SEXUAL POLITICS against. In no time it turns the rebellion into a suicidal carnival, an orgy of blood connected to the old phallic fantasy of "choos and select." Its totem is the ritual sacrifice provided by every army's beauty queen since Troy. Once Chantal enters upon the mythical territory of a primitive male order over whom males will tear each other apart, the revolution turns irrevocably into counterrevolution.

Throughout The Balcony Genet explores the pathology of virility, the chain of sexual congress as a paradigm of power over other human beings. He appears to be the only living male writer of first-class literary gifts to have transcended the sexual myths of our era. His critique of the hetero-sexual political points the way toward a true sexual revolution, a path which must be explored if any radical social change is to come about. In Genet's analysis, it is fundamentally impossible to change society without changing personality, and sexual personality as it has generally existed must undergo the most drastic overhaul.

If we are to be free at last, Genet proposes in the last scene of the play, we must first break those chains of our own making through our blind acceptance of common ideas. The three great cages in which we are imprisoned must be dismantled. The first is the potential power of the "Great Figures"—the cleric, the judge and the warrior—elements of myth which have enslaved consciousness in a coil of self-imposed absurdity. The second is the omnipotence of the police state, the only virtual pow'r in a corrupt society, all other forms of coercion being largely psychological. Last, and most insidious of all, is the cage of sex, the cage in which all others are encased: for is not the totem of Police Chief Georges a six-foot rubber phallic, a "pick of great stature"? And the old myth of sin and virtue, the myth of guilt and innocence, the myth of horror and cowardice on which the Great Figures depend, the old pillars of an old and decadent structure, are also built on the sexual fallacy. (Or as one is tempted to pun, phallic.) By attempting to replace this corrupt and rotting edifice while preserving its foundations, the revolution's own bid for social transformation inevitably fails and turns into the counterrevolution where the Grand Balcony, a first-class whorehouse, furnishes both costumes and actors for the new pseudo-government.

Genet's play ends as it had begun. Issa turning off the lights informs us we may go home, where all is fatter than the theater's. The brothel will open again tomorrow for an identical ritual. The sounds of revolution begin again, but unless the Police Chief is permanently imprisoned in his tomb and unless the new rebels have truly forsaken the customary idiocy of the old sexual politics, there will be no revolution. Sex is deep at the heart of our troubles, Genet is urging, and unless we eliminate the most pernicious of our systems of oppression, unless we go to the very center of the sexual politics and its sick liberalism of power and violence, all our efforts at liberation will only land us again in the same primordial stew.


TWO

Theory of Sexual Politics

The three instances of sexual descriptions we have examined so far were remarkable for the large part which notions of ascendancy and pow'r played within them. Cuiras can scarcely be said to take place in a vacuum; although of itself it appears a biological and physical activity, it is set so deeply within the larger context of human affairs that it serves as a charged microcosm of the variety of attitudes and values to which culture subscribes. Among other things, it may serve as a model of sexual politics on an individual or personal plane.

But of course the transition from such scenes of intimacy to a wider context of political reference is a great step indeed. In introducing the term "sexual politics," one must first answer the inevitable question "Can the relationship between the sexes be viewed in a political light at all?" The answer depends on how one defines politics.¹ This essay does not define the political as that relatively narrow and exclusive world of meetings, chairs, and parties. The term "politics" shall refer to pow'r-structured relationships, arrangements whereby one group of persons is controlled by another. By way

¹The American Heritage Dictionary's fourth definition, is fairly approximate: "methods or tactics involved in managing a state or government." American Heritage Dictionary (New York: American Heritage and Houghton Mifflin, 1969). One might expand this to a set of strategies designed to maintain a system. If one understands pow'r only to be an institution perpetuated by such techniques of control, one has a working definition of how politics is construed in this essay.
of parenthesis one might add that although an ideal politics might simply be conceived of as the arrangement of human life on agreeable and rational principles from whence the entire notion of power over others should be banished, one must confess that this is not what constitutes the political as we know it, and it is to this that we must address ourselves.

