto. These two principles taken together constitute the principle of autonomy, the principle that each family is, within a certain range of activity, a law unto itself.

Our analysis of the natural family as a pre-social unit has prepared us to understand that no social code of domestic behavior could be exhaustive. Neither the ideals which society subtly instills into its youth nor the standards of behavior which it overtly enforces upon families can cover every move and gesture of domestic life. There is always a field of domestic life which society makes no pretension to control. Within this margin of freedom husband and wife face each other unguided, and have their destiny completely in their own hands.

Among those things over which the community exercises no supervision are included some of the most important marital affairs. As regards coitus, for instance, conventions require that it shall not be public; beyond that there is

no code. So long as public scandal is avoided and discussion suppressed, it makes no difference to society whether the sex life of the family is a matter of violence and rape or of love and mutual desire. Concerning other matters the community insists on imposing standards. The neighbors do not permit it to go unchallenged if the wife takes a job while the husband stays home to mind the baby. In other civilizations these rules may be drawn differently. Nowhere are they drawn to cover completely the whole of domestic existence.

We flatter ourselves that our institutions encourage freedom and expression of personality in marriage, but this is true only in a relative sense. If our ideals of conduct are more vague, and our rules and conventions more uncertain, it follows therefrom that more play is left for personality and freedom. But freedom and personality cannot be a social contribution to family life; they are rather the consequence of a more complete abdication of society with respect to domestic affairs. If the family relationship is essentially personal, this is not due to a dictum of society but is rather a welling up of a more elementary fact, which derives from a biological situation and not from social convention.

Thus we return to the deep divergence between the family as a fact in nature and the family as a social institution. If our fabric of social rules does not cover everything of importance in family life, this is no temporary accident. It is not a passing situation due to some dislocation in modern society and destined to disappear when certain inconsistencies in our social standards shall have been removed and certain articles of our code of domestic behavior more fully elaborated. It is rather due to an incompatibility of the inner nature of society with the inner nature of the family. The excellence of the former is in regularity and recurrence and imitation. The excellence of the latter is in its distinctiveness and originality and creation.

It follows that the important field of domestic activity is precisely that field which society makes no pretense at ruling. This basic incompatibility of society and family is reflected in the contradictory assumptions of sociological thinking on the one hand, and courtship on the other.

Sociologists since Comte have recognized that in the science of society "the individual" must be regarded as [p.74] an abstraction, if "society" is to be regarded as real. There is always a bias in sociological thinking against attaching importance to the unique and nonrecurrent. Separate individual facts have meaning in sociology only in so far as they can stand as symbols for general laws; distinct biological individuals are of interest only in so far as they participate in the phenomena of group life.

The academic sociologists are not the only ones who make use of this type of thinking. Every tourist who visits a foreign country comes back with a string of stories about the way "they" do things over there. If he has seen a woman pulling a plow in a field, or a peasant's house which is shared by some of the live stock, or some example of striking courtesy or immorality or poverty, he interprets these sights sociologically. He thinks from the point of view of one

who makes a study of customs. The real importance of the sight of the woman plowing, to his mind, is that it indicates that all women, or many women, plow in the fields of the region.

In courtship and marriage, the point of view is the reverse. "The thing about you and me is that we're so different from the rest!" Is this not the theme of every courtship? Whereas every study of society, whether it be by a casual tourist or an academic specialist^Y proceeds on the assumption that we do not differ from the rest except in insignificant details, the lover's thought takes it for granted that the important things about us are those wherein we differ. This attitude is implicit in the selective function of mating. When a man says to his "girl friend," "You are just like the [p.75] other girls," he speaks less as a lover and more as one making a study of customs.

The same divergence between family and society are evidenced when we contrast the conception of personality which courtship takes for granted with that which an observer of society must use. Since society does not take account of individuals as such, sociology is hampered in its study of personality. It cannot take account of personality without first re-defining the term and giving it a special and restricted meaning, which does not correspond to the meaning we usually give to the word. If personality is to enter into sociological calculations it must first be re-defined as "the subjective aspect of culture" (Thomas), and envisaged as a social product. Here, for instance, is a sociological definition of personality taken from an introduction to sociology:

The person is an individual who has status. We come into the world as individuals. We acquire status and become persons. Status means position in society. The individual inevitably has some status in every social group of which he is a member.⁸

Such definitions serve to obscure but not to overcome the incompatibility of personality and society, and the limitations of sociological theory. Even after sociology has newly defined personality as individual plus status, it is still limited in that it can only explain and describe so much of a person's conduct as reflects his status; it cannot explain or describe conduct that reflects individuality.

The amateur sociologist touring Europe falls into a [p.76] similar way of thinking. If he strolls along the quay at Naples he is looking for types of fishermen or beggar girls; he sees them as individuals with status. And so it is with nine-tenths of the persons we meet: we think of them in connection with their position in the community. We see the iceman and the mayor's wife and the high school principal. Their position seems to be an important part of them, whereby we identify them in our minds.

But in a love affair another way of thinking prevails. The rationale of biological selectivity requires it. In courtship and marriage such expressions as "I love you

⁸R. E. Park and E. W. Burgess, *Introduction to the Science of Sociology* (University of Chicano Press, Chicago, 1924), p. 55.

for yourself alone” imply a conception of personality diametrically opposed to that which a student of society must use. From the standpoint of sociology the lover’s concept seems mystical; from the standpoint of courtship the sociologists’ concept seems unreal.

It is difficult here to do justice to the intricacy of our way of thinking. Of course the lover is seen by his beloved to have his status as lover, the wife is seen by her husband to have the wifely status. But the mind quickly passes beyond the consideration of status and dwells more intently upon the unmeasurable and inexpressible fact of personality, which alone gives rise to everything that is of importance in family life.

The principle of autonomy makes it seem obvious that it cannot be an aim of domestic life merely to conform to convention. Conformity to convention can be only a means to an end. If we say of our Bohemian friends that in their family life they are “unconventional” we are adverting to a conspicuous but none the less unimportant aspect of their domestic life. It is as if we [p.77] should describe their new car by saying that it bears no license plates, and leave unsaid whether it is a Ford or a Cadillac, whether it runs well or ill.

The significant facts of family life are worked out in an inner domain where social influence does not reach. The external resemblance of one family to another is not a matter of importance. For families do not duplicate each other in their essential structure. Each family works out for itself, beyond the range of convention, some peculiar way of life. This self-organization, whatever it may be, is the one thing that really matters in terms of human life.

[p.78]

JUST as the examination of *convention* revealed an antithesis between family and society, so also an analysis of *authority* clarifies the distinction between family and State.

Occidental families find that the problem of authority in the home is already posed for them in the words of the marriage service which require that one spouse promise to obey the other. The wedding customs of other peoples may be less specific in referring to domination of one partner over the other, but usually there is some standard pattern of authority and subordination to which families are expected to conform. But families do not conform to these patterns. A strong-willed American girl who has commanded her fiancé in every crisis and prevailed in every decision may promise as a matter of form to obey him, but no one is misled by the promise, least of all the husband and wife. Among primitive peoples who consecrate the authority of the male with all the machinery of rigorous custom at their command, the women with their teasing and giggling and singing of pointed songs are far from being completely dominated.

Can there be a definite allocation of authority in a family organization? Folklore and table are full of the discussion of this moot point. The situation in which [p.79] one spouse dominates while seeming to submit is an unfailing theme of humorous narrative.

There is for instance the anecdote of the philosopher who set out to prove that throughout the whole country no man was lord of his own household. He took with him two horses, a gray and a bay, and gave out word that to any man who was sole ruler at his home he would freely give one of the horses as a reward. He went from one farmstead to another, repeating his inquiry and offer. Since these were simple, honest folk, the husbands all told him truly that they were often checked and governed by their wives and in this their wives confirmed them. Finally he encountered a canny farmer who asserted that he alone was ruler in his house. His wife, a sharp-faced woman, bore out his statement and owned that it was the truth. Whereupon the philosopher told him to choose a horse, either the gray or the bay.

The farmer looked the horses over carefully. "I think I'll take the bay."

The philosopher began to untie the bay, and while he was thus engaged the farmer talked in low tones to his wife. Then, having spoken with her no more than a moment, he called out to the philosopher, "Hold, sir, I think I will take the gray." But the philosopher, laughing, drove away with both horses, and returned gladly to his home, having proved that which he had set out to demonstrate.

Recently John Macy reported the results of a similar amateur investigation. He had inquired of his married friends whether in a crisis the husband or the wife prevailed. His friends were inclined to regard the question [p.80] as inconclusive if not actually foolish. His report bore the stinging title, "The Two-Headed Monster, the Family." From the point of view of one who seeks to know definitely where authority resides, the family is monstrous indeed.

But why should we wish to know where authority in the family is centered? The question is one which implies that the family is a miniature State. It carries over to the discussion of domestic affairs that doctrinaire difficulty which attends the so-called juridical theory of the State, namely, the search for sovereignty, for a supreme will-determining organ of the political group.

Kinship organizations are often political in character. The community sometimes holds the head of a household responsible for the conduct and debts of its members; the laws of republican Rome gave to the *paterfamilias* complete authority over the lives and property of his descendants and their wives. It is noteworthy that the kinship groups which have so strongly marked a political character are usually larger than the natural family. In any case, this aspect of the organization of the family is only one of the many conventional characteristics which society imposes on the family by means of pressure from without, or introduces from within by inculcating ideals of conduct. It is only as an institution, not as a fact in nature, that the family has any standardized organization of authority. It is formally impossible for the State to exist without sovereignty, but the family can lead a vigorous life without making use of any will-determining organ whatsoever.

Much of the life of the family goes on without the making of corporate decisions.

The husband may do [p.81] something of which the wife does not approve; the wife may do something contrary to the husband's wishes. Neither of them is expressing the collective will of the family in his act. And yet his act is part of a complex of action which fills domestic life.

Certainly there are some questions which the family must definitely decide, one way or the other. It is not difficult to envisage the making of these decisions as if it were a kind of political process. Here the father initiates a move and the mother has veto power; there the supreme authority is a council in which the two eldest children have a voice but no vote. F.P.A. printed in his column in the New York *World* a political analysis of a family campaign to buy a Buick sedan. Says the father:

"At a caucus of my faction held last night at dinner the situation was fraught with suspense. My wife, heroine of many similar campaigns, indorsed the Huick, but my favorite son Joe aligned himself with the irreconcilables. In his keynote speech he demanded a Darmon."

"Which way did your daughter Betty swing?"

"She is in the doubtful column. Her sister Bab is also on the fence. It is my youngest, Connie, who threw the bomb-shell into the convention. She was not expected to loom very large on the horizon. But it seems now that she occupies a pivotal position and I fear she may be a deciding factor in the conflict. She is standing pat for an imported model."

"The outlook is hardly encouraging."

"Far from it. But I intend to marshal my forces. Betty and Bab can be won over and instructed. That will give my cohorts an overwhelming plurality. When Joe sees which way the wind is blowing he will change his stand and lie low until next year. Thus Connie will find herself the standardbearer of a lost cause and will be forced to capitulate." [p.82] If the family existed primarily as an instrument for formulating decisions upon matters of policy, the political-theory analysis of the domestic situation would be useful and valid. If the principal problems of domestic life were problems of deciding upon a common line of action, then it would be obvious that the structure of the family was ill-adapted for the solving of its problems, and John Macy might fairly use the epithet "Two-Headed Monster" in writing of the family. It cannot be disputed that the modern Occidental family is in fact two-headed, but it is only from the specialized viewpoint of political theory that this two-headedness is monstrous.

In our political way of thinking we attribute to the State one single psychological quality – a will. We regard the State as an artificial person, endowed with volitional unity, and equipped with a specialized organ or *sovereign* which determines its will. The Crown in Parliament expresses the will of the British State by making laws and directing administrative policies.

But that a community of men are endowed with a common will is perhaps more a fiction and a metaphor than a description of objective truth. As Willoughby, dean of American political theorists, concedes in his discussion of the *Fundamental Concepts of Public Law*, this theory of the State “may start with any premise that it is deemed useful to assume . . . an attempt to examine their abstract validity would be as devoid of meaning as to question whether it is correct to use x or y to indicate the unknown quantity in an algebraic expression. . . . Analytical political philosophy does not attempt the statement of metaphysically correct propositions. The essential juristic qualities which it predicates [p.83] of the State are not supposed to correspond to substantive qualities which, ontologically speaking, inhere in the State and in law.”

There is no quarrel with the political theorists if they find it useful to attribute a metaphysical common personality to the State. But it is clear that the family can have no such unitary personality, to which a unitary will can attach. For the family is made up of a number of distinct and complete personalities which in the nature of things cannot be merged.

If we think of an individual in one capacity only (for example, his political capacity) then it is possible to imagine that relative to that particular capacity or range of activity there has been a merging of his will in some larger will. But when we think of a complete personality, then such a merging of one will in another is inconceivable and self-contradictory.

The wife who attempts to make complete submission to her husband diminishes the personal character of her marriage relationship. If it were psychologically possible for her completely to annihilate her own will, or to merge it in her husband's, her relationship with her husband would cease to be a personal one. Such perfect self-effacement, however it be studied and pursued, can never be achieved. But even to attempt its achievement is monstrous and abnormal. The promise to obey in marriage, when seriously meant, intends not the suicide but rather the dedication of a personality and will. The tie of personality and the distinction of persons in marriage can be rendered less important (in so far as mechanical submission obtains), but it cannot be effaced.

It is in a sense paradoxical that the family, in which [p.84] the most complete intimacies of life are possible, should none the less be so constituted that we must regard its members as forever distinct in personality and will – and hence forever in a state of tension. This is the paradox which, as Keyserling has pointed out, makes of marriage a fundamentally tragic situation.

Herein we discover the most profound difference between the domestic and the political conception of the family. Whenever we are confronted with a number

of individual things and it is required that we grasp them collectively, our minds reach at once for some metaphor or symbol by which we can reduce the diversity to unity, and envisage the many as one. So it is with the many citizens of a State and with the separate members of a family. The symbols which fulfill these purposes in political theory are all of a type which involves the merging of an aspect or capacity of individuals in a higher metaphysical unity. There is the symbol of the organism, which we establish by envisaging the individuals as organs having functions, and being defined by the functions they perform; there is the symbol of sovereignty which we create by deducing from the unity of a rational system of law the existence of a unitary and rational lawgiver in whose being men as legal creatures are merged, or before whom all bow down; there is also the symbol of the group mind, which we form by inferring from observed similarities in the thoughts and feelings of many individuals the existence of some super-personal mind in the processes of which the individuals participate, but with which they are not wholly identified.

We cannot use such symbols as these in envisaging the unity of the family because the personality of the [p.85] family relationship makes them inapplicable.⁹ Count Keyserling suggests that we conceive the unity of the family by means of a more appropriate metaphor: the elliptical field of force.

. . . the life-form of marriage must possess a special and independent significance. Love, propagation and self-preservation can only act as components. Within its domain of isolation the ego must be fundamentally secured. Such a conception of higher unity is actually realizable: *it corresponds exactly with an elliptical field of force*. The latter has two loci which are fixed and never can be merged in one another; its interpolar tension cannot be abolished if the field is to remain intact. The interpolar tension is at the same time an independent unit created by the field of force itself. This unit cannot be deduced from the specific character of each pole, taken separately or together, or from any other possible relation existing between the two. In the very same sense marriage represents an independent unit over and above each partner and his particular impulse.¹⁰

Keyserling's metaphor of *polarity*, used to define the nature of the family, has this virtue: that it keeps clearly before us the fact that personalities cannot be merged. The writer who describes the family as a "two-headed monster" was unconsciously presenting to us not a faulty or accidental character of a debased or disorganized family but the essential and universal character of the family in all times. The separateness of the spouses is an excellence, not a blemish, in

⁹The logical difficulty of conceiving of complete persons as members of a collective unity has been explored in the theological discussion of the Trinity, which requires of us that we think of the Trinity without "confusing the persons nor confounding the substance."

¹⁰Count Hermann Keyserling, *The Book of Marriage* (Harcourt, Brace, New York, 1926), p. 8.

married life. In the [p.86] words which Kahlil Gibran's Prophet addressed to husbands and wives:

. . . Let there be spaces in your togetherness
And let the winds of the heavens dance between you.
Love one another, but make not a bond of love:
Let it be rather a moving sect between the shores of your souls.
Fill each other's cup but drink not from the same cup.
Give one another your bread but eat not from the same loaf.
Sing and dance together and be joyous, but let each of you be alone,
Even as the strings of a lute are alone though they quiver with the
same music.
Give your hearts, but not into each other's keeping.
For only the hand of Life can contain your hearts.
And stand together yet not too near together:
For the pillars of the temple stand apart
And the oak tree and the cypress grow not in each other's shadow.¹¹

A continuous cycle of tension and accommodation characterizes the inner life of the family. In the dialectics of courtship conflicts are the rule rather than an exception. After marriage, the home furnishes an arena for the contest of wills. Those who marry are seldom blind to the probabilities of differences and disputes between themselves. The prospect of future tension between them has tremendous reality to them. They speculate upon the way that they will settle future quarrels. But the doctrinaire solution: that one is to rule and the other to obey, is really no solution at all. If indeed the bride and groom have been educated to believe that one of them must be master and the other slave, the subordinate [p.87] partner simply works out a technique of cajolery and persuasion which is more subtle but no less effective than an outright and independent willfulness.

The laws of domestic tension are not the laws of political dominion. The two differ in method and principle. In family life it is often the weakest who has his way, and this by reason of the weakness itself. The willful child or the childish adult, the bedridden invalid or the nervous housewife often becomes the tyrant before whom the stronger willed and better balanced members of the family habitually give way.

A contest of wills in domestic life is often a competition in irritability. For the family cannot, like the State, run roughshod over the personality of its members. At least the family cannot do so with impunity. The object of the State, as Machiavelli profoundly observed, is to endure without limit of time. No one human life, be it even the life of the Prince, measures the life ambition of the State. But the natural family has its life-term meted out to it by the lives

¹¹Reprinted from Kahlil Gibran, *The Prophet* (Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1923), by special permission of the publishers.

of its primary members. The State can sacrifice the individual and still attain its object; the family can offer up no such sacrifices. The family must therefore adjust itself to personal frailties which the State would disdain to take account of. Chronic resentments and repeatedly injured feelings can poison family life and continue to poison it as long as the family lasts. There is no getting rid of the poison except by making personal adjustments – or extinguishing the family. Making a “personal adjustment,” after all (however smooth and inoffensive the words may sound), is nothing more or less than doing what some one else wants you to do.

[p.88] It has been established that personal interaction is a necessary characteristic of the natural family, and that this interaction is in some degree independent of social convention. It now appears, when the structure of the family is examined from the point of view of authority, that this interaction has the character of a tension between two independent wills. The tension of domestic life is continuous, but not necessarily unpleasant. It involves conflict, but not necessarily hostility. It may take the form of competitive benevolence. The seeming paradox that there should be conflict without hostility is explained by the peculiar status of self-interest in family life. For loving and cherishing in family life are more significant than obeying.

[p.89]

IN our conscious life ideas of self-interest are usually more sharply defined than ideas of convention and authority. People meditate upon their interests, but as to the social atmosphere in which they find themselves, or the political authority under which they live, these they accept without intensive application of thought. This conscious preoccupation with interests is perhaps a peculiarity of the Western mind; there is evidence that some peoples are less disposed to do their thinking from the standpoint of personal advantage. Even in Occidental civilization there is never such absolute concentration of attention upon self-interest as was attributed by nineteenth century economists to humanity in general. The fact remains, however, that the point of view of self-interest is an important one, and that it is raised in domestic life every time there arises in the mind the thought of “What do *I* get out of it?” or “What is there in it for *me*?”*

What is there in marriage for any one? To answer that question completely, taking account of all its implications, requires nothing less than a complete doctrine of family life. Every thesis and postulate of domestic theory as herein developed must be brought to bear, more or less directly, upon the advantage to self of entering upon marriage and family responsibilities. There is moreover [p.90] a more restricted purpose which can be followed out within the confines of a single chapter: just as the doctrines of sociology and political theory were laid under contribution to supply information as to the nature of the family, so also the doctrines of classical economics can be drawn upon to serve the same end.

The principles and method of economics can be brought to bear upon the problem of self-interest in the family only on condition that these principles are understood in their broadest possible sense. It is not economics as a science of the appropriation of material things, nor the new, nonpsychological, statistical economics, but economics as a way of stating psychologically the problem of conflict of interest that will be useful in the analysis of the domestic situation.

The familiar dictum that “economics has to do with making a living” is after all an inadequate statement of the scope and application of classical economic theory. The greater part of its content does not relate to the primitive processes which are actually necessary to the maintenance of human life, but to the operation of a certain intricate system which correlates innumerable activities of civilized man. Most of these activities relate only indirectly to alimentation and warmth – the brute facts of getting a living. The facts which economics sets before us have a maximum of meaning in the business of the stockbroker. The “natural economy” of primitive peoples hardly constitutes a subject matter for economic theory of any kind, and is usually relegated to the attention of anthropologists.

The brute physical fact that men require food and warmth in order to live is so pervasive that no social [p.91] study ignores it. Economic theory is not alone in giving attention to this fact; sociology and political theory must also take it into account. None of these studies, however, can give exclusive attention to these physiological necessities of life. Such facts as postage stamp collecting, musical entertainment, travel for culture, or rivalry in fashionable dress are related to “getting a living” by only the most tenuous connection. These are matters which in themselves are far more fruitfully studied by the method of sociology than by the method of economics. Nevertheless, economics finds a place for them, just as sociology finds a place for the fact that man must get a living. Economics is distinguished from the other social studies not so much by any special preoccupation with getting a living as by certain theoretical postulates which it takes for granted in the study of human conduct. These presuppositions, which distinguish economic theory from other theories, are the following:

1. That there are individuals having desires
2. That these ends or desires are at present competitive (*i.e.*, that they have magnitude on a scale common to a number of individuals).
3. That the interaction between the individuals with respect to these desires produces a common resultant, which follows automatically from the competition of the individuals, and can be stated relationally.

The first presupposition is the *economic man*; the second is the *economic good*; the third is the *market* or *economic system*.

It matters not who is conceived as the “individual” so long as he seeks his own end. Classical economics takes [p.92] the natural man as the individual, but other economic theories speak of classes, nations, communities, or corporations as the true individuals of economics. Anomalies sometimes result when different conceptions of the “individual” are confused in the same argument (as when one infers that whatever benefits England must benefit all Englishmen), but any conception of the individual is valid in deducing: an economic theory. Even the family can be regarded as an individual in such a deduction.

Moreover, it makes no difference what it may be that the individuals seek as their aim, so long as it is competitive. They may seek for glory or Japanese prints or potatoes. The Tlingit and Haida Indians of the Northwest American coast strive to excel each other in giving away their property so as to keep each other under a maximum social obligation. This is the *potlach* institution, fundamentally economic. In modern capitalist society the individuals usually strive to acquire as much money or property as possible, and therefore the greater part of our modern economic theory corresponds to what Aristotle would have called *chrematistics*, the art of money-making. There is no ethical limitation as to the nature of an economic desire. Mere thermo-dynamic “efficiency” is the only intrinsic ethic of an economic system; aside from this, economics is ethically blind. And if there are associated with domestic life any pleasures or satisfactions which can be measured on a common scale, those can stand as the goods of an economic theory.

Moreover, the economic individual must not only have an appropriate desire, but must also be aware of the magnitude of his desire. He must not only want some[p.93]thing for which he must compete, but he must know how much he wants it. Knowing this, he places himself in the market, along with other men who are equally familiar with the magnitude of their desires. And then, however the rules of the market or economic system may be drawn up, an operation of selection and substitution takes place by which the desires of individuals are satisfied in varying degrees. This is a highly generalized statement of classical economic theory. If the desire is for money, and the rules of the market are those which prevail in a capitalistic world, then our familiar textbook type of economic theory can be deduced from these postulates.

Granting these three assumptions, any number of economic theories can be deduced from them. Buyer can always meet seller in a market, supply and demand can match each other, consumer and producer have their interests adjusted, and all the complex calculus of marginism will be manifested. We can draw upon our imaginations for a great variety of economic systems, each explained by its own theory, just as it is possible to imagine a variety of geometries. Capitalist economics and Euclidean geometry happen to be the most familiar and the most useful to us, but other theories of economics and other geometries are worthy of study. The economics of postage stamp collecting is probably distinct from capitalist economics generally, because the usual economic rule that the latest increment of goods is less valued than earlier increments is reversed in

the collecting of stamps; additional postage stamps have constantly increasing value to the owner as his collection nears completeness – which it never attains. Thorstein Veblen has given us an [p.94] amusing new economic doctrine in his theory of the leisure class. We might draw up an economic theory for hermits and saints in which there would be competition for poverty rather than for wealth, and whereby we would discover a marginal saint whose austerities were just sufficient to bring him recognition.

There are three ways in which the concepts of economics can be applied to the study of the family. First, we can regard the family as an economic individual; or we can treat the separate family members as economic individuals and think of them as seeking some “good” which inheres in family life; or, third, we can regard the family as an economic system in itself.

The hypothesis that the family is an economic individual is familiar to us through the writers who discuss the so-called “economic functions” of the family. When the housewife spins and weaves and the children work on the farm, the family is a productive unit. When the wife and children do nothing at all but spend father’s money, the family is still a consuming unit. In both cases it can be regarded as an economic individual, which is rich or poor, successful or unsuccessful, compared with other families in the economic system.

We can learn very little about the nature of the family from this hypothesis. It may or may not be true that a family which has some clear-cut position as a unit in the economic system displays a more satisfactory family life on that account. The husband and wife who share the work of a farm may or may not enjoy a better domestic existence than the city-dwelling couple who work in different offices and take their meals out. There is not any proof that the decay of household industries which fol[p.95]lowed the industrial revolution sapped the foundations of family life. There is no evidence that a home is a better home if it is also a little factory and a little restaurant.

Moreover, the wealth or poverty of one family as compared with another is not an index of its domestic excellence. It is notorious that a wealthy family is not necessarily a good family, and that poverty may increase family solidarity. Dr. Hamilton in his research found no correlation between wealth and marital satisfaction. A family can pass from wealth to poverty or from poverty to wealth without impairing or improving the quality of its domestic life. Here we can see that poverty is a cause of failure, there we can see it as a cause of success. The fortune of the family as a unit in the economic system is an element of the external environment only, and not of the inner nature, of the family. This is the fact which we feel in the words of the marriage service and which gives the phrase, “for richer, for poorer” its significance.

If we regard the family members as the “economic individuals” and think of them as seeking, each for himself, and in competition with others, some kind of a good which marriage provides, we have the elements of a sound theory of courtship and divorce – the origin and dissolution of families – but not yet the

elements of a theory of normal family life.

Let us imagine that the delights or benefits of family life are apprehended by individuals on a quantitative scale, so that marriage will seem to be worth exactly so much but no more, and a prospective bride or groom will be valued at just so much sacrifice but no more. Two clearly economic questions will then formulate themselves: whether to marry, and whom to marry. Does the [p.96] advantage of the married state exceed that of the unmarried state? If so, marry. Marriage competes as an occupation with other occupations. The woman of the Middle Ages chose between home and convent; the woman of today may make the choice between family and career. Pantagruel debated painfully whether it was worth while to marry at all.

