

MORALITY FORUM UPDATE

March 2004

Morality Forum Action

The Devils Advocates

By Bryan Warner

Not for the first time, I feel obliged to say, "All that it needs for evil to prosper, is for good men to do nothing."

Did you believe us when we tried to encourage you to stop the schools from teaching children "how to do it" (see page 3)? Maybe you tried to help, but the 'experts' got their own way and began corrupting ever-younger children.

Did you write to your Member of Parliament about the dangers of giving homosexuals special consideration? Maybe you did, but they are still treated as a special group requiring all manner of privileged treatment.

There are so many instances of our politicians pushing through policies, which suit their own ideological or permissive thinking. People can be forgiven for thinking that it cannot possibly be true. Unfortunately it is true and not enough people are telling them to represent their constituents and not force their own ideas on society.

You could say that many of the things they interfere with are none of their business. The latest crackpot idea, which they have *rushed* through parliament, is to allow a transsexual to change his, or her, birth certificate to say that he/she was born female or male or whatever!! Why would anyone want to do that, unless they were ashamed of themselves? Why would your M.P. want to do that?

I personally think that they are doing the work of the devil by destroying the very foundation of a stable society. The Christian Institute is aghast at the havoc this legislation will cause for religious freedom. They say, "The Gender Recognition Bill is the worst thing that this government has ever imposed on churches. Please make this an urgent matter for prayer."

There are many objectionable features to this bill, such as men using women's toilets and visa versa, the prospect of employers or church ministers being prosecuted and fined (up to £5,000) if they refuse to accommodate transsexuals and, not least, the fact that

two men being legally joined together in 'marriage' makes a mockery of that holy institution.

Our gender is determined at conception and a 'sex change' operation is nothing short of mutilation. Many who have the operation live to bitterly regret it. Did you see a man called Sam on the Richard and Judy T.V. show recently? Sam had himself changed to Samantha. He said that he regretted this within hours of the operation and was never happy as a woman. He had a nervous breakdown and is now being changed back. *Can this operation be reversed?* Sam didn't look as if it could.

The consequence of this Gender Recognition Bill gives preferential treatment to a very few sick individuals, while being totally offensive to tens of thousands of decent citizens. Don't you think that it would be much better to direct resources to helping them? There must be plenty of people who can give them the love and attention needed for them to sort themselves out. No one should be allowed to drift into such bizarre behaviour.

A briefing, giving more details is available from the Christian Institute, or from us, but the matter is urgent. Write **now** to anyone you can think of who might have the courage to stop this practice. If you have a religious belief, pray for what is right and proper to prevail.

Write Letters

Letters to MP's, Managers and officials are effective in influencing the way that their organisation works.

Public opinion still counts for a great deal.

Public statements of sincerely held beliefs encourage like minded people and make others consider their position.

Articles in this update may be amalgamated from publications of various organisations, as well as original material.
The views expressed are not necessarily those of any particular organisation.

Sex Education

By Thomas Langton

Teenage pregnancy rates in the US are at a 10-year low. In stark contrast, the UK's record is the worst in Western Europe. So says Olga Craig in her article in the Sunday Telegraph of 11th January, following her investigation of two very different ways of tackling adolescent sexual activity.

1,000 teenagers, their clothes reflecting the latest fashion; their hairstyles and their accessories shrieking teenage taste. Gangs of girls and boys grouped in corners, showing off their latest mobiles, flirting shyly with each other. It could have been a school disco anywhere.

This one in the gymnasium of Knoxville High School in Tennessee was different. As the lights dimmed, the teenagers formed themselves into rows, each holding aloft a silver ring. As they pushed the narrow bands onto the third finger of their right hand, they recited in unison: "I agree to wear a silver ring as a sign of my pledge to abstain from sexual behaviour. On my wedding day, I will present my ring to my spouse, signifying my faith and my commitment."

"It was terrific, we were on such a high," said Ellie Yaring, 16, the next day. "We were all rejecting permissive values, making our commitment to chastity.

Saying that we didn't want to have sex before marriage."

Ellie and her high school friends have joined the growing movement of chastity organisations that have swept America's Bible belt. President Bush has ploughed \$117 million (£64 million) into what is known as "abstinence education" in schools to support his tough moral stance on teenage sex. Latest figures show a pregnancy rate of 43 per 1,000 teenage girls.

The strategy has been acknowledged as a success, and we, on the other side of the Atlantic, can only look on in envy.

In Britain, the Government has adopted a vastly different approach — that of dishing out condoms and morning-after pills, making sex education compulsory in secondary schools, and inundating our teenagers with explicit information on sex.

