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CHAPTER 9

Virgin Versus Chad: On Enforced Monogamy as a Solution to the Incel Problem

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Introduction

In April 2018, 25-year-old Alek Minassian mowed down more than two dozen Toronto pedestrians with his van, killing ten. A self-described "incel" (an internet portmanteau of "involuntary celibate"), Minassian was inspired by Elliot Rodger, whose own mass killing was, according to the latter's manifesto, similarly motivated by a deep resentment of female rejection.[1] "The Incel Rebellion has already begun!" Minassian posted on Facebook just before his killing spree. "We will overthrow all the Chads and Stacys! All hail the Supreme Gentleman Elliot Rodger!"[2]

Soon after, University of Toronto psychologist and public intellectual Jordan Peterson was asked by *New York Times* journalist Nellie Bowles for his thoughts about the tragedy.

> "He was angry at God because women were rejecting him," Mr. Peterson says of the Toronto killer. "The cure for that is enforced monogamy. That's actually why monogamy emerges." Mr. Peterson does not pause when he says this. Enforced monogamy is, to him, simply a rational solution. Otherwise women will all only go for the most high-status men, he explains, and that couldn't make either gender happy in the end. "Half the men fail," he says, meaning that they don't procreate. "And no one cares about the men who fail."
>
> I laugh, because it is absurd.

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> "You're laughing about them," he says, giving me a disappointed look. "That's because you're female." […] In situations where there is too much mate choice, "a small percentage of the guys have hyper-access to women, and so they don't form relationships with women," he said. "And the women hate that."[3]

Peterson's endorsement of "enforced monogamy" drew the ire of the commentariat, many of whom interpreted the phrase as a *Handmaid's Tale*-type scenario or associated it with the crudest forms of sexual coercion. Common among these critiques was the claim that Peterson was assuming some sort of right to sex on behalf of incels.[4] Peterson replied in subsequent interviews and tweets that "enforced monogamy" is a well-established term in anthropology and related fields (when I restrict the search to 2017 and earlier, Google Scholar reports 550 publications using that phrase and about 103 using "normative monogamy," which means the same thing). Peterson noted in a blog post about the controversy that he doesn't base his case for enforced monogamy on a right to sex or spouses, but rather on the pragmatic social benefits of monogamy.

> Men get frustrated when they are not competitive in the sexual marketplace (note: the fact that they DO get frustrated does not mean that they SHOULD get frustrated. Pointing out the existence of something is not the same as justifying its existence). Frustrated men tend to become dangerous, particularly if they are young. The dangerousness of frustrated young men (even if that frustration stems from their own incompetence) has to be regulated socially. The manifold social conventions tilting most societies toward monogamy constitute such regulation.
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> That's all.
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> No recommendation of police-state assignation of woman to man (or, for that matter, man to woman).
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> No arbitrary dealing out of damsels to incels.
>
> Nothing scandalous (all innuendo and suggestive editing to the contrary).
>
> Just the plain, bare, common-sense facts: socially-enforced monogamous conventions decrease male violence. In addition (and not trivially) they also help provide mothers with comparatively reliable male partners, and increase the probability that stable, father-intact homes will exist for children.[5]

In this chapter, I will construct an argument premised on the "incel problem" and concluding with the remedy of "enforcing monogamy," which I will henceforth refer to as the "Enforced Monogamy Inference" or EMI. I cast the issue in terms of an "inference" rather than a mere call for "enforced monogamy" in order to focus our attention on the fact that we're talking about a proposed solution to a certain problem—namely, high rates of involuntarily celibate men—as opposed to a general call for enforced monogamy or a monogamist position motivated by another rationale, such as some religious scruple against extra-marital sex. If EMI were the brainchild of Peterson alone, discussion of it would not be warranted here. But EMI is it not idiosyncratic to

Peterson: it, in whole or in part, has a great deal of currency in the manosphere, and it might be beneficial for students and scholars of sex ethics to think through it. I stress this is an *acquaintance* with the inference from the "incel problem" to enforced monogamy: in a discussion of this size, it is impossible to advance a thoroughgoing analysis of its soundness. Readers are welcome to fill gaps in my reasoning and/or pursue lines of thought only gestured at here.

Note that Peterson is concerned not just about unhappily-alone young men, but also the larger social implications of the incel phenomenon (since inceldom is an identity, I will try to reserve "incel" for men who self-identify as incels and "involuntarily celibate" for the much larger class of involuntarily celibate men). Advocates of EMI-type thinking tend to be social pragmatists who feel our mating patterns not only profoundly affect, but are also beholden to, social well-being. Thus I begin by advancing a moral premise that advocates of EMI are likely to sympathize with, which sees mating patterns as morally constrained by social or civilizational sustainability. I then summarize some well-established social scientific research suggesting that polygamy, as compared to monogamy, is indeed significantly disadvantageous to civilizational advance. After that I pivot away from how EMI applies to polygamous cultures to how it applies to our own. This raises a conceptual problem for EMI: is it about *relieving intrasexual competition* on behalf of involuntary celibates by restricting the availability of the best-positioned men, as one might gather from the monogamy versus polygamy framing? Or is it about *decreasing the percentage* of involuntarily celibate men, which is a much broader project? I explore the former as it might apply to a sexually unregulated but socially monogamous mating market. Advocates of EMI can and do draw from the sexual economics literature to argue that liberal sexual mores, in conjunction with certain facts about innate sex differences and reproductive technology, result in a degraded form of polygamy, thereby encumbering modern socially monogamous societies with some of polygamy's downsides. In the final section I step back and conclude that "enforced monogamy," in the sense of *normative anti-polygamy*, is probably justified for non-polygamous societies if we accept civilizational sustainability as a baseline. On the other hand, "enforced monogamy," in the sense of imposing *stricter sexual and marital monogamous norms*, is not yet warranted, since less intrusive interventions—interventions Peterson himself is exemplary of undertaking—are likely to be more effective.