This question whether to marry is usually associated definitely with the question of whom to marry. Each marriageable individual competes with every other for a mate. Each seeks to secure for himself the most advantageous alliance that is possible. Where marriage is by purchase this competition is on a monetary basis; elsewhere the elusive imponderabilia of courtship are thrown into the scale. But always the situation is one of economics: there is competition in a market, and the possibility of substitution. The thought is always present that if the other man is better than this one, he would be taken and this one given up; if the career is more advantageous, it must be preferred to marriage. Then if the moment arrives when two people cease to weigh and balance the possibility of renouncing each other or their marriage, they are withdrawn from competition, from the market, from the possibility of substitution. Their situation is no longer economic, and economic theory no longer explains it. Their relationship becomes a personal one, which falls outside the scope of economics because in personal relationships there can be no transferring or substitution.

According to the genial theory of marriage which we have called the tomcat theory, this moment never comes. Even after marriage, the competitive situation of courtship continues. The wife competes continuously with all [p.97] other women for her husband's love, and the husband with all other men for his wife's loyalty. This competition, if it exists, is the fundamental *economic* tension of marriage

So long as this economic tension continues in marriage, divorce is always envisaged as the ultimate limit of competition. If the married state comes to seem sufficiently burdensome or unattractive, or if another person comes to be regarded as sufficiently more appealing than one's mate, divorce has the character of a simple economic act, and is equivalent to a sale in monetary economics. Divorce is the consummatory economic act which bears witness to the persistence of a market situation in marriage.

So long as a family exists, the market situation is hostile to its well-being. A wife or husband can separate from his family just as an employee can leave the firm which employs him, and for reasons which are fundamentally the same: that he is offered better employment elsewhere. But the consequences of these

acts are very different, for if the employee quits his job, the factory simply hires another man, while if the husband gets a divorce, the family is extinguished. This is, of course, a result of the fact that family relationships are personal and hence nontransferable.

Finally we can regard the family as an economic system in itself, existing in isolation from all other economic systems. Within this system the members are the economic individuals, and certain distinctive domestic services constitute the economic goods. These services have no proper currency beyond the limits of the family itself. It is a dangerous and disruptive procedure to attempt to [p.98] commute them for the values of the outside world. The anomalous nature of such an attempt is evident when a wife sues for alienation of her husband's affections, or when a law is proposed requiring that the husband pay wages to the wife for her housekeeping.

What are these intimate domestic services which have no currency outside the isolated domestic system, and which are not to be commuted into the goods of another economic world? Here economic theory is indifferent, but sociology has an answer prepared. These services are defined in each society by its domestic institutions. They are implied in the socially established meanings of family membership. They are a part of the language of domestic life, which each civilization formulates for itself. In Occidental society, coitus is such a service; among the veiled Turkish women personal beauty was a service confined to one's own home. A debate is now in progress in the Western world as to whether housekeeping is properly an intimate domestic service, or whether it is rather to be regarded as an article of commerce. If it is regarded as an intimate service, then any scheme by which a husband pays a wife for her housekeeping is merely a convenient device for budgeting time or money, for keeping accounts or fixing responsibility within the household organization, and does not make of the wife's duties an article of commerce in the outside market. But if housekeeping is not regarded as an intimate domestic service, then a wife who finds that she can make more money as a sales manager than it would cost to hire her housework done may seek outside employment as freely as she might look for a better apartment or change her milkman. [p.99] The method of economics has taught us something of the external environment of a family, and something of the way in which families come into existence or pass away. Here it conforms to that which sociological doctrine has already revealed, that the family is an isolated thing; it withdraws itself from the rest of the world; it has its history and its values which it cannot safely share outside its close-drawn limits. The primitive urge which drives two lovers to forsake companions and sit silently together forecasts the creation of something in which they alone can share and in which no outsider can participate. In most marriage ceremonies there comes the symbolic moment when the married pair flees, or the guests withdraw and leave them to themselves. In most civilizations it is recognized that this isolation is worthy of protection – hence the mother-in-law joke. Hence also the familiar tragedy of conflicting loyalties to the mate on the one hand and the parents on the other. For an attempt to render the distinctive domestic services outside

of the limits of the family, even if it does not result in disaster, is certain to result in confusion. Our society (unlike a patriarchal society) has so defined the intimate services of domestic life that any newly married pair attempting to live in the household of a parent is courting domestic disaster.

If the family is thus isolated and autonomous, with its own set of values, one cannot intelligently measure his own interest and advantage in family life without understanding these values.

At the end of this labyrinth of thought, we come upon a conception of the family which is satisfying to the mind [p.100] as well as to the heart. The two who have been planning their future together agree that the family is for them not an institution given them by society but a situation given them by nature. It consists of a man and a woman together, and possibly a child. They have inspected this conception from different points of view, and each inspection has revealed to them a sound reason for believing certain things which they have wished to believe but which previously they had been unable to prove. Political theory taught them that the merging of their personalities is not properly an object of their domestic life; sociology verified their suspicion that real excellence in family life lies beyond social control, and requires more than mere conformity; economics confirmed their feeling that in setting up their family they are in a very real way cutting themselves off from competition with the rest of the world and creating a system of values for themselves alone. The family which they are to establish is too personal to be merely a political unit, too spontaneous to be merely a social institution, too isolated to be a mere organ of the economic system; it is something independently rooted in nature itself. Thus they have drawn up their definition of the family.

[p.101]

WHEN two young things promise to love and to cherish one another, they take for granted the existence in human nature of a capacity for loving and cherishing. And each as regards the other is chiefly interested in that; one aspect of the other's nature. Will he love me always? How much does he love me now? These perennial questions reveal the natural form which the thought of the newly married assumes. It is a sound intuition which fixes upon this quality of human nature as the most important in connection with domestic problems. This quality is so worthy of special study that we will give it a special name. We will call it the psychological equipment of the domestic man (*homo domesticus*).

The social sciences have adopted a convenient method for studying the general effect of any given trait in human nature. They create for purposes of inquiry a fictitious man whose psychological endowment consists of just such qualities as are pertinent to their investigation. The most distinguished of these creations is, of course, the economic man (*homo oeconomicus*) who knows only the motives of self-interest and whose intellect is able to measure with incredible exactness the intensity of all of his desires. Less well known is the political man, whom

Catlin presents to us. The intelligence testers have [p.102] brought forth a psychological man whose nature is completely revealed in the answers he gives to lists of prepared questions. No careful thinker makes the mistake of confounding these abstractions with the facts of nature. It is perfectly apparent that a real man is neither the economic abstraction of pure self-interest nor the political abstraction of pure will to dominion nor the psychological abstraction of pure “intelligence.” Yet these abstractions are useful, and we would not know what to do without them. Taken together, they constitute a little menagerie of fabulous beasts. Into this interesting and useful menagerie it is permissible to introduce a new creature – the domestic man, whose sole quality of mind and heart is an ability to love and to cherish.

What is meant by loving and cherishing? What are these qualities which we deem so important in the life of the family?

The kind of account we will give of these qualities depends upon whether we confine our attention to their conscious manifestations or try to trace them back to some unconscious process out of which they can be said to arise. Since the object of formulating these principles of marriage is to establish a pattern for conscious purposive conduct, these qualities must be studied in their conscious form, although their derivation from nonconscious elements may be recognized.

They derive from two primitive and beautiful attitudes – the attitude of a male and female toward each other as their lives are joined in a new life, and the attitude of the protecting parent toward a dependent child. Both of these love-attitudes enter into the character of the domestic man.

[p.103] When these primitive love-attitudes are interpreted according to the requirements of a religious cult, a social code, or an intellectual interest, many variant conceptions of love result – there is for instance the disembodied “pure” love which derives from the worship of the Virgin, the love-service ideal of medieval chivalry, and Platonic love which expresses itself in the contemplation of an ideal.

These variants of the love concept are products of a certain amount of sophistication and discipline. They do not flow directly from natural impulse. We cannot witness their analogues in the behavior of the higher animals. They represent special qualities of love in a given time and place and not the universal quality of love everywhere. They describe aspects of culture or civilization rather than aspects of human nature. They always threaten to cause a misunderstanding of the real nature of love, and to establish in hierarchic order a series of different kinds of love, from love of the body to love of the soul.

The distinction between “sacred” and “profane” love, between pure love and animal passion, between natural love and sophisticated love, is a dangerous distinction to introduce into marriage. It is a distinction unknown to the domestic man. And yet it is often introduced, in the Western World, under the influence of the Puritan tradition. The psychoanalysts describe it as a dissociation

phenomenon in which the sex aspect of love is dissociated from the tenderness aspect.

It is a distinction which can do no good at all, but which can work infinite harm. There is always plenty of [p.104] ways, but no beautiful love relationship between man and wife can be based on the repression or contempt of sex.

Love can be spiritual if it does not denounce the flesh or regard the body as unclean; it can rise to great heights of beauty if it does not destroy its own foundations in nature. A bride who thinks of loving and cherishing as something ethereal, and of sex as something vile, must either change her mind or endanger her marriage. Most of them, according to Dr. Hamilton, change their minds. The real and important distinction which must be made by lovers is the distinction between personal and impersonal love. The impersonal love for mankind which Christian ethics requires is the antithesis of the personal love which marriage demands. Humanitarianism, brotherly love, altruism, philanthropy – all these sentiments are rivals and even enemies of the jealous personal attachment which draws two lovers together. The oft recurrent tragedy of the man torn between love for his family and devotion to a cause is evidence of the wide disparity between these two kinds of loving and cherishing.

The capacity to love and to cherish which we ascribe to domestic man is necessarily an aptitude for personal rather than impersonal devotion. This is logically implied in the definition of the family as something that consists of determinate members, and in the description of the relationship of personality which unites the members of a family. Quite aside from formal logical requirements, the voices of all lovers would insist that this and nothing else, is the special quality which they demand in their beloved. Loving and cherishing in domestic life is a personal affair, an outgrowth of the natural functions of sex and parenthood.

This kind of loving and cherishing is at its source common to man and beast. It need not be expressed in words nor formulated in thought. It is more primitive than logic, and anterior even to consciousness. But when the light of consciousness is thrown upon it and the schematization of logic is applied to it, it is very clearly a personal attitude. An ego is the source of object-love; a person is its object.

Loving and cherishing, being acts that arise in one person and are directed toward another, have both an active and a passive aspect. They involve motives on the one hand, and feelings on the other. The motives and feelings are of a special type which must be assumed to be present in the domestic man.

Just as it has been necessary to borrow from the social sciences in analyzing various aspects of the family, so now it is appropriate to make use of psychological theory in the domestic view of human nature. It is necessary here to defend the idea that the domestic man's behavior proceeds from motion and then to classify and analyze the motives from which it proceeds.

In a period of intellectual adventure and experiment, such as the present, there comes a time when service can be done by stating emphatically facts that are perfectly obvious and insisting categorically upon the recognition of truths that are already accepted. In this spirit it is appropriate to assert that there are such things as motives and purposes, and that human behavior is sometimes motivated or purposive. This is a view so much in accord with our commonsense interpretation of things that some [p.106] psychologists regard it as a perversely unsophisticated notion.

Psychologists object to motives because there is no experimental proof that a motive corresponds to any psychophysical fact; what we call motive may be merely afterthought, or, as they say, "rationalization". This objection would be regarded as mere pettifogging if motives could be measured exactly or analyzed statistically. But motives are notoriously ill-adapted for use as objects of science. They have quality and quantity, but their quality cannot be reduced to any quantitative terms nor their quantity measured on any known scale. Psychology lets them go with a sigh of relief, for it suspects all introspective data. "Since the rise of the experimental method in psychology there has been little if any room in the field for the study of the human individual when he performs what may be very definitely and accurately called purposive actions."¹² Since Kantor wrote these lines, two significant books on motives have appeared: Thomson's *Springs of Human Action* (1927) and Troland's *Fundamentals of Human Motivation* (1928). Thomson is clearly a pioneer in the analysis of these things; Troland's work is more thorough.

There are other fields of thought from which the concept of motive cannot be dismissed so easily. If we are trying to get human behavior into a rational system such as ethics or law, not attempting to correlate it with a physiological or sociological process, then the existence of motives must be assumed; otherwise ethical systems and codes of criminal law are irrational.

[p.107] And yet it is clear that not all behavior is motivated. Thomson uses "motive" to mean all factors moving to conduct, but most writers use the term to mean a conscious and purposive element in the determining of behavior. "Motivated behavior belongs to that most complicated of all behavior modes . . . in which the person is not only a part of the stimulus reaction but the main stimulus." (Kantor.) To illustrate: In the ordinary reflex action situation the stimulus is external, as light striking the eye, but in motivated behavior the principal stimulus is the total personality of the actor, as when Napoleon decides to return from Elba. It would be a grotesque description of Napoleon's decision if we should say that the arrival of newspapers from France at Elba operated to bring about the departure of Napoleon from exile in the same way that the light striking the eye operates to contract the pupil. Kantor lists in hierarchic order five modes of action as follows:

1. Automatic (Actions not remembered, anaesthesia, stupor,

¹²R. Kantor, *Principles of Psychology* (Alfred A. Knopf, New York, 1924), Vol. 1., p. 129.

- coma, etc.)
2. Subreactionalistic (Individual concentrated on stimulus but action not sharply pointed; habit reactions often in this class.)
 3. Reactionalistic (This includes the “flash of genius” type of behavior.)
 4. Subpersonalistic (This includes the reactions of the person as represented by his likes, tastes, abilities, etc.)
 5. Personalistic (“Whenever there is some problem of advantage or disadvantage”; all motivated or purposive behavior.)

[p.108] The intimate connection between motives on the one hand and personality on the other is attested in Occidental thinking whenever human behavior is ascribed to “social forces” rather than to the agency of an individual person. When action is not attributed to a person, the motive concept drops away. The Samoans, according to Miss Mead,¹³ do not possess any well defined concept of motive. Their social habits do not allow them to inquire and their language does not permit them to speak concerning the motives of any one in doing anything. The absence of a motive-concept implies a distinctive attitude toward personality. A Samoan love does not engage the personalities of its participants. Very deeply, and even as between husband and wife, a deep personal attachment is regarded as indecent. Needless to say, the natural family is quite submerged in the Samoan kinship and village organization. Thus the ethnologist, the psychologist, and the student of the family arrive at the same truth from different points of view. The psychologist notes that the behavior which most completely engages a personality in action is motivated behavior. The ethnologist notes that the motive concept, the personality value and the natural family unit are linked elements in a culture; the student of the family discovers that motives are important in domestic life because they testify to the engaging of a complete personality therein – because they are part of the psychological equipment of the domestic man.

In normal experience motives are, as we say, “mixed.” We are seldom able to pin them down and identify them [p.109] with certainty. As Thomson rightly complains, they are numerous, elusive, complex, varied, and locking in constancy. And yet, without insisting unduly upon the naturalistic accuracy of our conception, we describe motives as having both quantity and quality. Having quantity (or intensity), they are capable of being added to or subtracted from each other, having quality, they are capable of being grouped or clustered in various ways. The problem of classifying motives does not differ fundamentally from all problems of classification. A thousand individuals be they beetles or poems, verbs or motives, will continue to present individual differences whether we group them or not. In order to group them we must assign classificatory significance to certain of their features, disregarding others.

The motive which is peculiar to loving-and-cherishing behavior is a motive of

¹³Margaret Mead, *Coming of Age in Samoa* (William Morrow, New York, 1928).

benevolence toward the person who is loved. The domestic man intends his acts to benefit his beloved rather than himself. It is permissible, therefore, to classify as domestic those motives which direct behavior toward the welfare of some definite other person, and to regard all other motives as nondomestic. The domestic motive is the distinctive characteristic which marks the active aspect of loving and cherishing. Just as the economic man is perfectly selfish, so the domestic man is perfectly unselfish.

The distinction between selfishness and unselfishness is a dubious one, but we cannot explain the nature of the domestic man without expounding it. One of the first signs of sophistication in a college student is his grasp of a certain formula for calculating motives whereby he can prove that all acts whatsoever are selfishly motivated. [p.110] The philanthropist and the miser, the patriot and the city boss, the loving daughter and the faithless wife are all alike selfish. Even the martyr who seems to be sacrificing himself is, according to this formula, giving himself the satisfaction of martyrdom. This current sophistry impresses tender minds, but after all it amounts to nothing but a word trick. If we define “selfishness” in such a way that it corresponds to “preference,” then we can argue that whatever is decided upon is preferred, and whatever is preferred is preferred by a self, and hence is selfishly preferred. When this little logism has been played through, it is still necessary to distinguish between certain kinds of “selfish” actions. If some actions are intended to minister to the needs or increase the happiness of others, such actions can be classified together, whether the word “unselfish” is used to describe them, or not. Actions of this kind flow naturally from a disposition to love and to cherish. Nature has equipped husband and wife to delight each other in the act of sex, and has prepared the parent to minister to the needs of the child. Thereby nature sets up prototypes for the activities of a domestic man.

The activity which we have for the moment described as “unselfish” would be regarded by many thinkers as a perverse and intricate kind of selfishness. For the kind of conduct which results from a personal attachment occupies a very uncertain place in the speculations of social theorists. In economics unselfishness of any kind is an anomaly; in sociology and political theory it is comprehended only as group-loyalty, which submerges [p.111] these theories except as a special form of self-seeking. If a governor appoints his son to some high office, despite the fact that some other candidate was better qualified, economic theory sees this act as an economic act wherein the governor drew some of the invisible wages of his office by securing something he desired for himself – *i.e.*, his son’s appointment. In political theory it might be pointed out that the governor had two capacities: the capacity of a public official and the capacity of a father. In making this appointment the governor permitted the father to act outside of his proper sphere. A personal motive interfered with the discharge of a public duty. It would not be asked whether the personal motive was self-regarding or other-regarding. The personal motive would be regarded necessarily as a selfish motive. And if, in order to protect his son, the governor would ruin his own political prospects, or risk imprisonment, these sacrifices would still be

regarded from the point of view of economics or political theory as risks selfishly assumed. If a man gives up everything he has in order to save his wife or child, it is regarded as selfish. In such a context the word “selfish” loses its meaning.

If these acts are seen from the standpoint of the family, from the point of view of those persons who benefit by them, they appear to be unselfish. The governor is acting as a domestic man. A sacrifice of a father for a son is an evidence of loving and cherishing. Favoritism and nepotism look selfish from without the family, but unselfish from within. The acts in themselves are neither selfish nor unselfish; the antithesis between selfishness and unselfishness lies not in nature, which is ethically blind, but in the set of principles and presuppositions [p.112] which we use in classifying acts. This is evident when we compare the plausibility of the sociological and the economic explanations at human behavior. For almost all conduct can be referred in sociological theory to an other-regarding movement of the mind, in economic theory to a self-regarding movement. The two diverse explanations of the same act can be made equally plausible and are in fact equally true.

For example, let us say that a woman is buying a hat. On her way she passes a curio shop, where many strange articles are displayed. She gives only a passing glance at the richly gleaming articles in the window, and passes on to the milliner’s where she buys a hat. Explain this by economic theory: she had a certain quantity of desire for the hat which was greater than her desire for the strange ornaments. She satisfied her selfish desire. Explain it by sociological theory: she was sensitive to the fact that other people approved of the wearing of hats, but not of the wearing of showy jewelry. A maiden from Basutoland would for similar reasons have passed by the millinery shop and purchased a fine nose ring in the curio shop. Now let us suppose that we explain her conduct with reference to the family and to her capacity for loving and cherishing. We can say that she wished to please her husband by making herself more attractive, to give him greater cause for pride in her. None of these explanations are complete; any of them may be transposed into the language of the others; the value of any of them depends upon the importance of the general conclusions we can reach by making use of them.

The overt action which proceeds from a domestic motive is a distinctive kind of behavior, which should have [p.113] a definite name. It may be called benevolent activity, or perhaps (if the words are understood in a special sense), a domestic act. It is perhaps the kind of thing we mean when we use the words “to cherish”. It is a fundamental element of that interaction between members which the structure of the natural family implies. It is a vehicle wherein the separate will of a member of the family finds expression, and hence it is a manifestation of the basic *will-tension* of marriage. It is productive of the intrinsic *values* of family life.

The distinction between domestic and nondomestic motivation is of course merely conceptual. There is in nature no hard and fast classification of motives. In practical life motives are mixed. The woman who is putting her hair in

curl papers is actuated partly by a domestic motive: to please her husband or lover and partly by a nondomestic (or economic) motive: to satisfy her personal vanity. How much of a component of domestic motivation is necessary in order that an act may be regarded as domestic?

Psychologists who remember the extravagances of sensationist psychology with its classification of subjective data will be prejudiced against the use of such a scheme as this which is here set forth. It is so easy to draw up catalogues of emotions or sensations or desires or instincts; so many of these catalogues are meaningless. An arbitrary list of types of motive would have no value if we were trying to study psychology, but it is necessary when we are studying the family. It brings before us the distinctions which may or may not be real in the human organism, but which are certainly real in the business of family life. [p.114] It is certainly both futile and impossible to name a quantity of domestic motivation which invests acts with domestic character. The domestic or nondomestic character of an act is clearly manifested only in certain situations of suspense, when rival interests are hanging in the balance. In such situations it is a matter of no consequence how the components of motivation be added or subtracted, so long as the domestic motive prevails. The domestic component need be neither great nor small; it need only be sufficient, that is to say, sufficient to turn the balance in favor of an act which benefits the marriage partner rather than the self or some other interest.

There is a simple pro-condition of benevolent activity which can be described in the words "paramount loyalty," or "preponderant interest." The domestic man always deems the welfare of his marriage partner to be a matter of highest value to him. Any conflicting interest which comes to his attention will be subordinated to this preponderating interest. This does not mean that he must, like Annabel Lee,

Live with no other thought
Than to love and be loved by me.

His thoughts need not dwell perpetually upon the welfare of his mate. There may be innumerable choices and decisions in which her welfare is in nowise engaged. It is not necessary that domestic acts should always be sacrificial acts. It is only necessary that when an interest in a member of one's family is in direct conflict with other interests the former must prevail.

If a man values his club or his business more highly than his family, there is something wrong with his family [p.115] life. Circumstances may compel him to be more persistently and assiduously occupied with outside affairs, but our common-sense view of things demands that except in some exceptional situation the interest of the members of the family should predominate when it comes to a showdown. If the wife's health demands they move to Arizona, the husband must sacrifice his business in New York. This personal evaluation which seems so natural within the family appears out of place or mischievous

outside of the domestic circle. As we have observed, it is known as favoritism or nepotism in the domain of business or politics. But in family life it is normal and good. There are a number of situations in which ethical theory requires that the interest of a member of one's family be sacrificed to some other interest, but there is no pretense that such situations are norms of domestic conduct. Should one member of a family perjure himself for another? It is understood that such situations are exceptional, just as martyrdom is exceptional, and that they interfere with the functioning of the family.

Paramount loyalty is thus seen to be the subjective prerequisite of domestic activity, and a distinctive endowment of the domestic man. It is a mental act or sentiment by which the welfare of some one else is evaluated as having greater importance than the welfare of any other person or the attainment of any conflicting aim which may be simultaneously present to the mind. Value-begetting attachments of this kind are, of course, at once conscious and emotional. If they were unconscious, the psychoanalysts would call them complexes. Paramount loyalty, being conscious, is called a sentiment or "con[p.116]stellation," not a complex. It is the key to the psychological make-up of the domestic man. Briefly, the domestic man is a hypothetical person who, though normal in other respects, is abnormal with respect to his personalistic mode of behavior. Instead of balancing a variety of conflicting interests when he decides questions of advantage or disadvantage, he refers all these questions to one final standard – the welfare of his domestic partner. Real men approach this quality of mind to a greater or less degree. The domestic man is a fiction, and being a fiction can be also an ideal.

There are some who think that a life lived for another person is necessarily a satisfactory life, that even if such a life does not bring apparent happiness, still it yields obscure satisfactions which are all the more profound and intense because they are concealed. It is a mistake to preach such an immediate connection between benevolent activity and happiness. Unskillful cherishing may be more disastrous to happiness than enlightened selfishness. There is no absolute superiority in *homo domesticus* over *homo oeconomicus* or any other ideal man. It is only relative to the life of the family that the domestic man offers a more appropriate ideal of conduct than others.

In the family as elsewhere there is unlimited scope for artistry and science. There is an art in the planning of a surprise and science in the planning of a meal. A cultivated aesthetic sense can express itself in anything from a coat of paint on the kitchen table to an artistically managed quarrel which melts away in delicious tears of reconciliation. Applications of scientific knowledge are possible all along the line: the husband's bad temper can be cured if the wife knows about orange juice and vitamin [p.117] C; the wife's coldness can be overcome if the husband will watch the periodicity of the moon. The domestic man may be ignorant of all the important things, and his life may be tragically unhappy because of his ignorance. The domestic man as such may be neither wise nor happy, and none the less be continuously domestic. The distinction

between domestic and nondomestic does not parallel the distinction between wisdom and folly, welfare and misery, happiness and discontent. Domesticity and its opposite are the poles of an independent series of values.

For illustration, let us imagine a crisis in the life of a young family. George and Dorothy have been living in a one-room apartment for two years while George has tried to launch himself as a commercial artist, and Dorothy has helped out by working at Macy's department store. George is thinking that the time has come to give up his plans and get into some business which will yield more money for Dorothy. Dorothy fights grimly to keep on because she is afraid that he will not be happy in the insurance business, and she insists that she is glad to go on working and doing the cooking over a gas jet in the bathroom if George will only keep on with his art. This is clearly a case of domestic behavior.

On another floor of the same cheap apartment house another young couple is in equal misery, but in this case the wife is complaining that she is sick of living in one room, while the husband laments that his chances of success are being ruined by her demands. These two situations are externally parallel, but from the domestic point of view there is a world of difference between them. We do not know on the facts as given which of the two situations is most painful, but we do know that they unfold [p.118] themselves on different levels. One is domestic, the other nondomestic. The difference between them is not a difference of degree but a difference of kind.

This difference in kind between a domestic and a nondomestic situation has long been taught to our young people. The older generation has repeatedly assured the younger generation that marriage will give life more depth, more fullness. The language in which this message is preached borrows phrases from religion on the one hand and from the literature of romance on the other. Especially the word *love* serves at once to describe and to explain the deeper life which marriage makes possible. George and Dorothy love each other, whereas the other young couple do not love each other! The explanation is so simple that it leaves us where we were at the beginning, with our vague schoolgirl faith in true love. It leaves us with the blank question still before us, whether this or that kind of love is to be a possibility in our own lives. Love explains nothing, but is itself a thing that needs to be explained.

Nowhere in our thinking is the survival of faith in primitive word magic more apparent than in our use of the word love. Let a woman be rude, captious, complaining, jealous, and mean to a man, and if it is only said that she acts that way out of love for him, the word is held to change the color of her actions. Just as some states require that an internal revenue stamp must be affixed to a certain class of documents, so some customs require that a declaration of love must in decency accompany a certain class of proposals. The potency is in the word rather than in any one specific thing to which the word refers, for the word covers a multitude of different [p.119] attitudes. It can be traced through a maze of contradictory meanings. For instance: the home requires love; love is essentially free; free love breaks up the home. It can be applied indiscriminately

to contrary kinds of behavior, as any movie plot will demonstrate. If the man seduces the virgin, it is because he loves her, and if he refrains from seducing her it may also be because of his love for her.

