

Editor's note: The following excerpts come from Dr. Kengor's "work-in-progress" on the far left's attack on marriage and the family, a project that was inspired by this conference. His conference paper is developing into a "short book." Dr. Kengor forewarns readers that much of the evidence needed to explain, elaborate upon, and fully back his thesis could not be included in these excerpts.

From Marx to Marcuse: The Far Left's Assault on Marriage and Family

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"Abolition of the family! Even the most radical flare up at this infamous proposal of the Communists."

—Karl Marx, *The Communist Manifesto*, 1848

That disturbing quotation from Karl Marx appears in his *Communist Manifesto*, an enormously influential work that literally launched a revolution unprecedented in its destruction. Totalitarian movements that envisioned nothing less than the transformation of human nature were inspired by that book. And where is human nature more elemental than in the family and the male-female marital procreative act that produces the family?

Even way back then, in the mid-1800s, the radical left had its sights on the family, with marriage at the epicenter. And this particular component of the extreme left—the communist left—was devoutly atheistic in its orientation and ambition. It rebelled against God; a rebellion against the Creator that was central to its new direction and fundamental transformation.

Generally speaking, such rebellion is not new at all; it is as old as the Old Testament, even as communists had a new, perverse direction in mind. The rebellion against God is an ancient battle that circles back to the Garden of Eden, where a sinister force first tried to separate man and woman from the will of Divine Providence and tear asunder the male-female union that the Creator had ordained. Fortunately for the long scope and history of humanity, better angels prevailed, as did natural law and common sense, all of which, by practice and experience, enabled civilization to hold the bonds of matrimony and the traditional family together.

Nonetheless, the far left has remained undeterred, faithful to its rebellious roots. It has long been hell-bent in taking down the family. In that objective, leftists have made their arguments and tried different tactics, but they at long last seem to have found the vehicle to make it happen: this entirely novel phenomenon called "gay marriage." Once advocates of same-sex

marriage succeed in redefining marriage as anything but one man and one woman, there will be no end to the redefinition. The current liberal/progressive standard that consulting adults who love each other ought to be entitled to “marriage rights” cannot, by sheer logical consistency, prohibit polygamous marriages, group marriages, inter-family marriages (mother married to son or daughter or stepson or stepdaughter, dad to son or daughter or stepson or stepdaughter, uncles and nieces, aunts and nephews, etc.), and numerous other innovative arrangements. By the left’s new insistent standard for what rises to the level of “marriage,” any and all of these variations are fair game for consideration if not implementation. Liberals in their hearts know this; it is undeniable. It will be a mess—a mess of marriage.

A mess of marriage, of course, means a mess of the family. And as families fall apart, so does society. No one denies that the best situation for a child is a home with both a mother and a father, which should always be the goal of any culture or polity. Children who grow up with the presence of a mother and father are less likely to be poor, to end up in prison, to get addicted to drugs, and generally are healthier and stronger and more successful. Conversely, the most common condition among men in American prisons is not racial or ethnic background, not income or class distinction, not high school or college diploma, but whether or not they grew up with a father in the home.

In a speech for Father’s Day 2008, Senator Barack Obama was emphatic in championing fatherhood: “We know the statistics—that children who grow up without a father are five times more likely to live in poverty and commit crime; nine times more likely to drop out of schools and 20 times more likely to end up in prison. They are more likely to have behavioral problems, or run away from home, or become teenage parents themselves. And the foundations of our community are weaker because of it.” Obama added: “Of all the rocks upon which we build our lives ... family is the most important. And we are called to recognize and honor how critical every father is to that foundation.” If “we are honest with ourselves,” said Obama, “we’ll admit that ... too many fathers” are missing—they are “missing from too many lives and too many homes.”

Obama summed up: “We need fathers.”

Nary a single conservative would disagree with any of this; a rare moment of complete conservative agreement with Barack Obama. For that matter, few liberals would disagree—until now. Liberals have been compelled to disagree because of the political gyrations they must do to

accommodate their ideological marriage to gay marriage. Now, liberals (Obama among them) are suddenly pushing relentlessly for fatherless families—or, more specifically, for a new form of American family that is fatherless. With their embrace of gay marriage, a massive shift not only within America, American culture, and human civilization, but also within the Democratic Party, liberals/progressives nationwide are simultaneously advocating a redefinition of family that embraces fatherless families. Think about it: married female-female parents will be households without dads.

Actually, what today's liberals are advocating is far worse than that. They are pushing not only for fatherless families but also, conversely, motherless families. Married male-male parents (the other half of gay marriage) will be households without moms.

This is all changing with the advent of gay marriage.

And indeed, the process is well underway. Since July 2006, a group instructively called Beyond Marriage has pushed a statement titled, “Beyond Same-Sex Marriage: A New Strategic Vision for All Our Families & Relationships.” The group is seeking “a new vision for securing governmental and private institutional recognition of diverse kinds of partnerships, households, kinship relationships and families. In so doing, we hope to move beyond the narrow confines of marriage politics as they exist in the United States today.” The statement candidly admits that “the struggle for same-sex marriage rights is only one part of a larger effort”—albeit the seminal breakthrough to make other arrangements possible.¹ Prominent members of the group include Chai Feldblum, Georgetown University law professor and EEOC commissioner under President Barack Obama.²

In the past, such a group of leftists would have loudly raised their voices but not caused any real change. They would have been dismissed as left-wing cranks and minor irritants and agitators with no serious concern. But now, with formal legalization of same-sex marriage afoot—i.e., traditional marriage redefined—they are getting what they want. And what they want will change everything.

¹ “Beyond Same-Sex Marriage: A New Strategic Vision for All Our Families & Relationships,” July 26, 2006, posted at the website www.beyondmarriage.org.

² When later under scrutiny by the U.S. Senate for confirmation of her EEOC position, Feldblum attempted to backtrack from her original signature to the Beyond Marriage petition, which to this day retains her endorsement. See: “Obama EEOC nominee calls support for radical marriage manifesto ‘a mistake,’” Catholic News Agency, November 20, 2009. Feldblum said she had problems with some elements of the sweeping statement, but certainly not all of them.

So, what will have initiated this fundamental transformation of this onetime pillar of human civilization? The answer is this 21st-century novelty called “gay marriage.” It is entirely new, entirely untried, entirely untested over time or even one generation; it isn’t as old as the cell phone. Its antecedents, however, go back much further.

This is not to say that readers of this paper will discover receptivity toward gay marriage or homosexuality by Marx and Engels in the 1850s or by Communist Party USA (CPUSA) in the 1950s. Yes, there were certain Marxists who challenged sexual convention and the bounds of the traditional family, but they were not advancing or remotely contemplating gay marriage—a notion that was utterly unthinkable until only very, very recent times. The mere fleeting contemplation, the mere momentary notion, the slightest passing fancy of a man legally marrying another man (with widespread cultural acceptance) in the 1850s or 1950s, or as recently as the 1980s, would have been scoffed at as inanely incomprehensible; its proponents would have been deemed certifiably insane. Public authorities might well have hauled them away as public menaces dangerous to society.

Nonetheless, along the road that prodded civilization toward this historically extremely unusual spot, there were influential forces on the far left and communist left. Among certain extreme-left elements, there was a pronounced sexual radicalism that arguably helped pave the surface or at least broke the ground. One such group was the neo-Marxists of the Frankfurt School, which had an especially strong impact upon the universities, particularly in the 1960s. Individuals in this school were not orthodox Marxists or CPUSA types; they were not even economists. They were cultural radicals—from sociology, psychology, outside of economics departments; they were devotees of Freudian thought more radical than Freud. They were sexually radical, and they advocated practices conspicuously contrary to traditional marriage, to conventional sexual relations, and to the nuclear family.

In short, what we have here, and what I intend to show, is not an early embrace of homosexuality or gay marriage by any of the early Marxists, but a long, slow progression in that ultimate direction by the radical left generally. Today, in a fascinating but telling development, Communist Party USA and its flagship publication *People’s World* are totally and equivocally pro-gay marriage. With gay marriage, today’s communists thus have the straw to crack the once-unbreakable back of the traditional-natural-Biblical family, allowing a redefinition that forever changes the boundaries of how marriage and family have been long understood.

Same-sex marriage is hardly a Marxist plot, a latent communist conspiracy. It is, however, a crucial final blow to marriage—the only blow that has allowed a formal, legal redefinition that will unravel the institution and open the floodgates. It has distinct origins traceable to the far left’s initial thrusts at this once unassailable monogamous, faithful male-female institution.

The current state is the end-road of a long radical progression that should not be viewed entirely separate from or totally unrelated to early attacks by the radical left. It had many prior destinations. A people do not just one morning wake up and ditch the sacred and natural character of the male-female marital union that served their parents, grandparents, great grandparents, great-great grandparents, great-great-great grandparents, great-great-great-great grandparents, and the ongoing long line of ancestors who preceded them. That does not happen without some busy work by some factions in the years before. Ground had been plowed to ready this soil. Much deconstruction and desensitizing to the sanctity of marriage had to be done over a long-haul to arrive at this final destination.

