

My Talk at ICMI24

Feminism, Cultural Collapse and the Rise of Authoritarianism in the West

This is an extended transcript of my ICMI24 presentation, including some details that would have made the video over-long.

Purpose

The burden of my talk will be to draw out how feminism has contributed to the increasing authoritarianism we now see arising across most of the West. In recent years I have become even more concerned about this growing authoritarianism than about gender issues *per se*. But the purpose of my talk is to demonstrate that those two phenomena are closely connected.

Not that feminism is the sole cause of the authoritarianism which is now in the ascendancy in all Western and Anglophone countries. Of course not. But feminism is one of the more significant contributors to it. Indeed, if one links the rising authoritarianism to our cultural decline – and I do – then there is a strong case for feminism being the leading cause of the authoritarianism due to its significance in promoting Western cultural collapse. As we will see, this is particularly so in respect of the destruction of the two-parent heterosexual family and the rise of sexual libertinism, the so-called sexual revolution.

My presentation will be in three parts. The first part demonstrates that feminism is itself directly authoritarian, within its own purview. That part will hardly be a revelation to this audience (despite being incomprehensible to almost everyone else, lamentably). The second and third parts address how the political and social effects of feminism spread this authoritarianism into the general culture.

Part 2 considers the overtly political dimension. Feminist alliances with political power centres have led to feminism being incorporated into those power structures which then act as the vectors of feminist authoritarianism. In addition, the faux-moral credentials of feminism lend credence to said power centres' operations which promote their own ideologically based authoritarian policies. The feminist enthusiasm for hate crime policing and the resulting censorship is an example.

Finally, and to my mind most significantly of all, Part 3 relates to how feminism has promoted sociological conditions which are known to be causally related to the rise of totalitarianism. This part may be less well known, even to this audience.

Part 1: Feminism is Authoritarian

So to Part 1: feminism is itself authoritarian. I expect I shall be pushing on an open door with this audience. Nevertheless, let me rehearse just a few of the authoritarian features of feminism.

Feminism is, of course, dogmatic, admitting no possibility of its ideological perspective being wrong, despite being wildly at variance with empirical reality in most of its key aspects. This intransigent inflexibility coupled with the natural moral authority which women wield over men constitutes authoritarian control of the dominant social narrative and acts as the driving force for the specific instances of authoritarianism that follow.

There is, for example, the systemic refusal by the feminist-controlled National Union of Students to allow men's groups on UK university campuses.

In the wider society, all instances of all-male spaces have been systematically eradicated, either by having them shut down as being axiomatically misogynist or by insisting on female membership – with consequent destruction of their previously masculine ethos and operation. This is the classic behaviour of totalitarian regimes, in which any gatherings are permitted only under the watchful eye of a Party member. In sharp contrast, all-female spaces are vigorously protected.

We have been told for many years that universities are a hot bed of sexual assault by men on young women. Yet universities increase in popularity amongst young women with every passing year. Now the focus is also on the purported epidemic of sexual harassment of girls in schools. Yet where are the calls for girls to be educated in single-sex schools? I hear none. It is advocates for boys, such as myself, who argue in favour of single-sex schools after the age of 11. The feminists do not. Could it be that the incessant talk of sexual harassment of girls is actually about control of boys, not about protection of girls at all? And so the last thing the feminists would want

would be boys-only schools as that would deny them the opportunity to have boys under their control – being raised to be “confident feminists”.

The incessant narrative on VAWG – violence against women and girls – is a classic feminist control strategy. I do not deny that bad things happen to females, sometimes at the hands of males, but that does not detract from the claim that VAWG is a control strategy. Actually, it just adds to its potency.

In particular, VAWG in the form of domestic abuse is used to great effect to place control in the hands of a mother, to the detriment to the father, in child contact disputes, one of the feminist weapons in the destruction of fatherhood and the consequent rise of social atomisation. We will see in Part 3 that this social atomisation also promotes wider cultural authoritarianism. That feminism is a deliberately authoritarian modality in the context of parenting is clear.

Political Correctness, closely allied with feminism, is authoritarian control of what you are permitted to say. Our common experience these days is that one really cannot say what one likes – not without rapidly being denied a platform to say anything. Here’s an example of something you can’t say. Women sometimes lie about rape. Actually quite frequently. Here’s another: abortion is bad. You can probably say that in the USA, but not in the UK. The wildly below replacement rate average fertility in the UK would be at replacement rate were it not for abortion. I’m not supposed to say that, either, even though it’s just an arithmetical observation about uncontentious data. There is no debate on abortion in “polite” circles in the UK. It’s not permitted. But here’s a less appreciated truth that cannot be said either,

Equality is not a moral precept.

Moral precepts have a particular characteristic. They are exhortations on the individual to behave in a certain way. Equality is not that, is it? It is a category error to regard equality as a moral precept: it is not even the right kind of thing to be a moral precept. What has been done here is to conflate equality with fairness. Now fairness IS a virtue and hence a moral precept. One can indeed exhort an individual to “be fair”. One should endeavour to be fair oneself.

So the trick is to conflate a political policy of equality with the virtue of fairness, thus falsely conferring upon the former unassailable moral rectitude.