In another of the stock situations of drama the woman loves the man but believes that her love will harm him. Then if she renounces him, this is due to her great love, but if she still clings to him this is also due to her love. Love blows either hot or cold; whatever she does she does for love. It is another case of word magic.

But when we speak of a domestic motive, of preponderant interest, or of paramount loyalty, we bring before our minds something which has a more precise and unequivocal meaning. If this woman's attitude is domestic, that is to say, if her interest in the man's welfare looms larger in her life than anything else, then she renounces him. This very attitude is indeed one of the many things which are by some people called love. It happens to be the one which is of greatest importance in family life. In insisting on its importance we do not disparage any of the other varieties or manifestations of love. Least of all do we contend that love is any less significant than it is generally held to be. We mean simply that love as a word refers to many different things which have different kinds and degrees of importance in marriage.

What are these different meanings which the word love has accumulated and the different points of view from which it is regarded? There is first the notion that by [p.120] love we mean bare sex life. A book on "love in nature" tells us about the mating habits of frogs and lizards. Sharing this point of view but lending to it an artistic interest are those who, like Ovid or Havelock Ellis, see love as an art based on sex, an art which finds in sex life its principal medium of expression. Others like Edgar Saltus in his *Historia Amoris* think of love as a texture of social conventions about sex life. They compare love in Greek times when there were heterae and temples of Aphrodite with love in medieval Europe when there were tourneys and courts of love, and with love in our own day when there are movies and coeducational universities. Freud dips into his deep sea of the unconscious and drags forth Narcissine love, which attaches to a projection of the self, and object love, which attaches to a complement to the self.

There are some metaphysicians who see in love a universal principle of nature. Empedocles said it was the principle of attraction; Schopenhauer declared it was the life force. Far more numerous are those who describe or classify love experiences, whether their own or other people's. Frances Newman's "hard boiled virgin" felt love as a fountain playing within her somewhere in the region of the navel. Others have seemed to feel it as something resembling fire rather than water. Some writers try to classify all the different feelings which can be called love. Stendhal found that love is of four kinds: passion-love, body-love, spirit-love, vanity-love. The new school of German philosophy, the so-called "phenomenologists," attempts to define the subjective state with rigorous methodical accuracy. Max Scheler, a leader of this school, has worked out the

following definition: "Love [p.121] is a movement from lower value to higher value in the object loved." Some of these attitudes called love bear very little relation to the functioning of the family. Don Juan was a lover, but not a domestic man.

From the practical standpoint of courtship and marriage, the most confusing ambiguity in the meaning of the word love results from its dual application to experience of feeling on the one hand, and of purposing and evaluating on the other. Many of those who describe a love experience present it to us as something that seizes upon us while we remain more or less passively subject to it. It may come or it may go, as the foul weather follows fair. While it lasts it bathes us in a glow of pleasure which we enjoy but do not create. It beckons us with more or less directness toward the possession of the beloved as the supreme goal of desire. In the language of psychology this is a "feeling response" rather than a personalistic mode of behavior. It is something that happens to one, not something that one does. It is an ultimate datum of experience in which reason and purpose are not present as components, and which is no more under the control of the will than is the beating of one's heart. Such a love as this is the natural basis at a liaison, but not of marriage.

The love which marriage requires is more highly developed on the active and voluntary side. It seeks not only to enjoy the beloved, but also to serve and benefit her. This is the kind of love for which young people who are thinking of marriage must search their hearts. In order to avoid confusion we have given it a special name, calling it the domestic attitude, or the sentiment of paramount loyalty. If you prefer to call it love, well and [p.122] good. It is intimately related to the feeling reaction of love, for this feeling enters into it as a component, along with reason and purpose. It is the kind of love of which one can be master rather than slave. It is the kind of love which is the necessary precondition of the functioning of the family, and which constitutes the psychological equipment of the domestic man.

It is notorious that those who marry are prone to indulge themselves in transitory idealizations and to accept temporarily the most fantastic fictions, so that many a bride who pledges her truth to a more human being imagines that she is pledging it to none other than the domestic man himself. The imagination of lovers long ago invented this man; it is time that a place be made for him in social theory and that the domestic view of human nature be recognized in the social studies.

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A DOMESTIC act, by definition, involves two persons, because it performed by one person on behalf of another. We have hitherto considered only its source or origin; we are now to consider its effect as well. With reference to any particular domestic net, we can designate the two family members involved by calling them respectively the active member and the beneficiary member. The active member is the person performing the domestic act: the beneficiary member is the person

for whose benefit the act is done.

It lies before us now to inquire whether there is any mode of domestic behavior which is proper to the beneficiary member. The active member, we have seen, is known by his domestic motive, his preponderant interest in the welfare of another person. What response on the part of the beneficiary member constitutes domestic behavior?

Certainly the family permits and encourages a reciprocity of domestic activity, so that a beneficiary member with reference to one act may be the active member with reference to another. The wife prepares a dessert which she knows will delight her husband; the husband buys something which he is sure will please his wife. It would be possible perhaps to regard the husband's activity as being in some way a complement to the wife's. But such [p.124] an interpretation of the facts would stultify our conception of the principles of marriage. For benevolent activity would then become a mere matter of exchange. The principle of *do ut des*, I give that you may give, is an economic principle, not a principle of domestic relations. An act done in consequence of some benefit to be received, and with intent to repay an equivalent benefit, loses its domestic character and becomes economic. In so far as the attempt is made consciously to maintain a balance of benevolent activity, so that the quantity rendered by one member shall be equal to the quantity he receives, that activity is no longer domestic. It is therefore excluded that we should consider that the beneficiary member responds to domestic activity in his favor by himself entering upon domestic activity. The interplay of benevolence in a family is not a mere exchange of favors on a market basis; it is spontaneous.

Domestic behavior in the beneficiary member is passive. It is not an act but an attitude – the attitude of appreciation. Appreciation is the complement of domestic activity. It is the passive mode of domestic behavior. If A does something for B, and B appreciates what A has done, the domestic act is completed.

Far from compromising the domestic quality of an act, or reducing it to a mere exchange of services, appreciation rather intensifies its domestic quality by bringing more clearly to the attention that component in the motive which was domestic. If the wife assumes that it is solely for her sake that the husband has bought two tickets to the theater, the husband is likely to forget that he bought them partly to please himself. There is a magic in appreciation by which, as the deriva[p.125]tion of the word suggests, it enormously magnifies little things.

In the interplay of domestic activity and appreciation – a total behavior to which we give the name “domestic interaction” – there is comprehended both the active and the passive side of love. The attitude of appreciation, in its most intense form, can amount to a worship of the beloved. In a more commonplace form it is a simple recognition of benefits which a loved one confers upon one.

In the ever significant act of sex, where domestic attitudes come most sharply to focus, there can develop a fine balancing of the active and passive sides of

love. This act is not fully developed aesthetically, it has not reached its full beauty, unless each participant has at once the sense of giving pleasure to the other, and of recognizing spontaneity in the free gift he receives. These two attitudes are distinct. Sometimes they are separated. Dr. Hamilton found in his inquiry into the sex lives of a hundred married women that for thirty-two of them the sex act was often less than mutual; for eight of them it was always sheer submission. The frigid woman who derives no direct pleasure from her husband's embraces performs a domestic act when she submits to them; her husband for his part may appreciate her sacrifice, but he cannot regard his own action as domestic, nor is there any ground for appreciation by the wife. The act of sex is appropriately the central fact in the psychological situation of marriage, for in this act a complete system of domestic behavior, both active and passive, can be manifested.

The ratio of domestic activity to appreciation is a significant index of the quality of a domestic life. This ratio can be observed in the individual members, where it may be a consequence of the set of one's character or an indication of the way family life is organized. And it can be studied in the relationship of the family members among themselves, where it serves to distinguish the fundamental types of family from each other.

When we first contemplate the fact that an individual's domestic behavior may consist of an active or a passive component, we realize that we will have to explore the consequences of individual differences among men. Some people will seem predisposed to a passive attitude, and others will tend to meet each situation with action.

It would contribute greatly to the convenience of students of mankind if individual human beings showed no variations among themselves, and if all of them behaved exactly alike when placed in like situations. We feel the initial inadequacy of any general rule of human behavior, because none of the people with whom we become acquainted turn out to be average men. We set up this standard of domestic behavior, and we imagine the uniform benevolence of a domestic man, but we know that real people differ from this ideal type, and that they differ in varying degrees and in diverse ways.

The idiosyncrasies which we sum up in the word "character" resist systematic classification. We say in an offhand way that this person is stupid and that one bright, that this one is good and that one bad, that one is passionate and another frigid and so forth. A more comprehensive scheme is suggested by the ancient tradition of our culture which distinguishes men as choleric, sanguine, bilious, or phlegmatic. There have been a [p.127] number of attempts to found a science of character in recent years. Kretschmer's "six fundamental temperaments" and Spranger's "ideally basic types of individuality" are examples. One scheme for classifying psychological types which may turn out to be of real service in studying domestic behavior is Jung's distinction between the introvert and extravert. The introvert makes internal adjustments to his situation: the extravert always tries to "do something about it." The introvert is acutely conscious of his own

feelings; the extravert is less given to introspection and more inclined to purposive action. The domestic behavior of an extravert will perhaps tend to take the form of domestic activity, of cherishing. The introvert may manifest his domestic behavior more frequently in the form of appreciation. The pale lovers who sicken and sigh in despair are introverts: the red-blooded lovers who try to abduct their women are extraverts. Intraversion and extraversion are of course relative terms. There is nothing absolute about the classification. The introvert is still capable of purposive action, the extravert can entertain the feeling and make the gesture of appreciation.

We took note of the fact that within the meaning of the word love are included experiences of feeling on the one hand and of evaluating and purposing on the other. These two kinds of love experience, when looked upon from the standpoint of the natural family, are, respectively, appreciation and domestic activity. The introvert type tends to stress the one, the extravert the other. Both are necessary to the complete functioning of the family.

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WHEN lovers are thinking of marriage they are wont to protest or pledge to each other that their love, such as it is, will resist the ravages of time. A love which is only a golden moment does not meet their demands. Marriage requires of love a certain temporal extension; it involves a projection of love through time. The lover and his mistress may be content to accept love as a cross section of experience, but the husband and wife must try to imagine it as a profile extending through a course of years.

Love itself has an aspect of novelty and an aspect of recurrence. It includes an element of discovery and surprise (which corresponds on the physical level to the orgasm), and an element of sequence and development (which corresponds to parenthood). Both of these aspects of love should show themselves in a complete marriage relationship. But our traditions when they place such an emphasis on the need for a positive identification of the state of love before marriage necessarily envisage love under its aspect of discovery. And yet the need for permanence cannot be ignored. Therefore in the same breath with which a lover announces that his feelings are new to his experience, he will assert that they are not subject to change. He eagerly pledges paradoxes: that the flux of life is to be arrested, the course of time is to [p.129] be checked, that the future is to conform to this supreme present, and that love in its transitory aspect is to remain unchanged. The form of his protest reveals his deep-seated belief that time and love are not natural allies but potential enemies. His conception of love is such that he can only stand in helpless horror before the prospect that the day must come

When prettiness turns to pomp, and strength to fat,
And Love, Love, Love, to Habit.

If time operates to destroy or degrade love, its principal agency is habit. Life

processes demand recurrent acts, and recurrent acts tend to become habitual. There is no escape from recurrence or habit-formation. The parting kiss bestowed each morning loses its ardor and becomes a gesture; the little favor done daily becomes a matter of course. Even acts of sex, however nature may conspire to lift them from the current of this deadly stream, are none the less borne down toward the level of habit. Habit is at once destructive and creative. It quenches the sparkle of novelty in things, but it also frees us from preoccupation with them.

Elinor Glyn and her disciples are always warning women against the danger of habits in marriage. According to their notion, one must perpetually surprise and mystify one's husband, lest he seek elsewhere for novelty. Uncertainty is to be sustained with the utmost ingenuity. The encroachment of habit is to be resisted *à outrance*. The wife who finds herself "taken for granted" is already a failure.

This notion is a corollary of the tomcat view of marriage. The policy it proposes is suitable enough for [p.130] people who are playing with a transitory liaison, but it is both futile and inadequate in marriage. To resist habit-formation by coquetry is to try to sweep back the tide with a broom. The true principles of marriage require that habits be used, not that they be fought.

In order to make use of habit formation in marriage, it is necessary to distinguish between that which habit destroys and that which habit confirms. All the manifold acts which make up the routine of living together are persistently subjected to a process of degradation; they tend more and more to become automatic and to lose their zest. The bride and groom enjoy their first adventure in washing dishes together, but their older friends smile indulgently at their innocent pleasure, knowing how relentless will be the pressure toward degrading dishwashing to a chore. The chore may be cheerfully performed; it may become a treasured part of the domestic ritual, but it cannot continue through the years to have the same significance. That which begins as an adventure entered upon in exuberant spirit becomes a duty performed correctly and according to custom. It is in this way that habit attacks marriage routine. But habit does not attack benevolent activity, for benevolent activity is not a routine. It is not identified with any concrete and overt action, but with a motive, a dominant interest, which can be expressed in any action. The man who helps to wash dishes in the first months of marriage is acting domestically because his motive is to benefit his bride. If the washing of dishes later becomes a habit and a duty, and is no longer a matter of choice and decision, then this particular action is no longer benevolent. But new situations always arise and demand that choices be [p.131] made anew and interests be balanced against each other. No life can consist completely of recurrent acts. Without conscious choosing there is no conscious life. Wherever there are choices to be made the domestic motive can operate and domestic activity can take place. Time can confirm and intensify the habit of making these choices in the interest of one's marriage partner. But nothing can preserve the glamour of novelty in things that have ceased to be new.

It behooves those who promise or expect enduring love in marriage to have an appropriate conception of love. If they demand permanence in that which cannot last, they are only courting disappointment. Let them then recognize in advance that this state of mind which they identify in themselves when they fall in love is certain to change; let them avoid the risk of envisioning their love as a thing concretely expressed in certain symbolic acts – a kiss for instance, or a warming of slippers by the fire – for the significance of these routine acts will change as the years pass. And above all, let them realize that the only love which has meaning in marriage is the active process which goes on through a period of time, not the static condition of the mind which is preliminary to a betrothal or a wedding.¹⁴

[p.132] If love in marriage is identified with domestic activity, there is no further difficulty in acknowledging the possibility of permanent love. Love and time are allies. Domestic activity and habit supplement each other. The relation of domestic activity to habit is that of creator to preserver. Benevolent activity can begin what habit will thereafter perpetuate. A domestic motive initiates an act which is designed to benefit the marriage partner – the husband helps with the dishes or the wife gives her mate first chance at the newspaper. These acts, originally domestic, will later become habitual. They no longer utilize domestic motivation; they are among the things taken for granted. They become a part of the structure and organization of the family, as the hardened skeleton of the coral polyp becomes part of the structure of the coral tree. The growth and development of the family consists in the accumulation of just such habits and the fixation of just such routines. The life history of the family is the account of this process. It is in this wise that a family grows from youth to old age. It is in this sense that a family can be a product of the creative art of its members.

The process of habit formation is of course indifferent and unselective. Non-domestic acts can become habitual as easily as domestic acts. Bad habits are as easy to develop as good ones. In many families there is a rock-ribbed routine which responds solely to the selfish demands of one member, and is not in any sense a product of benevolent activity. Father gets two eggs, sits in the best chair, and receives valet-service from mother, whom he intimidates into obedience by using gruff words or displaying a severe frown.

[p.133] Even the habits which develop from domestic acts are not always pleasant. The miscarriage of good intentions is a familiar tragedy, and quite often a misconceived benevolence will become part of the habit system of a family.

¹⁴“ . . . love is not, as they say or give to understand, a crisis, a drama in one act. If it were nothing but that, an accident so transitory would hardly be worth the trouble of giving it notice. . . . But fortunately love, and by that I mean a faithful love fixed upon an object, is a succession, often long, of very different passions which feed life and renew it . . . the flame does not burn except on condition that it rises, lowers, rises again and varies in form and color. Nature has made provision for this. The aspects of a woman change unceasingly; one woman includes a thousand. And the imagination of the man varies the point of view. Upon a foundation, generally solid and tenacious of habit, the situation traces changes which modify and rejuvenate affection.” J. Michelet, *L'Amour* (Paris, 1859), p. 8-9.

The wife's campaign against some masculine foible or her attempt to improve her husband's taste in reading may become a persistent nuisance in the home. But as time goes on correction can be made of those errors which arise from a failure to understand one's mate. Montaigne wrote that they only can be friends who by being long together have learned to know each other perfectly. It is the virtue of young love that it experiments and of old love that it knows. The deepening of sympathetic understanding of each other, like the accumulation of habits toward each other, is a product not of love alone, but of time and love.

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ONE who is about to invest his life in marriage has no disposition to look for the consequences which ensue to the race or the world from marriage in general, whereof his own is an inconspicuous instance. That his own marriage, together with billions of others, may perpetuate the race and transmit the social heritage is a fact of meager importance to him. The Occidental does not marry in order to fulfill a public duty. In China, according to Keyserling, these general considerations motivate marriages, but this fact must be interpreted in connection with the submerging of the natural family in the Chinese household. Certainly in the Western World any man who should propose marriage to a girl out of regard for the interests of society or race could hardly expect to have his argument taken seriously. Our own day is especially hostile to the idea of making marriage a matter of duty and obligation; here if anywhere the thing must be done for its own sake.

Marriage is by no means unique in this disparity between the social or racial functions it fulfills and the actual motives and purposes of the individuals who engage in it. The same thing is true of business. A stockbroker does not open his offices in order to aid in the important function of distributing economic goods, nor does a street car conductor take his job in order to assist [p.135] in furnishing transportation to the community. However, there is this significant difference between the attitudes of a man in business and of a man and woman in marriage: that the men in business know exactly what they want, while those who marry are much less clear as to their purposes. The stockbroker wants "to make money," the conductor hopes "to make a living." They have been taught from childhood the meaning of business and the purpose of having a job. The bride and groom have received no such instruction; their purposes are more beautiful, more fanciful and more variable than the purposes of broker and conductor, but they are also less clear.

Can we not clarify these purposes, separate the possible from the fantastic, and discover that aim in marriage and that object in family life which have real and direct meaning to young people who are planning their firm? What must marriage give them if they are to regard it as a success?

It is fruitless to discuss the function or purpose of the family without establishing beforehand the point of view from which the discussion is to proceed. From the point of view of the human species as a whole, or of civilization in general, it

might appear that the family fulfills this or that function. But from the point of view of the family these same alleged “functions” might appear vain and meaningless.

We might imagine ourselves on the top of a high mountain, far removed from the turmoil of actual life, looking down upon countless little homesteads in the valleys below, and asking, “What end do these serve?” Around us would stretch the panorama of nature, its trees and its [p.136] grasses and flowers, and of these we might also ask, “What end do they serve?” And we would recognize the artificiality of our question, for nature has no purposes. Still we might fix arbitrarily upon some fragment of the totality of nature, and ask how all the other things contribute to the persistence of the selected fragment. There are some cows grazing in a little glen, and with reference to these cows we can easily discover the function of the grass, the trees and the homesteads. The grass nourishes the cows, the trees offer them shade, the homesteads supply them with shelter. Or again we can direct our minds to the whole human species, and inquire how all of these things which lie before us contribute to the persistence of the human race. The grass and the cows and the trees all have their importance in this connection, and so also have the homesteads, and the families which inhabit the homesteads. The family, it may be, contributes to the welfare of the race and society, but this does not mean that the welfare of the race and society are intrinsically the ends of the family. It is only the accidental turn of a query, and not the inevitable nature of the family itself, which can fix upon racial or social welfare as “ends” of domestic life.

We have defined the family, not as a social institution, but as something anterior to and independent of society. We are studying it, not as an element of social organization, but as a thing in nature. Hence we cannot judge it as if it existed for the sake of society; we must think of it as existing for itself. We have noted, furthermore, that family life has values which cannot be shared outside its circle. The family stands in isolation, as an autonomous system. Should we from the mountain top assign trans[p.137]cendent ends and purposes to the families, we should be denying the isolation and autonomy of the family. If there is an end toward which domestic life strives, this end must be something immanent within the family, not transcendent and reaching beyond it.

We leave the mountain top; we cease to inquire about the race or society; we come down into one of the cottages of the valley, and see a family sitting around the evening lamp. Here is an object in nature to be studied, as one might study a specimen of algae, a mollusk, a colony of streptococci, or a eucalyptus tree. How can we attribute an end or aim to this entity which is set before our neutral gaze? How can we know whether this family is “successful” or not? We would not ordinarily think of ascribing ends and aims to mollusks and streptococci. These things are what they are, and the only aim we can possibly attribute to them is the aim of continuing stubbornly to be what they are. The separate organs or parts of these things have indeed their functions; the valves, muscles, chlorophyl, cells, sap, neuclei, all have their ends in the maintenance of the

organism. Our concept of “organism” permits us to ascribe functions to the *parts*, but to the organism as a *whole*, studied in isolation, we can assign no functions whatsoever. Analogously, when we study the family *per se* the only functioning that we can discover is an interrelated activity of the members, not a service which the total family renders to something else. The functioning of the family is not a matter of what the family does or fails to do for the world, but a matter of what the family members do or fail to do for each other. The only end or purpose which we can properly attribute to the family is one which relates on the [p.138] one hand to the actions, on the other to the intentions of the members thereof.

Out of what combination of intention and achievement, of will and of act, is there compounded this thing which we seek as “success” in marriage?

From the point of view of the individual family member why should one marry at all? What contribution will marriage make to one’s life? What purpose is intrinsic to a marriage project?

To have children? But why have children? From the standpoint of the race, of course, they are necessary, and it is the “function” of the family to produce them. But from the standpoint of those who marry they are simply prospective members of the very organism which is under discussion. Why bring this organism into existence? To say that one marries in order to have children is psychologically less accurate and logically no more satisfactory than to say that one marries in order to have a husband or a wife.

There is indeed that important difference between the status of husband and wife and the status of children: the former are necessary to the existence of a family, the latter only contingent. That which is implicit in the sex side of marriage is not the certainty, but the possibility only, of having children.

The development of a technique of contraception in the Western World has tended to bring about a separation of the idea of marriage from the idea of child-breeding. It is safe to say that if only those couples were allowed to obtain marriage licenses whose primary object in marrying was to beget children, the revenues of county [p.139] clerks and clergymen would be seriously curtailed. But the old fact of contingency remains: the device used to induce fertility, be it a witch-doctor’s charm or a gynecologist’s diet prescription, is just as subject to uncertainty as the device used to prevent conception. And whether children are born of the union or not, the family continues.

It will be necessary to go more deeply than is here possible into the problem of values which confronts those who try to decide whether they want their marriage to be childless or fertile. In the meantime one cannot beg the question by assuming out of hand that the only object of marriage is to beget offspring. It may be that the logic of the marriage situation is such that childless marriages are inevitably failures, and that the procreation of children is a precondition of

successful family life. But even a fertile marriage may be a failure. A search must be made for some principles of purpose or function which will encompass the barren marriage along with the fertile, and which will apply no less to the aged families that have had children than to the young families which are about to have them.

It cannot be disputed that the total sex situation, which includes the possibility of children, has given the family its fundamental tone and character. But it may be that the family may have risen above its source, and that out of a child-breeding function it may have created a system of values which can exist without children. If this transmutation has taken place it is only another instance of that general law which Vaihinger once wished to formulate as "the law of the preponderance of the means over the end." The qualities of family life which originate as a [p.140] means for caring for offspring may have become ends in themselves.

Were it not for the development of a technique of contraception on the one hand, and the so-called "emancipation of woman" on the other, we might never have had to face the problem of discovering some broader and more universal principle of success in family life than the biological principle. Were it not for the appearance in civilized life of vast nonbiological value-systems, aesthetic and ethical, we might not be in a position to appreciate or understand any other function of family life than the biological one. But the facts as they stand in the Western World to-day indicate that the child-breeding function does not suffice to explain the family in terms of the purposes of its members, nor is the fecundity of a marriage an adequate test of its success.

In every civilization much of the actual intention of those who marry reflects the prevailing social code. They marry in order to secure that which they are taught to expect in marriage. This influence of social pressure upon the purposes of family members is evident in the attitude toward child-breeding. Married people tend to reflect in their own minds the community's appraisal of the importance of having children. In some communities large families are much esteemed and childless marriages looked upon with contempt. In other communities the parents of a large family are pitied, and the childless couple viewed without condemnation. Needless to say, a married pair will be more likely to leave children out of their calculations if the sentiment of the community approves of childless marriages.

In this respect as in others, the sentiment of the com[p.141]munity is often a product of some real social need. Among warlike or colonizing peoples fecundity will usually be highly valued; among peoples who are living near the limit of their food supply, or among those who have developed wide luxury tastes, social approval may be withdrawn from the extremely fecund marriage. This is the situation in some Polynesian communities and in American cities. The modern rationalization of this attitude is a comprehensive doctrine of population growth which teaches that the result of breeding up to the biological potentialities of the race would be unmitigated disaster.

It is not only with respect to child-breeding that the community tries to define the purposes of family members and to measure the success of families. Many elements of family life are subject to community judgment. Where polygamy is the rule, it may be that the man who has the greatest number of most valuable wives and concubines is accounted to have the most satisfactory family, just as the pair who have the largest brood of children may be looked upon as most successful in the community which approves of fecundity

The principle of conformity to conventional standards, however, is not a satisfactory principle of success in marriage. It is a principle which relates to the family institution, but not to the natural family. The scope and limitations, as well as the mechanism, of the community's influence upon the family members, have been analyzed in the chapter on Conventions and the Family. It is clear that the most important increments of family life go on beyond the reach of the community.

[p.142] Most of the judgments we actually pass upon some one else's family are a resultant of our own socially-given standards rather than an attempt to measure an absolute excellence in family life. If we discover that a traveling salesman living at Newark, New Jersey, has an extra wife in Omaha, we jump to the conclusion that his marriages are both failures, whereas it may be, for all one knows, that save for the intervention of the law both marriages are successful. Or again, if a wealthy banker maintains in the same city a wife and several mistresses, we declare without further inquiry that his family life is ruined. But if we lived in another society, we should draw opposite conclusions from the same facts. The Chinese hold that it is correct to yield to the mother-in-law the dominant position in the household; Americans regard such an abdication as lamentable or laughable. Wherever in our judgments on the success or failure of a marriage we find ourselves merely judging conformity to our own institutional rules, our attitude is blind, and leaves us helpless.

For it happens that at the present time our institutional rules [or family life are uncertain; our system of social conventions relative to marriage is changing under the pressure of criticism; the young people may be willing enough to conform and to accept conformity as a test of success, but how are they to choose among the contradictory marriage institutions which demand their conformity?

The ideal of monogamy and of contract marriage rather than purchase marriage they find well enough established in their milieu, but aside from this the conventions are in conflict. What of trial marriage, companionate marriage, [p.143] birth control, woman's place? To mention any one of the leading problems of magazine is to call to mind another instance where social guidance fails us, and where we must choose between conflicting rules, certain, however we may decide, that some people will approve and others condemn.