Sex education in our schools is aimed at increasing sexual knowledge and encouraging contraception to combat teenage pregnancy, rather than condemning underage sex. Preventing

pregnancy rather than preventing sex is the Government's aim. While it is a strategy that is lauded in liberal circles, it is also a strategy that has not worked.

We have failed utterly to reduce the numbers of gymslip mothers. For the past 12 years Britain has been the pregnancy capital of Europe. According to UNICEF's latest figures, in 2002 some 41,966 British girls under 18 became pregnant. Of those, 5,954 were 15; 2,011 were 14, and 450 were under 14.

However, while results in America have been impressive, many critics assert that an improved moral attitude is not the only factor. American welfare reforms in the early 1990s no longer offered an incentive for young girls to become pregnant. A baby in your teen's means a lifetime of drudgery, was the message.

In Britain, surveys indicate that for many teenagers becoming pregnant is an aspiration. The benefits and cheap local authority housing available is seen by some as a reason to become pregnant, especially for teenagers from impoverished or broken homes. A recent poll by the Family Education Trust indicated that 45 per cent of single pregnant teenagers had either wanted to conceive or "didn't mind" that they had. The introduction of £5,000 worth of free nursery care to enable pregnant teenagers to return to school is seen by many as a "perverse incentive" to attract young girls into parenthood.

Robert Whelan, the director of the Family Education Trust, points out: "The scale of state help directed at young single parents is such that girls who do not have babies are losing out." He also believes, however, that our teenagers are being bombarded with the wrong message:

Katie, 17, may be unaware of her local authority's approach, but her life reflects its ethos. At 16 she gave birth to Brandon: father unknown. "We did loads of sex education at school," she says. "I used the morning-after pill a few times, but, you know, you forget" She shrugs. "I was hanging out with boys from when I was 13. My mum knew. She put me on the pill. She thought, 'Better safe than sorry.' To me it was like saying go out and sleep with boys. And I would forget to take that too."

She pulled out a battered pamphlet. Published by the Brook Association. *The Good Grope Guide*, which is one of its sex manuals for schools, and is

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Make marriage not crime

By Basil Gurney

I am afraid I pinched the headline from the Times, where it headed an article by Mary Ann Sieghart in which she described the world's longest study of criminals. This study has come up with an astonishing answer to what it is that turns young, male delinquents away from a life of crime. This question has long puzzled policymakers.

Prison, cognitive therapy and anger management; have all had little effect. Now an American academic has come up with the definitive answer — marriage!.

John H. Laub, an eminent criminologist from the University of Maryland, has published a book, based on research into the lives of 500 criminals who were in reform school in the 1930s and 1940s. Now they are in their seventies, and Laub has re-interviewed a cross-section of them to find out what, if anything, in their lives made them turn their back on crime. This is thought to be the longest longitudinal study of crime in the world.

Laub identifies three factors that entice men back into a law-abiding society: a steady job, a successful spell in the Armed Forces and marriage. But the greatest of these is marriage.

The evidence is not just anecdotal. Laub found that those offenders who gave up crime were, statistically, more likely to be in stable marriages. Those who persisted were more likely to be never married, divorced or serially married. His calculations show a 36 per cent reduction in crime associated with being married.

What is it about this institution that turns men straight? First, it is investment. Married men have more to lose than single men. It also takes men away from their peers: married couples tend to spend more time with each other and with the wife's friends. Often marriage also entails moving house, taking the man out of the environment in which he got into trouble.

The state of marriage can change men's sense of self, making them feel more adult and responsible. Getting hitched almost always involves, for criminal men, "marrying up". Women are, statistically, much less likely to be criminal than men. Laub says, "For this reason alone it is little wonder that marriage, to virtually any woman, could benefit (delinquent) men."

These men, born in the 1920s and 1930s, grew up in a very different society. Marriage was the norm. Divorce was difficult. Cohabitation was

virtually unknown. Even a young delinquent would have found it hard to father several babies with different women and neither marry nor live with any of them — which is the norm in some parts of society today.

Marriage conferred respectability. It was a formal passage into adulthood. It provided a stable structure for people who may have experienced chaotic lives. Marriage was seen as synonymous with "settling down" a phrase we hardly ever use today.

Too many twenty, and even thirty-somethings, seem stuck in a perpetual adolescence, in which commitment and permanence are seen as threats or traps rather than symbols of love and security. They fail to see that they are living in a trap of their own. They are trapped in a stage of life that they ought to have outgrown. It is a stage that may deliver more instant gratification but far less long-term happiness.

