

# Sexuality and the Lost Proletariat

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## Abstract

Original Marxism was utopian, materialistic, and determinist. All human dynamics were explained by the dialectic or conflict between capitalists and the proletariat, with the victory of the proletariat being certain. In spite of the fact that determinism eliminates responsibility, those opposing Marxism were seen as evil. Marx's prophecy failed, and Russian communism emerged as evil and repressive. "Western" Marxism used Freudian psychology to explain the rise of fascism. It looked for another "proletariat," who were "oppressed." Co-opting the 1960s social revolution, it found this proletariat in non-Europeans, women, and homosexuals. This involved accepting the genetic determinism of the fascists. All who disagree continue to be treated as evil.

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**I**n analyzing any social change, there are a number of false directions that need to be guarded against. A major one of these is the tendency to put all the responsibility upon individual thinkers or figures. That results in a form of conspiracy theory, the implication being that society as a whole has been beguiled and has entered unwillingly into new movements. While people often do not understand the full implications of what they approve, they probably have some idea, particularly as ideas are further elaborated and developed. Conspiracy theories are often an attempt to avoid acknowledging the wrong motives and judgment of the population as a whole. It is more congenial to believe in the wickedness of a few plotters than to accept the depravity of the mass.

On the other hand, writers and thinkers often spell out the full implications of a line of thought. Once the general public has accepted a basic proposition, the trendsetters will push it to its limits. Hence this treatment argues that we must consider both general trends in society and particular ideological positions. To do that, I need to switch back and forth between general social developments and ideological developments. I will attempt to follow a roughly historical development and to signal when I am switching between topics.

## **I. *Basics of Marxism***

We might describe the culmination, in Hegel, of European philosophical thought as being a form of secular pantheism. A “spirit” is at work in history through trends and countertrends. Though this “spirit” had nothing to do with the true Spirit of God, Hegel often used quasireligious language, with the result that his position was not acceptable to the radical materialism of Marx. For Marx, the trends and countertrends had to be overtly secular. Hence Marx turned this dynamic into opposing socioeconomic groupings and their interactions. Although the opposing groups differ in different periods of history, for the modern age they are capitalists (bosses) and the proletariat (workers). These two groups are in opposition to each other so that the relationship between them is termed dialectical. Marx’s system, like Hegel’s, was dynamic. The progress of history would, more and more, force people into one or other group, leading to an intensified conflict, necessarily resulting in victory to the proletariat.

Some significant features of this theory tend to emerge in any subsequent theory influenced by Marxism. While the key parties to the dialectic may change, the structural dynamics tend to stay the same. The increasing conflict is a consequence of impersonal historical forces. Capitalists are forced to be capitalists and to oppress workers. A consequence of such a determinist view is that one can claim that the victory of the proletariat is a historical necessity. Yet, if someone is forced to do something with no conscious intent, he cannot be morally guilty. Despite this, popular Marxist rhetoric talks in terms of evil capitalists. There is a fundamental ambiguity here as to whether we are talking of determinism or moral culpability. That ambiguity is not resolved in Marxism. There is an attempt at resolution in picturing Marxism as the way of the future—that is, of progress—and making Marxists “progressive.” Anybody then fighting against “progress,” which is depicted as indubitably good, must be acting from evil motives. This is no real resolution because, if determinism is really operating, then those who oppose are also

responding to forces beyond their control. As we will see, the determinist aspect of Marx will be abandoned, but the moral judgments against any opposition to the current form of Marxism are retained.

Further, Marx was taking over a total, all-explaining metaphysical system. Hence his dialectic of capitalists and proletariat claimed to explain everything. For this to be true, all other aspects of human life must be derivative from the socioeconomic forces. All ideology, all morality, all religion, all art, was a product of the socioeconomic conflict. Consciously or unconsciously, other forms of human life and culture must arise from one side or the other of the conflict. This base–superstructure model is crucial for Marxism. Marx thought of his system as science, not ideology or philosophy. (The German equivalent of “science”—*Wissenschaft*—covers a wider area than English “science,” including any rigorous “discipline.”) In those terms, Marx claimed to base himself on a thorough economic and social history. The socioeconomic structure is basic, and everything else is froth.

The combination of these implications produces significant results. Any religious or philosophical deviation from, or objection to, Marxism must, consciously or unconsciously, be supporting the capitalists. Theoretically, this opposition could be a result of the blind forces of history; however, it is never seen that way, but always in moral terms. Consequently, Christians under Communism are always seen not as religious objectors but as counter-revolutionary class enemies deserving of punishment for supporting the evil capitalists.