Conformity to convention is not a test of domestic values. The conventions which demand conformity are themselves among the things requiring to be tested. The confusion in social guidance which the Western World offers to those who

marry is evidenced both directly and indirectly. Directly there is a cross fire of propaganda emanating from different schools and expounding divergent ideals of domestic life. The slogans of free love, eugenics, feminism, and conservatism are irreconcilable. The ideal of eugenics, which stresses the biological significances of marriage, contradicts the ideal of free love, although Ellen Key tried to conceal this contradiction by pretending that children born of parents who loved each other inherited a superior endowment in consequence of the subjective state of the parents at the time of conception. Ellen Key's hypothesis, of course, has no standing in the science of genetics. The appeal which feminism makes for a sex solidarity among women is basically more opposed to the free love ideal than to the conservative ideal of woman's domestic sphere. The confusion of ideals is not only a conflict between conservatism and novelty, but also a conflict between contradictory proposals of innovation.

The indirect source of confusion in social standards of domestic life lies in the social, economic, and intellectual [p.144] that the services once rendered to an individual by his family are now rendered to him by other agencies. Professor Ogburn lists seven services which the family rendered to our ancestors, namely:

1. Economic
2. Religious
3. Protective
4. Educational
5. Recreational
6. Status-defining
7. Affectional

According to Professor Ogburn, it lies at the root of modern family disorganization that six out of these seven functions of the family are lapsing in modern life. People are coming to look elsewhere than to the family for these services, and groups other than the family are assuming these functions. A man's wife was his business partner in the day of the spinning wheel and in the environment of the milking shed, but not in the day of the can-opener and in the environment of the elevator and dumb-waiter. The religious meaning of the family was greatest when there were household gods to be worshiped; it was still great when the Bible was read by the head of the house while the children sat around the table, in silence; but in these present days religion is usually paid off, so far as the family is concerned, when the minister receives the envelope from the best man, or when the children are sent to Sunday School. The protective service

given by husband to wife has been reduced to the formal gesture of escorting her home from the theater after dark, while for all real protection against danger or violence one turns to [p.145] the telephone and the police. The training of children is committed more and more to a corps of teachers, and takes place more and more in institutions outside the home, from nursery school to college. The movies, the amusement parks, and the public playgrounds replace the home as a play center. Except for a few thousand families who preserve the traditions of a past age, social status is far more a matter of individual achievement than of family connection. There remains that service or function which Ogburn has called "affectional." Here and here only the domain of the family has not been invaded. No other social organ shows any tendency to usurp this function from the family; on the contrary, business and education are becoming constantly less personal and giving constantly less scope for the play of affection.

But the social conventions relating to marriage in the Western World have not yet adapted themselves to the new situation. People are therefore required to choose among competing standards, and cannot merely accept a prevailing standard. Were it not for this practical problem of choice, we might not have felt the need of searching for an absolute standard of excellence in family life, nor need we have occupied ourselves with the problem of defining the functions of the natural family.

Upon what universally valid principle can we act in choosing that system of conventions to which we will purpose to conform, and by which we will judge the success of a family? If, confronted by this question, we turn upon ourselves for counsel, a native urge impels us to grasp at one of the things that seems to us ultimate – happiness. Let us by all means be happy; let us conform to the rules of that marriage institution which will make [p.146] us glad, and turn aside from those conventions which sadden us. With happiness as a working standard we may go a little way, but we cannot go far, for happiness is not the kind of thing one can measure in a test tube. There is the happiness of the bacchante and the happiness of the contented cow. How can these be measured in and weighed against each other?

The test of happiness is difficult to apply. If marriages are happiest in which girls are "married young, treated rough, and told nothing," let us accept this as one of our marriage conventions, and let us then condemn the failure of those who marry mature women, treat them gently, and impart information to them. If the monogamous marriage is conducive to more gaiety of spirit than the group marriage, let us convert the Polynesians to the Christian point of view and induce them to give up their heathenish practices. If, on the other hand, it appears that the group-marrying Polynesians get more joy out of the thing than the missionaries, let the missionaries be converted. If we observe that young people who practice birth control are gay, while those unacquainted with the technique are morose and serious, we conclude that the practice of birth control is a commendable addition to the line of conduct which society shall demand of married people. If virginity before marriage results in unhappy sex life, we

will adopt the more hilarious practices of the numerous primitive peoples who do not permit virgins to marry, and we will condemn chastity before marriage as unsocial and unconventional conduct.

We may, if we wish, apply this test of happiness to all the marriage systems of the world and compare the joy of being a Borneo bride with the pleasure of being an [p.147] Eskimo husband. But our results will be inconclusive in two ways. First of all, the test of happiness is particularly hostile to the tradition of Christian marriage, for the Christian marriage has always been a compromise with sin, and has looked with contempt upon the mere joy of sex.

And then again, an institution cannot confer happiness. Happiness is a thing achieved by people individually. Let these young people accept whichever of the conflicting standards of conduct they see fit to choose – the problem of happiness remains unsolved for them. They still stand before life without any solid guarantee that happiness will be their reward for living according to the rules they have chosen.

If we no longer raise the question of conformity to socially-given rules, and the parallel question of selecting among contradictory rules, we are still tempted to judge the success of a married life by the happiness it grants. We wish to estimate the amount of pleasure enjoyed by the members of a family, and conclude that if this amount is large, the family is a success; if it is small, the family is a failure. We will discard all other classifications. We will not ask whether there were children, but only whether husband and wife are happy together. We will not inquire whether it is polygamous or monogamous, old-fashioned or companionate, but only whether the husband and wife enjoy themselves.

In connection with the scientific research conducted by Dr. G. V. Hamilton, a working definition of the happy marriage was drawn up by rating those persons as happily wedded who expressed satisfaction with their married [p.148] state. This definition proved to be useful in classifying and evaluating the experiences of the two hundred married persons whose testimony was taken as a basis of the research. From the retrospective standpoint this, after all, is the only test of a happy marriage. As a general ideal the concept is definite enough to be opposed to Keyserling's theory that marriage is essentially a tragic situation. But the definition is quite unserviceable in orienting the purposes of those who are planning to marry. Certainly the bride and groom intend so to conduct themselves that they will later be satisfied with what they have done. But what are the desires which marriage can satisfy? How are we to restrain those who demand too much of marriage, and thereby foredoom themselves to disappointment? How are we to educate those who fail to appreciate at their just worth the things that marriage offers, and thereby remain dissatisfied with their married life because they are blind to what it does for them? To propose as a solution to those problems the judgment that the thing men seek in marriage is happiness and that by happiness is meant the feeling of being satisfied with the married

state, is to mock the whole quest for guidance by arguing in a circle.

The purely hedonistic standard of domestic achievement is valid enough as a part of a general hedonistic philosophy of life. If we judge everything under the sun by estimating its contribution to our pleasure or our pain, we are justified in weighing marriage in the same scale. The arguments for and against this general hedonistic doctrine have been the commonplaces of ethical theory since the time of the Stoics and Epicureans. It is unnecessary to discuss them here, for they have no [p.149] precise bearing upon marriage as distinguished from other things in life. If we declare that the successful family is the happy family in the same sense that the successful plumber, doctor, lawyer, or admiral is the one who is happy, we have learned nothing of the special character of domestic achievement.

Sometimes this hedonistic view of marriage is offered, not as a part of a general philosophy of pleasure, but as a special analysis of marriage alone. It is made to appear that the production of happiness is the special duty of the family. If any one is seen to be happy, let his family life receive the credit for his good fortune, and if he is observed to be sad, let his family take the blame. This is, of course, an exorbitant demand to make upon marriage. If one of these dour men who rarely smile and never laugh is married, do we require that his character must change before he can be credited with success in his domestic existence? And must we regard all these merrily irresponsible people as proficient in marriage simply because of their unfailing good humor? These constant factors of character operate to make people predominantly joyful or sad, regardless of how well they are married and irrespective of whether they are married at all.

Moreover, there are always a number of independently variable external influences which operate to make people glad or unhappy. Can we demand of marriage that it counteract the effects of toothache or bankruptcy? When affliction comes from an outside source, it may be more painful to a good husband or wife than to a bad one. A man may feel a failure more poignantly because he sees that it affects his family. A personal attachment always [p.150] involves the risk that we may have to share sympathetically in pain which would not touch us otherwise. A family is a hostage given to fortune, which makes us more sensitive than we would otherwise be to the buffetings of an unkind world. How unfair, therefore, to require of marriage that it guarantee happiness to us. The hedonistic classification is misleading. Keyserling does well to warn us that marriage may be an essentially tragic situation. However desirable a happy marriage may be, we cannot accept the distinction between happy and unhappy marriages as the most significant one for those who wish to see clearly into the nature of marriage,

The purely economic distinction between richer and poorer families is a crude variant of the hedonistic classification. When people say of a girl that she is happily married, they often mean nothing more than that she is married to a man who is supporting her in comfort, and when they say of a marriage that it did

not turn out well, they often mean simply that the family cannot pay its grocery bills. Inasmuch as a certain minimum of economic success is always necessary in order to lift human life above the brute level, there is a material precondition to the functioning of the family. This fact must be taken seriously into account by young lovers, however impatient they may be of material obstacles to their desires. But once the subsistence level is reached, any further variation in the prosperity of the family has only a superficial relation to true domestic excellence. Dr. Hamilton, in his research on marriage, reached the conclusion that discontented wives or husbands who complain of money troubles in the home are usually making use of the money trouble as a peg upon which to hang some resentment [p.151] which results from a deeper cause, and that there is no significant correlation between financial success and marriage satisfaction.

If neither the biological principle nor the principle of conformity to convention nor the hedonistic principle adequately defines the functioning or measures the success of the natural family, where is a more adequate criterion to be found? Such a criterion is actually implicit in the definition of marriage and family, and needs only to be deduced from premises already established.

Marriage, it will be recalled, is a sex relationship considered in its aspect of duration. The time element enters into marriage as an essential part thereof, whereas children are only a contingent consequence. The roughest and simplest test of a good marriage is actually the endurance test. The first function of a marriage is to last. If the purposes of those who marry do not include the intention that the relationship is to persist through a period of time, there is actually no marriage at all.

Applying this test roughly to the marriages that we know, we ask of them: Do they last? If the marriage ends in a divorce court, we consider it a failure. Whenever other things are equal, the success of a marriage is directly proportioned to its permanence. A period of time is necessary in order that the family may gain an individual character and develop a distinctive organization by the successive laying down of new strata of habit. The qualities which are legitimately sought in domestic life are time-given qualities. The ideals and purposes which are proper to marriage are those which permit of permanence. True enough, people do not all live at the same tempo; it is possible that some marriages which last [p.152] only a few years may be productive of more positive domestic achievement than others which last till death. But aside from differences in the rate of living, the social convention or individual purpose which limits the duration of a marriage limits also its excellence.

For instance, there are the conventional ideas of the Moors of the Sahara, according to which frequent divorce is required. It is considered a disgrace to remain long married to the same person. One who has failed to divorce his wife after a reasonable time conceals the fact as the young American in a small town conceals the evidence of an illicit love affair. And again, there is a famous beauty whose merest flirtation is followed eagerly by the international press. Every two or three years she divorces one husband and marries another. It is

hardly credible that this woman's ideals of marriage are such that she enters upon every one of these marriages with an identical aspiration toward permanence, and that two or three years suffice in each case to disillusion her anew. Much more probably her ideal and purpose is such that marriage is to her a thing that burns itself out quickly. In so far as the time factor is concerned, the social convention of the Moors and the personal attitude of the actress are definitely inferior to conventions and ideals which seek permanence. This judgment is based upon an absolute and universal quality of marriage.

The time element, however, is not the only factor in absolute domestic excellence. There is at least one other aim which family life should attain. This additional aim is deduced from the personal character of the family relationship, just as the permanence aim is deduced from the temporal quality of marriage.

[p.153] Given the natural family, what is the necessarily characteristic activity or interrelation of parts to which we can give the name of function, and by which we can measure success?

Because the family consists of determinate members, the interrelation of its parts follows the laws of a personal relationship. This would be impossible if the family membership were substitutive.

Since the characteristic behavior of the family follows the laws of personal relationship, it is free, that is to say, it arises within total, unitary personalities and is not imposed by external circumstances.

Arising within a total personality this behavior is necessarily motivated, for it is in motivated behavior that the personality operates as a principal cause.

The quality of the motive in this behavior is also determined by the laws of personal relationship. It necessarily envisages another member of the family as an end-in-himself, a complete object of value and loyalty.

Thus benevolent activity, arising from a sentiment of paramount loyalty, is the characteristic activity of the family members. The success of a family can be judged by the degree in which it manifests this characteristic mode of conduct.

These deductions are, of course, implicit in the whole system of definitions thus far presented and discussed. The domestic man naturally appears as the ideal of conduct within the family. The success of a family is to be measured by the degree to which the members approximate in their conduct the behavior of the domestic man.

This is, after all, neither more nor less than that "affectional" function which, according to Professor Og[p.154]burn, is the one service the family continues to perform for the young people of the Occident. Let us imagine a family in which no members have the domestic attitude, and each acts solely for himself. If there is any exchange of services between family members the exchange takes place on a strictly measured basis of barter and price. No one allows the interests of any other member to enter into his personal calculations. Judged by external signs,

this family is normal. The neighbors report no scandal, a biologist observing the family notes the presence of children to whom, as the sociologist would testify, the social heritage is being regularly transmitted. An economist may contribute the information that the family pays its bills, and a wandering novelist may search in vain in this home for the sense of tragic unhappiness. But domestic theory is not satisfied. In the eyes of domestic theory, this family does not fulfill its functions. It may suffice as a breeding establishment, a school, or a hotel, but as a family it leaves the important things undone.

The normal young men and women of our day think first of affection when they think of marriage. Children come later; the economic argument is usually against marriage rather than in favor of it. Marriages are launched in affection with the purpose that the affection shall last. This function (described by lovers in an infinite number of ways) is for us the true function of the family.

In setting the purpose and estimating the success of a marriage two principal factors are therefore to be computed. On the one hand the intensity of domestic interaction; on the other hand the duration of the marriage. [p.155] These are two independent variables. A marriage might last long with a minimum of domestic interaction, or it might be quickly terminated, although it had been during its brief existence a field for the intensive play of benevolent activity and appreciation. The best marriage is that which is at once most permanent and most highly charged with domestic interaction.

[p.156]

WHEN the two authors of this treatise set their minds to the making of a theory of family life they hoped to free themselves from false standards, and to discover a consistent inner meaning in married life in terms of which they could measure their hopes and their achievements. If there is an art or a technique in marriage as there is in dentistry or civil engineering, it should be possible to know a good family from a bad one as one knows a good dentist from an incompetent practitioner. The trouble with so many of these classifications of families is that they fix upon the fortuitous and inconsequential aspects of domestic life, and miss its essential core.

There are, of course, as many ways of classifying families as there are conceptions of family function. The fecund marriage can be contrasted with the barren, or we can contrast the families which conform to our institutional requirements with those that fail to conform. Or from a broader point of view we can contrast various marriage institutions: polygyny, polyandry, monogamy. We can take happiness or unhappiness, these ultimate categories of psychology and ethics, and use them as ultimate categories of domestic life. We can classify families as rich and poor. But these classifications do [p.157] domestic excellence. None of them take note of the presence or absence (through time) of domestic interaction. The principles of domestic theory imply a new order of domestic types, a new way of envisaging success in marriage.

Let us go back to our original concept of the natural family as a kinship group

consisting of husband and wife with possible children, held together in a relationship of personality. This family functions to the extent that its members manifest toward each other the domestic type of behavior; domestic activity on the one hand, appreciation on the other. The distinction between functioning and nonfunctioning families is the fundamental distinction for us.

In the course of time each family develops an individual character or system, made up of interrelated habits and mutually understood meanings. Domestic behavior can enter to a greater or lesser extent into the formation of these family systems. The extent to which a family is functioning is thereby registered in its habit system.

There are four principal levels upon which the functioning of the family can proceed. These four levels correspond to the four ways in which it is mathematically possible to combine the two modes of domestic behavior. We will call these four levels of domestic interaction: (1) symmetrical, (2) asymmetrical, (3) unilateral, and (4) nondomestic or economic. Behavior upon each of these levels tends to develop its distinct species of domestic system, which can be known as (1) the romantic, (2) the pseudo-patriarchal (or pseudo-matriarchal), (3) the pseudo-parental or biological, and (4) the impersonal. These levels of behavior and these domestic systems are [p.158] ideal types which actual families approach but do not attain. They serve us, thereby, as standards wherewith to measure achievement and success in marriage. They afford us a scale by which we can evaluate different factors in a marriage situation. They give us a common measure by which we can compare different family institutions.

The four levels of domestic behavior can be illustrated by diagram. (See page 159.)

If each member of the family acts domestically and appreciates the domestic activity of the other, the family is functioning on a symmetrical level, and developing a romantic character; if only one member acts domestically, and the other merely appreciates his activity, the functioning is asymmetrical. If a member acts domestically, but his activity goes unappreciated, the functioning is on the unilateral level, and the resulting system is called pseudo-parental because it resembles the natural relationship of a parent to an infant. The lowest level is the nonfunctioning level. The relationship among the members is lacking in all domestic quality. The life of the family goes on as if the home were merely a market for the exchange of services. There may be equality between the members, but there is no manifestation of the domestic attitude.

In O. Henry's charming Christmas story, *The Gift of the Magi*, the husband sells his watch to buy a comb for his wife's hair, while the wife sells her hair to buy a chain for his watch. When both melt together in mutual appreciation of the sacrifice that each has made for the other, they share in the mystical gift of the Wise Men. This story illustrates domestic behavior on the highest symmetrical level, where there is cherishing and appre[p.160]ciation on both sides. Out of such conduct as this a family develops a romantic character.

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THE FOUR TYPES OF THE NATURAL FAMILY

SYMMETRICAL LEVEL: ROMANTIC SYSTEM

Activity Appreciation

Appreciation Activity

Illustration: O. Henry's story; "The Gift of the Magi"

or

Activity No response

No response Activity

This is an unstable variant of the Romantic System.

ASYMMETRICAL LEVEL: PSEUDO-PATRIARCHAL SYSTEM

Activity Appreciation

or

Activity No response

Appreciation Activity

Shaw's "Candida"; Ibsen's "Doll's House"; Barrie's "What Every Woman Knows". The ideal family of the Victorian age.

UNILATERAL LEVEL: PSEUDO-PARENTAL SYSTEM

Activity No response

Flaubert's "Madame Bovary".

NONDOMESTIC LEVEL IMPERSONAL SYSTEM

Neither Benevolent Activity nor appreciation / Neither Benevolent

Activity nor appreciation

Marriage of State; marriage for family alliance, for duty, for convenience.

[p.160] It is a matter of record in many family case histories that young people infused with romantic feeling toward each other will sometimes devote all their thought and energy to the service of each other, quite without noticing the benefits that they are receiving from each other. Eventually each one notices that his good works are unappreciated. The result is a disillusionment which lowers the level upon which the family functions, even to the extent of killing all domestic activity. This variant of the romantic system is therefore very unstable. The danger is especially threatening to the family which consists of two extraverts.

An illustration of the pseudo-patriarchal system is found in that family in which the husband is deemed the fount from which all good things flow, while the wife,

incapable of any substantial contribution, receives the good things bestowed upon her and responds with appreciation. Domestic behavior is especially likely to run on the pseudo-patriarchal level if one member of the family has a pronounced superiority to the other, physically, culturally, or economically. In this situation we find the clinging-vine wife whose economic dependence has become so morbidly overemphasized that she actually becomes a moral dependent, unable to face the most insignificant decision in her personal life without referring to her husband. There is also the hired-entertainer type of husband whose wealthy wife drags him around as a social ornament. If one member is for a long time an invalid in the care of the other, the level of domestic behavior is likely to be asymmetrical, with all the activity [p.161] on one side and all the appreciation on the other. The Victorian family, with its pale women and bewhiskered men, was likely to develop a pseudo-patriarchal character.

When it comes to be accepted in any family that all initiative must come from the husband, while the wife's role is merely to perform her set of customary duties and render thanks, then the level of domestic behavior is pseudo-patriarchal. If these roles are reversed as between husband and wife, the system is pseudo-matriarchal. A marriage between an introvert and an extravert is likely to function on this level.

When the level of domestic behavior is unilateral, the relationship of husband and wife approaches that of a parent and infant. The man who serves a selfish and unappreciative wife will excuse her faults as he would those of a naughty child; the wife who lavishes her love upon an unresponsive or irresponsible husband is playing the part of a mother to him, and satisfies the maternal side of her nature in her unthanked efforts. Sometimes domestic behavior drops to the unilateral level because of the profound preoccupation of one member of the family with some outside interest – the husband with his business, the wife with social affairs. A not uncommon instance of unilateral behavior is that of the family in which the wife, because of excessive attention given to the children, has come to neglect her husband, who none the less goes on making sacrifices for her. Generally speaking, however, the unilateral system is extremely unstable unless the relationship is assimilated to that of parent and child.

When domestic behavior is quite absent from the life of the family, the marriage is placed frankly on a profit[p.162]ivity basis. The husband is the meal ticket, the wife the housekeeper or plaything. Each one gets what he pays for and pays for what he gets. It may happen, just as it happens in the business world, that one member will occupy the more advantageous position, and may be able to exact more and give less than the other. In the extreme case the woman is a purchased slave, bought and paid for, and maintained at a profit to her master.

These levels of benevolent interaction are comparable to the marks on the levees which indicate the height to which the water has risen. And it is one of the complexities of the technique of marriage that it can apply itself both to navigating upon the level of domestic interaction that happens to exist and to manipulating the level. The married pair are like voyagers upon a stream of

their own creating. The level of the water limits in some ways the possibilities of their voyaging. When the water is low and shallow there are many places they cannot reach without going aground, and perhaps there are great dangers from rocks and snags upon the river bottom. All these things are to be taken into account by the prudent navigator.

If, then, he runs aground, it may be that nothing will save him but an opening of flood gates to raise the level. Such episodes are common enough in domestic life; a disaster suffered by one serves to shake the other out of selfish habits and to release a flood of sympathy and benevolence. Many of the stories of married life which are recounted more or less from experience by the professional novelists and the amateur gossips are simply accounts of changes in the behavior level of some family.

Thus in the life history of a family there may be [p.163] progress from a lower to a higher level of domestic behavior, or there may be retrogression. The marriage which is made on a purely business basis may develop a romantic level of behavior. The marriage which starts out romantically may deteriorate to a mere economic level of existence. The true measure of achievement and success in marriage is the level of domestic behavior attained and the type of family system developed. The most successful marriage is that which most continuously maintains domestic behavior at the symmetrical level and most nearly approaches the romantic system in its organization.

This gives us a scale of values wherewith we can compare individual families. We can use the same standard in comparing domestic institutions because these may exert pressure toward a higher or lower level of family life, although they cannot guarantee any achievement. This scale of values is not a mere expression of the current prejudice of the younger generation in the Western World; it is a scale of values which inhere in marriage itself, as a universal fact in nature, independently of transitory institutional changes or shifting habits of thought.

Let us consider a case history. All of Ellen's friends declare that her marriage was a great mistake, and those who knew Dick in college lament the evident fact that his marriage was a failure. These are the facts. Dick was brilliantly completing his advanced work in biology in a university, when he met Ellen. They married. He planned to go on with his work, while she helped to support the two of them. They planned not to have a child until Dick should have completed the work for his degree, [p.164] but their plan miscarried, Ellen's baby came a year after the marriage, the financial plans of the household were wrecked. Dick had to give up his college work and went into the crockery business as a wholesale salesman where he made just enough to keep Ellen and the baby in comfort. But Ellen was distressed. It hurt her that the marriage had caused Dick to sacrifice his career. She determined to find work, and save money, in order to make it possible for Dick to pick up his scientific work again. By taking a secretarial position, and paying part of the salary to have the baby cared for during the day, she was able to save several hundred dollars in the course of a year. But the strain was too much for her; her health broke down, all the savings were consumed in caring for

her, and the family came out of the episode heavily in debt, with the possibility of Dick's returning to his profession much dimmer than it had been before, and Ellen's health rendered permanently delicate. Dick adjusted himself to the new situation, put his best efforts into his job, and had risen to a position of some responsibility when his wife's illness made it imperative to move to a different climate. He sold his equity in his house, borrowed money from a friend, and set up as a small farmer in Arizona. There wife, and child blossomed in health, despite the poverty and hard work of the farm. It seemed that the child, now ten years old, was compensation for the life aims that had been surrendered on his account. The father saved enough to buy a microscope; the boy became interested in biology. And then, just fourteen years after the marriage, the boy was killed in an automobile accident.

There they are, no longer young, and their perfect [p.165] loyalty to each other has borne nothing but bitter fruit. A soft-paunched preacher may speak of their deeper joys, of their more profound satisfactions, but such language merely insults despair. We know this situation for what it is – a cold tragedy of reality, and no buncombe will convince us that it is otherwise. Judged by the test of happiness this marriage did not succeed. By the economic test it was an evident failure. Even biologically it has turned out to be barren in result, for these two people are left alone, to grow old together. But the family life of this pair persists throughout on the romantic level. It has been a succession of sacrifices made by one member in the interests of the other. Dick gave up his scientific career; Ellen used herself up in the fruitless attempt to restore it to him. With failure patent on the surface, the success of this family lies only in that domain where motive, not overt accomplishment, is the essence of things. Despite all its clear failures, this family has maintained the highest level of domestic behavior. It has done that thing which it is the special function of the family to do.

In the immortal dialogue at the house of Cephalus, Socrates undertook to prove that the just man in misery, whom every one thought to be unjust, was better off than the unjust man who had prosperity and good reputation. Proof of such a thesis requires that it be established that justice and injustice lie on a different dimension from pleasure and pain. No amount of pleasure constitutes justice; no amount of pain is equivalent to injustice. The two things are different as sound differs from light. They obey different laws, and we measure them by different measures. And so it is also with domestic behavior, [p.166] and the functioning of the family. It is a level of experience and achievement which has its own excellence peculiar to itself. To identify its excellence with some other is to try to judge the apple tree by the quality of the figs that grow upon it.

[p.167]

It used to be that when people were married they were thought to be through with making major decisions. Thereafter they had only to live happily together so far as possible and to wait decently for God to send them children. Now all this is changed.

No sooner are people married than they have another sweeping question of life policy to decide. Shall they have a baby? They regard babies as things that one can have or not as one chooses. Even if they are ignorant of adequate birth control methods, they still think of pregnancy as a state which they are free to accept or reject. Fiction writers no longer drop their heroines at the betrothal or the wedding, but follow them through this second crisis. Viña Delmar's *Bad Girl* is the story of a bride who finally made up her mind to have her baby, after friends had been advising this way and that. That a book entitled *A Child is Born* should be crowned by the French Academy and that Fannie Hurst should entitle her novel *A President Is Born* gives further evidence that our literary tradition is appropriating dramatic elements of the marriage situation which the older tradition passed over. Even the movies have developed a new pantomime for announcing a pregnancy. We are coming to such a pass that the friends and neighbors are less interested in knowing whether the new baby is a boy or [p.168] girl than in guessing whether or not it was wanted and evaluating the reports that it came contrary to plan. Most significant of all, there has come forward for discussion a proposal for a species of marriage contract in which the procreation of children is, at least temporarily, excluded from the intention of the husband and wife.