This is moral usurpation. And then proceed to redefine equality – now dubbed equity - as “equality does not mean treating everyone the same, but treating some people better”. It is never explained just how much better certain people need to be treated. It is a blank cheque.

By this cunning contrivance, preferential treatment of some – in this case women – is imbued, not merely with acceptability, but with the force of moral obligation. This causes any objection to said preferencing to be interpreted as misogyny. And now, to object to it in the form of DEI is to face dismissal from your job.

I commend this mechanism of moral usurpation to your closest attention because it is the trick that is used over and over again by “progressives” and their ilk to inveigle otherwise decent people into passionately defending policies which are prejudiced, unjust and socially destructive.

Part 2: The Political Dimension

And so to Part 2 - the political dimension. If you agree that trans-national, intergovernmental bodies like the UN, the WEF, the IMF, the World Bank, the European Court of Human Rights and the European Court of Justice and many others, are the source from which much of the authoritarianism stems, then feminism is also immediately implicated because feminism is in close alliance with many of these bodies, and has defined the moral landscape for all of them.

To understand how feminism became so closely allied to political power centres one needs to appreciate the role of moral usurpation. I have covered this in previous talks and in my book [The Destructivists](#), Ref.[1], so I'll be brief. What feminism gains from such an alliance is clear, namely access to influence. What political bodies, such as national governments or the United Nations, get in return is a share in the apparent moral rectitude with which feminists surround themselves.

The example of “equality” illustrates the manipulative mechanism of moral usurpation. The valid moral desiderata of fairness has been usurped and repackaged as “equity”. By this piece of verbal conjuring a political opinion is given the force of moral obligation. This is the foundational trick that is used repeatedly to manipulate public perception and deceive masses of

people into enthusiastically embracing policies whose impact will be very different from what they have been led to believe.

My purpose is to penetrate the moral smoke screen that surrounds feminism and renders it, to the bulk of the public, not just acceptable but virtually obligatory. It has been a hugely successful con, rooted ultimately in evolved proclivities. It blows my mind that even now the majority of the unthinking public believe that feminism is “just about equality”. Even if it were, feminism would still be a fraud because the prejudice in Western countries is emphatically – and openly – against males, of any age.

But leaving that aside, it is amazing that so many people have still not appreciated that the cornerstone of feminism is, and always was, giving women the option – that is, the authority, as in “authoritarian” - to remove fathers from families. They have said so very clearly in myriad books and papers going back 70 years and more. They have said so equally clearly in academic and political speeches. Moreover, it was not merely an intent. The policy has been very successfully carried out and is now essentially complete. Millions of fathers in the UK, and tens of millions in the USA not to mention elsewhere, have been removed from their families – and, yes, some mothers too, the inevitable collateral damage of aggressive policies.

If you have ever tried to explain the reality of feminism to one of the great unwashed, the complacent conformists, you will know that you don’t get very far before they are calling you a misogynist or some other of the handful of standard slurs that act so conveniently as a replacement for thought (or, dare I say, fairness!). That phenomenon *is* the moral carapace in which feminism has so successfully clothed itself and which renders criticisms of it so difficult for most people to even tolerate hearing let alone to agree with.

This is what we need to overcome. The public – and ultimately the political class – need to understand what feminism really is. It is a political strategy which deploys moral usurpation to achieve ends that would not be so popular if they were declared openly. So, one purpose of my talk is to promote an understanding of feminism as a tool of the authoritarian elites.

The elite few have, since time immemorial, used divide-and-conquer and moral usurpation to control the populace to advantage themselves and disadvantage us. Feminism is part of that process as it is enacted today.

It is tempting to express this as the political establishment, irrespective of political party, having been captured by the partisan feminist lobby. But in truth it is not a capture but an alliance, a symbiosis. Feminism is a tool for those of an authoritarian bent – which tends to be everyone in positions of power unless that power is closely monitored, severely restricted, and frequently curtailed by democratic sovereignty. But the political process is also a tool for feminism. This is the feminist establishment. It operates on the basis that feminism gifts the establishment with ostensible moral legitimacy, whilst in return the establishment yields some policy influence to feminism.

The establishment is feminist. Just as two hundred years ago Christianity was embedded within all facets of the establishment so is feminism today. This is the source of feminism's access to formal power – which, by the nature of the ideology, naturally morphs into authoritarianism.

It was to be nearly a century before men knew anything was afoot with this feminism business, but in 1888 the feminist movement had already formed its first global pressure group, the ICW, the [International Council of Women](#), Ref.[2], – still going strong today.

In this photo of the founding members of the ICW you may recognise Elizabeth Cady-Stanton, front centre – she who organised the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention, the first convention for women's rights. The purpose of the ICW is to “bring worldwide attention to the issue of women's rights and lead the battle against gender based social injustice...the ultimate goal is the creation of a happier, safer and more egalitarian world for all” – by which they mean all women, of course. Do note that the ICW was formed 30 years before nearly half of men over 21 had the vote in the UK.