Social and Civilizational Sustainability as a Necessary Condition for Sex Ethics

Environmentally conscious people generally agree that we must strive to live sustainably. Of course, accepting environmental sustainability as a baseline is perfectly compatible with acknowledging a defeasible right to high-consumption lifestyles: if you like "rolling coal" in big trucks as opposed to buzzing about in tiny hybrids, or if you prefer to spend your leisure time crisscrossing the globe

instead of gardening, that is your business. Even so, we generally think the *prima facie* right to such freedoms might be outweighed if the costs of exercising these freedoms are externalized to others and to future generations. Although in some cases we should call for an absolute prohibition on a particular high-consumption industry, product, or practice in the name of sustainability, we will typically call merely for an internalization of the real costs of making these things sustainable, which may or may not price them out of the market—calls to remove beef subsidies are one example.[6]

Granted, which practices are sustainable is a difficult question, since the set of sustainable practices grows, shrinks, or shifts based on a host of changing social, psychological, and technological factors, each of whose relevance to environmental outcomes is also disputed. And granted, what even counts as a "sustainable" solution conceptually is also controversial. (Is a *presently* unsustainable practice "sustainable" if it is predictably sustainable in the long term? How *anthropocentric* may a "sustainable" outcome be? Is a high-consumption practice "unsustainable" if it is *counterbalanceable* by other measures?) But even in the absence of consensus on their answers, we usually hold that we must try to make our societies environmentally sustainable. Most of us would add that, even in the absence of laws or regulations enforcing sustainable behavior—and perhaps even more urgently in the absence of such regulations—we have a significant *prima facie* obligation to create and adhere to norms that do a good job of incentivizing people to consume more responsibly, to invent green technologies, to create businesses that make what are likely to be sustainable practices profitable, convenient, and fun. In sum, it isn't very controversial to say that environmentally conscious people should want to raise the costs of environmentally unsustainable lifestyles and lower the costs of environmentally sustainable lifestyles.

More controversial than environmental sustainability is a commitment to *social* or *civilizational* sustainability. Or maybe not: for although conservatives are more likely to worry about social and civilizational sustainability using those terms, it is not uncommon for people across the political spectrum in any polity to be concerned about high crime rates, violent factionalism, unhappy citizens, bad parenting, or shrinking birthrates. These concerns we should label "social" rather than "civilizational," since tribal elders in the remotest villages fret over such matters at least as much as our leaders do. By "civilizational sustainability" I refer to a civilization's need for massive public and private investment in things such as reliable physical infrastructure, science and technology hubs, cultural/arts institutions, and commons such as publicly funded schools, parks, hospitals, and edifying media. Extraordinary private and public investments in education, creative productivity, and public health are justifiable in no small part because we need to develop human capital if we hope to maintain, let alone advance, civilization: all those tech complexes, factories, labs, and studio spaces are worthless without healthy, talented, and motivated people to put them to use. (The link between civilizational and environmental sustainability isn't merely analogical, since the climate and energy crises themselves

will be *solved* only by an advanced, creative civilization that has done a good job of developing and harnessing human capital.[7]) So our lifestyles should be not only environmentally sustainable, but socially and civilizationally sustainable as well.

Importantly for our purposes, a society's mating patterns[8] are as critical as anything else to its prospects for social and civilizational survival. For instance, no reasonable person who cares about Japan can shrug off statistics showing that over 40% of Japanese people from 18 to 34 report never having sex or that half of Japanese marriages are sexless.[9] The negative consequences of a bad strategy with regard to sex, reproduction, and marriage are less immediate, perhaps, than those of a bad strategy with regard to agriculture or war, but no less disastrous in the long run. Thus, if we have good reasons to think some mating pattern is a threat to social or civilizational sustainability, then we should call for norms which, if not prohibiting that sexual lifestyle, at least make it costly. Prominent evolutionary psychologist Geoffrey Miller is commendable in this regard for acknowledging the above points even though he demurs on the question of enforced monogamy as it intersects polyamory.[10] "Sex-positive activists often argue that sexual relationships are matters of individual choice, and nobody else's business," he writes.[11] "Yet," Miller goes on,

> sexual relationships can impose good and bad side-effects ("positive and negative externalities") on children, communities, economies, civilizations, and future generations. Mating markets matter. Sexual ethics matter. Reproductive choices matter. Families matter. That's why we evolved instincts to stick our noses into other people's sex lives, and why human sexuality has often been the most controversial domain of human politics and religion.[12]

We may, after examining the evidence, come to different conclusions about the threats posed by some proposed or actual mating pattern, but we mustn't dismiss sustainability objections *ex ante* because we assume there can be no connection between mating patterns and social and civilizational sustainability.

Is Monogamy Civilizationally Adaptive, as Compared to Polygamy?[13]

Nellie Bowles laughed off as "absurd" Peterson's appeal to hierarchies, high rates of involuntary celibacy, violence, and reproductive desperation in justifying enforced monogamy and its effect of, in an uncharitable manner of speaking, "redistributing" women to less desirable men.[14] I suppose it may sound absurd to someone unfamiliar with the literature, much as the claim that cow flatulence could contribute to climate change sounds absurd to those who never bothered to research the question. But in fact, Peterson's worries, if not his prescription, are perfectly familiar in the fields concerned with the societal impact of marriage patterns. In this section I summarize the strongest case for worrying about any mating pattern that (by design or not) distributes women

to a significantly smaller fraction of men: that of evolutionary biologist Joe Henrich and his colleagues. Henrich's 2010 *amicus* brief advising against legalizing polygamy in British Columbia[15] served as the basis for his "Puzzle of Monogamous Marriage" (2012),[16] a *locus classicus* of cultural evolution theory he co-authored with evolutionary biologists Robert Boyd and Peter Richerson. The social and civilizational advantages of "normative monogamy" (Henrich et al.'s favored term for enforced monogamy) also figure prominently in Henrich's *The WEIRDest People in the World: How the West Became Psychologically Peculiar and Particularly Prosperous* (2020), which seeks to explain the global dominance of northwest European cultures in the modern world.[17]

As Henrich et al. explain, the stability and effects of marriage patterns, which are socially enforced, cannot be understood without reference to underlying mating strategies, which are biological.[18] Humans are a significantly dimorphic species—not just physically but also psychologically and behaviorally. As it concerns mating, the relevant behavioral dimorphism concerns, on the female side, strong observed sexual preferences for males of high status and/or genetic quality. For short-term pairings or extra-pair couplings, genetic quality (as assessed by looks and charm) figures relatively highly for women, while for long-term pairings qualities such as wealth, power, protectiveness, and commitment come to the fore.[19]

These innate mating preferences, some of which are not unique to humans, are largely explained by the different levels of investment required by males and females to pass on their genes.[20] Begetting children is far more costly to females, not only energetically but also in terms of opportunity costs for additional children, since women have a low cap on how many children they can have, even in the best of reproductive circumstances. This means evolution favored choosiness in females more than it did for males, since bad sexual decisions are more costly for females. It also means females are more attached to their children, since they have fewer chances than males do to pass on their genes. These considerations, when added to the fact that humans mature at a very slow rate, go a long way toward explaining the female bias in favor of mates possessing the genetic, material, and psychological means to help them produce and raise offspring who will not only survive to maturity but also be well-positioned to pass on *their* genes because of *their* attractiveness on the mating market.[21]