Let us now look at the roots of where this extraordinary progression arguably started to take place.

Early Communist and Socialist Movements on Marriage and Family

Throughout the 19th century, various socialists, communists, and assorted utopians wrote about the glories of “free love” and cogitated on what they perceived as the inherent ills of the family. Some became so brash and boisterous that governments viewed them as a growing peril to society; in Prussia and Germany, legislation was enacted to try to protect the family from these forces. Even before Marx and Engels came along, not to mention Clara Zetkin, the leading German Marxist-feminist, the likes of August Bebel (a German socialist), Charles Fourier (a French socialist), and the English utopian-socialist Robert Owen were busy laying an intellectual foundation for the rejection of traditional family relationships. For instance, Fourier as early as the 1830s was openly advocating the termination of monogamous marriage in order to allow greater sexual license among spouses.

Marx and Engels did not necessarily endorse all of these varied ideas, certainly initially, though their positions are often hard to unpack. There was an evolution/progression in their

thinking from roughly the 1840s through the 1880s. But even then, Marx and especially Engels would pick up the slack and move it onward in a way not healthy to the family.

“Although Marx and Engels were not the instigators of the anti-family trend among socialists, they—especially Engels—contributed mightily to it,” writes Professor Richard Weikart in his excellent journal article, “Marx, Engels, and the Abolition of the Family.” Weikart cites a contemporaneous report to the Prussian Minister of the Interior, which noted that German communists were “so unusually dangerous for the state, the family and the social order.” The authorities had their eyes on these intellectuals, whose ideas were deemed hazardous. There were, writes Weikart, “no doubts in the minds of Marx’s and Engels’ contemporaries that socialism was a threat not only to the state, but also to the family.”³

This went without saying. It was widely understood that communists advocated ideas that were contrary to the family. As noted in the lead quote in this paper, Marx in the *Communist Manifesto* wrote of the “abolition of the family” as not only “radical” but as an “infamous proposal of the Communists.” In their own time, their ideas were seen as extreme.

Marx and Engels had an evolving conception of family that was not based on a fixed structure stemming from an absolute understanding of God, Scripture, or any Christian church or denomination. For Marx and Engels, their structure was economic, materialistic, and based on their interpretation of historical cultures and evolution. “Even during the time they assumed that the family was a natural institution of society,” writes Weikart, “Marx and Engels were clear that it was not a fixed entity.” In *Das Capital*, Marx dismissed as “silly” the idea of absolute norms for the family. In their 1845 work, *The German Ideology*, Marx and Engels asserted that “It is not possible to speak of ‘the’ family.” They argued that the family played an important but, unfortunately, malevolent role in human history.⁴ It had to be changed.

These particular Marx-Engels thoughts were expressed prior to their *Communist Manifesto* in 1848, where the family rhetoric was amplified a few decibels. “Abolition of the family!” yelled Marx in the *Manifesto*. “Even the most radical flare up at this infamous proposal of the Communists.”

Marx and his comrades scoffed at what they dismissed as the “bourgeois family.” Marx snarled that “bourgeois marriage is in reality a system of wives in common.” It was a “system”

³ Richard Weikart, “Marx, Engels, and the Abolition of the Family,” *History of European Ideas*, 1994, Vol. 18, No. 5, 657.

⁴ Weikart, “Marx, Engels, and the Abolition of the Family,” 661.

that he and fellow communists would in some form endeavor to change, even if “reproached” in the process.⁵ He hoped and predicted that “the bourgeois family will vanish as a matter of course,” as would “bourgeois marriage.” These should go, vanish, averred Marx, along with all morality, eternal truths, and religion, which was the “opiate of the masses.” Marx, of course, was no champion of religion, which was an obstacle to his vision. “Communism begins where atheism begins,” he said in another context. They were all interconnected: communism, atheism, abolition of religion, abolition of marriage, abolition of the family.

Overall, stated Marx, “The communist revolution is the most radical rupture with traditional relations; no wonder that its development involves the most radical rupture with traditional ideas.” Yes, no wonder.

Marx had other diatribes against the family in store in the *Manifesto*: “The bourgeois family will vanish as a matter of course when its complement vanishes, and both will vanish with the vanishing of capital.” By “its complement,” Marx (as usual) is not entirely clear, though he seems to be referring to the scourges of “capital” and “private gain.” These, too, would vanish in the final stage and achievement of the communist utopia, as would the “exploitation” and “home education” of children by their parents. “Do you charge us with wanting to stop the exploitation of children by their parents?” Marx asked rhetorically. “To this crime we [communists] plead guilty. But, you will say, we destroy the most hallowed of relations, when we replace home education by social.”⁶

To this, too, Marx pled guilty. He fulminated against “the bourgeois claptrap about the family and education” and sniffed at “the hallowed correlation of parent and child,” both of which he found “disgusting.” Thus, not surprising, the tenth and final point of Marx’s crucial 10-point plan for implementing his vision called for “Free education for all children in public schools.”⁷ He wanted those children out of the harmful reach of their parents’ home education and corralled instead into the public-education collective. Of course, numerous leftists, most of all Professor John Dewey—whose work 70 years later was adored and implemented by the

⁵ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (NY: Penguin Signet Classics edition, 1998), 72.

⁶ Marx and Engels, *Communist Manifesto*, 71.

⁷ Marx and Engels, *Communist Manifesto*, 71-2 and 75.

Bolsheviks in establishing the Soviet education system⁸—would enthusiastically seek to do just that, fully agreeing with Marx on the vital “social” thrust of education.

This was also what Charles Fourier and Robert Owen desired. They wanted public schools and communal enclaves to replace the father and mother as the primary educators and shapers of society’s children. This, of course, would be forcibly done in brute fashion a century later in certain Asian communist experiments, such as China and Cambodia, where it produced unprecedentedly deadly results. Weikart notes of Owen: “Owen’s continual emphasis on the role of education in shaping an individual’s character and outlook lent urgency to his appeal for the abolition of the family, since only by removing children from their supposedly irrational and deleterious influence of parents could he hope to alter society.”⁹

This thinking is very much alive today. The atheist philosopher/educator Richard Rorty candidly stated that the job of professors like him is “to arrange things so that students who enter as bigoted, homophobic religious fundamentalists will leave college with views more like our own” and “escape the grip of their frightening, vicious, dangerous parents.” Many leftists in the educational field despise homeschooling for similar reasons—often sexual-cultural reasons. They want sex education, including their leftist views on marriage and family, to be taught not at home (where parents differ) but in public schools where they can manipulate classroom content. And if they fail to get hold of the minds of those students in the K-12 years, they eventually get them in the universities, where the parents hand over the child and pay huge fees for a re-education completely contrary to what they carefully inculcated at home for 18 years.

Getting back to Marx, he thus wanted “free education” for every child in “public schools.” No more of this “hallowed correlation of parent and child” and “bourgeois claptrap about the family and education.” Again, this was the 10th and final point of his plan.

Another of Marx’s 10 crucial points that was explicitly family related was his insistence on ending “all right of inheritance.” Marx and Engels saw inheritance as a menace that perpetuated the role of traditional family in their new economic utopia.¹⁰ How could a classless society guarantee equality of income when some persons at birth were unjustly handed more income than others? This point from the *Manifesto*, Marx’s third point, is translated succinctly as

⁸ See the long and in-depth discussion in my book *Dupes: How America’s Adversaries Have Manipulated Progressives for Over a Century* (New Wilmington, DE: ISI Books, 2010).

⁹ Weikart, “Marx, Engels, and the Abolition of the Family,” p. 664.

¹⁰ Weikart, “Abolition of the Family,” 665.

“Abolition of all right of inheritance.” Here, “abolition” seems to mean nothing but that, an actual termination of the “right” to inheritance. With this, too, Marx was looking to dramatically affect the family. Such proposals would change family.

Generally, overall, Karl Marx was looking to seriously alter the family, whether through completely reversing inheritance, home education, or any number of other means. Importantly, after Marx’s death, Engels went even further in fleshing out their anti-family ideas. He did so a year after Marx’s death in his 1884 book *The Origin of the Family*, which Engels insisted reflected Marx’s views.¹¹ Engels reiterated a position earlier advanced by he and Marx, namely that a woman’s/wife’s private housework would be supplanted by social labor. Women would not only be channeled into factories, to work there, but private housework would be nationalized by the state. Housework would become a public industry with communal child care, cooking, cleaning, and so forth. This was intended to liberate mothers and wives from the chains of conventional family *economic bondage*. Children would be raised communally.¹²

Obviously, this was a vast change in family life. And it would be seized upon and favored by later communist writers and theorists and even implemented by communist governments, always via or under threat of coercion.

In *Origins* and other writings, Engels favored that marriage should not be a legal relationship but a purely private affair—ironically, one of the few areas where he or Marx favored privatization, likely because it served his own interests. Engels in his writings revealed a highly promiscuous attitude toward sexual morality and marital relationships, symptomatic of what he vigorously practiced in his own life.¹³

Engels was not exactly a stalwart for marriage or fidelity. He was a stalwart for promiscuity and, most of all, easy divorce—which communist regimes of the 20th century implemented with vigor, and with corresponding huge divorce rates that dealt unprecedented blows to families.