Founded in 1904, the IAW ([International Alliance of Women](#)), Ref.[3], is an international NGO (non-governmental organization) that works to promote women's rights and gender equality with an ethos that is (quote) “inclusive, intersectional and progressive liberal feminist”. It was historically the main international organization that campaigned for women's suffrage. When it was founded, nearly half of adult men in the UK still had 14 years to wait until they would get the vote.

[Women's International League for Peace and Freedom](#) (WILPF), Ref.[4], was founded initially as the International Women's Congress in 1915 when

UK men were too busy dying in the WW1 trenches to lobby for their own benefit. Floridly feminist like all these organisations, here's a quote from their website: "Violent masculinities shape institutions, communities and intimate lives. These norms are enabled by institutions that heroise violence and fund the war system. To transform currently accepted gender norms and practices, we must meaningfully engage men and boys to identify, address and challenge the structural causes of gender inequality and men's use of violence and involvement in armed conflict." Should I mention here the Pankhursts' very active involvement in coercing men to join up to fight in the WW1 trenches – explicitly to save the women of Britain "from a fate too horrible to mention". They were doing this as the WILPF was being formed. A certain mismatch of demands, isn't there?

The League of Nations, the first intergovernmental organisation of its kind, was formed in 1919 in the aftermath of WW1. In the years that followed, in the 1920s, the afore-mentioned ICW, IAW and WILPF all had strong links and worked closely with the League of Nations, the WILPF enjoying Consultative status.

Allow me to labour the point: multiple international feminist organisations existed and had positioned themselves so as to enhance their influence via the League of Nations as soon as it was formed in 1919. That this massive fillip to the burgeoning power of feminism was achieved through an organisation whose creation was primarily a response to the slaughter of men in WW1 is an irony I do not want to be lost on you.

When the United Nations was formed in 1945 it incorporated all the feminist groups formerly linked with the League of Nations.

A full account even of just the founding of the many international feminist organisations that now exist would be lengthy and I'll not spend more time on it. However, the Beijing Platform of 1995 must be mentioned because that established Gender Mainstreaming as UN policy. This meant from that time onward, all policies and initiatives by the UN would be obliged to place women's empowerment first. This and subsequent resolutions established a feminist veto over every policy and activity in the UN thereafter – and from the UN it would trickle down to the nation states.

I regale you with this history because, from the UN's lead, every trans-national organisation would soon have explicit feminist programmes and

policies. This includes, but is not limited to: NATO, the WHO, the World Bank, the European Central Bank (ECB), the IMF (the International Monetary Fund), all the COPs (the climate change conferences), the OECD, the EU, the European Institute for Gender Equality, the Council of Europe (which gave us the Istanbul Convention), the BIS (the Bank for International Settlements), and, of course, the WEF (the World Economic Forum).

My point is simply this: if you regard any, or all, those trans-national globalist organisations as being implicated in the rise of authoritarianism – and I do – then the inextricable involvement of feminism in all of them implicates feminism in that same authoritarianism. Specifically, these globalist organisations gain moral status from their feminist credentials, and the feminists essentially trade this for a share in their power and hence their authoritarianism.

The Political Closer to Home

Feminism is virtually obligatory within mainstream politics in the UK. Full-on feminists occur across all political Parties and hence feminism is the largest caucus in Parliament. This guarantees that any Bill which is feminist in nature is certain to be passed with a large majority. Whilst there will be MPs who are less comfortable with feminism, they will nevertheless repeat well-worn feminist shibboleths when questioned – because they dare not appear anti-feminist. Any male MP declaring himself to be anti-feminist would almost certainly be thrown out of his Party, be deselected and lose his job. While a couple of MPs have criticised feminism, none have gone so far as to declare their anti-feminism.

What is this but authoritarianism at the highest level of UK national politics? It has come about by moral usurpation. To be against feminism is not seen as simply a political opinion or a valid social criticism – it is almost universally perceived as morally unacceptable. But this faux-moral positioning of feminism is a trick. Feminism is itself reprehensibly unethical.

To see how this authoritarianism within UK Government, or its ancillary services, impacts on individuals consider the case of the Prevent programme.

Following numerous acts of terrorism on British soil, mostly by jihadi Islamists, the Prevent programme was set up in 2019 with the intention of identifying radicalised persons who seemed likely to be future terrorists. But

this was never going to be the way Prevent would operate in practice when the likes of Hope Not Hate were instrumental in targeting the suspected individuals.

[An independent review of Prevent](#), Ref.[5], was commissioned by the Government and carried out by William Shawcross CVO, reporting in February 2023. The Shawcross report revealed that the Prevent programme, rather than being targeted primarily at preventing terrorism, had been targeted primarily at people who hold Incorrect opinions. Promoting Brexit, for example, had been labelled as Extremism – by which measure the majority of the British public are extremists, apparently.

Mainstream politicians, popular social commentators and news channel hosts who hold traditional socially conservative views, such as Douglas Murray and Julia Hartley-Brewer, had also been labelled as Extremists. Similarly, reading columns by Rod Liddle or Melanie Phillips was taken to be indicative of racism and Islamophobia. By no stretch of the imagination are these individuals remotely likely to carry out acts of terrorism, or to incite others to such acts. Advisors to Prevent also labelled historic works of the Western philosophical and literary canon as “key texts for white nationalists”. In short, the Prevent programme was hijacked by the extreme woke tendency.