The upside for females is that most will reproduce: historically, the strong majority of women had children, and more than that husbands. Not so for men, whose chances of having a spouse or children depend a great deal more on the culture they find themselves in. The mainstream account seems to be that, although most men probably had mates in small-scale foraging groups, the rise of large-scale agricultural societies resulted in bigger socio-economic gaps that in turn led to larger harems for elites and correspondingly fewer females for males at the bottom of society. Researchers suggest that it is not uncommon for around 40% or more of men to go without a mate in a polygamous society.[22]

Although Peterson's concern for low-ranking men was received with great hostility, it is noteworthy that feminist philosophers often object to polygamy on the grounds that polygamy harms underprivileged women.[23] Yet there is reason to think that, in material terms at least, it is *high*-status women, and not low-status ones, who are the losers under polygamy.[24] Whether women and girls are given away by their families or choose partners themselves, men of means are highly sought after and (quite unlike married women of means) these men are usually receptive to additional fertile-age spouses. Thus in such cultures, high-status men get high-status women as senior wives. Senior wives retain special prerogatives throughout their lifetimes but nonetheless cede some clout as their husbands acquire junior wives. In contrast, securing high-status husbands is an important way up the social hierarchy for young and attractive lower-status females.[25]

On the male side of the ledger, polygamy can benefit successful men not only in terms of sex and children but also materially: in traditional West African societies, for example, more wives mean more workers for a man's plot of land. All these advantages redound to additional status and influence.[26] (Once, in northern Ethiopia, I was informed by locals of a marriage taking place between a 50-something-year-old Afar man and a 14-year-old girl—his sixth or seventh wife, some having died. This patriarch had almost 60 children and was able to procure a highly sought-after administrative sinecure simply because he had so many sons and grandsons that he posed a local security risk if not mollified by the government.) Although winners in this game, polygamous fathers are worse than monogamous ones on average, given that the resources they would otherwise spend on parental investment are spent courting new wives. A number of studies show significantly higher mortality rates for children in polygamous families in Mormon and African households, for instance, even after controlling for relevant variables.[27]

Biologically speaking, low-status men are the worst off of all four sex/status demographics, since they alone are at serious risk of being deprived of any genetic legacy. As one would suspect, unattached males are far more prone to engage in self-destructive behaviors, such as gambling and drug use. Not all of these self-destructive behaviors are the *cause* of their being single, either: research suggests that men forsake much of their self-destructive behavior when they find mates—especially wives—since the domesticating influence of wives for at-risk men sees them working harder and spending less time hanging out with friends, drinking, using drugs, or wandering about in seedy areas looking for sex.[28]

Preventing the loss of human, social, and civilizational capital of dissolute lives should be a concern for all of us, but it is those unattached men who do *not* silently succumb to despair who pose the greater threat to our societies. Evolution-based analyses predict,[29] and we find, that polygamous cultures (and even polygamous subcultures within mixed societies) are consistently more violently criminal and unstable. Henrich, Boyd, and Richardson summarize research concluding that, controlling for a variety of relevant variables,

marriage reduces the probability of a man's criminality by 35%–50%. In their original work based on datasets drawn from crime reporting across 157 countries and controlling for a variety of variables such as GDP, inequality, and democracy, they find that the pool of unmarried men is a significant predictor of rape and murder. Various natural experiments that resulted in spikes of males relative to females (such as China's one-child policy or massive influxes of male immigrants) also precede spikes in crime that, after many variables are controlled for, point to usual effects of desperate males who can improve their chances of passing on their genes only by engaging in risky, criminal, and/or revolutionary behavior.[30]

Polygamy results in a scramble for unattached women, since even husbands continue to look for new wives. This drives down the age of marriage in such societies and (since established males are favored over less-established males) widens the age gap between husbands and wives—often to the tune of 20 years. Child marriage is not at all uncommon in polygynous societies, and in various such cultures girls may be promised before being born. Moreover, the mere fact that a wife has no monopoly on her husband's reproduction or sexual satisfaction further lowers her bargaining power in the relationship. All these factors contribute to the domineering hyper-patriarchal family dynamics often seen in polygynous societies.[31] Polygamy, for instance, encourages parents to aggressively interfere with their daughter's choices. Because of the pressing demand for young women, bride prices are common, which incentivize parents to direct their daughters in more or less forceful ways to wealthy suitors (this money is often used to pay the bride price a brother needs to pay *his* fiancé's family).[32] Cultures practicing female genital cutting are almost always polygamous, and it is commonly said in these cultures that cutting is intended to "reduce the sexual demands on her husband, allowing him to have several wives" and lower the odds that a young, sexually underserved young wife will stray when her polygamous husband is tending herds, raiding cattle, or otherwise occupied—a cheaper recourse than having one's personal harem guarded by eunuchs.[33]

For their part, Henrich and his collaborators theorize that monogamy was a cultural adaptation that allowed its adoptees to outcompete their polygamous rivals. The monogamous culture that has come down to us began in the Greek city-states of deep antiquity, where it served to reduce male intrasexual competition and build social cohesion. [34] Yes, high-caste Greek men of the archaic and classical era had a variety of sexual outlets, from barbarian prostitutes and slaves to young male mentees (consorting with Greek women other than one's wife could mean death, however): for males, ancient Greeks and Romans advocated only for social monogamy. But prohibitions against additional wives or even concubines gave any male citizen a real chance of marriage, unlocking an untapped store of domestic energy from low-ranking men who, for the first time, had biological "skin in the game" for the survival and success of their polities. Monogamy clearly proved advantageous for Greek and, later, Roman societies, who played a large if not definitive role in shaping Jewish and Christian

disapproval of polygamy. The spread of Christian monogamy across polygamous Europe encouraged equality, higher social trust, and higher levels of human capital, all of which played a crucial role in European civilizational dominance. Colonialism spread monogamous norms around the world.[35]

In concluding this section, I note that many of the social and civilizational downsides of polygamy are predictable even if that mating system doesn't come in its "traditional" form. Indeed, many of the behaviors commonly associated with patriarchal and religious elements of traditional polygamy are probably *effects of* polygamy, not some independent force of patriarchy or religion. Given our evolved preferences, allowing unattached *and* attached men to pursue unattached women cannot but lead to a higher percentage of unattached males, more patriarchal control of women to protect them from this scramble, less parenting investment by males lucky enough to be successful at procuring mates, less civic buy-in from males shut out by the competition, and more internal tension between the reproductive haves and have-nots. As philosophers Cheshire Calhoun, Polycarp Ikuenobe, Andrew March, and others have argued, liberal norms would seem to permit polygamy.[36] We have raised above an argument by analogy to environmental sustainability to the effect that the *prima facie* right people have, even on liberalism, to engage in consensual sexual and marital arrangements may be outweighed if those choices are civilizationally unsustainable. Whether polygamy's liberal advocates have appreciated the dangers of polygamy in that regard is not clear. My sense is that philosophers usually disbelieve, ignore, or downplay the innate mating preferences that, when given any option of polygamy, foster the negative consequences described above.