The Marxist science included predictions of the growing crisis of capitalism and the eventual victory of the proletariat. The working class was to become more and more conscious of its role in history. Despite the emphasis of the theory on the working class, Marxism never was a working-class movement. Its leadership has come out of middle and upper classes, especially from students. This contradiction was explained away as due to the ability of some parts of the intelligentsia to understand the dynamics of history.

What was the attraction of a theory that proclaimed the victory of a class that was not their class? This is one of the many points where Marxism, in its socioeconomic determinism, fails to explain itself. I suspect at least two factors, one moral and one religious. Cases of the exploitation of the workers and their impoverishment were real, and so Marxism appealed to a moral indignation. Another factor, which becomes very obvious with the later Marxists I will consider, was the materialism of Marxist theory.

Since everything comes out of the base, all human problems, including crime and conflict, are due to the world being in the wrong socioeconomic situation. The victory of the proletariat would bring in a utopian situation

where such problems would disappear. Marxism was seen as a universal movement, and its victory would eliminate national antagonisms. The utopianism of Marxism meant that no serious thought was given to policy after the success of the revolution. For a Marxist society to have serious problems was not conceivable.

## **II. *The Crisis of Marxism***

World War I was a great disappointment to the Marxists because the working classes in each country supported their own side in the conflict. However, worse for the theory followed. The resolution of everybody into either capitalists or proletariat was supposed to happen first where capital and industrialization were most developed, namely in Western Europe and North America. However, it was in semifeudal Russia that Marxists came to power. Although in 1918–19 prospects seemed good for a communist victory in Germany, that movement failed. The Great Depression could be interpreted in terms of the Marxist theory of a growing crisis within capitalism; however, the outcome in Germany and other parts of Europe was fascism, with strong working-class support. Further, the twentieth century as a whole has seen a lessening of distinction between capitalists and proletariat. Workers often hold shares in companies and invest in their own moneymaking schemes.

The failure of the fulfillment of Marxist predictions led to “the crisis of Marxism.” Russian communists could bolster the legitimacy of their rule by claiming Marx was right and the Russian revolution had to happen. Since many communist parties outside of Russia were financed and controlled by Moscow, that official version of Marxism, or what we might term Old Marxism, was widely dispersed. However, it was plainly implausible, especially as the horrors of Stalinism became better known.

## **III. *The Recovery Movement***

In the West, Marxists who tried to modify Marxism to make it more in accord with reality were far more influential. The crucial thing to be abandoned was the determinism of Marx. The triumph of the proletariat was not as certain as he predicted. The determinist model saw human will as irrelevant, so the replacement model had to give a greater role to human decisions.

The base–superstructure model came under question. Rather than being just froth, ideology was crucial. In an environment where Catholicism was a major anti-Marxist influence, the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci

stressed the importance of ideology.<sup>1</sup> Historians taking this up discovered that the working classes, rather than being the passive victims of historical movements, developed their own approaches and ways of coping. Perhaps this is well illustrated by the subtitle that Eugene Genovese gave to *Roll, Jordan, Roll*, his classic study of the community dynamics of American black slaves: *The World the Slaves Made*.<sup>2</sup>

If the revolution had failed to come as expected, then the logical thing was to investigate the dynamics of social and political decision making. This analysis became particularly pressing for German Marxists as they watched the German population, and particularly the working class, shift to support of the Nazis. Historical determinism is a dangerous doctrine when history produces the wrong solution. The commitment of Marxists to materialism limited the possibility of explanations. To see the political shifts as a rational response to the problems of Germany would be to abandon Marx. To interpret them in moral terms would open the door to interpretations that were not materialist. Marx needed to be supplemented by explanations that could be seen in materialist terms. The psychological theories of Freud opened the possibility of explanations that were materialist. Freud saw the individual as shaped by experiences in early life. There was then the possibility of reshaping that person during life. This was thus quite different from the genetic determinism of the Nazis, which saw human characteristics as indelibly imprinted. There was also a need to show that any conclusions reached were more than mere Marxist dogma. Marxists found themselves in the difficult situation of proclaiming that “science” could not be seen as an independent authority because the present socioeconomic state of society decisively influenced all cultural products, including science, yet they needed to appeal to something more objective than pure Marxist dogma.