In the mores of other civilizations than ours the practice of abortion or infant exposure has been sanctioned as a means of disposing of unwanted children. The ancient Greeks used exposure; the Polynesians prefer abortion. The modern technique of contraception permits parents to control the size of their families without resorting to the violence of infanticide or abortion, but requires in consequence that they keep the thought of whether or not they want children constantly in mind. The only effective decision against children is that decision which is an ever present article of faith.¹⁵

There is a certain stultifying habit of mind by which [p.169] merely potential children are thought of as having supreme claims upon us, as if they were already lying in their cribs and reaching up their hands. This way of regarding the potentialities of the womb is much in use among elderly sentimentalists who wage a war of propaganda against birth control.

Of course, it is not the role of children in the family that is new; the novelty is the

¹⁵Contraceptive practices are practically universal among the professional and business people of America, though not yet universal in the working-class families. Dr. Hamilton found that all the subjects of his research used contraceptives except those who desired children, and those who were sterile. Katherine B. Davis found that their use was practically universal among college women. Dr. Cooper estimates that of a certain contraceptive device, no less than 2,000,000 are used every day. The survey of *Middletown* bore out this conclusion as regards business-class families. The 27 wives of the business class who gave evidence in the inquiry all made use of contraceptives. But as to the 77 working-class women, only 22 used contraceptives, and of these only 10 used devices that were as good, technologically, as those used by the business-class women. (*Middletown*, p. 134). The publishers of the latest and best book on the subject, Dr. Cooper's *The Technique of Contraception* (Day-Nichols, New York, 1928), believes that very few of the physicians of the country are equipped to give the best advice on birth control. Only two or three medical colleges give courses on the subject, and probably 90 or 95 per cent of the physicians have never received instruction.

need we now feel for understanding that role. Our attitude toward the coming of children into our own family now involves recurrent acts and decisions which we would like to base upon intelligible principles. Children are a potentiality to be decided about, not a *fait accompli* to be reckoned with. We have, therefore, a great practical interest in knowing how children fit into the functioning of a family and into the individual life scheme.

In the organization of the family the children fill a triple rôle. They are a kind of joint property, the cherished objects in the enjoyment of which both parents participate and by which the husband and wife are consequently drawn together. They are also competitors, competing against the mother for the loyalty of the father, against the father for the love and attention of the mother, against both for the things that money can buy. When they grow older they come to participate as independent personalities in the system of loyalty, benevolence, and appreciation which arises out of domestic interaction. As cherished objects, children tend to raise the level upon which families function; as competitors, they tend to lower it; as participants, to complicate it.

In a large family living in poverty a new baby is unnecessary as a means of drawing the parents together [p.170] and relentlessly insistent as a competitor. On the other hand, the firstborn child of a wealthy couple is all-important as a mutually cherished object, and quite insignificant as a competitor. And what part will the child play in the family when he ceases to be a mere object, a pet, a thing to be taken care of, and becomes an independent person? Perhaps the little infant which has enhanced the domestic quality of the wealthy family will grow up to be the spoiled child and irresponsible youth who injures the home he once helped. Often the baby which placed a strain upon the resources of a humble home becomes a key member of the family as he grows older.

How then are we to draw the line between the children that enhance domestic life and those which degrade it? If we think of children as infants merely, the question is whether the competitive potentialities of the child overshadow its capacity to serve the family as a cherished object. If we take the longer view and consider the whole period during which the child is with the family, we must note that the relations of children to each other and to their parents can be organized on any one of the fundamental domestic systems: romantic, pseudo-patriarchal, biological, or impersonal. The infant receives its mother's care but renders no thanks; this is the unilateral situation. The child is radiantly appreciative of the kindness it receives from its parents, but assumes no responsibility for their welfare; this is the asymmetrical situation. The youth begins to meet the parents on equal terms and to take responsibility and thought for their happiness. The movement from the lower to the higher level in the relationship of parent to child, and of children [p.171] to each other, is the excellence which the family derives from the growing up of its children.

Let us then examine these three aspects of the child's place in the family. It is at once cherished object, competitor, and member.

The place of children as cherished objects in the family is best understood if we compare them with other possible objects of mutual interest to husband and wife. Two lovers may find themselves drawn together by some aesthetic interest. They both like Dowson's poetry or Russian music or football games. The fact that they share this interest gives them means by which they can pleasantly do favors for each other. They will get along better if both like football or both like Dowson than if one has no interest in football and the other is bored by Dowson. It is a well-recognized fact that love thrives upon such sharing of interest.

There is another and somewhat higher level of common interest in a thing. Socrates observed that the man who has made his own fortune loves money with an additional intensity of feeling which men render to the things they have themselves created. If husband and wife by joint sacrifices have bought a home, or if they have planted an orchard or garden, they will derive from these things not merely the satisfaction of shared delight but also the satisfaction of a joint authorship. The thing in which both feel their common authorship may be a piece of property, or a song to which one has written the words and another the music. The aesthetic side of sex life is developed upon this level. The act of sex is an artistic product which both create and which both should learn to enjoy.

[p.172] Sometimes the work which bears the impress of cooperation is not merely a thing enjoyed and appreciated, but a thing which seems to have ultimate ethical value. The missionary pair who have created a flourishing missionary center where once the long grass grew, or the revolutionary spirits who have risked and suffered together for the world revolution, combine with the feeling of joint authorship a thrill of comradeship in arms. They are comrades striving together for an ideal. Their work is not of the present only, but of the future as well.

The baby appeals to its parents upon all of these levels. It is sweet, it is "cute," it is attractive, it is interesting as it wiggles and laughs. It is their own, and has taken its eyes from mama, its chin from papa. It has brought with it the possibility of further achievements in rearing it well, giving it every opportunity, making its life beautiful, starting it on the road to the presidency. And even beyond this it has some kind of an ultimate meaning which the parents grasp easily enough without the implements of metaphysics. How often the old doctor has seen the face of a new father light up with the tremendous realization of the place of a child in the scheme of things!

Most married people want to have children. Dr. Hamilton's research disclosed the fact that, of the two hundred spouses who were asked, "Do you wish to have children?" only eighteen responded with an unqualified "No." while ninety-two answered, "Yes," without reservation.

If we think of children simply as cherished objects, like old china, rare books, or great causes, it is clear that some families have more need of them than others. The lack of them may leave a great void in the domestic life [p.173] of those who know no significant object of mutual interest save sex play. But where a man

and wife have some more ample purpose which they pursue together, children are less necessary to them. Their lives can be well lived without children. It may even happen that children are an obstacle rather than an aid to the development of a high level of domestic existence.

Here we must consider the competitive aspect of having children. Where competition is present in a personal relationship, there is always great likelihood that jealousy will enter. And even when no jealousies arise, a child's competition may interfere with a domestic system. The mother lavishes all her energy upon the child. It takes up time and attention from everything else; especially it takes up the time that was previously devoted to caring for the husband. The baby's diapers are washed, but the husband's shirts are not ironed. There is a lapse in domestic activity, a change in the ritual of the home which is not merely a matter of new routine but of new interests. The level of family life slips down from the romantic to the pseudo-patriarchal. Perhaps jealousy supplants appreciation. This particular type of degradation is so common to experience that young mothers are often vehement in protesting that the baby will not make any difference in their relation with their husbands. In Viña Delmar's *Bad Girl*, Dotty, whose domestic life was already pseudo-patriarchal, declared when she decided to have her baby that she would continue to love Eddie just as much as before. But how can the competition of the child be met without destroying the balance of the relationship of husband to wife?

There is always at hand a satisfactory solution to [p.174] this problem. The husband must be so wrapped up in the child that he appreciates the things done for it as if they were done for himself. And the marriage partners must continue to regard their bond as paramount. Aside from this spiritual means, there are two more or less mechanical devices for accomplishing the same end. Nursemaids and governesses can take up so much of the load of the child's care that the wife's preoccupation is reduced to something more nearly equal to the husband's. This is the device of the wealthy. The young people of meager means who must both keep their jobs have worked out another solution. The husband and wife share in the drudgery of caring for the child, and come thereby to share a common attitude toward it.

When the fortunes of the family are such that the arrival of a baby involves heavy sacrifices, a different kind of competition is often introduced. Sometimes the sacrifice falls unequally upon the parents. The father may have to give up his recreation, or the mother may sacrifice a world of pleasant friendly contacts. Sometimes the sacrifices are shared equally. An ambition to raise one's social status is thwarted, or the family standard of living is brought below that which the parents had regarded as a minimum for themselves. These tragedies are so common, and the risk of them so obvious, that some of the younger married people are almost savage in their determination to beget no children.

The immediate effect of the arrival of a child upon the level of the domestic activity of the family depends partly upon whether it is received as a cherished object or as a competitor and partly upon the level of domestic activity already

reached by the husband and wife.

[p.175] In a family which is functioning on the nondomestic level a baby which arrives as a competitor, demanding sacrifices, threatens the profitability of the marriage and hence renders it unstable. But babies have a natural way of overcoming sales resistance to themselves. Even though they appear to be competitors when they arrive, they may quickly enough become cherished objects in which both parents can express their loyalty to each other, and through which the level of domestic conduct in the family is raised toward the symmetrical. This is a fact which so often leads older people to advise younger ones to have children as an antidote for selfishness.

A child is in every case a potent means of changing the level upon which a family functions because the habits and routines of a childless family are shattered when the baby comes. The baby requires the formation of new habits and the organization of a new domestic system. The change is especially marked when the parents have organized their play life in a way that takes them constantly out of the house, to theater or party. Unless they can find adequate ways of playing together at home, they will come to feel keenly the competition of the child. The husband has inherited from courtship days a standard gesture wherewith to give expression to his affection for his wife – he “takes her out”. Now the baby makes that gesture impossible, and nothing new is invented to take its place. The comic strip situation in which the husband’s play is habitually away from his home, in poker game or bowling alley with his male companions, is often a result of the disorganization of a romantic routine which came about when the children were born. The change of routine does not require a change in attitude and [p.176] loyalty, but may give occasion for such a change. The romantic type of family life may become pseudo-patriarchal, as in the case of the wife whose paramount loyalty shifts from the husband to the child in the critical years during which the baby requires constant attention. Or a pseudo-patriarchal type of family may become romantic when the new routine imposes such responsibilities upon the wife that she rises from the status of a plaything and pet to that of an equal partner in the home.

As the child grows to maturity he continues to be, as he was in infancy, a cherished object and a rival. In addition thereto he becomes something else: a member of the family.

Hitherto in this study we have had to do with personalities as completed facts, but in the growing up of children we have to do with the creation of personalities. The most adequate study of this process is made by the psychoanalysts whose doctrine, as Malinowski aptly puts it, is a doctrine of the influence of family life upon the human mind.¹⁶

Every individual first learns *self*, *love*, and *hate* in his family environment. His first experience of love of an object other than himself is parent-love. This

¹⁶See also J. C. Fluegel, *A Psycho-analytic Study of the Family* (International Psycho-analytic Press, London-New York, 1921).

is usually accompanied by an infantile idealization of the parent which embeds itself so deeply in the character that no subsequent experience ever cancels it out. Along with object-love and self-feeling comes the experience of thwarted desires and jealousy, which issues in an emotion of hatred. The emotions of child toward parent are thus ambivalent: they include in themselves elements of [p.177] loving and of hating. The first attachments which these emotions make (to mother or father) and the subsequent displacements of their object (ultimately from love of parent to love of spouse) determine the love life of the individual. The degree to which an individual is autonomous or dependent seems also to be determined by early family environment. The child who is helped too much becomes incapable of self-help. It is fortunately unnecessary here to engage in the discussion of such mooted points as the importance of sexuality in infant life and the universality of the OEdipus complex. These disputed points of psychoanalytic doctrine come up for review only in connection with the specific art of educating children. They are not directly engaged in the question of whether to have children. What we have here set forth is the generally accepted minimum hypothesis as to the development of a personality in the family.

The important thing is that children do develop personalities, and that this development takes place through time. Just as the growth of a love relationship through stratification of habits requires time, so also the physical and personality growth of children is a time-product. The physical make-up of the species determines the main lines of the child's development. As the infant ceases to be a mere bundle of pink protoplasm he acquires a capacity for feelings of appreciation (object-love for parents) and then, as conduct becomes more rational and autonomous, and as he learns different skills, he acquires a capacity for benevolent activity. The capacity for the opposite attitude and line of conduct is of course acquired at the same time.

We have little control over the tempo of this develop[p.178]ment which equips the child to participate on an equal footing with parents in the reciprocities of domestic life. We cannot appreciably hasten or retard the appearance of these capacities in a child. Thus the rate of growth of a child sets an absolute time-limit for family life. The rearing of offspring is a "work of long breath." For this reason, children bring with them into a family something of a guarantee of stability for a period of time. By requiring duration in a marriage they enhance the absolute excellence thereof, and afford husband and wife more definite tenure during which to build up family organization by stratifying habits.

As the children come to enter fully into personal relationships with each other and with the parents the family develops a subsidiary structure of amazing complexity. No two families are alike. The simple paths of loyalty between husband and wife are intersected by all kinds of transverse loyalties or jealousies between parents and children and among the children themselves.

The complexity of the fabric of personal relationships in a family which includes children increases the artistic difficulty of building up a good family organization. It is as if one undertook to paint upon a larger canvas with more colors and

a more intricate design. There is more likelihood of botching the work, but the success is more significant when it is achieved. The large natural family, knit together by many intersecting and well contrived bonds of loyalty and benevolence, is more durable because of its size. It approaches in this respect the super-family kinship group (patriarchal or matriarchal) which is immortal.

The structure of one of these natural families is an [p.179] artifact, the creation of which is subject to certain elementary principles of composition. The principal requirements are these: the family must develop an adequate love attitude on the part of the children. But the love attitude must be so contrived that its displacement outside the family, by the marriage of the child, will be disastrous neither to the parents nor to the new family which is established.

The ideal development of an adequate love attitude by the child occurs when domestic interaction of parent and child begins on the unilateral level, and rises through the asymmetrical to the symmetrical level of interaction. For a short time the relation between parent and child can display the full mutuality of the romantic system.

This movement of the children from the lowest to the highest level of domestic behavior is much more rapid and complete if there are several children. The only child, and sometimes the youngest child in a large family, is likely to remain over-long on the asymmetrical level. He expects everything from the parents and renders nothing to them. This attitude sometimes becomes so fixed in childhood that full mutuality is never learned. When the only child marries, the level of his domestic behavior often continues asymmetrical and his own family develops only a pseudo-patriarchal system. The lesson of mutuality is best learned in play with brother or sister, and then extended to the parents. For this reason there is an advantage in having one's children born within as few years of each other as possible, for they best learn mutuality from playmates of about their own age.

Since children advance more rapidly among themselves than with their parents upon the line of domestic inter[p.180]action, it follows that an ideal family of parents and children will consist of a number of subsidiary domestic systems. Father and mother maintain, let us say, a full romantic system between themselves. With their two boys of high-school age they maintain a pseudo-patriarchal system. But the brothers, as between themselves, interact domestically on the symmetrical level. Theirs is an independent romantic system. And they in turn engage in a pseudo-patriarchal system with their younger sister. Thus step by step, the children advance in the domestic scale.

The existence of these subsidiary systems in a family leaves the parents more free to keep open the straight path of loyalty between themselves. Their attention and interest is not so constantly deflected from each other as it would be if the children were not filling their own lives with brother and sister companionship. Thus an important principle of composition in family life requires a kind of balancing of child groups against the parent group.

The second principle of composition requires that the husband-wife relationship must always be dominant. While the children are young the solidarity of father and mother must be maintained in order to keep the confidence of the children. And when the children grow up this solidarity is even more necessary. For if the interests and loyalties of the family are so disposed that the children mean more to the parents than the parents mean to each other, the old family organization is difficult to unravel when the children are setting up new families of their own.

For the same flow of time which serves to build up a [p.181] domestic system in the interplay of love and habit, and which carries the children from one level of domestic interaction to another, must eventually withdraw the children from the parents and leave the natural family to be in old age what it was in youth: a union of husband and wife, alone against the world. The same principles of autonomy and isolation which made their own natural family the thing that it is must exclude them from the families their children set up.

Here again the significant distinction between primary and secondary family membership comes into play. Primary membership is necessary and coextensive with the life of the family; secondary membership is contingent and transitory.

Those who bring children into the world will do well to ponder upon the inevitable transience of their claims upon their offspring. This second parturition, whereby children tear themselves from the family, may be more painful than the first when they separate from the body of the mother. A kinship group institution like the Chinese or Jewish kinship organization may render it possible for parents to hold on to their children permanently, but such claims are enforced at the expense of the natural family, which finds its isolation and autonomy compromised by such institutions as these.

Parents have every chance to put their relationship with their children upon such a footing of love and respect that they will always be welcomed in their children's homes as well-loved friends and tactful guests. But they have no real claim upon their children, and if they try to assert such a claim they become not friends and guests but intruders. Dr. Hamilton's research tends [p.182] to confirm statistically the prevalent belief that visiting relatives endanger good domestic life.

These are harsh facts which have in them the seeds of many tragedies.

It repeatedly happens in modern psychiatry that broken-hearted individuals come for aid when the parent and child relation, having been abnormally close, is broken by other attachments on the part of the child. This is frequently the case when the son or daughter wishes to marry. "I wouldn't stand in the way of his happiness, but I feel that he is making a serious mistake," a woman will declare, trying to rationalize her desire to hold her son in perpetuity. "I'll gladly give my daughter to a man I can trust – but I don't like this young fellow," a man will say, with the conviction that his daughter

is a possession he can bestow or keep for himself as he wishes. . . . We have mistakenly thought that the parent and child relation was beyond question a permanent and enduring relationship. . . . A little thought can show the absurdity of our common attitude. There can be but one real love relation and that is the relation of marriage, the spiritual mate relation. The parent relation may, or may not, have elements of enduring spiritual attachment; but if it remains it exists not because of the physical bond between parent and child, but despite that fact and because of adult companionship.¹⁷

Certainly the parents can continue to cherish their children throughout life – the children owe nothing to the parents. The service which children can be expected to render to parents lies solely in their quality as cherished objects. Any other returns from them is without significance in the true scale of domestic values. It may happen that the rearing of a number of children turns out to be a profitable enterprise. The indigent old [p.183] mother who has worked all her life for her children may be given a comfortable place in her daughter's home, thereby finding her reward. But any insurance company can offer a more attractive and less hazardous plan for assuring comfort in old age. And those parents who try to make a quick profit on the children – the mill pappies who regularly take the pay envelopes of their entire brood or the farmers who are always keeping the boy home from school – are not thereby maintaining a higher level of domestic life. There used to be current a joke about the farmer who complained, when his son ran away from home to go to school, "It's downright stealin'; I raised that boy for my own use!"

The claim that the sacrifice of the parent imposes a debt upon the child is a ludicrous attempt to use a business-basis argument in a place where relationships are not on a business basis. The claim is bad enough in the case of an unwanted child. "Edward, my son, you cost me a lot of trouble. Mama and I were going to have a trip to Europe when you had to come along and spoil the whole plan. Won't you help me in the shop this summer, so that we can make enough money to take the trip next year?" There is something in this presentation which appeals to an unspoiled sense of justice. If Edward is placed under an obligation to which he did not consent, he recognizes that his parents also were tricked by nature without their consent. There is some sense to the idea of a child's obligation to his parents under these circumstances. But if Edward was planned for and hoped for and came in response to an ardent desire of his parents, there is a certain cheapness in imagining that he is bound by an obligation to which his parents had consented, but [p.184] he had not. Let Edward and his father plan their summer in a spirit of mutual consideration and affection. Theirs is a personal relationship of which the essence is sympathy; the fiction of a contract is woefully out of place. A business man who would try to establish an obligation in his favor by some comparable unilateral decision would be guilty of sharp practice. Parents who willfully beget a child with the

¹⁷David Seabury, *Growing into Life* (Horace Liveright, New York, 1928), p. 378.

idea that it will owe them something because of their part in bringing it into the world are like those canvassing agents who leave a vacuum cleaner on your doorstep and then try to make you pay for it. Children are not an investment, and cannot be expected to pay for themselves.

More subtle but almost as pernicious as the investment attitude toward children is the attitude of those who seek to achieve vicariously in their children a realization of the ambitions which their own lives did not fulfill. It is well enough to aid the child in any specific direction, but it is not fair to send him into the world charged with a specific duty inherited from his parents' failure. Edna Ferber has a story of a mother who, because she had been thwarted in her girlhood ambition to go on the stage, forced a stage career upon her unwilling daughter, almost ruining the daughter's happiness thereby. One can certainly take legitimate pride in any excellence which his children may display and in any success they may achieve. Their character and success may be a result of the parents' careful artistry. However, the true artistry of parenthood requires that the children be regarded as ends in themselves, and not as means to the achievement of some other end. And this is a fair test of the legitimacy of the parent's attitude: is he bringing up his chil[p.185]dren for some other purpose than their own welfare? If his object is to achieve some definite end through them, it is not a sound parental attitude.

And the children, regarded as ends-in-themselves, are in a sense ends that cannot be attained. The parent's hand is withdrawn from a task half done. The child may receive a sound body and know how to use it well, but this is only a beginning, a potentiality. Just as the very existence of children in a family is a contingency rather than an inevitable consequence of marriage, so in the development of the children through life they always present to the parent an aspect of possibility and hence of uncertainty. A picture can be painted, framed, and hung; a house can be designed, built, completed; but children and grandchildren are always reaching toward an unknown future and the stamp of finality is not set upon them. It is not good that the parent should see them reach the limit of their potentiality. The death of a child in the parent's lifetime compels the parent to judge of that life as of a thing complete. However beautiful the life of the child may have been, however well-rounded his achievements, the closing out of his life has, from the parent's standpoint, a tragic quality which is not present when the parent's death is seen from the standpoint of the child. For one of the things we desire in children is that undetermined stake in the future, that lottery chance in Destiny, which permits us to make of our own flesh and blood the persons of a dream.

Those who are deciding whether to have children or not must search their minds deeply indeed. The sentimental authors whose very typewriters are tuned to the "patter of little feet" and who preach the gospel that [p.186] children are necessary in all lives and under all circumstances are quite out of touch with the realities. Children do not fit in the same way into every life plan, nor do they make an identical contribution to every family in which they appear. There are

always advantages and disadvantages to be balanced against each other.

The value of children in the family, estimated in the scale of domestic values, depends first upon their quality as cherished objects as balanced against their quality as competitors and second upon their behavior as members of the family. This being their domestic value, it is fitting to consider further their value in terms of individual purpose, and their place in an individual's life plan.

For children are, in one way, inadequate as an aim in life. For a certain period they can engage all our artistry and workmanship. There is not one of our capacities, from money-making to self-discipline, that cannot be drawn upon to contribute to their welfare. But then the time comes when the children recede from us half-finished. We can neither apply a whole life to them nor regard them as our finished and definite accomplishments

At the same time the satisfaction in creating a child, taken in all its implications, with the art that can go into directing his education and with the moral discipline of living to keep his respect, has a kind of original value which does not seem to be derived from anything else. The sophisticated man tends to lose touch with natural values. Even eating and drinking lose their physiological primacy in his mind, and tend to seem merely the parts of a social ritual. Children restore to a life some of its primal contact with the soil.

Name any other object of effort and art, and the skeptical mind will pick its values to pieces and prove that it does not constitute an adequate purpose for a life. But in the creation of children there is a life-purpose which resists skeptical corrosion. For if the creation of a child is my purpose, then my object is not less real than myself, and is more lasting than any other object I might achieve. Time mocks the vanity of those who seek permanence in anything but life. Stone cities bury themselves in their own debris, the cultivated lands sink beneath the sea, the language of the song dies and is forgotten with the song itself. But something of the self of every parent carries on into the future.

[p.188]

THE marriage customs of the Western World attribute an enormous importance to the sex-monopoly aspect of marriage. Virginity is protected before marriage; adultery is prohibited afterward. Save for those who have remarried, no one can with propriety acknowledge having had sex intercourse with more than one person in the entire course of his life. Dr. Hamilton found only forty-one out of a hundred men, only fifty-three out of a hundred women, who had never violated this rule.

This ideal of sex monopoly, though historically traceable to an attitude of contempt for the world, the flesh, and the devil, has outlived the disintegration of the general otherworldly point of view of the Church, and presents itself to-day as a special ethic of sex, quite separated from any general ethic of asceticism.

Most of our positive teaching on sex has, until recently, focussed about the sex-monopoly ideal. The pressure of early education taught to youth one lesson

only regarding sex: that it was a forbidden thing. For the benefit of adults the community maintained a perpetual campaign against adultery and fornication. The aesthetics of sex was neglected and even the bare physiology of sex was comparatively unknown. Only so much thinking and [p.189] talking about sex was permitted as seemed necessary to protect virginity and prevent adultery.

A consequence of this social pressure has been such a linking of marriage and sex monopoly that the two are regarded as inseparable. The conventional courtship involves a promise “to be true,” *i.e.*, to refrain from intercourse with another. If either party to a marriage has had previous sex experience, the fact is one to be concealed or forgiven. If there is an infringement of the monopoly after marriage, divorce is thought to be the appropriate remedy.

This identification of marriage with sex monopoly explains the fact that the so-called “revolt” against marriage in Western lands is pretty much a mere attack upon the sex-monopoly ideal. The belief that marriage is “bankrupt”¹⁸ which finds expression in contemporary literature usually focusses on the contention that sex monopoly is indefensible or unattainable. It follows from the nature of these criticisms that any adequate theory of marriage must expound in some self-consistent fashion the relation of marriage to sex monopoly.

In former times it sufficed to denounce as libertines any who sought to defy the commands of the community in sex life. To-day such denunciations are inadequate. People are changing their attitudes. Dr. Hamilton’s research uncovered the fact that of his one hundred men subjects, only fifteen, and of his hundred women subjects only thirty-two, thought adultery difficult or impossible to justify. He classified the attitudes of these two hundred spouses toward adultery as follows:

[p.190] Conservative view: 47 spouses or 24 per cent
Liberal view: 124 spouses or 62 per cent
Radical view: 29 spouses or 14 per cent

An increasing number of people hold that the business in hand is not to determine whether the commands of the community have been complied with, but to find out whether the community ought to give such commands.

Broadly stated, the question is what values are gained or lost by reserving sex intercourse as an exclusive secret connived in by two persons alone throughout life. In these days which have witnessed the falling away of the ideal of asceticism in general, the rationale of the sex-monopoly ideal of marriage has come to rest chiefly upon three considerations: an aesthetic appeal, a jealousy danger, and a parenthood risk.

First, of aesthetic appeal: It must be recognized that coitus when artistically consummated is a supreme and unique instance of benevolent interaction. The

¹⁸V. F. Calverton, *The Bankruptcy of Marriage* (Macaulay, New York, 1928).

essence of the domestic values finds expression therein. There is reciprocity of tenderness and appreciation; there is isolation and personal intimacy. Everything that protects and develops these potentialities of the sexual act is valuable to marriage.

The value of coitus as benevolent interaction is increased to the extent that the act is guarded as a unique and personal possession which the husband and wife share with each other, but not with the world. Dr. Hamilton found that only 29 per cent of the men who committed adultery, and 17 per cent of the women, regarded their marriage as happy. The very characteristics of the sex act which render it so supremely significant as an expression of the paramount-loyalty attitude of [p.191] husband and wife render it dangerous to that loyalty when it is consummated under conditions of adultery.

closely related to these considerations is one of the arguments for chastity before marriage: It is urged that the exploration of the aesthetic possibilities of sex is an excellent coeducational experience to be reserved for the threshold of domestic life.