EMI as Applied to Our Unregulated Sexual Market

The rate of sexlessness among young American men is unprecedented in modern times and sloping sharply upward. According to a recent major report, from 2008 to 2018, the share of 18–24-year-old men having no sex in the previous year rose from 12% to 31%, and for men between 25 and 34 that number went from 7% to 14%.[37] Similar trends are found internationally.[38] Insofar as these figures represent men being outcompeted in the mating market, it is tempting to consider enforced monogamy as a regulatory intervention—we have called this the "enforced monogamy inference" or EMI.

That said, the *sole* explanation for these trends cannot be out-competition by elite males. Young women are having less sex, too, although the dropoff for females is not as dramatic and is more pronounced later in their lives.[39] Factors commonly cited as causal of this more general "sex recession" include troubling increases in housing costs, student loan debt, obesity rates, anti-depressant use, porn consumption, and cell-phone addiction.[40] But how on earth would enforcing monogamy encourage young people to get off their cell phones or help them out of their parents' basements? We are thus forced to say a bit more about what the EMI concerns. Let's disambiguate between two

interpretations. A *narrow* interpretation of EMI says that we should impose monogamous norms or policies specifically to reduce the competition involuntarily celibate men face from better-positioned (attractive, high status, rich, etc.) rivals. A *wide* interpretation, on the other hand, says that monogamous norms would help involuntarily celibate men secure mates for a variety of reasons.

Wide EMI is not fixated on direct male intrasexual competition. We can reduce the number of involuntary celibates if, say, we removed some barrier that's keeping men and women from getting together. (For instance, in Japan, the same percentage of men and women are going without sex, so sexlessness there is not obviously a matter of direct intrasexual competition.) Granted, conceptually, it seems inapt to say that (say) student loan forgiveness, which might help many reticent men (and women) feel more optimistic about starting a relationship and thereby reduce the number of involuntary celibates, would be "enforcing monogamy." But other measures that an advocate of wide EMI might favor can be reasonably thought of as enforcing monogamy. For instance, while social scientists debate its significance, among incels, at least, porn addiction is widely blamed for their situation.[41] (One "coomer" meme (the "coomer" is a compulsive masturbator with red, watery eyes) shows him staring at his screen while his possible-reality "trad" girlfriend disintegrates in the background.) Chastity norms also reasonably fall under "enforced monogamy," interpreted in the wide sense. Underappreciated by researchers and usually moralistically dismissed by journalists who study incels is a widespread disgust for promiscuous women in this demographic. However offensively they may express the sentiment,[42] it is as important to know if many men would rather be single than be with a woman with a high partner count as it is to know if women would rather be single than be with a man who is poor. Efforts to curb pornography addiction or female promiscuity, whether justified or not, could count as monogamy enforcement. (Obviously, a partisan of wide EMI might reject any number of initiatives that *conceptually* fall under enforced monogamy, just as an environmentalist might reject any number of ill-advised sustainability proposals.)

For his part, Peterson is reasonably read as meaning EMI in the narrower sense of blaming direct intrasexual competition for the lopsided distributions of female attention. In an unquoted passage of his blog post on the matter, Peterson adverts to Henrich's research on polygamy; and even in Bowles' quotes he seems to have intrasexual competition in mind, as when he says that, in situations with "too much mate choice," "a small percentage of the guys have hyper-access to women, and so they don't form relationships with women."[43] This suggests Peterson thinks an unregulated mating market reproduces some of the same problems associated with polygamy. Does he have a point? In what remains of this section, I will develop the case for this "narrow" interpretation of EMI, as it might apply to the mating patterns of most developed countries today.

We begin, as some manosphere theorists of the male predicament do,[44] with "Sexual Economics Theory" (SET), pioneered by psychologists Roy Baumeister, Kathleen Vohs, and colleagues.[45] According to SET, a number of factors of the modern world conspire to split the traditional mating market in two: one for sex and one for long-term mates/marriage. We need not repeat the material already discussed about how parental investment helped shape male and female mating strategies. But one prediction of parental investment theory ignored above but relevant to SET is that, although both women and men desire sex and long-term relationships, women will be more interested in long-term relationships, and men will be more interested in casual sex. This means women have a bargaining advantage when it comes to sex, and men have a bargaining advantage with regard to long-term relationships.[46] SET predicts, accurately enough it seems, that in earlier societies, men on the mating market were primarily motivated by exclusive sexual access to young women, and young women were primarily motivated by the benefits of marriage to high-quality men—benefits that include not only quality genes but also provisioning and protection for themselves and their children.[47] As we have seen, whether the society is polygamous or monogamous matters a great deal to how these preferences are *directed*, but the transition from polygamy to monogamy didn't change the ultimately transactional nature of mating: women "trade" sexual exclusivity for commitment and resources. The search for exclusive sexual access incentivized men—in the decade or so where their intelligence, creativity, and physical prowess are at their peak—to build homesteads, develop their talents, and elevate themselves socially. Likewise women—even in monogamous societies where women had relatively more safety and autonomy and thus married at a later age—still married in their prime reproductive years. However, the advent of effective birth control marked a monumental shift in human relations by detaching sex and reproduction. The significance of that development for SET is that birth control "bifurcated" the mating market into one for recreational sex and another for marriage. As harmless as that might sound, its consequences might be quite dire.

First, the separation of sex from reproduction allows young people to pursue relatively riskless sex. For SET theorists, this means that women wishing to "lower" the price of sexual access could do so without much risk to themselves—indeed, offering sex at a lower price gives a young woman more access to male attention than she otherwise might have. Any vestiges of "slut shaming," without being buttressed by a real fear of pregnancy, are insufficient to keep a significant number of women from lowering the commitment costs of mating with them. This serves to break the "cartel" that women (and their parents) maintained on female sexual access. For although men usually *respect* women who show sexual restraint, and would prefer one for a spouse, most men will have a hard time committing to one sexually restrained woman when many other women are offering sex without commitment. This causes a race to the bottom that leaves the many young women who are *not* interested in a string of meaningless liaisons and who would *like* to find a lifelong mate with

whom to start a family forced to choose between having sex earlier, more often, and almost certainly with more men than they'd prefer to or being celibate and alone.[48]