The following sketch, which might be described as "hunts toward a theory of patriarchy," will attempt to prove that sex is a status category with political implications. Something of a pioneering effect, it must perforce be both tentative and imperfect. Because the intention is to provide an overall description, statements must be generalized, exceptions neglected, and subheadings overlapping and, to some degree, arbitrary as well.

The word "politics" is enlisted here when speaking of the sexes primarily because such words is often useful in outlining the real nature of their relative status, historically and as the present. It is opportune, perhaps today even mandatory, that we develop a more relevant psychology and philosophy of power relationships beyond the simple conceptual framework provided by our traditional formal politics. Indeed, it may be imperative that we give some attention to defining a theory of politics which treats of power relationships on grounds less conventional than those to which we are accustomed. I have therefore found it pertinent to define them on grounds of personal contact and interaction between members of well-defined and coherent groups: races, classes, and so on. For it is precisely because certain groups have no representation in a number of recognized political structures that their position tends to be so stable, their oppression so continuous.

In America, recent events have forced us to acknowledge at last that the relationship between the races is indeed a political one which involves the general control of one collective, defined by birth, over another collective, also defined by birth. Groups who rule by birthright are fast disappearing, yet these remains one ancient and universal scheme for the domination of one birth group by another—the scheme that prevails in the arena of sex. The study of racism has convinced us that a truly political state of affairs operates between the races to perpetuate a series of oppressive circumstances. The subordinated group has inadequate resources through existing political institutions, and is deterred thereby from organizing into conventional political struggle and opposition.

Quite in the same manner, a disinterested examination of our system of sexual relationships must point out that the situation between the sexes now, and throughout history, in a case of that phenomenon Max Weber defined as heirocratic, a relationship of dominance and subordination. What goes largely unexamined, often even unacknowledged (yet is institutionalized nonetheless) in our social order, is the birthright whereby males rule females. Through this system a most ingenious form of "interior colonization" has been achieved. It is one which tends moreover to be studied than any form of segregation, and more rigorous than class stratification, more uniform, certainly more enduring. However muted its present appearance may be, sexual dominion obtains nevertheless as perhaps the most pervasive ideology of our culture and provides its most fundamental concept of power. This is so because our society, like all other historical civilizations, is a patriarchal. The fact is evident at once if one recalls that the military, industry, technology, universities, science, political office, and finance—in short, every avenue of power within the society, including the coercive force of the police, is entirely in male hands. As the essence of politics is power, such realization cannot fail to carry impact. What lingers of supernatural authority, the Deity, "His" ministry, together with the ethics and values, the philosophy and art of our culture—as its very civilization—as T. S. Eliot once observed, is of male manufacture.

If one takes patriarchal government to be the institution whereby that half of the populace which is female is controlled by that half which is male, the principles of patriarchy appear to be two-fold: male shall dominate female, elder male shall dominate younger. However, just as with any human institution, there is frequently a distance between the real and the ideal; contradictions and exceptions do exist within the system. While patriarchy as an institution is a social constant so deeply entrenched as to run through all other political, social, or economic forms, whether of caste or class, feudality or bureaucracy, just as it pervades all major religions, it also exhibits great variety in history and locale. In democracies, for example, females have often held no office or do so (as now) to such miniscule numbers as to

2 "Dominion in the quite general sense of power, i.e. the possibility of imposing one's will upon the behavior of other persons, can emerge in the most diverse forms." In this central passage of Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Weber is particularly interested in two such forms: control through social authority ("paternalism, magisterial, or parental") and control through economic force. In particular he in other forms of domination "that control over economic goods, i.e. economic power, is a frequent, often parasitically willed, consequence of domination as well as one of its most important instruments." Quoted from Max Ribetman's and Edward Shill's translation of portions of Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft entitled Max Weber on Law in Economy and Society (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1957), pp. 335-34.

3 No patriarchal societies are known to exist at present. Manifestly, which may be, as some anthropologists have held, a residue or a transitional stage of monarchy, does not constitute an exception to patriarchal rule, it simply channels the power held by males through female descent—i.e. the Amazonizers.