Indeed, whatever Marx and Engels originally meant, their followers would not hesitate to seek to alter or abolish the family, marriage, the parental function, home education, and anything and everything else that stood in the way of their radical utopia. The two centuries following Marx’s words have been all about the wider left’s aggressive actions on all those fronts.

¹¹ Weikart, “Abolition of the Family,” 657.

¹² Weikart, “Abolition of the Family,” 665-6.

¹³ Weikart, “Abolition of the Family,” 665-7.

Marx's Disciples

The disciples of Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels were likewise committed to a revolution in family life, to a radical rupture in traditional relations between husband and wife and parents and children. Their first and most ardent practitioners, the Bolsheviki, followed the new faith with truly reckless abandon.

Implicit to these fundamental changes was a fusillade aimed at the despised foe of religion. The Bolsheviki immediately forbade religious instruction to anyone below 18 years of age, by parents or the church. Children were encouraged to turn in their parents if they taught them about God, and all education was removed from the Russian Orthodox Church and turned over to public schools. The parental/husband-wife relationship was infringed upon in multiple intrusive ways. Marriage was transformed into a strictly civil ceremony; weddings, baptisms, and funerals were converted into bizarre “communist” ceremonies. Soviet officials instead substituted secular ceremonies infused with communist ideology, pejoratively labeled by outsiders as “red weddings,” “red baptisms,” and “red funerals.” In red baptisms, infants were given social “god-parents” who undertook to ensure the child was brought up to become a worthy “builder of communism.” The parents of new-born children would promise to raise their children “not as slaves for the bourgeoisie, but as fighters against it.” Young mothers would declare: “The child belongs to me only physically. For his spiritual upbringing, I entrust him to society.”¹⁴ The “spiritual” upbringing here would be the new and only approved faith of Marxism-Leninism.

The Russian Orthodox Church’s long-standing prohibition against divorce was lifted by the Bolsheviki, leading to an explosion in divorce rates and havoc upon the Russian family.¹⁵ The dramatic combined effect of an immediate radical liberalization of divorce and institution of “red weddings” became especially acute with the corresponding complete legalization of abortion by the year 1920 (an unprecedented action anywhere in the world at the time). With those changes and the squashing of the Russian Orthodox Church and its involvement in marriage and families and children and education and just about anything and everything else, Vladimir Lenin and his allies dealt a severe blow to marital and family life in traditionally

¹⁴ See: Jennifer McDowell, “Soviet Civil Ceremonies,” *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion*, Vol. 13, No. 3, 1974, 265-79.

¹⁵ W. Bruce Lincoln, *Red Victory: A History of the Russian Civil War* (NY: Simon and Schuster, 1989), 476-77.

religious Russia. Right of the gate, within the first months and years after they seized power, the Bolsheviks had initiated these shocking changes to society.

Worse, through their Communist International (the Comintern), the Bolsheviks militantly pursued the global revolution that they and Marx and Engels envisioned, modeled after the Marxist-Leninist way inaugurated in the Soviet Union. They sought to export these policies. They insisted that all other communist parties around the world, which swore a loyalty oath to Moscow, follow similar practices. The Comintern, based in Moscow and headed by Lenin crony Grigory Zinoviev, was the literal headquarters of what Lenin and Marx called “the worldwide revolution.”

In the Soviet Union and other subsequent communist countries, the effect on marriage and the family was nothing short of catastrophic. The divorce rate skyrocketed to levels unseen in human history. So did abortion.

Abortion was legalized in Russia by the Bolsheviks shortly after they seized power. Having overthrown the ship of state in October 1917, Vladimir Lenin made good on his June 1913 promise for an “unconditional annulment of all laws against abortions.”¹⁶ By 1920, abortion was made fully and legally available and provided free of charge to Russian women. In short order, the number of abortions skyrocketed. By 1934, Moscow women were having three abortions for every live birth. The toll was so staggering that an appalled Joseph Stalin, the mass murderer, actually banned abortion in 1936, fearing a vanishing populace—that there would be no future Russia let alone Russian families. Nikita Khrushchev took care of that, reversing Stalin’s abortion ban (and ramping up religious persecution), thus allowing rates to ascend to heights heretofore unwitnessed in history. By the 1970s, the Soviet Union was averaging 7-8 million abortions per year, literally annihilating whole future generations of Russian children. Only recently, under Vladimir Putin, who faced a projected population plunge from 140-plus million to roughly 100 million by 2050 (with abortion and abortion-induced fertility the chief culprits) has Russia put restrictions on abortion and created policies to encourage fertility.

This abortion abomination was in no way merely a Bolshevik aberration. Long before American pro-choice liberals were touting slogans like “This is my body” or “My body, my choice” or “Keep your hands off my body,” communist women in Germany in the 1920s were

¹⁶ Vladimir Lenin stated this in *Pravda*, June 16, 1913, republished according to the original *Pravda* text in *Lenin, Collected Works*, Vol. 19 (Moscow: Progress Publishers, 1977), 235-7.

pushing to legalize abortion under the slogan “Your body belongs to you.”¹⁷ In so many areas, including radical changes in sexuality, communists were merely ahead of liberals/progressives, with the latter eventually catching up to the communists or evolving to their position. Abortion is a painfully clear example.

To this day, the countries with the highest abortion rates remain communist or recently communist countries: Russia, Cuba, Romania, and Vietnam. Cuba had been a devout Catholic country prior to Fidel Castro’s takeover in 1959, with a special devotion to the Virgin Mary, venerated as a symbol of motherly sacrifice and purity. Like all good communists, Castro declared war on religion, immediately opened up divorce laws and abortion clinics—all in the name of “women’s rights”—and then watched a corresponding eruption once utterly unimaginable in Cuba. Though reliable statistics are hard to find, it is inarguable that the vast majority of Cuban marriages end in divorce, making America’s notable divorce rate seem tiny by comparison. All Cuban children who survive divorce and the abortion clinics are herded into the grand communist collective that is the Cuban public-school system, where they are steeped in Marxist-Leninist indoctrination.

Red China cannot be excluded from this analysis. Many if not most of China’s abortions are compelled by the regime’s one-child policy, one of the most painfully severe infringements on family life ever inflicted by a government on its people. It is difficult to find a greater imposition on the male-female marital bond than a state limiting the procreative will and capacity of its citizens. In China, communism has so directly impacted the family that it actually regulates the permissible size of the family, a size capped at the lowest possible limit.

China’s one-child policy was implemented not by the murderous tyrant Mao Tse-Tung but by the more moderate and reform-oriented Deng Xiao Ping. As for Mao, his revolutionary dagger into the heart of China’s family already had been repeatedly inserted throughout his Great Leap Forward (1957-60) and Cultural Revolution (1966-69). Under Mao, the familial masses were steered in to omnipresent communes, cultural-administrative units that oddly would find curious appeal among many “hippie” emulators in the United States in the 1960s. Families were balkanized into these communes and children pulled from their parents. As recorded by John King Fairbank, the renowned China-watcher and Mao admirer, all parents were to work 28 days

¹⁷ John Riddell, “1921-26: The Communist Women’s Movement,” *International Socialist Review*, January-February 2013, 37.

of each month and were to eat in large mess halls, “while their children went into day nurseries. This would bring ... all [China’s] labor, including its womanpower, into full employment.”

Consistent with communist philosophy, this was seen as an emancipation of mothers and families—as was the Bolshevik-like liberalization of divorce laws in Red China. Mao was allowing China’s women to at long last have their way. And meanwhile, Mao had his way with the women of China. Like many communists, he advanced in private the sexual frontiers he pushed upon the public. His personal physician, Li Zhisui, notes that during the Cultural Revolution, the aging despot was constantly serviced by a harem of handpicked young girls, always the most desirous virgins plucked from nearby villages for the Marxist master’s full-time satisfaction. Dr. Li says that his patient, who refused to bathe, brush his teeth, and had chronic venereal disease, was “sometimes in bed with three, four, even five women simultaneously.” The girls’ parents were expected to cheerfully support this contribution to the revolution. Mao had himself an “uncountable” number of fresh young women who he found physically preferable to his older wife. And that wasn’t all. Mao showed himself to be a sexual progressive; he seems to have taken some young men for himself as well.¹⁸

What Chairman Mao did to these young people is a metaphor for what he did to China. Call it Mao’s Sinification of Marxism, his own adaptation, though with one faithful commonality to other communist theorists: an obliteration of traditional sexual morality and married and family life, rooted foremost in an attempted obliteration of religion.

Theorists and Thinkers

Those are some actual manifestations of communism’s direct effect on marriage and the family in the 20th century. These Marxist-Leninist leaders had implemented actions they felt were fully consistent with communist teaching.