I have only snipped bits out of the article, which is very interesting in its entirety. I am the same age as these old delinquents and I feel very strongly that the society in which we grew up benefited us so very much more than goes the free sex, anything goes, sordid society we have bequeathed to my grandchildren.

Surely this study makes the case for pre-marriage abstinence and for girls, in particular, not to squander their most precious attributes by being free whores?

The book is *Shared Beginnings; Divergent Lives*, by John H. Laub and Robert J. Sampson, Harvard University Press

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directed at 13-year-olds. One of her friends has another, this time a Family Planning Association booklet aimed at 14-16-year-olds. "Abortion," it assures its readers, "is nothing to worry about."

"We are not like your generation," she says. "We get taught how to do it. When I was 14 we were shown a video in school that told us all about sexual positions. And it said that we should consider oral sex if we were a bit unsure about going all the way."

"My mum says my generation live the saying that familiarity breeds contempt. She's right."

Morality, What's That?

By Bryan Warner

What is the world coming to? We seem to have reached a point where the blessing of modern technology is being hijacked by the corrupt and dirty minded. Fifty years ago it was possible to make films and plays without depicting sexual activity or gratuitous violence.

With the advent of TV this ability appears to have been lost and even shows for young people, depicting school life, are shot through with scenes showing an unhealthy obsession with the opposite gender. Drugs, conflict and violence are all portrayed as normal daily life.

Programmes intended for grown up, or more accurately older, viewers are much worse. I sometimes wonder if every producer has a clause in his contract, which stipulates that a certain number of explicit sex scenes must be included, that all actresses must be expected to perform nude and that blood, snot and mayhem must be shown in detail.

I was a Royal Marine, I am not squeamish and I am certainly no prude, but I object most strongly to this stuff being pumped through my television whether I want it or not. More particularly, I object to it being inflicted on my children and grandchildren.

No doubt the perpetrators of this will throw up their hands at such an old-fashioned attitude and cry out "watershed". Watershed? More like sewage outlet!

The latest crime figures (which take an incredible time to creep out) show that the number of criminals aged **11 and under** has increased by 150% in ten years and that child offenders are getting younger and more violent. 49,200 criminals aged 10 to 17 were sentenced in 2002 for indictable offences.

Experts seem to agree that teenage crime can be laid at the door of homes without fathers and that functional married couples, where the biological father takes an active role and is a role model would mitigate the problem enormously. The police have been warning about this for years.

I would wager that these incomplete families are just the ones where television discipline is lacking and the children have little constructive after-school activity. Many of them will have access to Internet pornography as well, and the effect of this is well illustrated by the recent case of Graham Coutts, who has just been sentenced to life for murder.

Coutts was addicted to pornographic websites showing images of rape and strangled women. He also visited chatrooms to discuss perverted sexual activity. Finally he attacked and murdered teaching assistant Jane Longhurst.

Way back in 1992, a 12 year old boy who, according to the mother, "raped and violated my 3 year old daughter in every manner you can imagine," told the police that he watched pornography and so he knew what to do and how to do it

Jane's mother had the courage to go on television news and call for action to close down websites, which put out such "disgusting images". The official excuse for not stopping this abuse of the World Wide Web is that most of this material originates in other countries and not in the U.K.

What absolute absurd rubbish. I absolutely do not believe that this can not be done, wherever the filth is coming from. Where there's a will there's a way. Isn't that right? Maybe our 'representatives' have forgotten that they are **our** representatives and are not in their position for the purpose of imposing their own ideas and agenda on us. We are mostly quite capable of making up our own minds.

Addresses

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| Your MP: | House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA Tel: 020 7219 3000 |
| Adv. Standards Authority: | 2 Torrington Place, London WC1E 7HW Tel:020 7580 5555 Fax: 7323 4339 |
| Board of Film/Video Classification: | 3 Soho Square, London W1V 6HD Tel: 020 7439 7961 Fax: 7287 0141 |
| Broadcasting Standards Commission: | 7 The Sanctuary, London SW1P 3LS Tel: 01233 237 700 Fax: 01233235 870 |
| Head of Programme Complaints Unit: | BBC, Broadcasting House, Portland Place, London W1 1AA Tel: 08700 100 222 |
| Internet Watch Found'n: | E.View, Coles Lane, Oakington, Cambs. CB4 5BA Tel: 020 7233 0554 Fax: 7233 0397 |
| Media March: | PO Box 53, Cheltenham GL53 7ZQ Tel: 020 8467 6452 |
| Family and Youth Concern: | Elizabeth House, 39 York Road, London SE1 7NQ Tel:020 7401 5480 Fax: 7401 5471 |
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