The predictable results of cheap sex and commitment-shy men are more out-of-wedlock births, lower rates of marriage, and later age of first marriage, all of which have happened (although of course other factors have played a large contributory role too, such as an increasing interest among women in getting educated and establishing careers). Less obvious and more controversial is that the mere cheapness of sex might be serving as, as Baumeister and Vohs put it, an "opiate of the (male) masses."[49] How so? Well, they and other sexual economics theorists take it as a theorem that men "will do whatever is required in order to obtain sex, and perhaps not a great deal more."[50] And *that* matters for the rest of us since, if they are correct, the contributions of ambitious young men are, for reasons ultimately biological, key to civilizational advance. Baumeister and Vohs do not mince words:

> [Women] are more risk averse, resulting in fewer entrepreneurs and inventions. (Baumeister 2010 noted an appalling gender imbalance in new patents; nobody is seriously suggesting that the U.S. Patent office systematically discriminates against women, but women simply do not apply for patents in anything close to the rate that men do.) Women are less interested in science and technology fields. They create less wealth (for themselves and others). […] Female sociality is focused heavily on one-to-one relationships, whereas male sociality extends to larger groups networks of shallower relationships (e.g., Baumeister and Sommer 1997; Baumeister 2010). Crudely put, women hardly ever create large organizations or social systems. That fact can explain most of the history of gender relations, in which the gender near equality of prehistorical societies was gradually replaced by progressive inequality—not because men banded together to oppress women, but because cultural progress arose from the men's sphere with its large networks of shallow relationships, while the women's sphere remained stagnant because its social structure emphasized intense one-to-one relationships to the near exclusion of all else (see Baumeister 2010). All over the world and throughout history (and prehistory), the contribution of large groups of women to cultural progress has been vanishingly small.[51]

Whether Baumeister, Vohs, and their fellow travelers overstate this case or not is an empirical matter. What's not empirical is the moral relevance of this fact, if it is a fact, when conjoined with a moral outlook saying that we should raise the cost of cheap sex if it discourages human capital formation in civilizational-threatening ways.

So for SET the danger is *easy* sex—men, its theorists say, rarely exceed what is demanded of them to procure sex. But sex is *still* not all that easy for some men, as the phenomenon of inceldom demonstrates. Could we have fallen into a mating pattern that looks like social monogamy when it comes to marriage, but a degraded form of polygamy as far as sex is concerned?

Because of female selectivity, sex without risk results in a windfall of uncommitted sex for men with the best short-term mating value. It is imperative to stress *short-term* mating value, because this observation lay at the core of Minassian's resentment of "Chads." Sexual liberation splits apart not only the mating market but also the features that made one a desirable mate. Harkening back to points made above, when selecting for short-term mates, where provisioning/protecting and commitment aren't at issue, women will tend favor genetic quality as advertised by good looks and display. This means that the male beneficiaries of young women's sexual favors will now tend to be those who in previous generations would be considered peacocks, bad boys, or otherwise poor marriage material. Independent lines of research have suggested that men may actually be born predisposed to pursue either long-term "dad" (high sexual fidelity and parental investment) or short-term "cad" (more promiscuous and less parental investment) strategies, as evidenced by correlations between markers for testosterone (such as digit ratio), sexual precociousness, and "dark triad" (narcissism, Machiavellianism, psychopathy) traits.[52] Thus the big winners in the *sex* (not marriage) market tend to be effective short-term strategists.

It is commonly claimed in manosphere forums that the distribution of female attention follows the Pareto Principle, which applied in this context would translate to 20% of the men getting 80% of female interest. Sociologist Mark Regnerus reports in his book *Cheap Sex* that, based on *Relationships in America* surveys, 20% of the heterosexual American men between 25 and 50 are having 70% of the sexual partnerships and 10% are having about half of the sexual partnerships. (Although similar stats are seen on the female side of things, a heterosexual woman's having lots of sexual partners reveals more about her sexual choices than her value on the mating market, for reasons discussed above.) Regnerus is quick to point out a few fallacious takeaways from this fact. First, it doesn't mean that the most sexually successful men are having sex with 70% of the sexually active *women*; rather, they are merely involved in 70% of the sexual pairings, and most of these are likely to be with the fraction of most promiscuous women. Second, it doesn't mean that these men have actual harems: overlaps in their (brief) relationships are fairly rare and short-lived, so a woman who has a relationship with one of these skillful short-term strategists is, in principle, still available for average guys.[53] That said, Regnerus perceptively notes that, "if among the remaining 80 percent of men fidelity and a modest sexual history [for potential mates] are key values, then yes—the 20/70 phenomenon may well be dragging down marriage rates in the peak years of fertility (twenties to early thirties)."[54] If indeed long-term strategists find women with higher partner counts less attractive as potential mates, then successful short-term strategists are not so much outcompeting them on the marriage market as sabotaging them.

We mustn't confuse the *most successful short-term strategists* with the *most desirable men* (even on the uncommitted mating market): many of the former simply have low standards and hustle more for sex. More threatening for

average men is what we see in the virtual marketplace of online dating, which to a greater extent favors what we might term a sexually attractive "Chad" or at least a type of Chad. Infamously, women rate 80% of men's Tinder profiles as "below average,"[55] while on the dating app Hinge, half of female interest is directed to 15% of men, causing one data scientist to quip, "while the mythological ship-launcher, Helen, was a woman, it turns out that it's actually the most attractive men who soak up the most disproportionate amount of their gender's affection."[56] When we apply the Gini coefficient (a measure of inequality often appealed to in economic arguments for wealth redistribution) to female interest for males on dating apps, it is equivalent to that of the most unequal countries in the world, such as Haiti, whereas the Gini coefficient for male interest in females is equivalent to the economies of Western Europe.[57] It remains unclear how much of that interest translates into sex, however. It is also unclear whether these apps shape the way women shop for partners: it would appear that these apps favor handsome men who know how to market themselves visually and over chat functions, while disadvantaging (say) charismatic or laconic men, who might be very attractive in person. Anecdata suggests that the overwhelmingly negative feedback men experience on these apps is demoralizing huge swaths of quite eligible men.

Where does this leave the rest of the young males who are naturally more sexually restrained, less physically attractive, and maybe not particularly charismatic, but who in former generations might impress marriage-minded young women (and especially their parents) by creating businesses, developing their economically productive talents, and building homesteads? These males will have a much rougher time of it in a bifurcated mating market, where women can have risk-free sex without commitment. It is no exaggeration to say that how to respond to this dilemma may be the fundamental divide in manosphere thought. One response is to work harder at becoming a cad or a Chad, and these are main themes of the "pick-up artist" (PUA) and "Redpill" movements. Another response is simply to drop out of the mating market altogether, as represented by the MGTOW ("men going their own way") and incel movements, whose partisans hold that the costs of pursuing, and even winning, a woman in today's mating market are not worth it.