Throughout the 20th century, a new generation of communist thinkers and theorists chimed in with recommendations and extensions, further elucidating the reflections of Marx and Engels, Fourier and Owen. Here, any number of Soviet and communist thinkers could be cited, from Lenin himself to his cohort, Leon Trotsky, to Clara Zetkin, the feminist-communist who in 1920 made the extraordinary claim to the Third Comintern Congress that “as long as capitalism

¹⁸ Li Zhisui, *The Private Life of Chairman Mao* (NY: Random House, 1994).

rules, the stronger sex will threaten to deprive the weaker of livelihood and the means of life.”¹⁹ Among them, one of the most influential Bolshevik theorists on the family was Aleksandra Kollontai, one of the regime’s first and leading feminists.

A sort of Soviet version of Eleanor Roosevelt, Kollontai was appointed People’s Commissar for Social Welfare by Lenin. She became the most prominent woman in the regime. In 1919, she founded Lenin’s “Women’s Department.” An early sexual feminist, Kollontai was an advocate of so-called “free love,” which would catch like wildfire among many American progressives of the day, including Planned Parenthood matron Margaret Sanger.

Kollontai joined up with the Bolshevik Party in Russia in 1915, and would spend the next years and decades as one of its most fiery feminist agitators. A cheerleader for “Housewives uprisings,” urging on her communist sisters in Russia, Austria, England, France, Germany, and elsewhere, Kollontai sought liberation for “captive housewives.” This, she said, only Russian communism offered. “The shackles of the family, of housework, of prostitution still weigh heavily on the working woman,” stated Kollontai. “Working women and peasant women can only rid themselves of this situation and achieve equality in life itself, and not just in law, if they put all their energies into making Russia a truly communist society.” She insisted that, “Only the overthrow of capitalism and the establishment of soviet power will save them from the world of suffering, humiliations, and inequality.” She thus sought to organize and mobilize through a more “excellent method of agitation among the less political of our proletarian sisters.”²⁰

For Kollontai, the communist revolution was a revolution not only for factory workers but for home workers, not only for economic roles but gender roles, not only for trade unions but for nuclear families. She became the leading Bolshevik spokeswoman for the housewife front. In the new utopia, the family would be not merely transcended but would cease to be a necessity.

In her 1920 Marxist classic, *Communism and the Family*, Kollontai wrote: “There is no escaping the fact: the old type of family has had its day. The family is withering away not because it is being forcibly destroyed by the state, but because the family is ceasing to be a necessity.” She dismissed “the old family,” “the typical family,” which, she celebrated, “is changing before our very eyes.” Kollontai asked: “Will the family remain in the same form? These questions are troubling many women of the working class and worrying their menfolk as

¹⁹ Riddell, “1921-26: The Communist Women’s Movement,” 38.

²⁰ Alexandra Kollontai, “International Women’s Day,” *International Socialist Review*, January-February 2013, 29-34.

well. Life is changing before our very eyes; old habits and customs are dying out, and the whole life of the proletarian family is developing in a way that is new and unfamiliar and, in the eyes of some, ‘bizarre.’”

All traditions were bizarre to the communists. Marx saw the old nostalgia for traditional family life as a bunch of bourgeois “claptrap,” and so did Kollontai. “The worker-mother must learn not to differentiate between yours and mine,” the Bolshevik feminist said of the child of the new communist world. No, the worker-mother “must remember that there are only *our* children [emphasis added], the children of Russia’s communist workers.” In full keeping with the communist-socialist writings referenced earlier in this paper, Kollontai insisted that, “Communist society will take upon itself all the duties involved in the education of the child.” She did, however, add this motherly-maternal touch: “but the joys of parenthood will not be taken away from those who are capable of appreciating them.” That is, from those mothers (and fathers) who happily accept that the best educators are not the parents but the collective, not the sanctuary of the home but the supremacy of the state. The children would be reared by “society.” Children would be permanent wards of the state.

We should pause here to note that as shocking as this idea is, it has currency among progressives in America today, many of them products of Deweyan views of education, culture, and society embedded in universities. Professor Melissa Harris-Perry, for instance, regrets that, “We have never invested as much in public education as we should have because we’ve always had kind of a private notion of children.” Kollontai-like, Harris-Perry laments that “we haven’t had a very collective notion” of our children. “We have to break through our kind of private idea that kids belong to their parents, or kids belong to their families,” says Harris-Perry, “and recognize that kids belong to whole communities.”²¹

Notably, Perry is no village idiot. She is an influential writer and television commentator on the political left, with a doctorate from Duke. She has been a professor at Princeton and Wake Forest and has run or served in several academic centers and studies. Perry’s comments were not overheard among some faculty-lounge banter. They were recorded as an advertisement for MSNBC’s “Lean Forward” campaign, and backed by educators and psychologists. Of course, her comments certainly had detractors. FoxNews quoted one: “The notion that children belong to

²¹ Hollie McKay, “Critics slam MSNBC host’s claim that kids belong to community, not parents,” FoxNews.com, April 9, 2013.

a state government rather than their own flesh and blood is the most disturbing statement made in recent political times,” complained one parent.

It may be disturbing, but it isn’t new. Harris-Perry’s wistful gaze toward the collective landscape is consistent with leading theorists of Lenin’s and Stalin’s totalitarian-communist state.

Cultural Marxism and the Frankfurt School

In retrospect, perhaps the most sardonically prophetic of Marxist assessments on marriage was Aleksandra Kollontai’s 1920 statement that “old habits and customs” were “dying out” and “developing in a way that is new and unfamiliar and, in the eyes of some, ‘bizarre.’” Nonetheless, Kollontai and crew helped pave the way by advancing notions of marriage, family, and sexuality that were completely relativistic, untied to any absolute, fixed authority. Once a fixed arbiter is rejected and removed from consideration, anything and everything becomes possible. As Dostoyevsky once put it, “If God does not exist, everything is permissible.”

In practice, however, not everything was permissible at this point in time, especially for homosexuals in Russia, a country that to this day is not welcoming of homosexual behavior. In the 1930s, well-traveled American “progressive” communists like millionaire Marxist Corliss Lamont, spreading the Leninist gospel on inherited money from his Wall Street father, would go to Moscow and take satisfaction in the fact that Stalin and the Bolsheviks were dispatching the slightest traces of cultural cancers such as prostitution and “homosexuality.”²² The idea of homosexuals marrying or adopting children into a legal “family” in Stalin’s Soviet Union or in America or anywhere in the world in this period was wholly unthinkable.

But that is where secular progressivism needed to enter the historical big picture and begin slowly doing its evolutionary work. Progressives believe that things are always in a state of flux, of evolution. An ongoing and unending and unceasing process of *forward* “change” is the only absolute that progressives really agree on. These changes are societal, cultural, political—whatever it takes to move the always-advancing and ever-evolving *progressive* agenda. The changes are also sexual and, thus, intimately involve human relations and the human family. These changes became even more elastic as modern progressives/liberals heartily embraced not only the sexual revolution but secularism. Unthinkable things like “gay marriage” simply needed

²² Corliss and Margaret Lamont, *Russia Day By Day: A Travel Diary* (NY: Covici-Friede Publishers, 1933).

time to germinate and to “progress,” to take their evolutionary path in secular-progressive ideology.

Still, that kind of really perverse, really extreme sexual radicalism was far away, even as a gaining confluence of leftists was coalescing, helping to enable a larger take-down of traditional sexuality, morality, marriage, and the family. But sticking with my focus here on communist influences, I will highlight a significant Marxist faction that was germinating in the 1930s and 1940s and would heavily affect the '60s left and the university community, and in turn arguably impacted today's runaway sexual ethics more than any previous Marxist thinkers.

Among the various factions arising from the embers of Marxist-Leninist theory, particularly notable to the realm of sexual-cultural thinking was the Frankfurt School. The Frankfurt School protégés were neo-Marxists, a new kind of 20th-century communist less interested in the economic/class-redistribution ideas of Marx than a remaking of society through the eradication of traditional norms and institutions. They brought to Marxist theory not a passion for, say, more equitable tax policy or reallocation of private property, but, rather, tenets of psychology, sociology, and even Freudian teaching on sexuality.

Many of these men developed what has been informally described as a kind of Freudian-Marxism, or “Freudo-Marxism,” integrating the extraordinarily influential 20th-century ideas of Sigmund Freud with the extraordinarily influential 19th-century teachings of Karl Marx. It most assuredly was not a match devised in heaven. Marx had conjured up the most noxious ideas of the 19th century, whereas Freud had cooked up the most neurotic ideas of the 20th century; bringing the two together under one mad-capped roof was bound to produce an explosion of disastrous proportions. The Frankfurt School thus concocted a toxic ideological brew that, sadly, was devoured by a thirsty 1960s sexual-liberation culture that drank deep from this new extremism, intoxicated by the prospects for fundamental transformation of the culture, country, and world. Though the Frankfurt School was certainly not issuing joint statements calling for, say, same-sex marriage—again, such would have been considered pure madness in any day beyond our own—its comprehensive push for an untethered, unhinged sexual openness with no cultural boundaries or religious restrictions cracked the door for almost anything down the road.