Prominent in this endeavor was an institute established in Frankfurt called the *Institut für Sozialforschung* (commonly called the Frankfurt School),<sup>3</sup> which, when the Nazis came to power, transferred to New York because all its prominent members were of Jewish origin. Before the Institute moved to

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<sup>1</sup> T. J. Jackson Lears, “The Concept of Cultural Hegemony: Problems and Possibilities,” *American Historical Review* 90 (1985): 567–95; G. A. Williams, “The Concept of Egemonia in the Thought of Antonio Gramsci,” *Journal of the History of Ideas* 21 (1960): 586–99.

<sup>2</sup> Eugene Genovese, *Roll, Jordan, Roll: The World the Slaves Made* (New York: Pantheon, 1974).

<sup>3</sup> For detailed histories, see Martin Jay, *The Dialectical Imagination: A History of the Frankfurt School and the Institute of Social Research, 1923–1950* (London: Heinemann, 1973); Rolf Wiggershaus, *The Frankfurt School: Its History, Theories and Political Significance*, trans. Michael Robertson (Cambridge: Polity, 1994); and Thomas Wheatland, *The Frankfurt School in Exile* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2009).

America, it had set in motion an extensive survey aimed to reveal crucial factors in social psychology. This research endeavor was under the leadership of Erich Fromm, who had had Freudian training. As with any such survey, many forms were not returned, and many were lost in the hurried flight of the Institute to America. Even had that not been the case, conclusions solely based upon the empirical data of the survey would have been unacceptable because it would have conflicted with the belief of the members of the Institute that “science,” as a human social activity, was not unbiased, but was actually decisively influenced by the economic structure of contemporary society. Hence the publication that was produced after the move to America,<sup>4</sup> while referring to the study, was rather a statement of the theoretical framework within which the survey needed to be interpreted.

In that theoretical structure, Freud was prominent, but it was Freud amended according to a conviction that the original Freud was not aware of the conformity of his thought to the underlying socioeconomic influences. The criticism was that Freud saw his theories as having some general validity for humans, rather than being applicable only to humans at a certain point in time. Thus, his prescriptions, while correctly realizing the unhappy nature of human existence in the present age, tended to encourage people to conform to the present situation.<sup>5</sup>

However, what was seen as valid in Freud was the recognition of a personality type that was referred to as the “authoritarian” or “sado-masochistic” personality, with an explanation of that personality type as arising during life as a response to influences during childhood. Those influences in turn were seen as shaped by socioeconomic forces impinging on the family at a particular period in history. The authority of the father in the family, which was a feature of Protestantism and continued in the period of royal absolutism that followed the Reformation, shaped the thinking and feeling of the son so as to see authority as right and natural. Hence royal or state authority was also accepted. As the socioeconomic crises of capitalism impacted the family, the authority of the father was threatened, and expectations for security turned toward external authorities. The result was an authoritarian personality structure. A further link was made to the psychoanalytic conclusion that sadism and masochism came together in this personality type. The sadistic tendency was connected to the fact that, while

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<sup>4</sup> Max Horkheimer, ed., *Studien über Autorität und Familie: Forschungsberichte aus dem Institut für Sozialforschung* (1936; repr., Lüneburg: Zu Klampen, 1987). For discussion of these essays, see Wiggershaus, *The Frankfurt School*, 151ff., and Jay, *The Dialectical Imagination*, 124ff.

<sup>5</sup> As was generally the case with all the work of the Institute, the essays involved did not explain how the authors escaped the pit into which Freud had supposedly fallen.

there was subservience to those higher, those considered lower and inferior were dominated.<sup>6</sup> What is clearly being developed here is a way of explaining the German and broader acceptance of fascism as a product of European social history in which Protestantism had a significant role. In view of what developed later, it is significant that Fromm saw homosexuality as a feature of this development, that is, as a feature of the authoritarian or sadomasochistic personality.<sup>7</sup>

The fuller results of the survey were not published at the time of the preliminary volume. The reasons for this lack are complex: one was that Fromm separated from the Institute for reasons partly connected to money and partly connected to basic differences of approach. Fromm took the survey forms with him, and they were not published until 1980.<sup>8</sup>