In any event, we might reasonably conclude that either male demographic at the mating extremes—those who get sex too easily and those for whom it is (or perceived to be) unattainable—is to be minimized if we are concerned for what's good for society and civilizational advance. The former have relatively less incentive than women do to settle down, and often continue to pursue reproductively prime-age women (low 20s), replicating some of the pressure for young women we see in polygamous cultures. In small numbers they are sustainable; but if the only way to win a young woman's affections are, or are felt to be, to be a peacocking "alpha" or dark triad quasi-psychopathic narcissist, then we will see far too many men diverting their efforts from long days at the office to long workouts at the gym, opting to spend their money on clothes, cars, and nightclubs instead of on down payments for homes. On the other

extreme, discouraged young involuntary celibates also fail to contribute their talents to the civilizational commonweal. Of course, even many self-described "incels" work hard and find positive outlets in productive hobbies. But the talents and energies of too many are frittered away in escapist pursuits such as political message boards (where they are often radicalized), video games, pornography, and occasional prostitutes. Insofar as they still contemplate a relationship, they fantasize about removing themselves to some traditional society or impoverished country where they think they'll be more attractive. In short, they act in some ways like reproductively unsuccessful men in polygamous cultures do, who often despair, revolt, or abandon everything for a shot in a foreign land.

To sum up this section, it has been unclear up to this point how "enforced monogamy" is to be interpreted. Is it supposed to ease the competition involuntary celibates face from other men, who are dominating female attention? Or is it about increasing sexual restraint in a variety of ways (e.g., fostering norms against pornography and promiscuity), which in turn will result in a more egalitarian mating pattern and a smaller percentage of involuntarily celibate men? Although incels themselves acknowledge the role of factors other than direct intrasexual competition (such as porn overuse and a strong aversion to sexually experienced women) in causing their woes, Peterson seemed to have the former, narrower interpretation in mind when he prescribed enforced monogamy. And indeed, although not the whole story by any means, a lopsided distribution of female attention may be a significant stressor for involuntarily celibates, given the bifurcated mating market and the unequal distribution of attractive traits for short-term mates—traits, advocates stress, whose rewarding disincentivizes male contributions to civilization.

Evaluating the EMI

If we accept the premise that society has the right to impose informal and even formal sanctions on socially and civilizationally unsustainable mating patterns, and if we accept the thrust of Henrich et al.'s case for monogamy's being an important civilizational adaptation, then social and legal barriers to polygamy seem warranted, at least for monogamous societies. If we apply the standards of environmental sustainability to civilizational sustainability, I think the only reasonable conclusion is that polygamy is to civilizations what the cattle industry or gas-fueled car engines are to the environment—unsustainable. So if polygamy isn't one of our problems, let's not let it become one.

That said, and again in parallel with environmental sustainability, it is often practically (and almost always theoretically) *possible* to render an "unsustainable" practice "sustainable" by making changes elsewhere. If a country's economy is rather inflexibly based on (say) coal for whatever reason, it *may* maintain that coal-based economy sustainably if (say) it captures the greenhouse gasses produced by its factories, meaning that sustainability advocates will have a harder time justifying anti-coal policies for *that* country relative to other

countries who don't rely on coal as much or at all. Similarly, it is less problematic to reinforce existing anti-polygamy norms than to reform the sexual norms of a sexually liberated, post-contraceptive society. Censuring or even banning polygamy presents minimal costs on socially monogamous societies. The same cannot be said about enforcing monogamy on sexually unregulated but socially monogamous societies, where stricter norms of sexual monogamy would be highly disruptive. Although civilizational sustainability may demand reform of our mating patterns nonetheless, if there are less intrusive ways to effectively address an unsustainably high percentage of involuntary celibates (or unsustainably low birthrate or any other mating-related civilizational threat), those should be pursued first.

A presumption in favor of values such as liberty and autonomy would entail that, when it comes to unsustainable consumption and all else being equal, we should prefer social sanction to laws, prefer nudges[58] to social sanction, and prefer education and persuasion to nudges. If that presumption is correct, then whether "enforced monogamy" is manifested in the form of laws, social sanction, or even nudges to reduce mating inequality, we should first try to educate ourselves out of the problem. Some of that education involves disseminating the (obviously still-controversial) message that highly unequal mate distributions, whether in the form of marriages or hookups, should be a matter of grave concern for all of us. But the most important educational intervention would be practical. Just as we may try to address a racial or sexual employment gap not merely through demanding hiring quotas but also (and perhaps preferably *first*) through efforts to better prepare underrepresented groups to be competitive in the job market, our parents, educators, coaches, and counselors should be making a more deliberate effort to instruct young women on how to be savvier about their mating choices (given their long-term interests), and to train young men on how to be more attractive mates and better marriage material.

The proposal is hardly radical: preparing young people for romance and marriage used to be the central goal of church functions, community dances, and finishing schools. Granted, even if the traditional cultural scripts taught in these venues were to become attractive once again, the challenges of modernity (some of which were touched on above) make them almost impossible for young people to actually follow. Nonetheless, we mustn't throw the baby out with the bathwater. *If* traditionalist messaging is incorrect about what makes us more attractive mates and partners and/or demands the impossible of young people, then we should change the content, not eliminate the training altogether. Sexual assault training and sex-education courses do this to an extent; but safe sex, free of coercion, is a very low bar indeed.[59] Happily, we have some excellent examples of thoughtful, scientifically informed, and popular courses at universities designed to educate students about human nature, the virtues of dating with discernment, and courtship dynamics.[60] Indeed, Peterson's *own* transition from popular intellectual to guru is largely attributable to the way his lectures on sex differences, personality, and responsibility inspired and equipped

legions of young men to be less resentful, awkward, and self-sabotaging. So yes, the increased competition posed by cads and Chads who, on traditional monogamy, would have been avoided or quickly married off is probably an additional challenge facing today's young men looking for love. Nonetheless, it seems fair to say that intrasexual competition is not the involuntary celibate's biggest obstacle to sex and marriage and thus that enforced monogamy probably shouldn't be first on our list of remedies for their predicament.

Notes

1. Dan Bilefsky and Ian Austen, "Toronto Van Attack Suspect Expressed Anger at Women," *New York Times*, April 24, 2018, https://www.nytimes.com/2018/04/24/world/canada/toronto-van-rampage.html.
2. Mack Lamoureux, "A Brief History of 'Incel,' the Misogynistic Group Allegedly Cited By Toronto Van Attacker," *Vice*, April 24, 2018, https://www.vice.com/en/article/pax9kz/a-brief-history-of-incel-the-misogynistic-group-allegedly-cited-by-toronto-van-attacker.
3. Nellie Bowles, "Jordan Peterson, Custodian of the Patriarchy," *New York Times*, May 18, 2018, https://www.nytimes.com/2018/05/18/style/jordan-peterson-12-rules-for-life.html.
4. See, for example, David Futrelle, who writes

   > You can't solve the problem of aggrieved male entitlement by engineering some weird and at least semi-coercive program of "enforced monogamy" built on the assumption that men inherently deserve some sort of access to women's bodies—regardless of what the women inhabiting these bodies want. You can't rid the world of violence born of aggrieved male entitlement with a "solution" that reinforces that sense of entitlement.