Back in the real world, when the Shawcross review was carried out, 80% of the UK’s Counter Terrorism group’s live investigations were Islamist while only 10% were (in the report’s words) Extreme Right-Wing. And yet only 22% of Prevent referrals for the year 2020-21 concerned Islamism.

In fact, to quote the report directly, “Since this Independent Review of Prevent was commissioned in 2019, six terrorist attacks have blighted our nation. ...All these attacks were Islamist in nature.”

And yet groups such as so-called Incels had been addressed by Prevent in large numbers despite being neither ideological nor linked to terrorism. Do note that Incels are, however, a chief hate of feminists. It is clear that Prevent was being used by the progressive-left primarily to target people of whom they disapproved, rather than addressing potential terrorist threats. This is the stuff of which authoritarianism consists.

Not only had the focus of Prevent been deflected away from terrorism by ideologues, but even when genuine terrorists were referred into the programme, Prevent failed to live up to its name, failing to prevent them going on to commit terrorist acts.

The Shawcross report also identified that the Prevent programme was actually promoting terrorism in some cases. Specific examples were given. One was the use of Prevent to provide funding to certain civil society organisations where it went (quote) “towards generic projects dealing with community cohesion and hate crime” rather than combating terrorism. “Of particular concern”, noted Shawcross, “I discovered that some civil society organisations have promoted extremist narratives, including statements that appear sympathetic to the Taliban”. One has to conclude that the choice of people to drive Prevent was about as wise as putting the welfare of foxes in the hands of the Berkshire Hunt.

The example of Prevent illustrates how authoritarianism is enacted when ideologically intolerant individuals and organisations are suitably placed to subvert what might appear to be a reasonable, even desirable, objective. Behind authoritarianism lie ideologues who are so certain that they are right, and that opposing views are morally insupportable, that they feel justified in doing anything necessary – however unethical - to suppress dissent.

Part 3: The Sociological Impact of Feminism and the Precursor State to Totalitarianism

If we wish to take effective action to protect ourselves from the encroaching authoritarianism – and we must, lamentably – then we must first understand the fundamental basis of the problem we face. To treat a disease successfully one must first correctly diagnose it. To describe the symptoms is not enough.

I have never been content with a purely political level of explanation. Actually, political terms do not provide an explanation at all; they only provide a taxonomic system – a convenient means of pigeon-holing people into broad systems of opinion. One may call someone a Marxist, and it may be an accurate description of their views, but the essential question remains hanging: why are they a Marxist? Why are some people radical progressives whilst others are conservative? Why do some of us see free speech as the essential antidote to tyranny whilst so many others regard denying a voice to those with whom they disagree as an essential safeguarding measure?

And why does the significance of religion keep cropping up? Is religion the antidote? If so, why do many people regard the Woke phenomenon itself as “a religion”?

Clearly, we are in the realms of psychology or sociology. What, then, are the psychosocial bases of the suffocating blanket of authoritarianism that is now descending upon us?

In addressing the sociological origins of authoritarianism we must be equally concerned with the positive as the negative. It will not do to point only to the problems. People must be given a positive vision of what is possible and achievable. And this *can* be done without falling into the trap of utopianism.

I will provide an attempt at an answer which draws on the work of several others and which, I claim, form a fairly coherent whole. In what follows there are three main strands, each associated with a dominant author.

Mattias Desmet and Mass Formation

Firstly, [Mattias Desmet's theory of mass formation as the psychological origin of totalitarianism](#), Ref.[6]. Desmet cites his precursor and inspiration as being [Hannah Arendt's classic text on the origins of totalitarianism](#), Ref.[7]. By “mass formation” Desmet means a form of mass hypnosis which affects perhaps 20% to 35% of the population. People become, in my words, “assimilated into the Borg” and cease to have an individual mind. Instead they have a single hive mind.

Unlike normal hypnosis, in which the hypnotised person is hypnotised by another person who is not themselves hypnotised, in mass formation the hypnotist is also within the mass formation. The state seems to come about spontaneously when conditions are right. There are four contributory conditions, according to Desmet, but three can be seen as stemming from the first, which is therefore the key factor. It is this,

(1) Social atomisation: This is when people become disconnected from both local communities and the broader society or culture.

Social atomisation is related to Durkheim's conception of anomie, which refers to societies afflicted by disintegration and deregulation. It is characterised by a breakdown in the social fabric and a breakdown in leadership. The former is related to an erosion of moral standards within

society, whilst the latter involves an increasing lack of trust in the leadership and a perceived lack of legitimacy and effectiveness in leadership.