Fromm interpreted the results of the survey in terms of “radical,” “authoritarian,” and “compromise” types. He looked for a correlation between these types and political affiliation and wider cultural attitudes. While he could classify people into such groups, when correlation was looked for with other responses the results were mixed. His conclusion was that the results often showed a lack of correlation between political opinion and personality type.<sup>9</sup> Wolfgang Bonss, in his introduction to the publication, reports the view of Herbert Marcuse that the Institute thought it was politically unwise to publish the results because they could be interpreted as showing that German workers, though voting for the Left, were in personality type not opposed to authoritarianism.<sup>10</sup>

There are crucial issues here. Freudianism gave those who wanted to stay with Marxism a materialistic way to explain the failure of Marx’s predictions. However, it did not overcome the contradiction caused by determinism. If the authoritarian personality was a product of social and psychological mechanisms, was it not therefore “natural” and inevitable? In other words, there was some basis to the Institute’s fear that the results of the survey

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<sup>6</sup> See Max Horkheimer, “Allgemeiner Teil,” *Studien über Autorität und Familie*, 49ff. (German), 905–7 (English), and Erich Fromm, “Sozialpsychologischer Teil,” *Studien über Autorität und Familie*, 122ff. (German), 908–11 (English).

<sup>7</sup> Fromm, “Sozialpsychologischer Teil,” 911.

<sup>8</sup> Erich Fromm, *The Working Class in Weimar Germany: A Psychological and Sociological Study*, ed. Wolfgang Bonss, trans. Barbara Weinberger (1980; repr., Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984).

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 228.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 33, n. 56. Bonss also explores other ways in which Fromm’s presuppositions and the results did not match (“Critical Theory and Empirical Social Research: Some Observations,” 1–38). The important point is that Fromm’s whole approach, like that of the other members of the Institute, was not empirical. The theoretical structure interpreted the survey results and was not based on the results.

were politically dangerous. The Institute's approach was to attach the negative authoritarian or sadomasochistic personality to the Nazis—and in many ways, it fitted—but the survey showed that those characteristics could also appear, though less commonly, in those with Leftist political inclinations. The evils of Stalinist Russia were to emerge as an embarrassment to Western Marxists, but they never faced the reality that was before their eyes: the “correct” political leaning and the wholesome personality type do not necessarily correlate.

Given the failure of Marx's predictions and the ugly face of Russian communism, why do so many continue to follow Marxism, and why are Western intellectuals so receptive to it? I think it boils down to the fact that Marxism is a secular philosophy with utopian hopes. Non-Christians have a habit of following failed recipes that make great promises. What else do they have?

#### **IV. Explaining America**

The takeover by the Nazis of Germany and then of continental Europe had forced the Institute to take refuge in America. Columbia University in New York had given them a place to work. There was a precariousness about that situation, and the Institute took care not to make too obvious its Marxist roots. “Critical Theory” was a substitute for saying “Marxist,” and reading the theoretical essays by Max Horkheimer, Fromm, and Marcuse in *Studien über Autorität und Familie*, one is struck by the willingness to mention Freud but the avoidance of the name Marx, though it is obviously Marxist theory that is being expounded.

The failure of the working class in Germany to support Marxism had been explained in terms of the willingness of that class to accept authoritarianism. What about the American working class and the fabled American values of freedom and choice? The answer of the Frankfurt School was, in effect, that Americans and many others had been bought off with the material profits of capitalism. This, of course, was a concession that the Marxist prophecy of the growing crisis of capitalism had been disproved by events. The Frankfurt School fell back on the common contention of German idealism that the theory had to take precedence over the facts, a belief they used in attacking the English-language traditions of empiricism, positivism, and John Dewey. Involved in that claim that the working class was being bought off by capitalism was an attack on the role of mass media. Literature, films, and TV were providing a fantasy world through which workers could avoid facing the dreariness and meaninglessness of their existence under capitalism. The classic statement of this position was Marcuse's *One Dimensional Man*:



*Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society*.<sup>11</sup>

If capitalism was so successful in blinding the eyes of the public, how was it that Marxists still existed? Note the recurrence of fundamental Marxist belief in the passivity of the working class. Note also the fact that Marxism, in this form, is once again an elitist movement: they are the intellectual few who understand what is really happening in history, while the masses have no insight.