   "The Dark Corners of the Internet that Spawned Ideas Like 'Enforced Monogamy,'" *Vice*, May 25, 2018, https://www.vice.com/en/article/d3k3ex/jordan-peterson-enforced-monogamy-incels.
5. Jordan Peterson, "On the New York Times and "Enforced Monogamy," *Jordan B Peterson* blog, https://www.jordanbpeterson.com/media/on-the-new-york-times-and-enforced-monogamy/.
6. Christina Sewell, "Removing the Meat Subsidy: Our Cognitive Dissonance Around Animal Agriculture," *Journal of International Affairs*, February 11, 2020, https://jia.sipa.columbia.edu/removing-meat-subsidy-our-cognitive-dissonance-around-animal-agriculture.
7. In addition, and too-often ignored, is the fact that asteroids are inevitable and grave environmental threats, and cannot be identified and diverted by anything other than an advanced civilization—one quite a bit more advanced than our own. David J. Eicher, "Why the Asteroid Threat Should Be Taken Seriously," *Astronomy*, n.d., https://astronomy.com/bonus/asteroidday.
8. I'll use "mating pattern" as a catchall term to cover not only "marriage patterns" (discussed in the next section) but also patterns of sexual behavior, along with the concomitant norms for each.
9. Justin McCurry, "Record Numbers of Couples Living in Sexless Marriages in Japan, Says Report," *The Guardian*, February 14, 2017, https://www.the-

guardian.com/world/2017/feb/14/record-numbers-of-couples-living-in-sexless-marriages-in-japan-says-report.

10. Because of space constraints, I will not discuss polyamory here. Suffice it to say that I believe that, although polyamory-acceptance may indeed lead us down a slippery slope to polygamy acceptance and legalization for reasons of philosophical or legal consistency, and although I think (for reasons discussed just below) that polygamy should remain illegal and socially unacceptable in societies that are currently monogamous, polyamory itself is orthogonal to polygamy, and anti-polygamy legislation does not (and should not) infringe on polyamory.
11. Miller is not being uncharitable here: one book he assigns in his groundbreaking "Polyamory and Open Sexuality" course on the topic, Mark Michaels and Patricia Johnson's *Designer Relationships* (Jersey City: Cleis Press, 2015), advocates for complete social neutrality between monogamy, polygamy, polyamory, or any other mating arrangement in order to allow people to choose what works best for them, and is dismissive of any social critiques in the very brief passages where social impacts are considered at all.
12. Geoffrey Miller, "Polyamory Is Growing—And We Need To Get Serious About It," *Quillette*, October 29, 2019, https://quillette.com/2019/10/29/polyamory-is-growing-and-we-need-to-get-serious-about-it/.
13. Because of considerations of space, I consider only polygyny here and ignore the extremely rare polyandrous form of polygamy.
14. Cf. the controversy generated by Robin Hanson's post "Comparing Income & Sex Redistribution," *Overcoming Bias* blog, June 26, 2018, https://www.overcomingbias.com/2018/06/comparing-income-sex-redistribution.html.
15. Joseph Henrich, "Polygyny in Cross-Cultural Perspective: Theory and Implications," affidavit S-097767 submitted to the Supreme Court of British Columbia, Canada, July 15, 2010. Available: https://stoppolygamyincanada.files.wordpress.com/2010/12/joseph-henrichs-research-paper.pdf.
16. Joseph Henrich, Robert Boyd, and Peter Richerson, "The Puzzle of Monogamous Marriage," *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* B 367 (2012): 657–669.
17. Joseph Henrich, *The WEIRDest People in the World: How the West Became Psychologically Peculiar and Particularly Prosperous* (New York: Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, 2020).
18. Henrich, "Polygyny in Cross-Cultural Perspective," 26.
19. David Buss, "Sex Differences in Human Mate Preferences: Evolutionary Hypotheses Tested in 37 Cultures" *Behavioral and Brain Sciences* 12, no. 1 (1989): 1–14.
20. Robert Trivers, "Parental Investment and Sexual Selection," in *Sexual Selection and the Descent of Man, 1871–1971*, ed. B. Campbell (Chicago: Aldine, 1972), 52–95.
21. See for updated research on mating strategies pt. 3 of David Buss, *Evolutionary Psychology* (New York: Routledge, 2019).
22. Henrich, "Polygyny in Cross-Cultural Perspective," 40.
23. See, for example, Emily Crookston, "Love and (Polygamous) Marriage? A Liberal Case Against Polygamy," *Journal of Moral Philosophy* 12 no. 3 (2014): 267–289, esp. 283ff.
24. In fairness, Crookston's (see *supra*) concern is a moral injury, not a material one.

25. William Jankowiak, Monika Sudakov, and Benjamin Wilreker, "Co-Wife Conflict and Co-operation," *Ethnology* 44, no. 1 (2005): 81–98.
26. William Tucker, *Marriage and Civilization* (Washington DC: Regnery, 2014), ch. 8. That said, I know a Cameroonian noble woman who procured additional wives while her high-status husband was on a lengthy trip abroad, as she needed more help in their fields. When he returned, she informed him about his new wives, and it is a running joke in that household that these junior wives called her "husband."
27. Henrich, Boyd, and Richerson, "Puzzle of Monogamous Marriage," 665–666.
28. Henrich, Boyd, and Richerson, "Puzzle of Monogamous Marriage," 661–663.
29. Martin Daly and Margo Wilson, *Homicide* (New York: De Gruyter, 1988).
30. Henrich, Boyd, and Richerson, "Puzzle of Monogamous Marriage," 661–663.
31. "We find," say two researchers on the question,

> statistically significant relationships between polygyny and an entire downstream suite of negative consequences for men, women, children, and the nation-state, including the following outcomes: discrepancy between law and practice concerning women's equality, birth rate, rates of primary and secondary education for male and female children, difference between males and females in HIV infection, age of marriage, maternal mortality, life expectancy, sex trafficking, female genital mutilation, domestic violence, inequity in the treatment of males and females before the law, defense expenditures, and political rights and civil liberties.

Rose McDermott & Jonathan Cowden, "Polygyny and Violence Against Women," *Emory Law Journal* 64, no. 6 (2015): 1767–1814. Available at: https://scholarlycommons.law.emory.edu/elj/vol64/iss6/4.