For the neo-Marxists, orthodox Marxism was old and limiting, too narrow, too restrictive, too wedded to the tight control of the Comintern and its ironclad party discipline that strong-armed national communist parties. This rigidity prevented these more freewheeling neo-Marxists

from initiating the rampant transformation they craved. This included trenchant changes in sexuality, marriage, and family. Above all, these Frankfurt leaders were left-wing/atheistic academics and intellectuals who looked to the universities as the home-base to instill their ideas.

There were many key figures from the Frankfurt School: Georg Lukacs, Herbert Marcuse, Wilhelm Reich, Max Horkheimer, Theodor Adorno, Erich Fromm, and others. The school began in 1923 as the Institute for Social Research at the University of Frankfurt (also sometimes called Goethe University) in Frankfurt, Germany. Fully revisiting all of that history would be too much for here, but a summation of Lukacs, founder of the school, of Wilhelm Reich, another of its theorists, and of Marcuse, its most instrumental Marxist, is worthy of our purposes.

Lukacs was one of the original handful of individuals who were present at the Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow in 1922, along with Karl Radek (a high-level Bolshevik leader and Lenin representative), Felix Dzerzhinsky (head of the Cheka, later known as the NKVD and KGB), and Willi Munzenberg (a major Comintern organizer).²³ The prominent roles of these men cannot be overstated.

Born April 13, 1885, Lukacs came from refined stock. His mother belonged to one of the wealthiest Jewish families in all of Hungary, and his father was a self-made millionaire. Like many mansion Marxists who speak for the poor and oppressed masses, he was raised with a silver spoon, and he came to hate the world in which he lived. For Lukacs, this included a red-hot hatred of gender roles, marriage, and family. “Woman,” he sneered, “is the enemy. Healthy love dies in marriage, which is a business transaction.... The bourgeois family gives off swamp vapors.”²⁴ It was a cynical Marxist view, for sure—carried into a new and volatile century.

For Lukacs (as well as Munzenberg and others still), the key to undermining Western civilization was not the factory-emancipation of the working classes that Marx and Engels fingered but rather the culture. That was where the conversion had to take place, and it would be a tall task. The fact was that at the core of Western civilization was a pesky morality that derived from the Old and New Testaments, from the traditional family and from tradition itself, an embedded understanding that freedom was not the license to do anything a person wanted, the

²³ For an early document on the founding of the Marx-Engels Institute, see: <http://www.marxists.org/archive/riazanov/bio/bio02.htm>.

²⁴ Ralph de Toledano, *Cry Havoc! The Great American Bring-down and How it Happened* (Washington, DC: Anthem Books, 2006), 25.

realization that one's passions needed to be occasionally checked and restrained. To Lukacs, these vital human realities that had served and undergirded Western civilization were repressive obstacles to the new society he and his comrades envisioned. "Of these obstacles," wrote Ralph de Toledano, one of the 20th century's more insightful reporters on the communist movement, "the two greatest were God and the family.... The family was not only a receptacle of the continuity in values, but the cement which held society together—and Lukacs hotly hated both God and the family."²⁵

Significantly, the ideas of Lukacs and his European comrades would begin to emanate directly from American soil, as they left their Hungarian and German communist parties for the friendly confines of America's most left-wing universities—Columbia foremost among them. Many of these men were Jewish Marxists. Thus, in the 1930s, amid the threats of Hitler's Germany, they and their Institute fled Germany.²⁶ It would come to New York City, specifically to the campus of Columbia University, the worst hotbed of American communist thought. Pleading the case for this move was Columbia's pillar, the renowned educator-philosopher John Dewey, founding father of American public education, who, at this point in his political life, described himself as a "small c" communist (meaning a communist by philosophy but not a formal party member).²⁷

As for Lukacs and his cadre, they believed that this neo-Marxism needed to be inculcated in the next generation of children, and then those beyond that—just as the family in the past had educated its children and their children with a completely contrary set of long-established values. Thus, their primary area of operation would be the educational system to which these parents delivered up their children, and particularly the universities and teachers' colleges. It was no coincidence that Columbia housed the nation's top teachers' college. It was through higher education that the impact would be most enduring. After their Moscow meetings, Willi Munzenberg said, "We must organize the intellectuals." Marx and Engels had organized the workers in the factories; the neo-Marxists would organize the professors and students in the universities.²⁸

²⁵ Toledano, *Cry Havoc!*, 25.

²⁶ The dates on this move vary. Some report it as 1935; others as 1938.

²⁷ I detail this at length in my book *Dupes*, specifically in the three chapters on John Dewey.

²⁸ Toledano, *Cry Havoc!*, 27.

In this grand endeavor, Lukacs would be one of many players from the Frankfurt-Freudian-sexual-Marxism school with sights set on the family. Others included sexual fanatics such as Wilhelm Reich, Otto Gross, William Steckel, A.S. Neill, and Erich Fromm. Some of them were overboard for even Sigmund Freud's intemperate tastes, with Freud blasting them, describing them with language like "morally insane" and "complete lunatic."²⁹

The World of Wilhelm Reich

Foremost among these individuals was Wilhelm Reich.

Born March 24, 1897, in Austria-Hungary, Reich was the troubled son of secular Jewish parents who did not raise him in the faith, or any faith, nor did they model virtuous behavior. Wilhelm's father, Leon, was cold, cruel, and disinterested in his son. The father was also neglectful of his wife, who responded to his lack of love with an intense sexual affair behind her husband's back. As for little Wilhelm, the affair was no secret to him. It made him feel ashamed but it also confused, intrigued, and titillated him, so much so that he fantasized about jumping into bed with his mother and her lover and joining them.

Such odd, overbearing sexual inclinations for the boy began very early in his life—he claimed as early as four years old, when he tried to have sex with the family's maid. Reich was extremely candid about these desires in his diary and later autobiographical writings, including his posthumously published *Passion of Youth*. He claimed that by the time he was just 11 years old, he was already having daily intercourse with another of the family servants. That was not all. He openly admitted to many prior instances of watching farm animals have sex and engaging in excessive masturbation and borderline sadomasochism and near-bestiality. He became hooked on brothels, saying he could "no longer live" without them.

Things took a turn for the (further) worse for Wilhelm when he decided to inform his already perpetually angry father of his mother's affair with a younger man. Leon proceeded to mercilessly beat his wife, which was nothing new but now was more severe. The mother was so miserable that she killed herself.

The despondent father waded into a freezing pond in the hope of picking up pneumonia or something that would kill him, too. It nearly worked; he got very sick. He died just a few years later from tuberculosis. Wilhelm, by then an even more tormented and neurotic teenager,

²⁹ Toledano, *Cry Havoc!*, 96 and 105.

took responsibility for these deaths. In all, even the radical Reich could not help but deem this disastrous state of affairs a “catastrophe.”³⁰

Wilhelm Reich’s life was a mess. Tragically, the early 20th century offered two poisonous medicines that he felt might provide a cure and some form of direction: Freudianism and Marxism.

In 1919, Wilhelm Reich found his first god when he met Sigmund Freud and asked him for a tutorial and list of writings on sexology. Freud obliged. Reich began working as a “physician” for Freud’s psychoanalytic clinic in 1922. This new professional direction did not help his personal life. For Reich, there would be many women, several muddled affairs, more ruined lives, plenty of untidy premarital sex, failed marriages, plus abortions, suicides, death, and general assorted debauchery and misery.

Speaking of misery, it was the 1920s in elite Europe, which meant that the Soviet Comintern was in full bloom and that intellectuals in the academy and elsewhere were filling their pipes with smoky dreams of Marxist utopia. To that end, Wilhelm Reich would encounter his second god when he dug into the writings of Marx and Engels. He joined the Communist Party in Austria in 1928 and visited the USSR the next year, where he lectured and was received enthusiastically. To his communist brethren in the Motherland, Reich trumpeted the virtues of psychoanalysis and Freud as good things that good Leninists and Stalinists and even Trotskyites (he corresponded with Trotsky) should embrace.

By this time, Wilhelm Reich was well on his way in search of a grand unifying theory of Freudianism and Marxism. He hoped that the theory could become therapy, a grand cure for individuals, for cultures, for societies, for states, and for the world. It was no small vision for this budding Freudian-Marxist-fusionist-revolutionist.

Reich immediately began crafting a report on his Soviet visit, which ultimately would become his revolutionary sexual manifesto, *The Sexual Revolution*. For Reich, full communist revolution required full sexual license.³¹

In 1930, Wilhelm Reich moved to Berlin with his wife and two children. He established the Association for Proletarian Sexual Politics, and (with his own marriage rapidly coming apart) also found a more suitable marriage in his ideological bedfellows at the Frankfurt School. He

³⁰ See: Wilhelm Reich, *Passion of Youth: Wilhelm Reich: An Autobiography* (NY: Farrar, Giroux, and Strauss, 1988), 4-46; and Colin Wilson, *The Quest for Wilhelm Reich* (NY: Doubleday, 1981), 29.

