

Liberty depends on families

If you were a Big Picture sort gazing at America through a wide-angle lens, you might begin to wonder: Why the big rush to fascism?

For a nation that prides itself on freedom, even seeking to infect other countries, we're terribly busy undermining our own.

How? Specifically, by destroying the family.

Sanctity aside, the traditional family is the front-line defense of liberty, the Maginot Line against

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creeping totalitarianism.

Without the primary, autonomous unit of mother and father — whose duty is to protect and nurture their offspring — government inevitably intercedes.

Indeed, it is a goal of totalitarian governments to supplant the family by undermining parental authority, which Americans and other Westerners seem increasingly willing to surrender. Gluttons for irony, we surrender freedom in the name of freedom — as in liberty and equality for all.

Talk about unintended consequences.

This family dissolution has been gradual and incremental, occurring almost without our notice. First, we demonized men and made women into martyrs and victims. We didn't do this halfheartedly, but with gusto. We codified the concept "men bad, women good" with laws that gave women supremacy over men: child custody awards in divorce; acceptance of drive-by, sperm-bank impregnation and single motherhood; and finally, special status in new laws such as the "Violence Against Women Act."

Violence against women, though indefensible, is presum-

ably no more unacceptable a crime than violence against men. Nevertheless, we created a special law just for women — funded by taxpayers — that institutionalized female victimhood and cemented the image of man as predator.

Then, we turned child-rearing over to day-care workers and public institutions where parental control over the moral content of their children's lives has been diluted. From sex education to diversity training, public educators increasingly have decided what and when children should learn, sometimes without parental approval.

There's nothing wrong with teaching children about human reproduction, assuming information is phase-appropriate. But human reproduction is taught values-free because there is no secular moral consensus that fits all families' cultures.

Nor is there anything wrong with teaching tolerance for other cultures, except it is often done at the expense of covering Western Civilization. An odd omission for a nation trying to export Western principles. Meanwhile, public education dumbs itself down for the least common denominator. One pregnant 11-year-old in a school means that all 11-year-olds should know the fine points of sex.

Thus, parents were outraged last month when sixth-graders in Shrewsbury, Mass., were asked various questions about their experiences with oral sex in a survey designed to help educators plan health education programs.

Finally, we "advance" toward the "de-institutionalization" of marriage, as David Blankenhorn (president of the Institute of American Values and author of "Fatherless America") recently described the move toward same-sex marriage (SSM). As SSM becomes the law of the land in other countries (recently Spain and, pending expected

senate approval, Canada), and perhaps, inevitably, here, power is being ineluctably shifted from the natural family to the state.

In Canada, Blankenhorn says, the idea of the natural parent has been removed from marriage law and replaced with "legal parent." In New Zealand, a child legally may have three parents. By the logic of same-sex marriage, which insists that marriage is a contract of rights disconnected from sex and procreation, why shouldn't those three parents be allowed to marry? A question being asked by polygamists everywhere.

Viewed simplistically as an equal-rights issue, it's hard to argue against same-sex marriage. We want fairness and equality for all. But viewed historically, marriage isn't an equal-rights issue, nor a legal contract of privileges. The foundational purpose of marriage always has been a bond of duty cementing the affiliation of mother and father to the child.

By separating sex and procreation from marriage — and granting marriage "rights" to anyone and everyone — we are curtailing the rights of children to their natural parents, as well as to protection from the strong arm of the state.

Today's family portrait as a collage of individual snapshots is not a happy or promising picture: no fathers; single — busy and stressed — mothers; no-fault divorce and "marriage" that means everything and therefore nothing; children depressed and dosed in dumbed-down schools where the least common denominator dictates curriculum.

In such a state, someone has to take charge, for better or worse. When the state takes over, you can bet on worse.

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