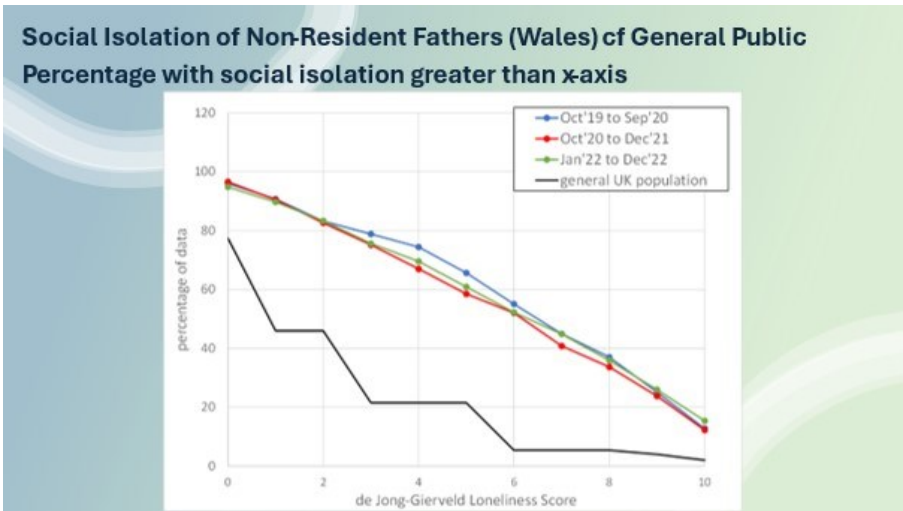
I think we can say these conditions are in place in most of the West.

I note in passing that anomie is known to increase under so-called multiculturalism. I say so-called multiculturalism because I don't think such a thing is actually possible, it being a very different proposition to the factual case of multiethnicity. The negative impact of multiethnicity on social cohesion was initially associated with the work of [Putnam in 2007](#), Ref.[8], and rapidly led to many studies of the phenomenon, see for example [van der Meer and Tolsma \(2014\)](#), Ref.[9]. Putnam argued that living in an ethnically heterogeneous environment was harmful to interpersonal trust and undermined social connections between and within ethnic groups. Faced with ethnic diversity, people would tend to retreat from social life. The occurrence of multiethnic spaces thus causes so-called multiculturalism to become merely a euphemism for cultural fragmentation and decline.

This process of increasing social atomisation is related to ethnicity rather than gender, though I note yet again that the close relationship of the two via intersectionality and progressivism means that they are not politically independent factors.

Another mechanism for promoting social atomisation is far more clearly related to feminism, namely the collapse of marriage and the increase in unstable, short-lived cohabiting between intimate couples. Only those in the deepest denial could dispute that this most dramatic change in our social structure was not a result of feminism and the associated "sexual liberation" – a term which increasingly seems inappropriate.

In the UK it has become notorious that most cities have districts dubbed "man deserts" which consist overwhelmingly of single mothers in relatively poor housing living largely on benefits. I expect the same occurs throughout the West. My own researches based on data from a Welsh charity which assists non-resident parents with child contact issues confirms the reality of social isolation amongst non-resident fathers. Validated psychology measures of social and emotional isolation has revealed the extreme extent of loneliness suffered by these rejected fathers.



Finally, I note yet another mechanism which promotes social atomisation, namely the tendency for middle-class university attendees to leave their childhood communities and never return, becoming instead the feedstock for the cosmopolitan, globalist “anywheres”, a euphemism for those who belong nowhere.

We have seen that this initiating factor which is instrumental in creating the social conditions for authoritarianism, namely social atomisation, has itself several causative factors of which feminism is one. In turn, social atomisation promotes three further pre-cursor conditions which prime a society for mass formation, according to Mattias Desmet,

2. The second condition is lack of meaning in life.
3. The third condition is a free-floating anxiety or psychological unease. “Free floating” because, crucially, it has no cause which is apparent to those affected by it.
4. The fourth condition is a growing inchoate frustration which leads to irrational lashing-out – aggression. Think of recent demonstrations which have turned rapidly into riots of destruction.

It is worth pointing out here that this lashing-out corresponds to [Mary Eberstadt's Primal Screams](#), Ref.[10]. Eberstadt attributes the cause to identity politics which she argues resulted from the sexual revolution and the breakdown of the family (and which, in turn, is indubitably a consequence of

feminism, though Eberhardt has a different take on the role of feminism). Hence we come full circle back to feminism. In the significance of the sexual revolution – that is the replacement of sexual continence by sexual libertinism – Eberstadt echoes the earlier work of J.D.Unwin, to be reviewed later in this essay. (Remarkably, Eberstadt makes no reference to Unwin).

These three further conditions – lack of meaning, free-floating anxiety and inchoate frustration – arise from social atomisation. The process by which they lead to totalitarianism according to Desmet can be summarised in two steps,

Firstly, there is a suggestion within the public sphere – essentially negative propaganda – that a certain out-group is responsible for all the ills that the public are feeling. This gains rapid acceptance irrespective of empirical evidence to the contrary because it affords relief to the believer. It provides a target upon which their previously free-floating anxiety can settle. This provides relief to the individual akin to having an illness diagnosed.

Secondly, becoming “a believer” also provides an antidote to the root cause of their unhappiness, replacing their isolation with absorption into a community with a clear mission and narrative. To quote Desmet, “Through this process an individual pivots from a highly aversive and painful psychological state of social isolation to the maximum interconnectedness that exists among the masses. This creates a kind of intoxication, which is the actual impetus to go along with the mass-forming narrative.”