## V. *The New Proletariat*

Among this Marxist few, now in America, was Marcuse. Along with other Marxists, he faced the question of who would replace the working class as the ground troops of the revolution. They had to be people who could be seen as victims of the triumph of capitalism. Since the Western Marxists had reluctantly acknowledged the horrors of Stalinism, it could not be orthodox Russian communists or their followers. Others had to be found to take the role of the oppressed who could rise to throw off their chain. So, the new “proletariat” was the American Blacks, the Marxist-influenced liberation movements of the Third World such as the Vietcong, and to some extent, women.<sup>12</sup> To these Marcuse added another group. He did this by disputing Freud’s history of the human race. Freud had argued that human sexual desires had to be repressed and limited to prevent chaos and to allow energies to be redirected into civilization and culture. Therein was the origin of the monogamous family. Marcuse acknowledged that some restrictions were necessary for civilization, but claimed that authoritarianism had used these dynamics to be overly restrictive. The main reason for the need of restrictions had been the need to acquire sufficient food. With the growth of technology, that was no longer a problem. There were abundant supplies for all, with the only need being proper and fair distribution. Hence, there was no more need for sexual restrictions, and Marcuse saw things formerly regarded as perversions as falling into the unrestricted category.<sup>13</sup>

<sup>11</sup> Herbert Marcuse, *One Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society* (Boston: Beacon, 1964).

<sup>12</sup> In an unpublished paper, written after *Eros and Civilisation* had been given a new significance by the rise of the New Left, Marcuse says of the cultural revolution, consisting of these groups, that it “not only precedes and prepares the soil for the political revolution (including the economic changes), but that it has, at the present stage *absorbed* the political revolution” (Herbert Marcuse, *Towards a Critical Theory of Society*, vol. 2 of *Collected Papers of Herbert Marcuse*, ed. Douglas Kellner [London: Routledge, 2001], 125).

<sup>13</sup> Herbert Marcuse, *Eros and Civilisation: A Philosophical Inquiry into Freud* (1965; repr., London: Ark, 1987), 214–15. For a discussion of Marcuse’s use of Freud, see Jay, *The Dialectical Imagination*, 106ff.

## VI. *Enter the 1960s Cultural Revolution*

I would like to turn now to social dynamics that were not necessarily Marxist, though eagerly appropriated by Marxists. Wars and threats of war tend to induce social conservatism. Non-Christians under threat, or recovering from major traumas, tend to be religious or moralistic (“There are no atheists in foxholes!”). Society immediately after World War II was somewhat socially conservative. Divorce and sexual promiscuity were frowned upon. The generation that had known the Great Depression, and rationing in wartime, was generally frugal with money. Besides, there was no easy credit. However, this social and moral conservatism lacked any real foundation. Liberalism had ripped the authority from the Bible and the church. Catholicism survived on tradition alone. The generation that grew up in that era was taught a morality that their parents had no basis for believing and probably secretly resented. As the younger generation were faced with the hypocrisy of racism against Blacks, of being drafted to fight the unpopular Vietnam War, and the teaching of their professors, who often held Marxist or similar beliefs, they revolted. Though various forms of Marxism played a role in the revolt, it would be wrong to see it primarily as a Marxist movement. It is arguable that Dewey was more of an influence than Marx. Dewey, believing that Christianity was doomed and American democracy therefore severely threatened, taught that people had to learn democracy by practical participation, and the place where people were to learn to express their ideas and to negotiate with the ideas of others was the public school. Thus, democracy was to be learned by practice. What Dewey did not face was that the willingness to appreciate others and their ideas had, itself, a Christian basis. A generation raised to express itself, believing that its ideas should be taken seriously, and conscious that their parents’ morality was without foundation, encountered a critical situation in the mid to late 1960s.

There is debate as to the role of Marcuse in the 1960s/1970s cultural revolution (aka the New Left).<sup>14</sup> Note the paradoxes. Dewey was a major inspiration for the American students. The Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) were originally Dewey followers. The Frankfurt Institute had attacked Dewey.<sup>15</sup> The New Left was anti-elitist, but the Marxists, though using egalitarian rhetoric, were elitists. The alliance of the New Left and Western Marxism was an example of the adage that “the enemy of my enemy is my friend.” For different reasons, both were concerned about the

<sup>14</sup> Wheatland, *The Frankfurt School in Exile*, 296ff.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 112ff.

treatment of American Blacks. The American youth who did not want to fight in Vietnam were happy to accept the romanticizing of the Vietcong. Sexual liberation was a theme of those who were rebelling against the morality of their parents' generation. Thus, what was passed on to subsequent society was an amalgam of popular beliefs about freedom and lack of restrictions, together with a form of Marxism seeking to find a new proletariat. One may wonder what Marx and Engels would have thought of the new proletariat being found in pampered college and university youth!