4 Radical democracy would, of course, preclude patriarchy. One might find evidence of a general satisfaction with a less than perfect democracy in the fact that women have so rarely held power within modern "democracies."
he below even attend representation. Aristocracy, on the other hand, with its emphasis upon the magic and dynastic properties of blood, may at times permit women to hold power. The principle of rule by older males is violated even more frequently. Baring in mind the variation and degree of patriarchy—say between Saudi Arabia and Sweden, Indonesia and Red China—we also recognize our own form in the U.S. and Europe to be much altered and attenuated by the reforms described in the next chapter.

I IDEOLOGICAL

Hannah Arendt* has observed that government is upheld by power supported either through consent or imposed through violence. Conditioning to an ideology amounts to the former. Sexual politics obtains consent through the "socialization" of both sexes to basic patriarchal politics with regard to temperament, role, and status. As to status, a pervasive aspect to the prejudice of male superiority guarantees superior status in the male, inferior in the female. The first item, temperament, involves the formation of human personality along stereotyped lines of sex category ("masculine" and "feminine"), based on the needs and values of the dominant group and discussed by what its members cherish in themselves and find convenient in subordinates: aggression, intelligence, force, and efficacy in the male; passivity, ignorance, docility, "virtue," and ineffectuality in the female. This is complemented by a second factor, sex role, which decrees a consonant and highly elaborate code of conduct, gesture and attitude for each sex. In terms of activity, sex role assigns domestic service and attendance upon infants to the female, the rest of human achievement, interest, and ambition to the male. The limited role allotted the female tends to arrest her at the level of biological experience. Therefore, nearly all that can be described as distinctly human rather than animal activity (as in their own way animals also give birth and care for their young) is largely reserved for the male. Of course, status again follows from such an assignment. Were one to analyze the three categories one might designate status as the political component, role as the sociological, and temperament as the psychological—yet their interdependence is unquestionable and they form a chain. These awarded higher status tend to adopt rules of mastery, largely because they are first encouraged to develop temperaments of dominance. That this is true of caste and class as well is self-evident.

II BIOLOGICAL

Patriarchal religion, popular attitude, and to some degree, science as well* assumes these psycho-social distinctions to rest upon biological difference.


†The social, rather than the physical sciences are referred to here. Traditionally, method science had often subscribed to such beliefs. This is no longer the case today.

"The historians of Roman law, having very justly remarked that neither birth nor affection was the foundation of the Roman family, have concluded that this foundation must be found in the power of the father or husband. They make a sort of personological institution of this power, but they do not explain how this power was established, unless it was by the superiority of strength of the husband over the wife, and of the father over the children. Now, we desire examples badly when we thus place force as the origin of law. We shall see further on that the authority of the father or husband, far from having been the first cause, was itself an effect; it was derived from religion, and was established by religion. Superior strength, therefore, was not the principle that established the family," Numa Denis Pustel de Caussengues, The Ancient City (1864). English translation by Willard R. Trill (1872), Doubleday Anchor Books, pp. 41-43. Unfortunately Pustel de Caussengues neglects to mention how religion came to uphold patriarchal authority, since patriarchal religion is also an effect, rather than an original cause.
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What would be crucial to such a process would be a state of mind in which the primary principle would be regarded as fertility or vitalist processes. In a primitive condition, before it developed civilization or any but the crudest technique, humanity would perhaps find the most impressive evidence of creative force in the visible birth of children, something of a miraculous event and linked analogically with the growth of the earth's vegetation.

It is possible that the circumstance which might drastically redirect such attitudes would be the discovery of patriarchy. There is some evidence that fertility cults in ancient society at some point took a turn toward patriarchy, displacing and downgrading female function in procreation and attributing the power of life to the phallus alone. Patriarchal religion could consolidate this position by the creation of a male God or gods, deeming, discriminating, or eliminating goddesses and constructing a theology whose basic postulates are male supremacy, and one of whose central functions is to uphold and validate the patriarchal structure.