He adds, “What one thinks does not matter; what counts is that people think it together. In this way, the masses come to accept even the most absurd ideas as true, or at least to act as if they were true”.... “The masses believe in the story not because it is true but because it creates a new social bond.”

In my words, this is why social justice types will react, rather bafflingly, with the claim that “you are denying my existence” when you attempt to dislodge their views on the basis of empirical data. They have built their sense of self around conformance with a narrative whose purpose has nothing to do with truth or justice but is motivated entirely by avoidance of the negatives of isolation, anxiety and lack of meaning.

The widespread adoption of a sense of identity built upon foundations both false and fragile might be expected to result in a surge in the common mental

disorders such as anxiety and depression. That is exactly what we see amongst young people, of both sexes but especially young women. According to Jonathan Haidt, the smart phone and social media are a principal cause. No doubt, but feminism can also be argued to cause psychopathology directly, according to Hannah Spier, Ref.[11].

This is why the audience for the sort of material I and many others that have been writing for ten years or more is not the woke, progressive, social justice types. Empiricism has no power over them. The target audience are the others, those not within the mass formation, and the purpose is to underwrite the moral legitimacy of dissent. How we defeat the mass hypnotised and their masters is another matter.

The ends of a totalitarian system are served by the process of mass formation by the relatively simple expedient of ensuring that the popular narrative is suitably directed. The knowing actors who do this directing are a tiny band whose impact is massively amplified by the mass formation process. These knowing actors may or may not be within the mass formation themselves.

Political Ponerology and Andrew Lobaczewski

The nature of the “tiny band” which exerts the directing influence on the proportion of the masses which have been effectively hypnotised by the mass-formation process is further elucidated in great detail by Andrew Lobaczewski in [Political Ponerology: The Science of Evil, Psychopathy, and the Origins of Totalitarianism](#), Ref.[12]. The book has an interesting history. Its first draft, a compilation from many authors, was written in Poland during the Soviet occupation. The only copy was thrown into a fire just ahead of a raid by the secret police. The second draft mysteriously disappeared, somewhere in the Vatican, I believe. The third, and surviving, draft in Polish was completed in 1984, and the following year in English translation. It seems that Zbigniew Brzezinski, one-time National Security Adviser to President Jimmy Carter, and who was initially helpful, ultimately blocked the book appearing at that time. As far as I am aware the first time the book was publicly available was in 2006, published by The Red Pill Press in an updated English translation with the author’s corrections. Lobaczewski died the following year.

The book starts with an account of the communist ideological take-over of the Polish universities. To quote an [article about the book in The Postil](#)

[Magazine](#), Ref.[13], “After universities had been emptied of enemies, they had to be filled with ostensible supporters: students from underprivileged social strata who would reward the regime with loyalty for upward social mobility”. In case you wonder what this has to do with feminism, do note that the strategy which has been in play in universities for many years in the West is precisely that. One merely reinterprets “underprivileged social strata” as the notionally oppressed intersectional identity groups – including women – rather than the economically underprivileged. Preferential hiring and promotion had been the norm in universities for decades before it was formalised as DEI.

Political Ponerology is a rather terrifying work but includes many insights. It is based entirely on psychology, the author opining, in contradiction to Durkheim, that “If we want to understand the laws governing social life, we must first understand the individual human being”. Lobaczewski argues that the individuals who provide the direction for the mass narrative generically exhibit schizoidia. Not to be confused with schizophrenia, schizoidia is characterized by dull emotionality and a weakened feeling for psychological realities. However, those exhibiting schizoidia tend to be adept at exploiting the emotionality of others and regard themselves as intellectually superior to “ordinary” people (though this is not actually the case).

These psychopathic individuals learn to recognise each other from childhood. They have a tendency to invent great doctrines which, when put into print, can serve as the vectors of their totalitarian views. Normal people can accept the doctrine in good faith, by (quote), “assimilating the content of such works in a manner corresponding to their own nature”. But unfortunately, according to Lobaczewski, “Subordinating a normal person to psychologically abnormal individuals has spellbinding, deforming effects on his personality”.

It is not surprising that, when such a process is in play, the narrative protects itself by disarming the very discipline that would expose it, namely psychology. Lobaczewski writes, “Wherever a society has become enslaved to others or to the rule of its own overtly privileged class, psychology is the first discipline to suffer from censorship and incursions on the part of an administrative body which starts claiming the last word as to what represents scientific truth”. In which context I note that psychology in the West has become a particular stronghold of feminist corruption.

The Significance of the Sexual Revolution (J.D.Unwin)

The rise of second wave feminism in the 1960s was accompanied by a sexual revolution. Prior to that time there were strong social, legal and religious constraints regarding sexual conduct. Other than for a few Bohemian types who put themselves beyond the pale socially, sex outside of marriage was forbidden to those who wished to be seen as decent, upstanding citizens. There was severe social stigma attached to couples cohabiting outside of marriage, and very heavy stigma indeed regarding childbirth outside wedlock. This ethos went together with divorce being rare and largely confined to the wealthier classes.