³¹ See entry at <http://www.marxists.org/glossary/people/r/e.htm#reich-wilhelm>.

settled in with these kindred spirits, working diligently (especially with Erich Fromm) on a synthesis of Marxism and psychoanalysis, which included full-scale sexual experimentation, few to no holds barred.

Every utopian has his key to utopia. For traditional communists, the key lay in economics, liberating the workers from their factory bosses. For the New Left Marxists, it would lay more generally in culture. For Reich in particular, it would lay within the culture's revamped perceptions of sexuality. This also meant overhauling perceptions of the family. As Donald De Marco and Ben Wiker note, "Reich saw the family, with its inevitable patriarchal authority, as the chief source of repression. Therefore, the family had to be dismantled."³²

Reich was content to sow the seeds for his utopia on the soil of European universities. But that would soon forcibly change.

Reich fled Germany at the height of Hitlerism. He was persuaded to come to the United States by a Columbia University comrade visiting and studying in Europe—Theodore P. Wolfe, a professor of psychiatry at Columbia. Wolfe not only offered to settle Reich and arrange a visa, with the help of Franklin Roosevelt's heavily communist-penetrated State Department, but also assisted in cobbling together an offer for Reich to teach a course on "character formation" at The New School in New York, better known as The New School for Social Research, founded in 1919 by "progressive" educators, most notably John Dewey and several other Columbia professors. Wilhelm Reich was on his way to America to spawn his ideas in the home of the free and the brave.

Overall, how influential was Wilhelm Reich?

Time magazine in 1964 stated that Reich "may have been a prophet."³³ He has been called no less than the "Father of the Sexual Revolution" by *The New Yorker*, among other sources.³⁴ Donald De Marco and Ben Wiker, two conservative Roman Catholics, agree with *The New Yorker* on that point, stating that his influence has been "particularly evident" among radical feminists, left-wing college students and professors, secular sex educators, and "enemies of the family."³⁵ That is indisputable. Enemies of the family can certainly identify with Wilhelm Reich.

³² Donald De Marco and Benjamin Wiker, *Architects of the Culture of Death* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006), 227.

³³ "Morals: The Second Sexual Revolution," *Time*, January 24, 1964.

³⁴ Ariel Levy, "Novelty Acts," *The New Yorker*, September 19, 2011. Another source who merits this title is arguably Alfred Kinsey, whose sexual anarchism was possibly to the left of even Reich.

³⁵ De Marco and Wiker, *Architects of the Culture of Death*, 222 and 231-2.

Herbert Marcuse's New Left

If Wilhelm Reich fathered the sexual revolution, then Herbert Marcuse fathered its bastard son, the '60s Marxist flower-child. Marcuse has rightly been called the Father of the New Left due to his huge popularity and influence among the '60s student radicals.

Marcuse (pronounced “Mar-koo-zeh” and also “Mar-quse”) was born in Berlin in July 1898. In 1922, he completed his doctoral work at the University of Freiburg. In 1924 he married Sophie Wertheim, his first of three marriages. In 1933, Marcuse joined the Institute for Social Research, i.e., the Frankfurt School, but, like other Jews, was soon forced to flee Germany as Hitler took power.

Marcuse searched for a professional home, and finally found one in American universities. First to roll out the red carpet was Columbia University, where Marcuse began to really spread his wings and lay the foundation for his version of Marxist revolution. There, Marcuse became the leading voice for the transplanted Frankfurt School, producing what some have called an “eroticized Marx,” most notably in his 1955 work, *Eros and Civilization: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud*. The book came just in time to be digested among faculty intellectuals and regurgitated for ready consumption by students arriving on campuses in the tumultuous '60s.

A decade later, in 1964, just in time to provide the shock to the wave that became the radical '60s, Marcuse published his acerbic critique of capitalist society in his bestselling *One-Dimensional Man*. The book sold over 300,000 copies, a bestseller by any standard but especially by academic standards.³⁶

For Marcuse, and the rest of the Frankfurt School, the next step in the Marxist battle was to be waged at the cultural level, which included the sexual level. He advocated what he called “polymorphous sexuality.” This term, a psychoanalytic concept also known as “polymorphous perversity,” allowed for sexual gratification outside the conventional channels of accepted sexual behavior—really almost any means that allowed for sexual gratification.

Freud applied this to the “infantile” stage of development of human development, which went up to age 5. He said that a child at this stage is “polymorphously perverse” and demonstrates receptivity to almost any kind of sexual pleasure and behavior without any

³⁶ Ronald Aronson, “Marcuse Today,” *Boston Review*, November 17, 2014.

restraint. In *Eros and Civilization*, Marcuse picked up this notion, mixed it within his Marxist framework and cultural adaptation, and applied it wider and later into life and adult sexuality. Culture had introduced restraints on such behavior, which Marcuse wanted to eliminate.

This included sex that was non-reproductive and non-heterosexual, and that sought to derive erotic pleasure from any part (or portal) of the body. A very telling explanation comes from the entry on Marcuse at the GLBTQ website, which merits quotation at length and without interruption:

During the early 1950s Marcuse returned to this line of thought in *Eros and Civilization*. In it he offered a dramatic re-interpretation of Freud's theory of repression and criticized Freud's stress on the genital organization of sexuality and on heterosexual intercourse. According to Freud, adult sexual development is a progression from oral and anal eroticism in infancy to the final adult stage of genital sexuality. In response, Marcuse proposed sexual liberation through the cultivation of a "polymorphous perverse" sexuality (which includes oral, anal, and genital eroticism) that eschews a narrow focus on genital heterosexual intercourse.³⁷

Marcuse believed that sexual liberation was achieved by exploring new permutations of sexual desires, sexual activities, and gender roles—what Freud called "perverse" sexual desires, that is, all non-reproductive forms of sexual behavior, of which kissing, oral sex, and anal sex are familiar examples.

Marcuse was himself heterosexual, but he identified the homosexual as the radical standard bearer of sex for the sake of pleasure, a form of radical hedonism that repudiates those forms of repressive sexuality organized around genital heterosexuality and biological reproduction....

³⁷ The GLBTQ website provides a hyperlink to "polymorphous perversity," which defines it thusly: "Polymorphous perversity is a Freudian term referring to unfocused, infantile sexuality. In Freudian terms, as individuals mature, the focus of their sexuality passes from polymorphous perversity through oral and anal stages to culminate in adult, genitally focused sexuality. More generally, the term is used to indicate the ability to derive erotic pleasure from any part of the body."

Marcuse, like other leading theorists of sexuality, such as Freud and Wilhelm Reich, argued that homosexuality was a form of sexuality of which everyone was capable—that in fact, everyone was fundamentally bisexual.³⁸

Herbert Marcuse represents a significant step in the extension of Marxism into the wider culture and sexual realm. His writings were a watershed. The entry on Marcuse at the GLBTQ website appears concludes with some added crucial information:

Dennis Altman's *Homosexual: Oppression and Liberation* (1971), one of the earliest theoretical discussions of gay liberation and sexual politics, reflected the same assumption and relied extensively on Marcuse's work.... Like Marcuse, Altman also emphasized "polymorphous perversity," the undifferentiated ability to take pleasure from all parts of the body. "Anatomy," Altman noted, "has forced the homosexual to explore the realities of polymorphous eroticism." Thus, homosexual sex represented an expression of pleasure and love "free of any utilitarian ends."

The Red Butterfly Collective, a Marxist faction of the Gay Liberation Front, also echoed Marcuse. The group stressed the importance of a democratic socialist perspective. "Human liberation," it noted in its comment on Carl Wittman's path-breaking *Gay Manifesto* (1969), "in all its forms, including Gay Liberation, requires effective self determination, i.e. democracy, in all spheres of social life affecting the lives of people as a whole." The group adopted as its motto the final line from the "Political Preface" of the 1966 edition of *Eros and Civilization*: "Today the fight for life, the fight for Eros is the *political* fight."

This, too, is extremely revealing. The Red Butterfly Collective, a Marxist faction of the Gay Liberation Front, not only echoed Marcuse but adopted as its motto the final line from the "Political Preface" of the 1966 edition of *Eros and Civilization*: "Today the fight for life, the fight for Eros is the *political* fight."

One of Marcuse's former students, writing in the left-leaning literary publication, *Boston Review*, sees in today's culture a myriad of manifestations linked to a "Marcusean analysis:" more diversity, more "tolerance," more multiculturalism, more feminism, and a culture in which "same-sex marriage rites become common," when "the watchword of our times is no

³⁸ http://www.glbtq.com/social-sciences/marcuse_h.html.

longer ‘conformity’ but ‘individual freedom.’” Sure, Marcuse might not have anticipated precisely these things at this time, but we can see them as extensions of the “liberation” he had in mind. The appreciative *Boston Review* writer is generous in the areas he credits to Marcuse: “Marcusean analysis is immensely useful in understanding the profusion of tattoos and pornography, the Internet and smart phones, coffee houses and art fairs, T-shirts and jeans, oral sex and divorce, ... [a] freer, more inclusive, more interesting and diverse, and humanly and socially richer than any of us would have imagined upon closing the pages of *One-Dimensional Man*.”