So much for the evacuation delights afforded by the gene of origins. The question of the historical origins of patriarchy—whether patriarchy originated primordially in the male's superior strength or upon a later mobilization of such strength under certain circumstances—appears at the moment to be unanswerable. It is also probably irrelevant to contemporary patriarchy, where we are left with the realities of sexual politics, still grounded, we are often assured, on nature. Unfortunately, as the psycho-social distinctions made between the two sex groups which are said to justify their present political relationships are not the clear, specific, measurable and neutral ones of the physical sciences, but are instead of an entirely different character—vague, amorphous, often even quasi-religious in phrasing—it must be admitted that many of the generally understood distinctions between the sexes in the most significant areas of role and temperament, not to mention status, have in fact, essentially cultural, rather than biological, traits.

Attempts to prove that temperamental dominance is inherent in the male (which for its advocates, would be tantamount to validating, logically as well as historically, the patriarchal situation regarding role and status) have been mostly unsuccessful. Sources in the field are in hopeless disagreement.

Dictionaries state that the major connotation of sex is a biological one, as for example, in the phrases sexual relations or the male sex. In agreement with this, the word sex, in this work will refer to the male or female sex and the component biological parts that determine whether one is a male or female; the word sexual will have connotations of anatomy and physiology. This obviously leaves tremendous areas of behavior, feelings, thoughts and fantasies that are related to the sexes and yet do not have primary biological connotations. It is for some of these psychological phenomena that the term gender will be used: one can speak of the male sex or the female sex, but one can also talk about masculinity and femininity and not necessarily be implying anything about anatomy or physiology. Thus, while sex and gender seem to common sense inseparably bound together, one purpose of this study will be to confirm the fact that the two realms (sex and gender) are not inevitably bound in anything like a one-to-one relationship, but each may go in quite independent ways.

No existing evidence has as far been advanced in this area. Experimentation regarding the connection between hormones and animal behavior not only yields highly ambivalent results but brings with it the hazards of reasoning by analogy to human behavior. For a summary of the arguments see David C. Olson (ed.), Biology and Behavior (New York: Rockefeller University and the Russell Sage Foundation, 1968).

In cases of genital malformation and consequent erroneous gender assignment at birth, studied at the California Gender Identity Center, the discovery was made that it is easier to change the sex of an adolescent male, whose biological identity turns out to be contrary to his gender assignment and conditioning—through surgery—than to undo the educational consequences of years, which have succeeded in making the subject temperamentally feminine in gesture, sense of self, personality and interests. Studies done in California under Stoller's direction offer proof that gender identity (I am a girl, I am a boy) is the primary identity any human being holds—the first as well as the most permanent and far-reaching. Stoller later makes emphatic the distinction that sex is biological, gender psychological, and therefore cultural. "Gender is a term that has psychological or cultural rather than biological connotations. If the proper terms for sex are "male" and "female," the corresponding terms for gender are "masculine" and "feminine"; these latter may be quite independent of (biological) sex." Indeed, to arbitrary is gender, that it may even be contrary to physiology: "... although the external genitalia (genitalia, testes, scrotum) contribute to the sense of maleness, no one of them is essential for it, nor even all of them together. In the absence of complete evidence, I agree in general with Money, and the Hampsons who show in their large series of intersexed patients that gender role is determined by hormonal forces, regardless of the anatomy and physiology of the external genitalia."

It is now believed that the human fetus is originally physically female until the operation of androgen at a certain stage of gestation causes those which chromosomes develop to become male, Psychosocially (e.g., in terms of masculine and feminine, and in contradistinction to male and female) there is no differentiation between the sexes at birth. Psychosocial personality is therefore postnatal and learned.

... the condition existing at birth and for several months thereafter is one of psychosexual undifferentiation. Just as in the embryo, morphological sexual differentiation passes from a plastic stage to one of fixed immateriality, so also does psychosexual differentiation between fixed and immutable—so much so, that mankind has traditionally assumed that so strong and fixed a feeling as personal sexual identity must stem from something innate, instinctive, and not subject to postnatal experience and learning. The view of this traditional assumption is that the power and permanence of something learned has been underestimated.

John Money who is quoted above, believes that "the acquisition of a native language is a human counterpart to imprinting," and gender first established "with the establishment of a native language." This would place the time of establishment at about eighteen months. Jerome Kagan's studies in how children of pre-speech age are handled and touched, tickled and spoken to in terms of their sexual identity ("Is it a boy or a girl?" "Hello, little fellow," "Isn't she pretty," etc.) put the most considerable emphasis on purely tactile learning which would have much to do with the child's sense of self, even before speech is attained.