Sex monopoly, because of this aesthetic appeal, makes a positive contribution to the excellence of domestic life. Conversely, sex liberty, by introducing a rivalry risk, has a negative influence upon the level of domestic behavior. There is always a chance that a liaison with a third party may draw the loyalty of the husband or wife away from the family. Sometimes the withdrawing of loyalty is permanent, sometimes only transitory. And even if paramount loyalty is not for a moment withdrawn, and no significant transfer of affection takes place, it remains probable that the most transitory outside liaison may withdraw from the marriage partner some of the warmth of response that would otherwise be his, and therefore establish competition in a domain which, in the best interests of the natural family (because of the unique potentialities of coitus as benevolent interaction), should be beyond the reach of competition.

In addition to rivalry risk a parenthood risk is involved because promiscuous liaisons on the part of the wife leave the husband uncertain whether the offspring is biologically his own, and the uncertainty may ruin the role that children play in the family life. The husband's promiscuity may confront the wife with a call to make sacrifices for some illegitimate child toward which she has no personal attachment whatsoever. Where the sex [p.192] connection is intended to be transitory, that is to say, where no real marriage takes place, the parenthood risk is especially serious because of the difficulty of providing for the child. The development of contraceptive technique has diminished but not eliminated the parenthood risk in sex liberty.

Before casting up the account and reckoning in terms of domestic values the costs and credits of sex liberty, it must be noted that there are at least four distinct ways in which the sex-monopoly ideal can be violated, and that each type of violation has consequences peculiar to itself. Two of these types of sex liberty involve a simultaneous plurality of wives or mistresses, husbands or

lovers, and the other two of them a consecutive plurality.

One who is having more than a single sex-love affair going on at the same time may be either adulterous or polygamous – or neither. Whether his situation is to be described by one or another of these terms depends primarily upon whether the relationships are permanent or transitory. If a sex relationship is permanent, if its duration aspect is dominant, then it follows from the fundamental definitions of the principles of marriage that the union must be regarded as a marriage, and the persons as members of a natural family. The marriage license is, of course, not the decisive thing. If a person who is continuing in such an enduring relationship should indulge in a transitory affair, his action must be regarded as adultery. But if the relationship with the additional man or woman is in like degree permanent and enduring, the situation cannot be defined as adultery, but must be called polygamy. The laws and conventions laid down by the [p.193] environing society seem powerless to prevent true polygamy, however they may avoid giving legal recognition thereto. A man who maintains wife and mistress together on his great country estate, and another who rents one expensive apartment for his lawful mate and another equally expensive one for his equally permanent mistress, are both just as much the heads of polygamous families as is any Moslem sheik or Indian nabob. The distinction made between the transitory liaison and the permanent attachment is here the fundamental one.

If neither attachment has a permanence aspect, the principles of marriage are not directly engaged.

Somewhat more readily tolerated in Occidental civilization is a plurality of liaisons which follow each other consecutively, provided each liaison is registered in a wedding, and its termination told off by means of a divorce. Since the legal and institutional aspect of marriage does not give the measure of its more universal significance, the violation of sex monopoly involved in a series of matrimonial adventures is not fundamentally different from the violation involved in a series of unions without legal marriage. The principal difference between absolutely unrestricted free love and easy divorce at the wish of either party is simply that in the latter case the man and wife take the community more fully into the secret of their intentions. Thus we can regard all instances of a union which lasts for a time only and is then supplanted by another union as belonging to a distinct class of violations at the sex-monopoly ideal, for which we suggest the name “love-tenure marriage”

For these marriages which are designed to end in divorce-at-will, or these free-love unions, are usually [p.194] based upon a philosophy of love which implies that love can unaccountably depart from a human relationship, leaving the two ex-lovers no course but to part company. The permanence of marriage is thus sacrificed in order that marriage and love may always coincide. Quite different in spirit and in practice is the revision of our code of sex morals which aims to permit experimental sex relations until permanent marriage takes place. The new code asserts that virginity need not be maintained until a permanent mate

is found. This ideal of conduct used to be tolerated as a standard for men only. “A young man must sow his wild oats,” was the saying. The novelty of to-day is to see the standard proposed as one to be equally applicable to men and women. Dr. Hamilton found that only forty-six out of the hundred men and sixty-five out of the hundred women of his research were virgins at marriage.

Here again we must beware of the danger of confusing the vital elements of a marriage relationship with its merely institutional forms. Given the situation as it stands in Occidental lands, the community is most interested in demanding that some kind of a wedding ceremony should mark any sex experiment, and, in fact, that the wedding should intervene before coitus takes place. From the standpoint of the more general principles of marriage decisive importance does not attach to the fixing of the exact point in the development of an experimental relationship where the wedding ceremony should occur, or even in the question of whether or not there is any wedding ceremony at all. The important distinction is not the one that the neighbors make between coitus in wedlock and out of it, but rather the one that inheres in the [p.195] mind of the participant: the distinction between experimentation on the one hand and the establishing of something permanent on the other. Thus the distinction between sex experiment cloaked by wedding and experimentation not so covered can be disregarded.

Sex-experiment and love-tenure marriages, while alike in that they permit a sequence of sex partnerships, are still to be distinguished from the Don Juan pattern of sex life, which lays itself out as an infinite series of equally transitory episodes of conquest. This is the way of life of the true harlot or the perfect libertine: it is not without its beauty – as witnesses the story of Gengi – but it is not marriage. It is a perpetual quest for the new experience – perhaps a quest for perfection. It is inevitably impermanent. Marriage does not enter at all into such lives, even though (as in Molière’s *Don Juan*) a wedding marks every conquest. From the standpoint of the principles of marriage, this basis of sex life is hardly to be taken into account, except in so far as the Don Juans interfere with the marriage destinies of others.

In the flow of change that carries every life in its current, it can happen that any one of these types of sex liberty can merge into another, or can become monopolistic in fact. The transitory liaison or the experimental affair can become permanent. The love-tenure marriage can turn out to be a life-tenure marriage; adultery can become polygamy, and the polygamous family, by the lapsing of all but one connection, can revert to a monogamous basis.

Taking into account the possibility of such transitions as these, the different types of sex liberty, simultaneous and consecutive, permanent and transitory, experimental [p.196] and love-tenure, must make each its own bargain with the sex-monopoly ideal.

To begin with, there are certain costs regularly to be assessed against the notion that sex monopoly is a supreme end of married life. So far as we can tell, human experience has pretty well demonstrated that absolute sex monopoly

enforced upon both partners in monogamous marriage is an ideal rather than a practice. Dr. Hamilton's findings, that twenty-eight out of the hundred men and twenty-four of the hundred women had committed adultery, are significant in this connection. Sex liberty of one kind or another is certainly common enough to be regarded as a normal rather than an abnormal element in modern life. Conditions vary, of course, in different places and in different social classes. With regard to this situation, a general theory of marriage must answer the question whether it is preferable to modify the ideal in conformity with the practice or to continue the seemingly vain attempt to bring the practice into line with the ideal.

The case against the sex-monopoly ideal is not so much its relative inaccessibility as the gratuitous difficulties it introduces into married life. The mere fact that an ideal is not attained would not constitute a reason for abandoning or compromising it: perhaps it is necessary that ideals should lie beyond the scope of practice; otherwise they would be mere descriptive categories and not ideals at all. But we can demand of an ideal that it lead us toward the most important and significant things, not diverting our attention to superficialities and trifles. We can also require of it that it become not a trap for us, whereby we bring on our own ruin.

[p.197] The baneful effect of the sex-monopoly ideal appears in two forms: first, in the form of certain measures taken to enforce monopoly, and second, in the form of certain penalties exacted when monopoly is violated. The costs of the enforcement measures must be borne whether or not there is in fact a breach of monopoly.

The enforcement measure most effectively used to prevent the "simultaneous" type of sex liberty is a strict taboo which exaggerates and intensifies the rivalry risk already present in adultery and polygamy. Jealousy, a by-product of love, furnishes a driving force which impels each marriage partner to resent sex loyalty. Taboo, the socially established prohibition, fixes upon adultery or polygamy as a specifically objectionable act and defines every adulterous act as a tort against the lawful wife or husband. The combination of these, individual jealousy plus social taboo, causes each individual to tie up his own self-respect with the sex fidelity of his spouse. This third element is illustrated in the jokes about cuckolds which provide so much of the comic relief in sixteenth century literature, in the notion that a wife's faithlessness deprives the husband of his "honor," and in the so-called "unwritten law" which even in modern times makes it difficult to convict a "wronged" husband if he murders his wife's lover.

The taboo on adultery, together with the social convention whereby punishment for violation of the taboo is visited not only upon the violator but upon the spouse as well, serves to intensify the jealousy attitude. Jealousy is indeed an irreducible fact in personal relationships. It appears as a consequence of competition for the loyalty of a personal object of affection. It expresses the dis[p.198]satisfaction of the self when the personal relationship to the other is not closed and complete. It is aroused by a child in the family, by relatives, by

friends. But when the competitor is a child, relative, or guest, jealousy masks or transforms itself in deference to social convention. Only when the competitor is a rival lover does convention permit the complete unmasking of the feeling of jealousy. If conventions required as much self-discipline in one's attitude as rival for the affection of a spouse as one must maintain in tennis, politics, or business, marriages would be better able to survive episodes of adultery or suspicion of adultery.

The sex-monopoly ideal operates, therefore, in a vicious circle. The social taboo stimulates jealousy and resentment; jealousy and resentment, thus stimulated, render adultery destructive of marriage. The prospect that adultery will mean divorce, and the total destruction of a family, generates new fears which further sharpen jealousy and resentment. The feeling of insecurity makes it more difficult to endure humiliation and loss of face.

To the extent that the marriage partners accept this system of convention and taboo, they accept also the consequence that every violation of the sex-monopoly code is a violation of the engagement of paramount loyalty. It is a symbol of disloyalty, a token that some other interest than that of husband or wife has been preferred.

The destructive effect of this emphasis on exclusive sex possession cannot be avoided by merely refraining from adulterous connections, for the fears which are engendered extend to nonsexual attachments which husband or wife may have. Pleasant and profitable friendships [p.199] may have to be limited or sacrificed in deference to the duty of forestalling all suspicion, and such restrictions, however rigorously they be adhered to, may have a galling effect upon the spirit. Often the most ridiculous jealousies are implemented and fostered by the sex-monopoly ideal. A jealousy will fly back to the years before marriage – even to the years before acquaintance – and concern itself with the early chastity of the present spouse. Here a wife flies into a passion if her husband chats for a moment with a female clerk, and there a husband tries to keep his wife secluded in his apartment as if it were a harem. And again there are unfounded and undefined forebodings of disloyalties that may occur in the future. Fantasy conjures up a correspondent to answer for a spouse's imaginary misconduct in a hypothetical court of law. All this focussing of thought upon the enforcement of a right is contrary to the spirit of marriage.

The measures used to enforce virginity till marriage are equally costly, and like the anti-adultery measures, they penalize alike those who obey and those who offend. If mating is postponed till long after puberty, one of two methods must be pursued in order to forestall sex experience. The surveillance method, as it is used in protecting the virginity of women in Mediterranean countries, is not only costly in time and effort, but also involves a sacrifice of the moral responsibility of the person supervised. On the other hand, this method dispenses with the need for building up inhibitions which will later interfere with the enjoyment of sex. The alternative method, used especially in countries in which the Teutonic stock has been drilled in the Puritan tradition, is the [p.200] method of moral

restraint. Certain negative attitudes toward sex are so strongly instilled into the youth that they are inspired to protect their own chastity. The effect of these attitudes is often injurious, as psychiatry attests. The Hamilton research revealed that forty-six out of one hundred married women had unsatisfactory sex lives in the sense that they experienced no orgasm in coitus. Of these, twenty had been diagnosed at one time or another as seriously psychoneurotic. Only one of the fifty-four women whose sex lives were adequate had ever been regarded as psychoneurotic. Attitudes which are useful in preserving virginity are deleterious in marriage.

The mischievous effects of these virginity-protecting inhibitions are especially marked in the case of the girl. They mislead her thinking upon marriage, either by inculcating the notion that carnal things are vile or by overemphasizing the supernatural interpretation of the nuptial night, which magically transforms a sinful horror into a lawful delight. In the first instance the development of a healthy aesthetics of sex is handicapped; in the second instance the fantasies of the schoolgirl theory of marriage are encouraged.

The harmful effect of the virginity standard upon the man is likely to appear in the form of a dissociation of feelings of tenderness and respect from feelings of sexual enjoyment, so that he becomes unable to cherish any woman whom he enjoys. As a result of masturbation fantasies on the one hand, and of “the association, in thought or deed or both, of sexual practices with prostitutes” a “moral degradation of the sexual object” takes place.

[p.201] . . . when later in marriage the young man endeavors to unite esteem and tenderness with sexual passion, he may find that the dissociation between these elements of love has grown too wide and fundamental to be overcome, so that one or other of these requisites of a complete and happy married life has necessarily to be sacrificed. As a result of this a man may marry a woman whom he is prepared indeed to cherish, honor and esteem, but toward whom (for this very reason) he feels himself but little attracted in a purely sexual sense; in which case he will often be tempted after a while to seek a more complete degree of sexual satisfaction elsewhere. Or else, should the directly sexual trends prevail, he may select a partner who is inferior to him in some important intellectual, moral or social respect, thus paving the way for a married life in which many of his more sublimated tendencies, desires and aspirations are doomed to suffer permanent lack of gratification.¹⁹

¹⁹J. C. Fluegel, *The Psycho-analytic Study of the Family* (The International Psycho-analytic Press, London - New York, 1921), p. 110. Freud's hypothesis that this dissociation is a direct result of infantile incestuous desires and jealousies seems to the writer far-fetched. The phenomenon, common enough, would seem to be sufficiently accounted for by the strong anti-sexual bias in the training of children – a bias which is motivated by the desire to keep the children chaste till marriage.

The enforcement of the monopoly ideal with respect to attempts at love-tenure marriages is accomplished largely by strict divorce laws and penalties imposed for desertion. Desertion and divorce are the equivalent means by which those unions are terminated wherein love has lapsed. Spectacular instances of unhappiness in marriage, life tragedies in which the bond of marriage has become a spirit-breaking fetter, have been exposed in fiction and in propaganda. It was here that the attack on sex monopoly was first opened in modern times, and it is here that the attack has been most successful. Divorce and remarriage have achieved a degree of social recognition [p.202] not yet accorded to adultery, polygamy, or unchastity before marriage.

And after this price is paid for the attitudes that are expected to enforce sex monopoly, it will often happen that enforcement is lax and desultory. Truly, "the flesh is weak"; impulses break through the restraints which it is intended to impose upon them; the pleasure principle triumphs over the reality principle and attains a momentary equilibrium at the sacrifice of future content. Phrase the thing as you will in the language of all the schools from Aristotle and Augustine to Freud and Watson, and the fact remains that these prohibitions do not successfully prohibit. Despite the price paid for sex monopoly, we have still to reckon with sex liberty.

If a fair hearing be given to the offender against the code, it will sometimes transpire that conformity requires sacrifice. Even after marriage sex cravings may remain unfulfilled and thus haunt and disturb the mind. Sometimes this is only a transitory condition, as when separation or illness imposes upon one partner a temporary period of continence. Sometimes it is permanent, as when the husband and wife differ greatly in sexual vigor. Frigidity in women, and in men the dissociation of respect from enjoyment of sex, may ruin the whole sexual side of a marriage. How often in human experience a strong sex attraction toward some siren or charmer seems to impose itself unsought upon a person whose intention is to conform to the monopolistic standard, but who is compelled by this event to stage a struggle between desire and will! Every one feels in some way the conflict between desire for security on the one hand and the wish for novelty on the other. How far these strains and tensions are the [p.203] necessary lot of mankind, and how far they are the product of disjointed institutions and environmental accidents, is quite uncertain. Many will be found to assert that man is by nature polygamous, and monogamous marriage a restraint upon his natural disposition. But this is pure speculation, which has never been controlled by scientific investigation. In fact, it is doubtful whether psychology is at present equipped to explore such a question as this.

The pressure of unfulfilled cravings in the case of the virgin is increased by an important element of curiosity, To remain chaste is to remain ignorant. Moreover, the courtship institutions which place upon the individual the full responsibility for winning his or her own mate penalize the person who cannot flirt. But flirtation in a land where youth has freedom of automobile transportation quickly gets out of hand. The petting party is intended to play with tumescence but

stop short of coitus; actually it often goes beyond its self-drawn barrier. Our confused institutions set for young people a difficult course to steer between the Scylla of coldness and the Charybdis of unchastity.

It then, yielding to these pressures, recourse is had to sex liberty – adulterous liaisons to meet transitory stresses, polygamous relationships to relieve permanent tensions, experimental relationships to satisfy the young, and an easy transition from one spouse to another to break the marriage fetter – how well or ill can these forms of sex liberty be reconciled with satisfactory domestic life?

The effect of adultery upon domestic life depends principally upon the meaning that husband and wife attach to [p.204] adulterous acts as symbols of disloyalty. If society has taught them that adultery is the supreme disloyalty, and they have constructed no other view for themselves, then the destructive effect of sex liberty upon their family life will be great and inevitable. The level of domestic interaction will be automatically lowered as paramount loyalty vanishes. More than that, it is likely to be taken for granted that adultery destroys marriage and leaves the injured party no choice but separation and divorce. This tragic attitude is due to the interpretation given to adultery, not to the intrinsic qualities of the adulterous act. The divorce for which “infidelity” furnishes ground is really due not to misconduct alone but also to a socially induced sensitiveness. Thus a double disaster follows from adultery when it is interpreted in the light of the sex-monopoly ideal. The level of domestic behavior is lowered and the duration of the marriage is threatened. The two basic values of marriage are thus sacrificed.

If marriage makes the extreme adjustment to this pressure towards sex liberty it changes from a monogamous to a polygamous basis. The effect of this change upon family life is not merely a reflection of social conventions, as these have determined the symbolic meanings of acts. It is also a definite change in the structure of the family. And this change in structure involves a tendency toward a lower level of domestic interaction.

The polygamous family, analyzed in terms of domestic theory, is comparable to a monogamous family which has come to include adult children. In both cases there is an induction of additional members into an already existing family. With the children the induction is gradual; with additional wives or husbands it is more sudden. The children are only secondary members; the wives and husbands are primary. In both cases the larger number of complete personalities engaged in the domestic relationship renders the system of loyalties more complex and tends to confusion. But when the additional members are wives and husbands rather than sons or daughters, there is likely to be more jealousy and less benevolent interaction developed between them. For the children have had occasion to develop affection for each other, whereas the natural rivalries of husbands and wives are not so screened.

Moreover there is no place in the polygamous system [or paramount loyalty. Paramount loyalty to one spouse generates an equivalent counteracting jealousy

in the other. With children it is otherwise. They are not forced into jealousy by the paramount loyalty of father and mother to each other, because this inter-parental loyalty takes the form of benevolence to the child. For the attitude of husband and wife to their child can reflect the idea of joint possession, of cooperative cherishing. But the attitude toward an additional spouse is not likely to be colored by such an idea.

Finally, if the presence of adult children in the family should happen to bring about some baneful confusion of loyalties, this confusion will tend to dissolve away in time as the children set up their own families. But the confusion between rival wives or husbands does not terminate itself; rather it goes on increasing in intensity unless dulled by habit. Therefore benevolent interaction in the polygamous family tends to sink to a low level.

Some polygamous situations are better described by comparing them to membership in two distinct families. [p.206] A man has one family in Philadelphia and another in Memphis. His position is comparable to that of a husband or wife who feels too strong a loyalty to the parental household. There is a confusion of loyalties and hence a lowered level of domestic interaction.

The lowered level of benevolent interaction is the penalty paid for sacrificing the sex-monopoly ideal. There is no sacrifice of duration.

When duration as well as domestic interaction is sacrificed, the result is comparable to a love-tenure marriage. If because of an adulterous episode, or in resentment at a polygamous situation, a marriage is broken up, the divorcees will say of their broken home that rivalry and lapsing of true love had made it impossible to continue together. Retrospectively at least, they will think that marriage may properly last only so long as love endures. This notion appears among us not only as a retrospective rationalization of domestic disaster but also as a project for a new norm of conduct in marriage. The wedding vow is to be changed to read, "As long as ye both shall *love*"; marriage in general is to be placed on a love-tenure basis. What, in terms of domestic theory, is the consequence of this type of sex liberty?

Just as polygamy sacrifices benevolent interaction but retains permanence, so love-tenure marriage purports to sacrifice permanence in the interest of benevolent interaction. Rather than tolerate a unilateral level of domestic behavior (with all active affection on one side), or a nondomestic level of behavior (from which all evidences of affection are absent), it is proposed that the marriage should be terminated, and whatever habit systems or memories it may have accumulated relinquished.

[p.207] This innovation is the most attractive of all the projected modifications of the marriage ideal, because it attacks one of the marriage values in the name of the other. It seems to require of marriage everything or nothing: either the full romantic system of organization, or divorce.

The danger underlying this sex-liberty ideal is that it may misconceive the true nature of domestic interaction and fall into the trap of using the word love in

its word-magic sense. Although those who adhere to this ideal of sex liberty pretend to enormous sophistication, they are only a step removed from the most naive schoolgirl theorist. They conjure up and make use of a conception of love which is not adequate for the purposes of marriage. Love is regarded as a feeling which comes upon one, an event which occurs independently of willful action, a state which one must passively accept if it appears, and as passively regret if it departs. Concerning this kind of love there is no sense in promising anything, for the will is not operative in its business. One cannot promise, but only prophesy. One cannot commit oneself to a future line of conduct, but only testify to a present condition. A conception of love from which the element of will-commitment is so conspicuously absent is a useless anomaly in marriage.

The weakness of the love-tenure marriage ideal is therefore not alone that it requires a sacrifice of permanence, but also that it may imply a misconception of the nature of domestic interaction, so that permanence is sacrificed not to a true marriage value, but to a phantom value which belongs rather to courtships and love affairs.

“Companionate marriage” has become a catchword, [p.208] spoiled by too much misuse. When M. M. Knight coined the expression, it meant a marriage which was intended to be childless, at least for a time. When Judge Lindsay took it up, he added two more points to the program: more adequate instruction on sex aesthetics and birth control, and more lenient divorce laws for childless couples, allowing separation by mutual consent without alimony. At the present time the words are coming to betoken almost any independence of conventional standards in marriage, and a general change in emphasis: less emphasis on duration, more on love; less on duty to society, more on personal satisfaction. The observations which apply to the ideal of love-tenure marriage apply with equal force to much of the tangle of thinking which makes use of the term “companionate marriage.” Characteristic of this type of thinking is the subtle transition from the most naive concept of love to the most sophisticated concept of convention. Equally characteristic is a tendency to discount duration value in marriage.

The experimental type of sex liberty does not directly affect either of the marriage values, for if it takes place at all, it is over before marriage begins. It must be judged, therefore, by its effect in qualifying or disqualifying persons for successful marriage, and not by its direct bearing on the success of the family.

Just as in the case of adultery, so also as regards virginity, the taboo which actually exists in Occidental society must be reckoned with, for it penalizes the marriages of those who have had premarital sex experience by causing the person who does not bring virginity to the marriage bed to be regarded as damaged goods. The symbolic significance which conventions assign to vir[p.209]ginity must be taken into account by the present generation of young people as a part of the environment to which they must adjust themselves. But they will wish to cast up for themselves the advantages and disadvantages of premarital chastity regardless of the ruling of convention. For they regard themselves as critics

rather than servants of the customs that environ them.

The principal risks which attend experimental sex experience before marriage are the well-known risks of parenthood and disease. The rivalry risk does not enter at all. And as regards the aesthetic considerations, it is debatable whether there is more to be gained by attaining a thorough first-hand knowledge of sex before marriage so that marital sex relations can be well carried on from the beginning, or by foregoing initiation into sex until it can be enjoyed as part of a total marriage experience,

The parenthood risk is unevenly distributed between the man and the woman. This is one of the reasons for the double standard of premarital morality against which women in recent years have so successfully campaigned. The unmarried mother who has kept her child has lost some of her qualifications for wifehood, and the one who has given up her child may have suffered a shock which will affect her success as a mother after marriage. The unmarried father is in a similar dilemma. The more he feels his responsibility for his illegitimate offspring, the more confused his loyalty will be at the very time when his bride will expect it to be most direct and undivided. The more completely he renounces his responsibility as a parent, the more clearly he reveals [p.210] success. An illegitimate child before marriage is a handicap in the attaining of marital success.

Those cases in which the parents marry after the birth of an illegitimate child are of course not different, from the standpoint of domestic theory, from any other permanent sex union which is for a time unlicensed by society. In these cases the natural family is fully established before it receives its legal recognition.

The popularization of contraceptives has diminished the parenthood risk, even though available devices are not one hundred per cent certain, and the marketing of them is carried on among young people on a bootleg basis. The complete elimination of the parenthood risk must await the better development of contraceptive technique, and the acceptance of a new standard of medical law (already foreshadowed in German legislation) which will permit a woman to have a legal right to decide whether she will bear a child or not.

What is true of the parenthood risk is equally true of the disease risk. And here also adequate precautions can offer some protection, but protection is not complete.

The value of first-hand knowledge of sex to one who undertakes marriage is twofold. In the first place it can prevent some bungling and disappointment. Hamilton found that the nonvirgin husbands were more likely than the virgins to be sexually satisfactory to their wives. Not always. A man's experience with a prostitute may teach him to enjoy voluptuousness but does not necessarily teach him to make sex enjoyable to a wife. And if amateurish mistakes are to result in permanent sexual anaesthesia, it is not clear that such mistakes are [p.211] less likely to occur in a premarital experiment than in a nuptial initiation.

However, if initiation is to be postponed till marriage, it is necessary that adequate instruction be available to young people. Otherwise the marriages of

virgins are penalized. Books such as those by Cooper or Stopes should be available on the open market. If there is to be chastity till marriage, both partners should realize that they must study and understand the sex act in order fully to enjoy it.

There is danger that too much emphasis upon the need for marriage before coitus may confuse the thought of young people upon the character of marriage, and hence unfit them to carry on successful family life. Here are two very different things: to satisfy sex curiosity, and to commit one's will to a paramount loyalty through life. If these two things are so closely linked that the one is not to be had without the other, many will marry without having either the intention or the equipment to make their marriage a success. When sex experiment is cloaked by a wedding there results a kind of mock- marriage which, to paraphrase Groves, is no more than a legalized temporary sex attraction, which, unable to progress into marriage comradeship, ends in anticlimax.²⁰

In terms of domestic theory, a revision of standards of virginity is most dangerous to domestic values if the marriage license is used to authorize initiation into sex, when the marriage itself does not constitute a longterm life plan for the bride and bridegroom. If sex gratification is sought before there is an engagement in [p.212] permanent marriage, the virginity ideal is really surrendered, even though the divorce and remarriage device may conceal the surrender. Since duration is one of the two fundamental values of family life, it is important that the distinction between permanent marriages and transitory love affairs be not obscured. Rather than confuse all thinking on marriage and family life by forgetting this duration value, it is preferable (from the standpoint of domestic theory) that a margin should be left for unregistered and unlicensed play of sex.

It cannot escape the attention of the thoughtful reader of these pages that no intrinsic excellence appears to attach to sex liberty *per se*. Nor is sex monopoly intrinsically evil.