Of course, sex happened outside of marriage, but it had to be kept secret and this limited its extent. Knowledge of such behaviour in a public figure would destroy their reputation and probably end their career.

Pregnancy outside of marriage would, for an unattached man, result in severe pressure to marry the woman involved. Shotgun marriages were a daily reality. As a result, all but a very small percentage of children were raised in a two-parent, heterosexual couple family.

The so-called sexual revolution blew all that away. I need not rehearse what Western social structure has now become. Half of children in the UK are born outside marriage now. All restrictions on sex are now regarded in our brave new, faux-liberal, morality as unacceptable infringements on individual freedom.

Mary Eberstadt points to the contraceptive pill as the cause of the sexual revolution. Certainly it was a key enabler. But would the pill without feminism have still led to the sexual revolution? I think not. The pill would prevent pregnancy but that would not obviate the social stigma without a change in the popular ethos about sex – and that was provided by feminism.

Indeed, this radical change in our sexual ethics was not unique to our time and culture as tends to be assumed. There are many historical occurrences of cultures whose early sexual restraint changed to an ethos of sexual libertinism, and these were not brought about by a contraceptive pill.

In 1934, the Oxford sociologist J.D.Unwin published an epochal work which detailed the effects upon a culture of such loosening of sexual constraints, [Sex & Culture](#), Ref.[14]. Moreover, his was an empirical study based on an

exhaustive analysis of historical instances of cultures which underwent such changes in sexual mores.

Unwin examined the data from 86 societies and civilizations to see if there was a relationship between sexual freedom and the flourishing of cultures. As regards “civilized” societies, Unwin recognised only 16 historical examples, namely Sumerians, Babylonians, Egyptians, Assyrians, three Hellenic civilisations (namely the Macedonian, the Seleucid, and the Ptolemaic), Persians, Hindus, Chinese, Japanese, Sassanids, Arabs (i.e., Moors), Romans, Teutons and Anglo-Saxons. I presume the latter subsumes what we would now refer to as Western culture, sans Teutons.

Unwin noted that, whilst the emancipation of women is logically quite distinct from the extension of women’s sexual opportunity, in practice the two things have, so far, always gone together. Here, “women’s emancipation” is understood to mean the social, legal and political equality between the sexes. In respect of the existence of historical cultures from which to draw data regarding the effects of increased sexual licence, Unwin writes,

“...it is often supposed that female emancipation is an invention of the modern white man. Sometimes we imagine that we have arrived at a conception of the status of women in society which is far superior to that of any other age; we feel an inordinate pride because we regard ourselves as the only civilized society which has understood that the sexes must have social, legal, and political equality. Nothing could be farther from the truth. A female emancipating movement is a cultural phenomenon of unflinching regularity; it appears to be the necessary outcome of absolute monogamy. The subsequent loss of social energy after the emancipation of women, which is sometimes emphasized, has been due not to the emancipation but to the extension of sexual opportunity which has always accompanied it. In human records there is no instance of female emancipation which has not been accompanied by an extension of sexual opportunity.”

Unwin provided detailed criteria to clarify what was meant by sexual constraint versus sexual freedom, and the degrees between the two. Similarly, he also systematised how cultural vigour, or lack thereof, could be clearly defined and categorised.

As regards the latter, Unwin described four degrees of cultural flourishing measured in terms of architecture, art, engineering, literature, agriculture, and so forth. Specific criteria were devised which allowed a given culture at a given period to be classified into one of four levels of cultural achievement, which, in ascending order were,

zoistic: defined as entirely self-focussed on day-to day-life, wants, and needs, with no interest in any deeper understanding or philosophy. This is a “dead or inert culture”.

monistic: defined as a progression from the zoistic as regards the acquisition of superstitious beliefs and/or special treatment of the dead, and hence the beginnings of a greater curiosity beyond the daily grind.

deistic: defined as a culture which deployed the idea of a god or gods as explanations for enquiring minds on matters which were otherwise mysterious. (I believe we would now refer to this as “theistic”, as the term “deism” has a more specific meaning in modern parlance, so I’ll use “theistic” in what follows).

rationalistic: defined as a culture which had moved beyond the theistic by the use of rational thinking to understand nature and the deployment of such rational understanding to improve the everyday lives of the people (leading potentially to the development of science and technology).

Unwin’s categories describing degrees of sexual constraint, or licence, were – firstly before marriage,

1. **Complete sexual freedom**—no prenuptial restraints at all
2. **Irregular or occasional restraint**— cultural regulations require an occasional period of abstinence
3. **Strict Chastity** —remain a virgin until married

Whereas after marriage he defined four categories,

4. **Modified monogamy:** one spouse at a time, but association can be terminated by either party.
5. **Modified polygamy:** men can have more than one wife, but a wife is free to leave her husband.
6. **Absolute monogamy:** only one spouse permitted for life (or until death in some cultures)

7. **Absolute polygamy:** men can have more than one wife, but wives must confine their sexual activity to their husband for the whole of their lives.