32. Gary Becker, *A Treatise on the Family* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981), 56ff. See also Robert Guest, "The Link Between Polygamy and War," *The Economist*, December 19, 2017, https://www.economist.com/christmas-specials/2017/12/19/the-link-between-polygamy-and-war.
33. Anika Rahman and Nahid Toubia, *Female Genital Mutilation: A Guide to Laws and Policies Worldwide* (United Kingdom: Bloomsbury Academic, 2000), 5–6.
34. Walter Scheidel, "A Peculiar Institution? Greco–Roman Monogamy in Global Context," *The History of the Family*, 14 no. 3 (2009): 280–291.
35. Henrich, "Polygyny in Cross-Cultural Perspective," 17–19; Henrich, Boyd, and Richerson, "Puzzle of Monogamous Marriage," 666–667.
36. Cheshire Calhoun, "Who's Afraid of Polygamous Marriage? Lessons for Same-Sex Marriage Advocacy from the History of Polygamy," *San Diego Law Review* 42 (2005): 1023–1042; Polycarp Ikuenobe, "The Monogamous Conception of Romantic Love and Western Critiques of Polygamy in African Traditions," *Philosophical Papers* 47, no. 3 (2018): 373–401; Andrew March, "Is There a Right to Polygamy? Marriage, Equality and Subsidizing Families in Liberal Public Justification," *Journal of Moral Philosophy* 8 (2011): 246–272.
37. Peter Ueda, Catherine Mercer, Cyrus Ghaznavi, and Debby Herbenick, "Trends in Frequency of Sexual Activity and Number of Sexual Partners Among Adults Aged 18 to 44 Years in the US, 2000–2018, *JAMA* 3(6) (June 12, 2020): 1–15.
38. "Demographics of Inceldom," *Incelswiki*, accessed November 2, 2020, https://incels.wiki/w/Demographics_of_inceldom#Young_incels_in_the_U.S.

39. Christopher Ingraham, "The Share of Americans Not Having Sex has Reached a Record High," *Washington Post*, March 29, 2019, https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/2019/03/29/share-americans-not-having-sex-has-reached-record-high/.
40. Kate Julian, "Why Are Young People Having So Little Sex?", *The Atlantic*, December 2018, https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2018/12/the-sex-recession/573949/.
41. Although more sexually active men also consume more pornography, there is reason to believe that, for many men, porn consumption serves as an adequate-enough substitute for sex such that they are disincentivized from seeking out relationships. For more on this debates, see Jean Twenge, "Possible Reasons US Adults Are Not Having Sex as Much as They Used To," *JAMA* 3(6) (June 12, 2020), https://jamanetwork.com/journals/jamanetworkopen/fullarticle/2767063; Philip Zimbardo, *Man Interrupted* (Newburyport, MA: Red Wheel, 2016).
42. "In the elaborate incel taxonomy of participants in the sexual marketplace, I am a Becky, devoting my attentions to a Chad. I'm probably a "roastie," too—another term they use for women with sexual experience, denoting labia that have turned into roast beef from overuse." Jia Tolentino, "Rage of the Incels," *New Yorker*, May 15, 2018, https://www.newyorker.com/culture/cultural-comment/the-rage-of-the-incels.
43. Bowles, "Jordan Peterson, Custodian of the Patriarchy."
44. "Roy Baumeister," *Incelwiki*, https://incels.wiki/w/Roy_Baumeister; see also an online discussion by psychologist Todd Grande on the incel-sexual economics connection, "Sexual Economics Theory vs. Feminist Theory: MGTOW, INCEL, & Science," June 17, 2019, https://youtu.be/M1R_pRxj9Zg.
45. Roy Baumeister and Kathleen Vohs, "Sexual Economics: Sex as Female Resource for Social Exchange in Heterosexual Interactions," *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 8, no. 4 (November 2004): 339–63.
46. Roy Baumeister, Kathleen Catanese, and Kathleen Vohs, "Is There a Gender Difference in Strength of Sex Drive? Theoretical Views, Conceptual Distinctions, and a Review of Relevant Evidence," *Personality and Social Psychology Review* 5, no. 3 (August 2001): 242–73.
47. Roy Baumeister, Tania Reynolds, Bo Winegard, Kathleen Vohs, "Competing for Love: Applying Sexual Economics Theory to Mating Contests," *Journal of Economic Psychology* 63 (2017): 230–241.
48. Baumeister and Vohs, "Sexual Economics," 350ff; Mark Regnerus, *Cheap Sex: The Transformation of Men, Marriage, and Monogamy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2017); Steven Rhoads, "Hookup Culture: The High Costs of a Low 'Price' for Sex," *Society* 49 (2012): 515–519.
49. Roy Baumeister and Kathleen Vohs, "Sexual Economics, Culture, Men, and Modern Sexual Trends," *Society* 49 (2012): 520–524, 523.
50. Baumeister and Vohs, "Sexual Economics, Culture, Men, and Modern Sexual Trends," 521.
51. Baumeister and Vohs, "Sexual Economics, Culture, Men, and Modern Sexual Trends," 522ff. For more discussion of male overrepresentation at the poles of accomplishment, see Roy Baumeister, *Is There Anything Good About Men? How Cultures Flourish By Exploiting Men* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

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53. Regnerus, *Cheap Sex*, 85–88.
54. Regnerus, *Cheap Sex*, 87.
55. Anonymous, "Tinder Experiments II," *Medium*, March 24, 2015, https://medium.com/@worstonlinedater/tinder-experiments-ii-guys-unless-you-are-really-hot-you-are-probably-better-off-not-wasting-your-2ddf370a6e9a.
56. Aviv Goldgeier, "What's The Biggest Challenge Men Face On Dating Apps?: A Q&A With Aviv Goldgeier, Junior Growth Engineer," *Hingeirl*, n.d., https://hingeirl.com/hinge-reports/whats-the-biggest-challenge-men-face-on-dating-apps-a-qa-with-aviv-goldgeier-junior-growth-engineer/.
57. Bradford Tuckfield, "Attraction Inequality and the Dating Economy," *Quillette*, March 12, 2019, https://quillette.com/2019/03/12/attraction-inequality-and-the-dating-economy/.
58. Richard Thaler and Cass R. Sunstein, *Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth, and Happiness* (New York: Penguin Books, 2009).
59. See Rhoads, "Hookup Culture" for a longer critique. Indeed, it could appear at times that sex and relationship education is almost designed to undermine the psychological wellbeing and reproductive futures of those it's meant to serve.
60. See psychologist Alexandra Solomon's "Marriage 101" course at Northwestern, or Boston College's Kerry Cronin's recorded talk "Hanging Out and Hooking Up," February 9, 2015, https://youtu.be/60K2-LEDPyg.