As to the focus in this paper, the effect of all of this on marriage and family was significant. At the core of the family is the committed husband and wife whose intercourse starts and perpetuates the family. And their respect for one another and their bond and what they reproduce is the glue that keeps the marriage and the family together. In that sense, Marcuse’s student is right to emphasize pornography, oral sex, divorce, and same-sex marriage.

This Father of the New Left was so influential in the sexualization of Marxism and in “deconstructing” traditional understandings of marriage and family that he is today highlighted for his “enormous influence” at the GLBTQ website.

And so, the Frankfurt School, started by Lukacs and friends at the Marx-Engels Institute in Moscow and coming to full fruition under the likes of Marcuse and Reich and others at Columbia University and other academic institutions, helped spawn a long-term project of sexual-cultural change and indoctrination. It would not take as long as some imagined. Really, it would take only a generation.

You Say You Want a Revolution? The ‘60s and the New Left

It was this rise of the ‘60s New Left that began to dramatically attack and alter the very foundations of marriage and family life.

David Horowitz was a leader among that New Left. As editor of the radical publication *Ramparts*, he was one of the most influential young communists in the country. “The phenomena that you’re seeking to explain,” Horowitz told me, referring to the long-term assault on marriage and family, “came when the Marxist working class model failed and the New Left started

applying Marxist categories to gender. This started at the very end of the Sixties and was a phenomenon of the Seventies.”³⁹

Leading that charge were feminists such as Betty Friedan and Kate Millett, early faces of the National Organization for Women (NOW), who, unbeknownst to many who elevated these women to icon status, were not only feminists but Marxist-feminists. Their advocacy of women’s rights and equal treatment was not separate from their Marxist worldview.

As for Kate Millett, she was the author of *Sexual Politics*, her dissertation at Columbia, which became a cultural juggernaut when published in 1969, the height of ’60s mayhem and three years after Betty Friedan became the first president of NOW. There, she decried the vile “patriarchy” of the monogamous nuclear family. The book landed Kate on the cover of “Time Magazine.” “Time” called her “the Karl Marx of the Women’s Movement.”

As a committed Marxist-feminist, Millett picked up the torch ignited by the Frankfurt-Friedan rebels. A flashpoint of Millett’s mindset is provided by her younger sister, Mallory. Mallory had suffered her own inner turmoil at the hands of the university system, becoming a Marxist before eventually pulling herself out, rediscovering her faith, remarrying in a long and loving relationship, and even becoming a successful CFO for several corporations. Though she lost her freshman fascination with Marxism, her older sister did not. Katie was hardcore, with no looking back. She drank deep from the Marxist chalice, and the intoxication has never left her.

Amid the late ’60s revolution, Katie implored Mallory, who was now a divorced, single mom, to stay with her. “Come to New York,” she urged. “We’re making revolution!” She and some of the other girls were fired up for the new National Organization for Women.⁴⁰

And so, Mallory went to Kate’s gathering in New York, thus becoming an eyewitness not only to how radical the left had become, but to history and what was growing within the culture rot infected by the maggot of Marxist ideology. Mallory remembers:

I stayed with Kate ... in a dilapidated loft on The Bowery as she finished her first book, a PhD thesis for Columbia University, “Sexual Politics.”

It was 1969. Kate invited me to join her for a gathering at the home of her friend, Lila Karp. They called the assemblage a “consciousness-raising-group,” a typical communist exercise, something practiced in Maoist China. We gathered at a large table as the

³⁹ Email correspondence with David Horowitz, November 13, 2014.

⁴⁰ “The Liberation of Kate Millett,” *Time* magazine, August 31, 1970.

chairperson opened the meeting with a back-and-forth recitation, like a Litany, a type of prayer done in Catholic Church. But now it was Marxism, the Church of the Left, mimicking religious practice:

“Why are we here today?” she asked.

“To make revolution,” they answered.

“What kind of revolution?” she replied.

“The Cultural Revolution,” they chanted.

“And how do we make Cultural Revolution?” she demanded.

“By destroying the American family!” they answered.

“How do we destroy the family?” she came back.

“By destroying the American Patriarch,” they cried exuberantly.

“And how do we destroy the American Patriarch?” she replied.

“By taking away his power!”

“How do we do that?”

“By destroying monogamy!” they shouted.

“How can we destroy monogamy?”...

“By promoting promiscuity, eroticism, prostitution and homosexuality!” they resounded.

Mallory says that the comradely sisters then proceeded with a sustained discussion on how to advance these goals by establishing the National Organization for Women. “It was clear they desired nothing less than the utter deconstruction of Western society,” she said. How would they do this? They explained that their goal—a very Frankfurt-like goal—was to “invade every American institution. Every one must be permeated with ‘The Revolution.’” This included the judiciary, the legislatures, the executive branches, media, education—universities, high schools, K-12, school boards, even the library system.

To that end, the university mis-education that Kate Millett and her sister and brother comrades received at a deceased John Dewey’s Columbia University and other colleges would, over the years ahead, become fodder for indoctrinating many more Kate Millett’s, with further destruction wreaked upon marriage and the family.

Here again, Kate’s sister Mallory adds unique, firsthand testimony to the cultural wreckage that came careening down the track:

I've known women who fell for this creed in their youth who now, in their fifties and sixties, cry themselves to sleep decades of countless nights grieving for the children they'll never have and the ones they coldly murdered because they were protecting the empty loveless futures they now live with no way of going back. "Where are my children? Where are my grandchildren?" they cry to me.

"Your sister's books destroyed my sister's life!" I've heard numerous times. "She was happily married with four kids and after she read those books, walked out on a bewildered man and didn't look back." The man fell into despairing rack and ruin. The children were stunted, set off their tracks, deeply harmed; the family profoundly dislocated and there was "no putting Humpty-Dumpty together again."

Kate Millett: Marxist, feminist, advocate for gay rights, for new sexuality, for new spousal relationships, and on and on. She channeled all of her revolutionary nostrums into a campaign to take down marriage and family, the backbone of American culture from the nation's inception.

Like many Marxists, Kate Millett incorporated her ideas on marriage and sexuality into her personal practices. Though she was married, she practiced lesbianism, becoming bisexual. She had started that lifestyle at Columbia while writing *Sexual Politics*. This would, predictably, end her marriage to her husband, who apparently found the trashing of these norms unnatural to the health of their marriage. Today, the bio for the 80-year-old Millett at the GLBTQ website describes her as a "groundbreaking" "bisexual feminist literary and social critic."⁴¹

Who were Kate Millett's accomplices in her take down of our traditions? The list is vast. Where to begin? Where to end? And where would Millet and the other cultural Marxists finally find the silver bullet to takedown traditional marriage, as they had always wanted?

The Gift of Gay Marriage

Alas, then came gay marriage.

Despite so much battering, from self-inflicted wounds to the pummeling provided by '60s radicals, by communists, by the Bolsheviks and Chinese, by Karl Marx, by Wilhelm Reich, by

⁴¹ See: http://www.glbtc.com/literature/millett_k.html, retrieved December 12, 2014.

Herbert Marcuse, by Betty Freidan, by Kate Millett, and by all else, the universal core notion of marriage as a special, unique, exclusive bond between one man and one woman remained intact in America and the wider West. It was the ideal. It was the standard. It was the definition of marriage. It hung on. It prevailed. Battered and beaten, it was not defeated.

Could anything break it? Could anything cut it down?

Alas, yes. The answer is finally upon us. The wider political left, in the West generally and America specifically, has found its hammer and its sickle to smash and undercut marriage. Under the banner of “gay rights” and feel-good slogans like “tolerance,” “freedom,” “marriage rights,” and “equality,” and, on the flip side, accusations of intolerance, bigotry, “hatred,” and “homophobia” slung at opponents, the left has seized upon gay marriage with abandon. The left has its wrecking ball, and it is swinging it far and wide.

The far left at long last has a suitable Trojan horse for its longtime goal of destroying traditional marriage and the traditional family. Advocates of gay marriage are now dupes to that deeper process, whether they know it or not.

With gay marriage having suddenly gained a seemingly insurmountable momentum in the culture, armed with political and legal backing, and thus finally offering communists the long-dreamed-of vehicle to take apart traditional marriage, the family, and much more, communists everywhere are suddenly gung ho for gays and same-sex marriage.

Communist Party USA and its flagship publication, *People’s World*, the successor to the Soviet-funded *Daily Worker*, have become cheerleaders for the gay-rights movement, and now consistently tout gay marriage. This can be seen on almost any given week in the headlines at *People’s World* and in a search of the website for CPUSA.

[Editor’s note: In his book, Kengor here provides roughly 10 pages of examples of Communist Party USA pushing gay marriage and excoriating those who oppose redefining marriage.]