There were, of course, some exponents of old Marxism among the New Left, those committed to violent revolution. There are many examples in modern history of the ability of small groups willing to use ruthless violence to take over inchoate protest movements. The seizure by the Bolsheviks (Communists) of the 1917 Menshevik revolution in Russia and the Muslim Brotherhood takeover of recent uprisings in Egypt are examples. However, the latter example also shows that lasting success depends upon a lack of enemies who are willing and able to use force. The Old Marxist Weathermen and the Red Brigades resorted to violence but were crushed. Many of the youthful troops of the New Left were bought off with the profits of capitalism. However, the ethos of the end of restriction and thus of sexual freedom was attractive not just to members of the generation of the New Left but also to the generation of their parents and to the children of those who lost their revolutionary fervor when bribed by capitalism. Various movements adapted the structure of the new Marxism. It was crucial to claim membership in a victimized class.

The New Feminism found that class in women. Just as Marx argued about the working class of the nineteenth century, there was ample evidence of the victimization of women. Notice, however, how an echo of original Marxist logic reappears. To suggest, and especially to suggest for religious reasons, that the feminist answer has problems and actually hurts certain women is to make one a supporter of the evil misogynists. Marxist materialism cannot allow religion to be real. We have to realize how deeply that belief has sunk into Western society. The Republican administration of George W. Bush refused to heed warnings that any invasion of Iraq had to take the dynamics of Islam seriously. They were confident that all that mattered was a better political and economic system.

Similarly, the unwillingness of Left-leaning politicians and journalists to connect terrorism to a form of Islam flows from the base-superstructure belief that religion is part of the froth and behind it, in the case of Islam, are socioeconomic dynamics of oppressed people. In addition, the search for the new proletariat baptized Third World protest movements as victims of

capitalism, aka colonialism. Since Muslim movements come out of the Third World, they are victims by definition, and we should not blame the victim! In all these cases, we see the consequences of the rejection of the doctrine of total depravity. Marxism leads to the treating of all members of a group as acting as the group acts.<sup>16</sup> If women are the victimized group, all women must be innocent; if Muslims are victims, all Muslims must be innocent! That threatens to set up a reaction that treats all members of a group as guilty.

With respect to homosexuality, the various trends lead to similar results. The rhetoric of choice and freedom leads to the ability of all to indulge their ideas and desires in any way they choose. However, this rhetoric has had to be modified due to the realization that homosexual sex is very unhealthy. Hence, it is being argued that it is genetically determined. Notice here the curious echo of Marxism, though Old Marxism in this case. Russian communism justified its revolution and consequent repression as determined by the forces of history and thus beyond challenge. The logic of the appeal to genetic determinism is the same. However, it is not empirically confirmed by studies of twins, the only way known at present to test such claims.

Furthermore, it runs contrary to one of the great beliefs of our time—Darwinism. Evolution by natural selection depends upon differential reproductive success. The forms that leave the most progeny will prevail. Carriers of genetic combinations that inhibit reproductive success will be eliminated from the population, along with their genes. Creationists do not disagree with this logic. What they question is the continuous appearance of propitious mutations. Now, if there is any genetic composition likely to inhibit reproductive success, it is a homosexual gene.

There is another intriguing paradox. Genetic determinism used to be the preserve of the racist Right. There is a rule of thumb that the Left believes in environmental determinism and the Right believes in genetic determinism. The Marxist belief that all social problems will disappear after the Revolution is founded on a belief that changing the conditions under which men live must change humanity itself. The Right is more inclined to believe that people have intrinsic, that is genetic, characteristics. Nazi extermination practices were justified as the removal of those carrying inherent evil natures.<sup>17</sup> Upper-class disdain of lower classes is generally based on ideas of

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<sup>16</sup> Marx was actually more realistic. He saw the crystallization of pure capitalist and worker groups as a process that would take time. With the New Marxism the “oppressed” groups are simply homogeneous without process.

<sup>17</sup> For the genetic basis of Nazi policy, see Hans F. K. Günther, *The Racial Elements of European History*, trans. G. C. Wheeler (London: Methuen, 1927).

inherent superiority, as are racial theories. The writings of members, or former members, of the Frankfurt School show a strong aversion to any idea of intrinsic human nature.<sup>18</sup> Freudianism fits easily into the thinking of the Left because in it experiences during life are claimed to shape the personality.