Where baneful effects are associated with sex monopoly, these are the result of enforcement measures, taboos, educational devices. Not sex monopoly but the means which are used to insure sex monopoly have brought criticism upon the monopolistic ideal.

The evidence of ethnology attests that the taboos, the stimulated jealousies, the restrictive laws, the life-warping inhibitions which are set up among us to discipline sex life are not to be regarded as the necessary products of universally prevalent human attitudes. Societies differ between extreme poles as to the significance they attach to infringements of sex monopoly, and as to the value they attach to virginity. According to the customs of many peoples, virginity is a blemish in bride or groom, and no one is expected to marry without having had previous sex intercourse.²¹ Adultery is not everywhere regarded as a serious offense against the family. Malin[p.213]owski found that among the Trobriand

²⁰Groves and Ogburn, *American Marriage* (Henry Holt, New York, 1928), p. 106.

²¹Robert Briffault in *The Mothers* collects many instances of this.

Islanders adultery was not considered important, but certain obscene words, if used by a husband to his wife, were taken as symbols of supreme disloyalty. In one instance the use of these words resulted in a suicide. That men can share their wives without feeling injured thereby is evidenced wherever the institution of hospitality prostitution exists. That women can share their husbands without jealousy is illustrated by the case of the Kikuyu wife who reproached her mate: "Why do I have to do all the work; why do you not buy another wife?" Of course where the institution of polygamy prevails it is definitely evil and anti-social for one wife to monopolize the husband.

It is Occidental society, then, and not human nature, which insists on monopoly and virginity and leaves no freedom for choice. Somehow we must continue to live at peace with this colossal community. At what price can we break away from its sex standards?

Can individuals, either alone or in their small Bohemian communities, defy social rules in these matters? Can they re-define for themselves the meanings of sex acts so that they gain freedom from the enforcement measures which society imposes?

The attempt is being made. There are people who say that so far as they are concerned, virginity does not matter, and there are others who declare that they do not demand a monopoly of husband or wife, nor expect themselves to be monopolized. Recent literature on the family abounds in the records of deliberate and mutually permitted violations of the sex-monopoly code. Judge Lindsay knew a young couple who were about to separate in the conventional way after the husband's [p.214] one adulterous connection. But instead of divorce, they decided to surrender mutually their monopolistic claims upon each other. And after that they got along famously. Hamilton records a number of these adultery-toleration compacts. His evidence suggests that the men in the case tolerate their wives' adulteries very well, but the women find it more difficult to suppress feelings of jealousy.

Another case is that of a young man, a punctiliously honest person, intelligent and well educated, who casually announced one evening some time in the fourth year of his marriage that he was by nature polygamous and would not consider himself bound to refrain from intercourse With other women. He had no objection to any similar course his wife might take with other men. He proposed that neither of them should interpret such conduct as disloyal. And after he had made this declaration, nothing whatsoever was done about it. He had at the time no particular woman in mind, and he has had no love affair since. Following this declaration there ensued the same orderly married existence that had preceded it. The gesture was an act of liberation whereby the husband sought to re-define the meaning of sex loyalty in his family life.

These attempts to avoid the use of social conventions in dealing with sex problems require for their success a certain careful conspiracy against publicity. If those who attempt them cannot maintain their privacy, they will find it difficult

to escape from the pressure of the judgment of their neighbors.

But if they are successful in mapping their own course, in what direction are they to go? None of the four [p.215] types of sex liberty has any intrinsic superiority to the monopolistic state. Neither promiscuity nor divorce is an end worth seeking for itself.

Though divorce may, under certain circumstances, be a lesser of two evils, it cannot be other than an evil in marriage. It is both a symptom and a disease. In terms of hedonism and individualistic ethics, divorce is a symptom. It indicates that the marriage has not been pleasing and has not proved worth while to the individual. In terms of domestic theory, divorce is an absolute evil in that it destroys duration value, and duration value is one of the two essential marriage values. So also with adultery and polygamy. They may indeed relieve some strain, but their tendency is necessarily to degrade the level of domestic interaction in the family, even if the tendency does not decisively determine the event. Sex liberty does not pretend to contribute anything of positive value to the natural family. Sex monopoly, rather, is the norm of family life.

But at the same time it is dangerous to permit this norm to assume the status of a mandate by the community.

Exclusiveness in sex is an ideal toward which natural marriage may spontaneously and rightly strive, but it is not properly a standard to be imposed upon married people, willy-nilly, from without.

The disastrous results of the sex-monopoly ideal occur when the ideal is attached to the family as an institution; they do not occur when the ideal is attached to the natural family.

Is it not reasonable that people should be left free to decide for themselves to what extent they will regard [p.216] extra-marital sex relations as disloyal? If, taking circumstances into account, they decide to maintain sex life as an exclusive secret between them, this decision could then be an expression of the implicit artistic principles of family life rather than a mere surrender to external pressure.

When circumstances, either temporary or permanent, bring it about that the maintenance of sex monopoly imposes a real sacrifice upon one or the other partner, husband and wife might well be free to agree whether the sacrifice imposed does not outweigh the advantage to be derived from monopoly.

And the mere act of adultery need not be construed as final evidence of a definitive lapse of paramount loyalty toward husband or wife. Such constructions are arbitrary fictions which derive their appearance of validity from social judgments rather than from the actual experience.

These principles clear up a seeming inconsistency which pervades much of the liberal writing on marriage. Again and again propagandists of marriage reform have argued against the strictness of the marriage fether, only to conclude that if

marriages were more free they would come in the end to observe more completely monopolistic standards of behavior. Thus they seem at once to affirm the value of the sex-monopoly ideal and to deny it. The truth is that the ideal is good as a plan of life, but bad as an enforced element of the marriage institution.

Is it possible to avoid the strain which the sex-monopoly ideal places upon marriage, without giving up the advantages which this ideal confers? If such an end is to be attained, it is necessary, first of all, to limit the [p.217] emphasis on sexuality in family life. This is harsh doctrine in the ears of the younger generation who have carried the reaction against Puritanism so far that they seem now to foster sexuality even at the expense of family life, and to regard marriage as if its whole meaning were exhausted in the one item, sex. The mixture of fad and sanity that characterizes any extreme reaction is present in this revolution in marriage ideals.

Some of the revolutionary changes seem fated to endure. The movement to develop the aesthetic side of sex is sound. The dropping away of the extraneous institutional functions of the family (economic, religious, political) carries with it as a consequence a relatively greater emphasis on sex. It would be vain to try to sweep back the tide, to restore to the family its lost functions, or conceal the facts of sex again in Puritanical obscurantism.

Because of these changes, it now remains to give to the natural family, already stripped bare of its institutional trappings, a clearer consciousness of its meaning and purpose. These must include sex, but sex must not have too destructive a primacy. The erotic side of marriage has decisive importance, but only as a part of a more general scheme. The concept of domestic interaction and duration as the primary function of the family includes sex play, and reaches beyond it. Sex monopoly is a part only, not the whole, of sex life in marriage. And sex life in marriage is itself a mere part, and not a completed whole. If we start with a definite notion of the functions of the natural family, the true place of the sex-monopoly ideal in the marriage scheme can be deduced therefrom.

[p.218] A decision to conform completely to the sex-monopoly ideal, involving the renunciation of plurality of sex connections whether simultaneous or consecutive, is properly a decision to be made freely, for aesthetic reasons, in order to protect or enhance the two basic marriage values: domestic interaction and duration. This line of conduct need not be imposed by the community; it should be the free choice of those who accept the implicit principles of marriage.

[p.219]

WE cannot live by the book. However coherent and adequate our standards may be, it remains to apply them to particular cases. This is something that each individual must do for himself. He must take facts which are infinitely diverse and fashion them toward ideals which are utterly unattainable. And just because this is the consummatory problem of marriage – as indeed of all life – it is a problem which the principles of marriage cannot solve, but only set up for solution. It is the problem of workmanship, of creation, of art without

the capital A. In this broadest sense the artistry of marriage is here brought under review.

In the artistry of marriage there is a necessary fusion of two kinds of principles. On the one hand there is the specific ideal of permanence and loyalty which is intrinsic to marriage; on the other hand there is the more general ideal of beauty, proportion, harmony of part and whole, which is characteristic of art, and the ideal of adequate adaptation of means to end, which is the distinguishing mark of technology.

So long as we were exploring the principles of marriage it was necessary to segregate the values peculiar to the family from the values which are common to all fields of human interest. Therefore actions were classified according to the conscious motive in which they originated, [p.220] ignoring for the purposes of inquiry the actual effects which the actions may have had. A benevolently motivated act was classed as a domestic act, whether or not it actually benefited the person to whom it was directed.

For instance, there is the case of the woman who seeks to benefit her husband by chiding him for some fault. If her motive is sincere, her conduct conforms to the standards intrinsic to marriage. But the principles of technology and art remain to be satisfied. It may be that her method is ill-devised for securing the end she has in view. Her manner of chiding may intensify the fault instead of removing it. Or the end itself may be ill-chosen. She may be acting in the sincere conviction that tobacco is the Devil's weed, which brings damnation to the soul and disease to the body. But the man may be actually better off with his tobacco, so that the habit she is campaigning against is not really a fault at all.

A man may get on better with a wife who is wise and selfish than with a woman who is a devoted fool. Though his life be not so rich in domestic values, it may be happier. For happiness and ease are more directly the products of art and technology than of domestic interaction.

What then is the province of art in marriage? Does it complement or supplant the basic marriage values of permanence and loyalty? Are there certain special canons of art applicable to marriage as there are rules which apply to painting and sculpture? These questions are raised in a practical spirit. There is no need to pose the general philosophical question of the nature of art. [p.221] Neither is there any great value in merely taking over terms from certain of the fine arts and applying them to marriage. To be sure, there has been of late much superficial translating into the language of aesthetics. The advertisements announce the discovery of "subtle harmonies" in everything from automobiles to cold creams, and it is not uncommon to read of "delicate rhythms" in products as diverse as mustard and silk. An analysis of art in marriage must go deeper than the linguistic transmutations of this recent fad. There must be a comprehensive survey of marriage as an aesthetic situation.

At the root of this aesthetic situation lies the question: Who is the artist in

marriage, and what the medium of his art?

All this of Pot and Potter – Tell me then
Who is the Potter, pray, and who the Pot?

Of some art products a single individual is the creator; others arise from an organized mutual activity. Thus, according to Meier-Graeffe, the highest art of the Middle Ages was coöperative – mosaic, stained glass windows, architecture – whereas the highest art of the Renaissance was individual – the picture in a frame. To which of these classes does marriage belong?

The temptation is to answer at once that marriage is a duet rather than a solo, and there is some truth in the answer. There is a sense in which marriage can be regarded as a Pot made by two Potters. But actually the artistic relationship of husband and wife is far more complex. Some of their activity is a coöperative effort to secure an effect extraneous to both. They pose [p.222] together for the benefit of the neighbors; they conspire together to create some impression of themselves in their community. They labor together for economic success; they plan together for their children. With respect to this kind of activity they can be compared to the ballet dancers on the stage, whose art is cooperative. But with respect to most of their actions they are not working together to impress some third party. They are working rather upon each other. They are treating each other at once as the medium of their artistic expression and the spectators of their artistic success.

This extraordinary relationship is comparable in some ways to the situation of pedagogy, wherein the student is the medium in which the teacher works – the teacher the Potter and the student the Pot. One marriage partner works upon the personality of the other, modifying it either by accident or according to plan. We may speak of this as the *pedagogics* of marriage. An illustration is of course the campaign against the other person's bad habit, or the effort to remove some prejudice from the other's mind.

Beyond this the situation is comparable to that of the theater. Each person maintains himself as a spectacle for the others to admire or appreciate. The wife endeavors to "keep up" after marriage, in order that she may retain her husband's affection. All this posing with a view to increase the respect one receives in his family belongs to a special class of endeavor. It may be called the *histrionics* of marriage.

Both the pedagogies and histrionics of marriage can be the vehicle of benevolent activity. Moreover they are the means by which the individual operates upon [p.223] the organization of the family and directs the flow of domestic life.

It is of the first importance that the technique of married living is so much a matter of individual initiative. For if a perfect accord of husband and wife in harmonious purpose to coöperate were a precondition of the use of art and technique in the family, it would appear that the possibility of artistry is present

only when the need for it has passed. It is important to understand that even though one spouse refuses to do his part or fails to grasp the character of the problem confronting him, the other can none the less carry on alone the practice of the art of marriage. In every family that functions on the unilateral level, and in many pseudo-patriarchal families, the significant artistry all comes from one person, the other responding automatically to the situations that unfold.

The ancient legend comes to mind of Shun of Yu, who became Emperor of China because he had proved himself able, single-handed, to bring harmony to a discordant family. When the first of the Emperors grew old, he looked about for some one to succeed him. The courtiers recommended

. . . an unmarried man among the lower people called Shun. .
. . His father was obstinately unprincipled. His stepmother was insincere, his half-brother Hsiang was arrogant. He has been able, however, by filial piety, to live in harmony with them and to lend them gradually to self-government, so that they no longer proceed to great wickedness.

Upon hearing this report the Emperor determined to test Shun in marriage by giving him his daughters as wives. [p.224] And when Shun successfully passed this test he was made Emperor. It is no accident that the Chinese, whose institutions emphasize so much the value of the kinship group, should retain this anecdote at the beginning of the oldest of their classics. The story was already a thousand years old when Confucius read it and retained it in the Book of Shu. The point and purpose of it is clear: that each member of the family can take it upon himself to bring excellence to domestic life.

While recognizing the individual person as the “artist” of marriage, it is still necessary to take into account the fact that the consequences of his art appear in an interplay of himself with one other person only. The marriage artisan resembles more nearly the writer of a letter than the composer of an essay. The full range of creation and effect is reached without going beyond that “field of force” which the tension of two wills maintains.

Regardless of the level of domestic interaction which prevails in the family, there are always, then, two independent wills to be reckoned with. When these two wills direct themselves toward each other, so that each person desires the advantage of the other, there is inevitable tension between them. For it is impossible that there should be automatic agreement upon all the things which are presumed to be of advantage to one or the other. Of this universal fact of will tension in the family, the standard expression is the domestic dispute or episode of conflict.

The sociologists who are studying the pathology of family life have made elaborate classifications of tensions. Some are due to an absence of sex response, others to an absence of respect, others to poverty. Sometimes [p.225] one member of the family is ashamed of the other; he feels that his own social standing

is compromised by the incompetence or the reputation of his marriage partner. From the standpoint of domestic theory these tensions belong to two classes. To the first class belong normal tensions, consistent with paramount loyalty; to the second belong the pathological tensions which presage the disruption or degradation of the family. And the test for determining the character of a domestic tension is this: does it arise from a misunderstanding of symbols, a lack of agreement upon some matter of opinion? Or does it spring from insufficient loyalty, from an unwillingness of one person to make sacrifices for the other?

The greater the difference in the social background of husband and wife, the more intense will be the normal tensions. There is the story for instance of the American girl who married an Hungarian army officer. It never occurred to this girl that her husband placed a high symbolic value upon being met at the door when he came home. She took no particular pains to be at home when he came in, and in this he was bitterly disappointed. The cure for tensions of this kind is a mutual explanation, a quarrel, or an educational campaign. It is a matter of pedagogics.

The lower the level of domestic interaction, the greater is the likelihood of pathological tensions. An illustration is the case of a girl who married a wealthy man but would not face poverty with him when his fortune melted away, or the man who complains with rancor that he has lost valuable opportunities because of his marriage. In these cases of insufficient loyalty neither quarrels nor explanations are of much avail. The only thing that [p.226] counts is some increase in the value which one person has for the other – in other words, it is a matter of histrionics.

Within the field of tension which marriage maintains, the critical event is the personal conflict. The conflict episode is second only to coitus as the test of artistry in marriage. Just as coitus brings the two persons nearest to each other, so the quarrel marks the point where they are farthest apart. Just as coitus dissolves the sense of separateness and individuality so the quarrel hardens and crystallizes it. Coitus is the perigee of the orbit of two individuals, and the quarrel the apogee. In coitus the fact that there are two distinct persons and wills is least significant; in the quarrel it is most significant.

This view of the personal conflict as an essential and normal characteristic of marriage runs counter to some of the homiletics of matrimony, and the reason for this is clear. For the quarrel is likely to be more conspicuous, viewed from outside, than any other moment of married life. The failure of artistry in coitus gets no publicity; even in the divorce court proceedings it is covered by circumlocutions such as “incompatibility.” But an artistic failure in managing disputes gives the whole neighborhood a copious subject for discussion. Therefore when family life is seen from the outside it will appear that the least quarrelsome pair is the pair which is most nearly perfect in its domestic life. But when the marriage is viewed as an independent system, disregarding its contacts with the public, the fallacy of this judgment is clear. Just as some heavenly bodies have narrow orbits, approaching very near their focus at perigee, and being

immeasurably far from it at apogee, [p.227] so in some unions there is oscillation between extremes of distance and proximity, whereas in others there is an evenness which permits neither great hostility nor great intimacy. Clearly we cannot calculate the orbit of a marriage as if its only measure were the apogee; we must reckon in the perigee as well.

The belief that the object of married life is to avoid conflicts, and the failure to accept them as normal elements of marriage. have served in the past to blind us to the artistic principles involved. Just as respect for the privacy of coitus has caused its artistic importance to be ignored, so derision over publicity attending quarrels has led to a neglect of the artistry of quarreling. The first principle of this artistry is indeed that there should be no publicity. The quarrel should be as sacred a secret of the family as coitus is wont to be.

Another canon of the art is that the quarrel should be adequate – no mere pin-pricking. It should accomplish a catharsis of the emotions. And withal it should be kept under control. There should be no complete loss of judgment and sense of proportion. These are two contradictory requirements, for the more emotion enters the quarrel, the less room is left for judgment and discipline.

And finally, the conflict must be brought to a conclusion. It does not suffice merely to abandon an attitude of hostility and resume an attitude of tenderness. The whole episode must be given an artistic consummation. The dispute which ends when one person slams the door and walks out, to return when the storm is blown over, is probably not ended at all. Even if they kiss and go to bed they may be leaving their quarrel half-done, like [p.228] a play which does not go beyond the second act. When it is said that the quarrel must be brought to a conclusion, this does not mean that the substance of the dispute must be settled one way or the other, once and for all, but only that the episode of the dispute must be so stage-managed that it will become, in retrospect, a pleasant memory.

The art of the dispute requires for its success an adequate reserve of loyalty. The supreme and accepted loyalty of each partner to the other is the only background against which really successful contention can go on. Ultimately in the course of the dispute there must come a moment when values are transmuted, and when that which was the subject of the contention moves to a different level of importance, or takes on a different color. This moment in the quarrel corresponds to the orgasm of coitus. So long as there is adequate loyalty to be played upon, this moment can always be achieved.

To resolve a conflict episode in this way does not necessarily require the submission of one will to another. Sometimes there is a real enlightenment upon the subject of the dispute. The argument gets somewhere. The perception of the new facts or relationships alters the importance of the old ones. The husband demonstrates with figures that the proposed purchase is really beyond their means, and this new fact changes the wife's opinion. Or again, one person comes to see that he has touched upon too tender a spot in the other's person-

ality, and having made this discovery he takes it thenceforth into account with the same indulgence that he accords to any other quality or infirmity. If the other mind is closed to the liberal point of view upon sex monopoly, [p.229] or immutably prejudiced against having a dog in the house, this is then to be accepted as a part of himself, like his fondness for onions or his inability to remember names. A subtle campaign of education can go on, but the fact revealed by the quarrel is not again to be disregarded.

More generally useful than anything else in bringing conflicts through their crises is the quality we describe as a sense of humor. This quality is not so much a matter of quick-wittedness as an ability to change the importance of things by regarding them from a new point of view. One steps lightly from the attitude of a participant to the attitude of a spectator, and presto, the thing that was vitally important a moment before, engaging all one's concentrated powers, becomes a joke. The quarrel that is played through till it ends in a laugh is all ready to be stored away as a delicious memory.²²

The art of personal contention can be regarded as a subtle exercise in combining histrionics and pedagogics. One attempts to cause the other to alter his attitude or character without cheapening the self in order to obtain this effect. Mere scolding or nagging is bad quarreling because it sacrifices histrionic values; it cheapens the scolder and may not even then effect the desired change in the person who is scolded. So also more sweetness and yielding, if there is no adequate subtlety or firmness of character back of it, sacrifices the pedagogic effects for the histrionic. Both of these extremes are bad marriage art.

[p.230] In the art of contention, in pedagogics and histrionics, as indeed in all the phenomena of marriage-as-tension, the decisive fact is the juxtaposition of two wills, two independent personalities. There is another element of marriage art, whereof the decisive fact is rather a flow of shared experiences. As we shift our attention from the activity of the independent will to the content of shared experiences, we turn from the study of the artist to the contemplation of the artifact. Again, and with a new emphasis, we are called upon to distinguish between the Potter and the Pot.

Some products of human effort, such as pictures, statues, or poems, we are prone to judge as completed things, giving little attention to the sequence of acts out of which they were created. Such things as banquets or symphonies and such arts as dancing or navigation are valued differently. With them we tend to note a continuous process rather than a single completed thing. The painter unlocks his studio, admits the critic, and declares that he has just finished the painting; what sense would there be in the pianist admitting his audience to declare to them that he had just finished playing the Moonlight Sonata? The art of marriage in this respect resembles music rather than painting.

²²For an insight into the importance of the difference between the participant attitude and the spectator attitude, the writers are indebted to an essay by Edwin Clapp, to be published in the *South Atlantic Quarterly* in 1929.

There is something in marriage of sequence and change that can be compared to the melody of music, and there is also a depth, an intrinsic value in each moment that can be compared to the harmony.

And here again the art of marriage must compromise.

Some people live for the future, always discounting the present moment for the sake of an ambition to be realized. And others dwell continuously in the past. [p.231] These are right in understanding life as a sequence, but the melody of their existence lacks depth.

At the other extreme are those who, like the schoolgirl, make no offer to compromise with the impermanence of things. They require of marriage an unchanging bliss, a projection into time of the rapture with which the prince and dream girl exchange vows. Their great moments are the richer because of the borrowed robe of eternity with which they are clothed. But such lives are not ordered to accord with the ways of nature. The penalty is called disillusionment.

The need for compromise with impermanence is not a peculiar problem present in the marriage art alone; it is a problem that arises whenever the attempt is made to apply the principles of art to the immediate business of living. Marriage has that kind of variability and continuousness which all living things share. It is a continuousness which includes part of the past in the present, an impermanence of growth. It is simply because the marriage relationship is so immediate, so close to life, that the flux and transition of life so relentlessly attends it. As it is with love and marriage, so is it also with work and fame, with beauty and pleasure, and with all the immediate objects of human endeavor. As the wife looks back with regret upon her bridal ruptures, so also the elderly business man returns to his class reunion in a vain attempt to recapture, if only for a moment, the glow of his college days. From the time of Heraclitus to the present there has been a meditative exploring of compromises and ways of escape from this fated way of life. And we are still left to make what terms we can with this common human destiny.

[p.232] The only adequate compromise with transience is one which makes use of transience itself as a medium in which to work. Marriage must therefore accept the very change and sequence of things as its artistic medium. It will follow from this postulate that marriages are never completed, never achieved. They are only in process of achievement. Actions and events are to be valued not alone by the qualities they impermanently display in the present but also by referring them to the whole series of actions and events in which they stand. An embrace which closes a pleasant evening of recreation, setting its seal of delight upon a delightful episode, has a distinctive artistic significance, and is set apart from the embrace which delightfully commemorates the wedding anniversary. The pleasant sensations may be identical, but the values are different because the two acts enter into different sequences. The insouciant bliss of the honeymoon is to be rated not in its own terms as a kind of absolute happiness to be enjoyed while it lasts and regretted when it is gone, but rather as the starting point of

a sequence of shared experiences, to be built upon and elaborated with infinite variety as the years pass.

This is the standpoint from which Walter Pater proposed to regard all problems of conduct and opinion. It is a way of life which he has excellently presented in ascribing it to Marius the Epicurean.

Amid his eager grasping at the sensation, the consciousness, of the present, he had come to see that, after all, the main point of economy in the conduct of the present, was the question: How will it look to me, at what shall I value it, this day next year? – that in any given day or month one's main concern was its impression for the memory. A strange trick memory sometimes played him; for, with no natural gradation, what was of last month, or of yesterday, of to-day even, would seem as far all, as entirely detached from him, as things of ten years ago. Detached from him, yet very real, there lay certain spaces of his life, in delicate perspective, under a favorable light; and, somehow, all the less fortunate detail had parted from them.

This contemplative Epicureanism requires to be elaborated before it is adequate as a canon of the marriage art. For actions and events leave their legacy to the future not alone in the form of memory images, but also in the form of habits and knowledge. Therefore the events of marriage, regarded as parts of a sequence, have a triple value in that they contribute through recurrence to habit, through experience to enlightenment, and through their intrinsic beauty to a beautiful fabric of memories.

Our current ways of thinking have made us familiar with the technique of habit formation and the value of experience. Every wife speaks more or less jestingly of training her husband to do this or that, and most marriages recognize sooner or later that they give rise to a learning process. That the artful treasuring of memories is also a part of the technique of marriage is a fact in which we have been less thoroughly schooled. It is a matter of curious import that the college girl keeps a "memory book," pastes into it her dance programs and photographs of her friends, and maintains as a cult the worship of sacred memories. But with marriage this kind of preoccupation usually fades away, except for the elementary practice of keeping anniversaries.

The melody and harmony of marriage, the length and [p.234] the depth of its experiences, are thus woven together in habit, knowledge, and memory. The marriage artifact is the flow and cumulation of shared experience. If husband or wife or both stand forth as the Potter, this sequence, indeed, is the Pot.

Nor is there anything mysterious or intangible in marriage thus conceived. The artifact of marriage is as real as a nationality, which also exists in a flow and cumulation of memories, habits, and experiences. The process of nation-making

is not unlike the art of fashioning forth a family. Just as nationalities feed their spiritual life upon dreams of the future and memories of the past – the dream of power perhaps, or the legends of ancient kings – so the family nourishes itself in youth upon its hopes and ambitions, or treasures in middle age the shared reminiscences of happy adventures long past. Just as nationalities develop their own languages, so families contrive certain special and secret meanings which they give to things. In every family there are some words which have a peculiar flavor because of some memorable happening with which they are associated. Moreover, just as a nationality dignifies its ways of doing things by setting them up proudly as national customs, so the family can infuse into its very chores a sense of ritual.

These developments are within limits subject to control, not only as regards gross matters of habit but also in the finer things of memory and meaning. There is room for delicate discriminations between that which is to be remembered and that which is to be forgotten, and between that which is to be shared outside the family and that which is to be held as a family secret. One can always exercise a subtle control over the record. Anec[p.235]dotes live only by the telling, and the version that is told becomes eventually the truth.

If the artistic medium of family life is a flow of shared experiences, there are certain external limitations with which the marriage artisan must reckon. These are the limitations set by the instruments, the tools. Where with one fashions a sequence of experiences.