It is hard to pinpoint when exactly CPUSA openly and publicly embraced both homosexuals and gay marriage. At CPUSA’s website at the time of this writing, there are many statements that are retrievable on the topic. Including among them is an official June 21, 2006 statement from CPUSA titled, “Gay Pride Month: Communists stand in solidarity.” Released by Communist Party USA and the Young Communist League, it states: “The month of June has been designated as Pride Month in celebration of the struggles and achievements of lesbian, gay,

bisexual and transgender people in the United States.... In 2006, we still have a long ways to go.”⁴²

Typical of CPUSA, it then tagged the usual enemies: conservatives, religious people, George W. Bush. The article also, notably, referred to gay marriage. And also typical of the communist movement, again with the Frankfurt School and early communists and progressives in mind, it emphasized the need for the educational system to step in to advance the proper sexual agenda: “In our schools, the ultra-right and religious conservatives deny students access to scientifically accurate sex education while more young people are becoming infected with HIV every year. In our schools, in our workplaces and in our streets, LGBT people are faced with discrimination, hatred and violence. ... In Australia, the president overturned a law that would allow same-sex marriage and the conservative government now in power in Canada is also seeking to overturn its law that allows gay marriage.”

Here, CPUSA had to go as far away as Australia to uphold gay marriage, since in 2006 it was still a pipedream even in America, when Barack Obama, Hillary Clinton, and virtually all of Washington’s elected Democrats still supported historic male-female marriage. Nonetheless, CPUSA found an example to advance its long-time anti-family cause, even if it had to go to Australia to get one.

[...]

I could fill these pages with similar examples that exist at *People’s World*. Because of limited space, I’ll briefly summarize merely the latest example that appears as one of the four lead articles in the rotating window of the publication as I write. Written by one of the communist publication’s most popular reporters, it calls for a renewed strategy for the 2016 election, an “inclusive” one applied to all 50 states to avert another damaging loss to Republicans. This strategy includes harnessing gay marriage as a winning issue for the far left and for communists. The article notes that “over the past few years a sea change has taken place in people’s thinking toward marriage equality and LGBTQ rights.”⁴³

Indeed it has. The communists have that right. Thus, for communists, it is high time to ride that wave, to bring their deeper agenda to shore, along with the help of the enlightened cultural masses of America.

⁴² Press Release, “Gay Pride Month: Communists stand in solidarity,” Communist Party USA, June 24, 2006.

⁴³ John Bachtell, “Lesson from the 2014 elections: Inclusive 50-state strategy needed,” *People’s World*, December 1, 2014.

With Gratitude to Mr. and Mrs. Mainstreet

Speaking at the National Prayer Breakfast in 1979, not long before he died, the legendary Bishop Fulton Sheen asked his audience how one defines a football field. The answer, he said, was by its boundaries.⁴⁴ So, too, has been our definitional understanding of marriage, with boundaries set by nature and nature's God, by natural law and Biblical law, by biology and tradition. Once the onetime-unshakable boundaries that have always undergirded marriage are removed—beginning with its redefinition as no longer one man and one woman—then the whole edifice collapses. Any honest, rationally thinking pro-gay-marriage liberal will admit that once marriage is redefined as anything but one man and one woman, with the only standard being that consenting adults who love one another should be permitted to marry, there will be no end to the redefinition: multiple wives, group marriages, sibling marriages, fathers and stepfathers marrying daughters and stepdaughters, uncles marrying nieces, you name it. Shocked liberals screaming that they would never support such arrangements will be inured to them once they come, happily ready to “progress” and to “evolve” to this next new step or “change” taking us “Beyond Marriage.”

Anyone who pays attention to these things knows that they are already beginning to happen, especially in Europe but also in “progressive” courts in the United States. With the advent of gay marriage, the breach has been opened, large enough that one day you will be able to drive a truck through it—a truck with a sign on the back that says “Just Married,” with all sorts of non-traditional couples and triples and quadruples and whatever else housed inside. It is the fast-track to the new road for a new America and an altogether new form of human arrangements and civilization heretofore uncharted in the long, ancient history of men and women and their families. Even its advocates have no idea what it will ultimately entail, and yet they are in one hell of a hurry to get there. Those who dare suggest a pause before the culture takes this literally unprecedented leap are immediately denounced as irredeemable bigots who obviously hate homosexuals and cruelly want to stop people from loving one another.

The takedown of marriage has arrived, with the boundaries that always defined it removed. The old Marxists and neo-Marxists would be thrilled. They would be shocked, but thrilled. And they would understand completely the big picture and the momentous fundamental

⁴⁴ Fulton Sheen, Remarks at the Annual National Prayer Breakfast, Washington, DC, January 18, 1979.

transformation underway. Most of the rest in modern society have no clue. It is crucial for everyone, including gay Americans, to know they have signed on to something extraordinarily radical and quite sinister—namely, the longtime extremist/communist left effort to undo the family as we have always known and understood it.

Marriage between a man and a woman predates Christ. It is a position with roots as deep as the Garden of Eden. Marriage between a man and a woman has been far and away the dominant position of all peoples and cultures and societies since the dawn of humanity, at no time of which was the idea of homosexual marriage remotely on the map. Even the ancient Greeks and Romans, long held up as the dubious model for sexual perversity, would not go that far. Robert Reilly, author of *Making Gay Okay*, notes that although some ancient Greeks did write paeans to homosexual love, “it did not occur to any of them to propose homosexual relationships as the basis for marriage in their societies.” The only homosexual relationship that was accepted, said Reilly, was between an adult male and a male adolescent.⁴⁵

Of course, that in itself is wicked, though enlightened progressive Americans will probably warm to that someday as well, particularly if the adult and adolescent claim to be in love and are engaging in sex consensually (especially in a culture that cheerfully accepts widespread premarital sex, including among youth). Nonetheless, notes Reilly, this male-male relationship in ancient Greece was to be temporary, as the youth was expected to get married—that is, a *heterosexual* marriage (there was no other kind)—and start a family as soon as he reached maturity. Such was the cultural expectation. Reilly says that the idea that someone was a “homosexual for life” or gay “as a permanent identity” would have struck the Greeks as extremely odd.

Americans and Europeans today, in the 21st century, are breaking entirely new ground, and with no hesitation whatsoever. Quite the contrary, those who suggest caution are accused (incredibly) of holding “extreme” viewpoints, as sort of statistical outliers, even as they agree with well over 99.999-plus percent of human beings who have bestrode the earth, and agree with tens of millions of Americans still.

This has only changed in merely the last handful of years. The entire Democratic Party and both Bill and Hillary Clinton were on board for the Defense of Marriage Act just a decade or two ago. Barack Obama opposed same-sex marriage merely four years ago. And now, suddenly,

⁴⁵ Robert Reilly, *Making Gay Okay* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2014).

those who support the accepted view of marriage since the start of humanity are considered the radicals. It is a stunning development, being fundamentally transformed before our very eyes. The extreme/communist left has finally found a vehicle to make it happen.

Advocates of gay marriage have no idea how what they want to do so closely fits today's communist agenda. I would implore them not to get angry at me for pointing out what is happening. I see it because I have long studied the communist/far left. Others who do not know that movement do not see. They are blind to the historical-ideological machinations at work. These forces are not discernible to Mr. and Mrs. Mainstreet.

Sure, they and gay Americans come to gay marriage for what they perceive as positive and entirely un-sinister forces: their notions of love, freedom, tolerance, equality. I understand this completely. I do not agree with their applications and interpretations of these things, but I absolutely and fully understand that their intentions are anything but malicious. They do not see themselves as hell-raisers on the same page as communists or whatever other left-wing radicals. Nonetheless, the far left could care less how the rest of the culture and everyone else gets there, with whatever slogans or well-intended notions, so long as they get there and assist the grand takedown.

An utterly fascinating aspect of the general public's support of same-sex marriage is that this is the only time that a majority of everyday Americans have agreed with communists in one of their sharp, atheistic stances against marriage and the family. When Marx and Engels and Kollantai and Trotsky and Lenin and Lukacs and Marcuse and Millett and Mao and Castro and Reich and their assorted comrades pushed fringe ideas on infidelity and free love, on new motherhood, on full-time nursery care for children as wards of the state, and so forth, they were far outside the mainstream. At its height in the 1930s, Communist Party USA never had more than 100,000 members. Susie and Joe Q. Public were never with communists on anything, least of their marriage views. Not anymore. Today, CPUSA and the American majority at long last finally agree, and they agree on a non-traditional-marriage/family matter that does nothing less than irreversibly redefine marriage. It is a breathtaking development to behold.

Today, gay marriage is an absolute cultural juggernaut, steamrolling to a sudden surge of majority acceptance, and steamrolling those who dare to dissent. Where did the kindling that lit this fire start? It began germinating in the petri dishes of the universities and their grand cultural-social laboratories, just as Georg Lukacs and the Frankfurt gang envisioned.

[...]

And so, all of the non-radicals in the American mainstream who today support gay marriage, whether they realize it or not, are unwitting dupes to a much longer and older effort by the radical, extreme left to alter marriage and the family. That momentous change, thanks to this wider support, is finally upon us. Its radical forebears are smiling and laughing from their graves, dizzied by their success and, more so, by their unexpected allies. They are genuinely transforming human nature. And they are doing it with the unwitting support of a huge swath of oblivious citizens and voters. It has been a long time coming.