As mentioned above, Fromm created a quite different appraisal of homosexuality from his combination of Marx and Freud. For him, it was part of the “authoritarian personality.” The departure of Fromm from the Frankfurt School has been variously interpreted.<sup>19</sup> His later books show he had not changed from his beliefs about the authoritarian personality and the contribution of Protestantism to its creation.<sup>20</sup> The later polemic between Fromm and the remaining members of the Frankfurt School contains reciprocal accusations of disloyalty to Freud, but I suspect that the real difference lies elsewhere. Is sexual desire, and its disruptive impact on society, a physical fact, leaving humanity the hard choice between desire and civilization? This more Freudian form comes close to a biological determinism. Fromm saw man’s dilemma as something arising in a social context during life and thus as an alienation that a person can hope to overcome during life. The utopian Left does not like a physical determinism that leaves no hope of resolution through social change.

What Marcuse was effectively saying is that the sexually different, specifically the homosexual, was part of the new proletariat, part of those oppressed by traditional sexual morality. It follows that to be opposed to homosexuality is to be part of the oppressors. Notice, here again, the Marxist logic. Marcuse was quite consistent in that he opposed freedom of speech for those who disagreed with his version of Marxism.<sup>21</sup> His justification was that the powerful in society so dominated the organs of education and communication that toleration of all views still meant that the views Marcuse disliked must prevail. Notice again here the use of determinism when it suits the Marxist argument. If his view were correct, the present promotion of homosexuality by the organs of education and communication would be inexplicable.

<sup>18</sup> Marcuse, *One-Dimensional Man*, 44. A major part of Erich Fromm’s *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (1974; repr., Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1977) is devoted to refuting theses of innate destructive tendencies.

<sup>19</sup> Wheatland, *The Frankfurt School in Exile*, 82–84, 224, 358, n. 63; Wiggershaus, *The Frankfurt School*, 265–73; Jay, *The Dialectical Imagination*, 88–106.

<sup>20</sup> Erich Fromm, *The Anatomy of Human Destructiveness* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1973); *The Fear of Freedom* (1942; repr., London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1960).

<sup>21</sup> Herbert Marcuse, “Repressive Tolerance,” in Robert Paul Wolff, Barrington Moore Jr., and Herbert Marcuse, *A Critique of Pure Tolerance* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1969), 93–157. Marcuse could not be more explicit: “Liberating tolerance, then, would mean intolerance against movements from the Right and tolerance of movements from the Left” (122–23).

Materialism means that there are only oppressors and oppressed. Notice also the continuing contradiction that something may be determined, yet still treated as evil. If some can claim to be genetically determined to homosexuality, then one might claim on equally flimsy grounds to be genetically determined to hate homosexuals. However, the logic of determinism and guilt is always applied inconsistently. To be against the proclaimed new victims is automatically to be guilty. The historic Leftist rejection of intrinsic human nature is forgotten when it suits.

The utopianism of Marxism has carried into the sexual revolution. The Western Marxists never faced the reality of Russian communism, even while they were anxious to distance themselves from Stalinism. They also did not face the fact that, while “authoritarian personality” was a stick with which to beat the Right, aspects of authoritarianism could emerge in those who voted for the Left. That could be explained away as a residual influence of the social dynamics that produced that personality type. However, Russian communist society continued to produce the horrors of authoritarianism. Maybe, after the Revolution, authoritarian types do not disappear but rather see their opportunity, however contrary that may be to utopian Marxist theory. For this to happen, society after the success of the revolution has to be kept in constant turmoil. It is in this light that we perhaps should see the rise, after the apparent victory of the homosexual cause, of many other varieties of sexuality, all eager to condemn and oppress those who oppose them.

The church cannot hope to remain silent and to be left in peace. The Word of God means that we cannot accept homosexuality. In the modern materialist world, the logic of Marxism still applies: whoever plays the role of the proletariat may not be criticized. Freedom of speech, however, was won on the basis of biblical truth, and it cannot exist in a Marxist world. We must be prepared to question the system at its root. The ability to do so does not ensure that we will be heard. Only God can bring that about. However, it is important that God’s people are made aware that the issue is not a matter of whether we are loving and kind to people in their sin; it is rather a worldview that denies the possibility of any religious or ethical truth and yet makes sinners out of those who oppose it.