These instruments for the creating of experiences are of three kinds. First of all the body, with its capacities and its hazards. Then the whole contribution which the social environment affords: cultural heritage; social status; the whole fabric of conventions, rules, and symbols which is the language of conduct no less than the language of words. Finally there are the hard material things, with food and warmth at one end of the scale and diamond bracelets at the other. In the actual distribution of energy that imposes itself upon us, varying proportions of effort can be invested in these three instruments of marriage. And all extremes are likely to be bad art.

Of these three hard facts, the body has of course the greatest ultimate importance. The risk of death hangs over every family, threatening to penalize the survivor for the very success of his marriage by making the loss more painful to endure. There is also the risk of loss of health, which may revolutionize a whole system of family relationships. Aside from these possibilities of disaster, many people are tempted to spend much thought in calculating their own capacities and meditating upon their own level of ability as compared with the abilities of others. A man should take reasonable care of his health without going to the extreme of hypochondria. [p.236] He should have a just enough appreciation of his capacities so that his endeavors may be proportioned to his powers, without going to the psychopathic extreme of a chronic feeling of inferiority or grandeur. The ideal of art requires moderation and proportion in these things.

The same artistic canons apply to the use of the social environment envisaged as an instrument for creating experience.

Of course our ways of thinking are so largely determined by our social surroundings and the content of our thought so deeply imbedded in the psychic matrix of culture that no experience comes into existence without bearing a whole array of socially given meanings. The meanings that apply to a shared experience are partly subject to voluntary control, and partly beyond control. To some extent we can choose the meaning we will give to an act. For instance, people who are camping on a lonely lake shore have gone bathing without bathing suits. Is this beautiful, or indecent? If they automatically apply to their act the interpretation it would be given by a circle of acquaintances in their home town, they will accept the indecent meaning as the true significance of their act. If they appeal to the traditions of poetry or Greek mythology, they will appreciate its beauty and lift its meaning above the taint of indecency.

People who feel the pressure of their community as a fetter can escape from it by appealing to a wider circle. Thus they grasp at culture, at liberal education, because it trees them from the narrow perspectives of their immediate environment. They reject the standards of Gopher Prairie and seek admission to a world-wide intellectual community. In this way they come to control [p.237] their social environment by increasing the range of socially given meanings they can apply to particular acts.

Another kind of preoccupation with the social environment concerns itself with the relation of the self to the community. One strives diligently to conform to the standards of some community in order that he may win its approval. This is the quest for fame, for higher social status. The community in which one strives for higher status may be anything from the neighborhood group to the republic of letters. Achievement may be registered by rewards as various as the light-heavyweight boxing: championship or an invitation to Mrs. Ransom's tea. One who wins the approval of an outside circle is often rewarded by receiving additional esteem in his home; conversely one who has made a conspicuous failure in the quest for social status may find that his standing in his family has suffered thereby. Preoccupation with status in the social environment is thus an element of the histrionics of marriage.

Both in seeking to escape from the limitations of social environment and in striving to conform to its demands, there is need for compromise. The student type, overmuch preoccupied with self-education, loses touch with humanity. His life is in danger of becoming thin while he is trying to broaden it. And the slave of inordinate ambition sacrifices the present to the future, giving himself over to be the prey of external circumstances which may lie beyond his power.

The use of the social environment as an instrument at experience-making is likely to be unconscious; social judgments are so much taken for granted that we are unaware of their character as social judgments, and social [p.238] approval as an object of endeavor receives a similar uncritical acceptance. As to material

things, we are more fully conscious of the character of our relationship to them. We perceive at once their necessity, and the margin of choice that is left us in deciding how much attention we are to give to them. In our civilization the issue is very plain, because material things are all commuted to a common denominator of money, and thus we have only to ask ourselves how far the pursuit of wealth is to absorb our energies.

In making terms with material conditions the artistry of marriage faces some of its most fateful decisions. If too much attention is given to money-getting, the essential personal side of the family may be starved. In the old rural household personal contacts and interests in the family would take care of themselves; there was plenty of living and working together. But in contemporary city life a special investment of time, energy, and thought must be devoted to the family – and business affairs may suffer by the diversion of this effort. But unless the diversion is made, the family is de-personalized; its domestic interaction sinks to the lowest possible level. The tragedy of this is seen in those homes in which the father is a tolerated intruder, the legitimate victim of the “gold-digging” activities of his wife and children, but wholly lacking in personal influence simply because he has made no investment of personality in the home.

On the other hand there is always the danger that lack of money may cramp all efforts at beautiful living. Although there are standards of living to fit every income, it happens too often that people do not know how to use [p.239] and enjoy the standard which their income permits. The most annoying dilemmas present themselves: to give up the higher standard or to pay for it in continuous financial worries; to maintain the pleasant specialization of function which gives the wife her work in the home or to have the wife take a job, thus bringing in more money to the family but withdrawing from it some of her time and attention. Even children have to be bought and paid for, and to parents who have high standards in rearing them they are a luxury indeed.

Somewhere a balance must be struck. And for one who would plan a married life with sanity and art the naive success-philosophy of contemporary America is the poorest possible guide. The articles of this current creed must be seasoned with some of the salt of Aristotle’s venerable distinction between *oikonomia* and chrematistics, between the art of acquiring what is needful and the art of acquiring without limit. No money plan is adequate which does not point to an equilibrium of means and desires. The striving for wealth without limit, for automobiles each year more expensive and living quarters each year more luxurious, is an endeavor consistent with good marriage only on condition that it does not absorb all the energies of life. The true art of the family concerns itself only with acquiring what is needful. This penetrating observation is as good to-day as it was twenty-four centuries ago.

Here at last we have before us the complete aesthetic situation of marriage. For if the married persons are the artists, and a flow of shared experiences is the product of their art, then these three things – their physical bodies, their social environment, their material belongings – are [p.240] their tools and

instruments. The quality of the instrument always sets a limit to the artistic accomplishment which can result from its use, and therefore these instruments operate also to limit the range of art in marriage, to set bounds to the flow of its shared experiences. The fact that these limits are set need not mislead the artisan. He must look to his tools, but must also look beyond them. He must distinguish between means and ends. The marriage artist who devotes all his attention to self-cultivation, or who concentrates his powers upon social success and economic achievement, is like a musician who should spend a lifetime tuning his instrument and never play upon it, or a carver who should devote his energies to sharpening his knife and never touch it to the wood.

In this aesthetic situation, coitus is the supreme challenge to marriage art. AEsthetically the sex act can be an end in itself; it can fulfill itself in a beautiful moment in the present; it can be significant as a single episode, valuable in its own right. Beyond this, it is potentially the most intimately shared of all marriage experiences, and hence it is always significant as part of a total stream of shared experience, just as those crises which touch deeply all classes of a nation are most significant as episodes in national history. If we think of the movement of life in marriage as having a harmonic and a melodic quality, sex is potentially both a rich chord in its harmony and a pervasive motive in its melody.

The play of sex is subject to the widest extremes of artistic success and failure. Good artistry requires knowledge, skill, sensitiveness, in the command of the instruments of marriage.

Of the external instruments of marriage, money is the [p.241] least important as a means to successful sex life. It is notorious that sex love can flourish in poverty and starve in the midst of wealth. True enough, wealth may permit more elaborate wooing, and poverty may inhibit pleasure by causing the mind to dwell upon the fear of pregnancy. But in general the art of sex is little influenced by material things.

The consequences of social environment enter more significantly into the artistry of sex life. On the one hand society may have instilled into the minds of husband and wife prejudices on sex which have an inhibitory effect. (These are likely to arise, of course, from the attitudes which are taught as a means of enforcing sex monopoly.) On the other hand, the husband and wife are likely to have absorbed from their social environment certain systems of romantic symbols which will serve to ornament the art of sex, and to fill each wooing with delicate meanings. In the use of their social heritage as an instrument of sex art, those conventional attitudes which despise sex as unclean must be discarded, and the cultural embellishments of sex values retained. Thus sex as a symbol will gain dignity and beauty.

The most important instrument of sex is of course the body. Hence a knowledge of anatomy and physiology is an indispensable prerequisite to the practice of the art of sex. It is not implied that this must be book knowledge, or that things must be known by names derived from Greek or Latin roots. But knowledge

there must be of some such minimum as this: That, physiologically speaking the sex act is accomplished in three stages – first, tumescence, or the preparatory intensifying of sex feeling; then the orgasm, the crisis of the act; finally detumescence, the rapid ebbing away of sex feeling and the general relaxation or torpor which follows sex satisfaction. The artistic value of the sex act as shared experience requires that, first the man and woman should each carry the process through all three of its phases, and second that the progress should be as nearly simultaneous as possible. If the man reaches the orgasm too quickly the woman will fail to experience it at all. The man who understands the physiology of sex can often correct such disharmonies by taking pains to stimulate more amply the tumescent process in the woman, while restraining the process in himself, thus compensating for physiological differences.

The artistry of sex requires further that an adequate wooing should precede each consummation. In this wooing culturally derived ideas of beauty and romantic symbolism are fused with more purely physiological values. This is the stage of the sex act in which culture contributes most richly to its content.

Finally, in the orgasm, the participants reach into an extracultural or pre-cultural world. There is a “coalescing of illusion and reality, as in a dream.” The whole psychic experience comes to a crisis, like a quarrel, in a transmutation of values.

Good sex artistry is perhaps no less rare than good artistry in other things. There are men who expect of their sex life no more dignity and scarcely more pleasure than they associate with their excrementary functions. There are wives who never experience the orgasm, either because their husbands lack skill, or because they themselves are so hampered by warped ideas that they cannot be participants in coitus, but only victims of rape. Such [p.243] conditions starve a marriage, by leaving unfulfilled the potentiality of its most intimate shared experience.

The exceptional potentiality of coitus as the expression of intimacy in marriage passes away in time. As age advances, ecstasy yields something to habit; ultimately sex interests recede from the foreground, leaving the whole chain of sex-episodes established in the stream of shared experience. The change is both physiological and psychological. And it is often accompanied by a general movement from intense participation in things to more passive contemplation of them. In the best ordered lives the necessity and significance of the conflict as the expression of self-feeling slips away also. Both coitus and conflict lose their primacy, but meanwhile they have accomplished their respective ends.

For these type-crises of the early period of a family's life history make a definite contribution which is retained through later periods. The contribution attaches not only to the family as a unit, but to the separate individuals as well. Successful coitus opens up a new level of psychic energy, developing what Havelock Ellis calls the erotic personality. And successful conflict episodes smooth off the corners of personal difference.

Thus the economy of marriage proceeds toward a contemplative equilibrium. The crises which mark the greatest tension of independent personalities prepare the way for their better harmony, and the crises which mark the nearest fusion of two beings give to them greater depth and integrity. These are permanent achievements. They are manifested directly in the life of the family, and they are so far possessed by the individual that he will carry the greater depth of character and greater adapta[p.244]bility into other relations of life, and will continue to retain them even if the family passes out of existence.

From this standpoint coitus has an importance beyond that of the contribution it makes to the flow of shared experience in marriage. For it is also a fact of highest significance in the life history of the individual. "The longer I live," writes Havelock Ellis. "the more I realize the immense importance for the individual of the development through the play function of sex of erotic personality, and for human society of the acquirement of the art of love . . . until it is generally possible to acquire erotic personality and to master the art of loving, the development of the individual man or woman is marred, the acquirement of human happiness and harmony remains impossible."

. . . A woman may have been married once, she may have been married twice, she may have had children by both husbands; and yet it may not be until she is past the age of thirty and is united to a third man that she attains the development of erotic personality and all that it involves in the full flowering of her whole nature. Up to then she has to all appearance had all the essential experiences of life. Yet she has remained spiritually virginal with conventionally prim ideas of life, narrow in her sympathies, with the finest and noblest functions of her soul helpless and bound, at heart unhappy even if not clearly realizing that she is unhappy. Now she has become another person. The new-liberated forces from within have not only enabled her to become sensitive to the rich complexities of intimate personal relationship; they have enlarged and harmonized all realization of all relationships. Her new erotic experience has not only stimulated all her energies, but her new knowledge has quickened all her sympathies. She feels, at the same time, more alert mentally, and she finds that she is more alive than before to the influences of Nature [p.245] and of art. Moreover, as others observe, however they may explain it, a new beauty has come into her face, a new radiance into her expression, a new force into all her activities. Such is the exquisite flowering of love which some of us who may penetrate beneath the surface of life are now and then privileged to see. The sad part of it is that we see it so seldom, and then often so late.²³

Just as the erotic experience accomplishes an integration of the personality, so

²³Havelock Ellis, "Love as an Art," in Keyserling: *The Book of Marriage* (Harcourt, Brace, New York, 1926), p. 387.

episodes of conflict render the person more adaptable to his surroundings. These effects come about only on condition that the episodes of coitus or conflict are completed. An incompleting quarrel which hangs fire for years, never resulting in a transmutation of values, never consummated but only interrupted, is far from effecting an adaptation of the person to his surroundings. Such conflicts fix the attention upon their subject-matter, whatever it may be. They cause a person to be hypersensitive to this particular point of contact with his surroundings, while to certain other points of contact he has no sensitivity at all. The incompleting quarrel magnifies one thing out of all proportion, and leads as a psychopathic extreme to the fixed idea, just as the sex act if incomplete may bring about hysteria.

Some people never learn to the end of their days the art of resolving a conflict. There are querulous old men who carry grudges dating back to their youth, and aged shrews who in scolding will introduce historical data culled from the whole period of the marriage. These personalities are maladjusted. They are encrusted within a shell of their own making; they are hardened to their [p.246] surroundings. Whoever is around them feels the hardness. There are other people who all their days shrink from conflict, leaving all their thwarted desires to turn in upon themselves. A quiet mousy little woman who had murdered her husband declared that life with him had become unendurable, according to the account. "Why didn't you separate from him?" "Oh, I couldn't hurt his feelings like that," was the reply.

Hers was certainly an unbalanced character, unadjusted, because of softness rather than through hardness. She had not dared to set her personality up against her husband's, to stage a conflict and come to a conclusion. There are many cases which resemble this save that they fall short of the extreme of murder. No open quarrels, nothing unseemly; but hidden resentments display themselves in little dagger-like remarks which are none the less deadly for the fact that their wound is almost imperceptible from without. The oppressed personality poisons the relationship it is not adaptable enough to meet, nor strong enough to conquer.

The marriage test is only a special instance in which there is tried and proved a man's ability to make accommodation of self to another – to keep himself intact while taking the other into account. All human relationships require something of this accommodation. If marriage requires more of it than others, it is simply because marriage is the most intensely personal of relationships. And for this same reason marriage and family life are capable of fostering the quality which they so rigorously put to the proof. While the child is learning the elements of the science of personal adjustment, his parents are making more advanced studies. To one who masters [p.247] the supreme art of entering sympathetically into another person's point of view, advancing age promises an accumulation of wisdom and composure; to one who has not mastered this art age threatens to bring only an accumulation of prejudices and of irritability.

Thus the exploration of marriage as an art leads to the revelation of marriage

as education. The diverse threads of the discourse meet in this conclusion. Here is one fact: the active engagement of two independent wills which operate upon each other. And here is another fact: the cumulation of shared episodes, created by means of certain instruments, taking their place in the stream of experience. The first fact is typified in the conflict, and the second in coitus. The two facts manifest themselves infinitely in other ways. They are present even when there is no conflict and no coitus. They are significant not alone in the artistry of marriage but also in the development of personality. Successful will-adjustments, necessary because each personality is distinct and intact, lead to a harmony of self and other; successful shared experience, arising from a harmony of self and other, gives inner strength, unity, harmony, to the separate personality. This is the delicately balanced economy of marriage as a technique and an art.

[p.248]

THE principles of marriage value and of marriage art have necessarily brought to a common focus the problem which confronts the individual acting alone and the problem which confronts two individuals acting together. For both of these situations are present where marriage value and marriage art are at stake.

But in the inner forum at the mind where decisions are made there is only One. And hence the result of a synoptic treatment of the activity of One and Two brings a certain amount of conclusion. Problems of marriage value come, ultimately, to the problem of the personal conduct of one who in the utter privacy of his own heart is meditating whether to engage in a marriage or of what to do with a marriage in which he is engaged.

The foregoing discussion is intended to find application in the thought of an individual who is making: actual decisions. Therefore a theory upon marriage values and art values in marriage has been developed with a view to maximum self-consistency. For that which at present renders choices on matters of marriage difficult is a confusion of ideals, or the lack of any ideal which is adequate and coherent in all its parts.

In matters of love it sometimes happens that a man does not regard himself as a free agent, capable of making choices as a consequence of meditation. He pictures [p.249] himself rather as a chip in the stream, carried whithersoever it may be by forces beyond his control. He says of his love affair that the very force and pressure of his love compels him to seek marriage, leaving no other alternative or he thinks of his marriage that his total fund of prejudice and attitude is so disposed toward it that it is impossible for him to continue it.

Since he is acting as the plaything of blind forces, ideals would be a useless encumbrance to him. They might serve him indeed to measure the height to which he has risen or the depth to which he has fallen, but they could not aid him in controlling his fate because he is not trying to control it. Only the man who is seeking to govern his destiny by means of his intelligence is in a position to make use of this or any other theory of marriage.

Moreover, neither this system of marriage ideals nor any other can present itself to his mind with utter and absolute validity. It is only when a certain presupposition is accepted that a specific system of values unfolds. In this case the presupposition has been made that marriage is essentially a personal relationship. The specific values of marriage, loyalty value and duration value, have been deduced from this assumption. If this presupposition is accepted, then and then only do the principles of marriage as herein outlined come into play to serve the individual who is making the choice.

Therefore, as another fundamental choice, the individual must decide whether he is to consider his marriage problem as if marriage were essentially a personal relationship. If he decides in the negative, choosing to regard his marriage as essentially a socially useful institu[p.250]tion or a heaven-decreed duty, then he can make no practical use of the principles here laid down.

If he accepts the hypothesis that marriage is essentially a personal relationship, he will acknowledge the validity of the system of values that is deduced therefrom. He accepts, for instance, the standard of domestic excellence which accounts as best that family which maintains most durably the highest level of domestic interaction.

The use that is to be made of this system of values or ideals depends upon the nature of the decision in hand: whether it is the question confronting the unmarried or the married.

The unmarried person is concerned with the problem whether he should marry or not. He must acknowledge that so far as he is concerned the critical question is whether he is willing to commit himself to a permanent, personal, paramount loyalty. This is not an arbitrary question, raised whimsically like the question of blondes versus brunettes. It is the necessary question which lies at the threshold of all careful thinking on a marriage problem.

The question of loyalty poses itself in more general forms. For there are loyalties which are not paramount, and paramount loyalties which are not personal, and paramount personal loyalties which do not endure.

A paramount loyalty is desirable as an instrument of the integrity of the self. For conduct in which the self is most clearly manifested, that is to say purposive conduct, is subject to an hierarchy of purposes or ends. That which is an end with respect to an inferior series of acts is a means with respect to a superior series. The person who [p.251] has a mind so ordered that the hierarchy of his purposes is dominated by a supreme purpose or paramount loyalty is at peace with himself. His energies do not cancel each other out in internal tensions. Therefore there is a value to any one under all circumstances in having an object of paramount loyalty.

This object need not be personal. One can fill his life with an impersonal loyalty to Socialism, to the Church, to Prohibition, to the Fatherland. Or one may accept tentatively some object of paramount loyalty, leaving it to the future

to decide whether he will retain it or not. Thus in the general range of choice that lies before a man, the loyalty requirement of marriage is highly specialized.

The man who desires to commit himself to the special kind of attitude that marriage requires may still be in doubt whether his present will can effectively project itself into an indefinite future. Unforeseen circumstances may put an end to the state which he intends to be permanent, or set before him something which transcends in value that which he has purposed to regard as supremely valuable. In committing himself to a loyalty that is at once paramount, personal and permanent, he may fear that the commitment may be subject to change by factors not under his control.

It is here that introspection must run when one is testing his own mind to determine whether it is adequately prepared for marriage. It is not to be expected that this introspection is infallible, nor that it will eliminate risk, but at least it will focus attention upon the facts that are most significant with reference to the probable excellence of the marriage that is to be undertaken.

[p.252] This is not the traditional diagnostic of love. These are not the signs which Shakespeare listed –

. . . the lover,
Sighing like a furnace, with a woeful ballad
Made to his mistress' eyebrow.

whereby the premarital state is to be identified. It does not have much place in our romantic tradition that one should order his mind upon his love affair by asking himself: "Do I take her up as my permanent hobby?" This is none the less the essential question of courtship; its importance is implicit in the hypothesis that marriage is a personal relationship.

The person who is already married finds a different type of problem confronting him: at most he may be wondering whether to maintain the marriage or terminate it; at least he is concerned to know at what level of domestic interaction to maintain the marriage.

Speaking and acting for himself alone he has only a limited control over the level upon which his family is to function. If his partner is domestically active, it rests with him to determine whether he will give or withhold his cooperation, and hence he has the option of choosing any level from the unilateral to the romantic. But if his partner is domestically inert, and fails to cooperate, then his latitude of choice is limited. He has only to decide whether he will maintain single-handed a unilateral level of domestic interaction, or give up the game and run the relationship on a strictly exchange basis, on the economic level. It will rest with him then to adapt his practice of the art of marriage to the level upon which the family is functioning.

[p.253] If he undertakes to maintain paramount loyalty toward his marriage partner, despite the fact that it is not reciprocated, and to act domestically

though he receives neither appreciation nor benevolence, he must assimilate the relationship to that of a parent to a child, from whom one expects neither appreciation nor benevolent activity. This is the consequence of functioning upon the unilateral level.

The limitations of the marriage partner, the inertness, the unresponsiveness, is then a challenge to art. For just as the parent seeks to lead the child to take a more responsive part in their relationship, so the husband or wife seeks to increase the domestic qualities of the marriage partner, in order that the level of domestic interaction may be raised.

Under these conditions the most open activity takes the form of histrionics, preferably, for it is by increasing one's value to the other that one stimulates greater appreciation and loyalty. Pedagogics must be subtle and contention must never overstrain the loyalty that exists. The object of contention must be not the winning of an argument but the creation of a satisfactory episode. This means that perfect control is necessary. In the creating of shared experiences, one person alone can do much; in controlling their place in the stream of experiences he can do even more, for he can forget the things that are to be consigned to oblivion and remind the other of the things that are to be remembered. And in all this, one must seek an artist's satisfaction in a task well done.

This is the pattern of art to be followed by those who seek to raise the level of domestic interaction; but one [p.254] may prefer to let the marriage drift on the economic level. In the latter case one makes no effort to raise the level of excellence, but sets out rather to live one's own life and to be as comfortable as conditions permit. He commits nothing to the marriage and hence is incapable of losing much by it. If in the turn of events it comes about that the marriage becomes too disadvantageous, it is allowed to lapse. No significant development of personality issues from such a marriage; no deep sympathy develops the self, nor do adequate conflicts teach adaptation. Quarrels are avoided not for histrionic or pedagogic reasons, but in sheer indifference to considerations of personality and in order to avoid annoyance. Self-development goes unnourished by sympathy; adaptation, taking place without consummated conflict, is of the surface only. For these reasons the marriage on the economic level bears a superficial resemblance to the marriage on the romantic level, but it lacks depth, and is at the mercy of circumstances. The problem it presents to the individual is simple – to get as much and give as little as possible.

The individual acting alone has then alternatives of these kinds before him. If the question is whether to marry or not, he searches himself for his answer to the problems of loyalty. If he finds that he is willing to commit himself fully, then his is the optimum attitude for marriage. If the question is what to do with a marriage already on his hands, he alone, on his own responsibility, can at least decide whether to carry on the family life on the unilateral or economic level.

If he finds that he is not willing to commit himself to an adequate loyalty then

his reasons for marrying lie [p.255] somewhere off the level of the principles of marriage. Perhaps it is a matter of sex experiment, or conformity to convention, or economic advantage; these are reasons to be weighed on a different scale. Nor is it to be expected that a marriage entered upon for such reasons will yield much value as marriage unless a change of attitude takes place.

And if he chooses the economic rather than the unilateral level of domestic interaction (this choice being of course the only one that is absolutely within his power) then he voluntarily surrenders whatever domestic value might be accessible to him. The question whether to continue or terminate the marriage is then removed to another plane, where one reckons up costs and profits on a balance sheet.

But can one ever get away from this thing of reckoning up costs and profits on a balance sheet? Is not the very issue between choosing domestic values or rejecting them a matter to be weighed by the mind in terms of its advantages and disadvantages? And what after all is the advantage to the individual if he reaches for domestic values rather than other values? It is senseless to raise the question of happiness in sheer quantitative form, to ask whether domestic values will ultimately yield a greater sum of satisfaction. For matters of happiness are more intelligibly analyzed in terms of quality than of quantity. And hence the individual puts his query in this form: What is the particular kind of satisfaction that lies before me if I choose to strive for domestic values? Why should I prefer these to others? Why should I make the domestic man an ideal of my life?

This query submits the marriage ideal to a new test. [p.256] It would be absurd, within the scope of this essay, to claim for it any absolute preëminence over other ideals of life. For it is not purposed here to outline a comprehensive ethic. All that a theory of this kind can do is to show what things hang together, and what the full implication may be if one accepts or rejects marriage values as an object of life. Hence the need for coherence and consistency in the principles of marriage.

The theories of marriage values and of art values in marriage have a superficial appearance of inconsistency, for they are differently derived. The concepts of loyalty value and duration value were deduced from the fundamental assumption that marriage is a personal relationship. The scheme of art values was developed by analogy of marriage with other arts. The world of marriage values is a world of purpose and intention. To intend well is to do well in terms of marriage values, but not in terms of art. The domestic man may be a bad artist; his intentions may always fall short of achievement, and for all that he is none the less the domestic man. The two theories delineate different standards of excellence. The symmetrical level of domestic interaction is the highest standard of family life according to the scheme of marriage value, whereas successful marriage art is to be judged not by levels of intention and behavior in the family but by stages in the development at personality.

Art value is thus individualistic; marriage value is not. But marriage values

are necessary preconditions to the attainment of the highest art value. The reward which the individual receives for an enduring loyalty to another is a higher development of his own personality. The [p.257] man who stands alone, facing the issues of marriage, reckons then in terms at the contribution marriage will make to his own personality. Anything else is false reckoning.

Perhaps it follows from this that marriage is not the best of the alternatives that lie before one. Undoubtedly many adults, both wedded and single, are seeking in marriage for values extraneous thereto, and many are by their training unfitted to appreciate the actual marriage values. Yet it is only fair, since marriage has been rather relentlessly exposed, to demand that the complete consequences of alternatives to marriage should be equally laid open. What are, then, the full implications as a life object of personal ambition, the pursuit of pleasure, or the purposeless contemplation of things? If these alternative life ideals are scrutinized with the care which has been given to scrutinizing the ideal of marriage, their apparent adequacy to fill a life may rapidly dissolve away.

The purpose of this essay is accomplished, however, without pursuing these questions. The two authors have not been minded to set up as counselors of mankind. They have wished only to trace out comprehensively the implications of certain lines of thought that seemed to come upon them out of nature itself. For if marriage is the kind of thing they think it is, then these are its implicit principles. Further than that, they make no presumptions.

And if the language of domestic theory has been at times repellant because of words that come with unkindly flavor to English speech, this has been a sacrifice in the interests of intellectual adequacy – in order that issue [p.258] might be joined with other theories. Need it be said that the principles of marriage are practiced in family life, regardless of how they are stated? They do not need to be stated in order to be true.

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