What Unwin found from his detailed study provides a prediction for the endpoint of the trajectory that Western civilisation is now following. Here are the headline conclusions,

- [1] Increased sexual constraints, either before or after marriage, always led to increased flourishing of a culture.
- [2] Conversely, increased sexual freedom always led to the collapse of a culture in about one century (which Unwin aligns with three generations).
- [3] The clearest correlation with the flourishing of a culture was pre-marital chastity, especially for women. This had a highly significant effect in both directions: chaste singles make for a flourishing culture; sexually active singles result in cultural decline.
- [4] The largest effect size on culture was for pre-marital chastity coupled with “absolute monogamy”, i.e., monogamy without the availability of divorce. Rationalist cultures that retained this combination for at least three generations exceeded all other cultures in every area, including literature, art, science, furniture, architecture, engineering, and agriculture. Only three out of the eighty-six cultures studied ever attained this level.
- [5] Whenever the ethos of pre-marital chastity was abandoned, then absolute monogamy, theism, and rational thinking also disappeared within three generations.
- [6] Whenever total sexual freedom was embraced by a culture, that culture collapsed within three generations to the lowest state of flourishing, becoming zoistic, effectively a dead culture. At this point, the culture is usually conquered or taken over by another culture with greater social energy.
- [7] As a general rule, changes in sexual mores only realise their full cultural effect by the third generation. In our case, if we count the start of the sexual revolution as the sixties, then Unwin’s thesis predicts its full

effects will only be realised in the rising generation, and perhaps not fully until around 2060.

Let me remind you that Unwin published his study in 1934, some 30 years before second wave feminism and the sexual revolution even started. You may be tempted to imagine that his predictions will not apply to us – that we are somehow immune to what befell previous cultures. But, in as far as sociology results from psychology, and in as far as the psychology in question is innate, being of evolutionary origin, there are no obvious grounds for dismissal of Unwin’s predictions.

Moreover, being now two full generations into the predicted decline we should be seeing much of the cultural degeneration already. Are we? Kirk Durston* has summarised the position as follows:

- (i) absolute monogamy has been almost universally abandoned,
- (ii) theism has already declined steeply, and,
- (iii) I quote, “the swiftness with which rational thinking declined after the 1970’s is astounding”.

Durston cites the abandonment of objective truth in postmodernism as an aspect of this decline of rationality, together with the promotion of feelings over empirical evidence and the acceptance by large swathes of society that one can “identify” as things that one simply is not, be it a man identifying as a woman, or a girl identifying as a cat.

I have long been of the view that the Trans phenomenon was born of feminism, but this prediction of Unwin’s puts that causal connection in a whole new light.

*See [J.D. Unwin and Why Sexual Morality May be Far More Important than You Ever Thought — Quest \(kirkdurston.com\)](#) by Kirk Durston, Ref.[15], and [Sex and Culture Condensed.pdf - Google Drive](#) by Kirk Durston, Ref.[16].

The usual get-out in these cases is that Unwin’s correlation is not actually causal. However, he insisted that it is. For example he wrote,

“...the evidence is that a cultural advance has been caused by a factor which produces thought, reflection, and social energy and that it occurs only when

the sexual opportunity has been limited. I submit, therefore, that the limitation of the sexual opportunity must be regarded as the cause of the cultural advance.”

And again, he wrote,

“...compulsory (sexual) continence must be regarded as the immediate cause of a cultural advance. Any extension of sexual opportunity must always be the immediate cause of a cultural decline.”

Corollary: The Way Forward

It seems that there is nothing that can be done to avert the degeneration of the West. It is highly likely that more vigorous cultures will supplant the traditional Western culture, be it Islamism or cultures from the Indian or Chinese subcontinents. If Westerners wish to salvage something of our culture – perhaps with a view to its resurgence at some future time – then the lesson of the above observations, especially those of Unwin, is that parallel subcultures of traditionalists will need to form which rigorously exclude feminism and adopt a strict code of sexual ethics including pre-marital chastity and absolute monogamy (marriage for life).

Whilst Unwin notes that this has never been known in the past without also involving female subjugation, this may not be unavoidable. Emancipation of women in the sense of full social, legal and political equality is not logically contradictory with pre-marital chastity and absolute monogamy, and it is the latter which would appear to be the essential factors.

Additional Notes

To put further flesh on the bones of Mattias Desmet’s theory of mass formation and the role of social atomisation, anxiety and lack of meaning in life, here a few surrounding perspectives.

There are the views of John Vervaeke on the all-important issue of how we can, or should, acquire meaning in our lives and hence avoid the now-rampant nihilism.

Then there is the work of Jonathan Haidt on the relatively recent undermining of the mental well-being of young people brought about by early over-exposure to smart phones and so-called social media.

Next up is Iain McGilchrist whose work seems to veer ever closer to Buddhism. Whilst this may seem rather too philosophically esoteric to be of practical import, I think not. His take on meaningfulness and connectedness are important, as is his take-down of mechanistic materialism which he sees as arising from a neurobiological imbalance between the hemispheres of the brain.

Finally there is my own spin on these matters via the crucial role of social morality and its usurpation by bad actors. This quasi-religious take then morphs into overt politics as I give a new twist to Vivek Ramaswami's term the Woke Industrial Complex. Moral usurpation can also be seen as an update on the Gramscian programme of cultural revolution.

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