Because of our social circumstances, male and female are really two cultures and their life experiences are utterly different—and this is crucial. Implicit in all the gender identity development which takes place through childhood is the two-sexual axis of the parents', the peer's, and the culture's, notions of what is appropriate to each gender by way of temperament, character, interests, status, worth, gesture, and expression. Every moment of the child's life is a clue to how he or she must think and behave to attain or satisfy the demands which gender places upon one. In adolescence, the merciless task of conformity grows to crisis proportions, generally concluding and settling in maturity.

Since patriarchy's biological foundations repeat as so very insecure, one has some cause to admire the strength of a "socialization" which can continue a universal condition "en fatale" as it were, or through an acquired value system exclusively. What does seem decisive is the maintenance of the temperamental differences between the sexes is the conditioning of early childhood. Conditioning rains in a circle of self-perpetuation and self-fulfilling prophecy. To take a simple example: expectations the culture cherishes about his gender identity encourage the young male to develop aggressive impulses, and the female to thwart her own or turn them inward. The result is that the male tends to have aggression reinforced in his behavior, often with significant anti-social possibilities. Conversely the culture expects to believe the possession of the male indicator, the testis, penis, and scrotum, in itself characterizes the aggressive impulse, and even vulgarly celebrates it in such vocabularies as "that guy has balls." The same process of reinforcement is evident in producing the child's "feminine" version of passivity.

In contemporary terminology, the basic division of temperamental traits...
is marshaled along the line of "aggressiveness is male" and "passivity is female." All other emasculating traits are somehow—often with the most denunciatory ingeruality—aligned to correspond. If aggressiveness is the trait of the master class, docility must be the corresponding trait of a subject group. The usual hope of such line of reasoning is that "nurses," by some impossible outside chance, might still be depended upon to rationalize the patriarchal system. An important consideration to be remembered here is that in patriarchy, the function of norms is unspeakingly delegated to the male—were it not, one might as plausibly speak of "feminine" behavior as active, and "masculine" behavior as hyperactive or hyperaggressive.

Here it might be added, by way of a coda, that data from physical sciences has recently been enlisted again to support sociological arguments, such as those of Lionel Tiger, who seeks a genetic justification of patriarchy by proposing a "boding instinct" in males which assures their political and social control of human society. One sees the implication of such a theory by applying its premise to any ruling group. Tiger's thesis appears to be a misrepresentation of the work of Lorenz and other animalologists of animal behavior. Since his evidence of inherent trait is patriarchal history and organization, his preconceptions to physical evidence are both specious and circular. One can only advance genetic evidence when one has genetic (rather than historical) evidence to advance. As many authorities dismiss the possibility of instincts (complex inherent behavioral patterns) in humans altogether, admitting only reflexes and drives (far simpler neural responses), the prospect of a "boding instinct" appear particularly foolish.

Should one regard sex in human as a drive, it is still necessary to point out that the enormous area of our lives, both in early "socialization" and in adult "experience," labeled "sexual behavior," is almost entirely the product of learning. So much is this the case that even the act of coitus itself is the product of a long series of learned responses—responses to the patterns and stimuli, even as to the object of sexual choice, which are set up for us by our social environment.

The arbitrary character of patriarchal ascriptions of temperament and role has little effect upon their power over us. Nor do the mutually exclusive, contradictory, and polar qualities of the categories "masculine" and "feminine" inspire upon human personality give rise to sufficiently serious question among us. Under their sign each personality becomes little more, and often less than half, of its human potential. Politically, the fact that each group exhibits a circumscribed but complementary personality and range of activity is of secondary importance to the fact that each represents a status or power division. In the matter of coolness, patriarchy is a governing

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ideology without power, it is probable that no other system has ever exercised such a complete control over its subjects.

III. Sociological

Patriarchy's chief institution is the family. It is both a mirror of and a connection with the larger society, a patriarchal unit within a patriarchal whole. Mediating between the individual and the social structure, the family effects control and conformity where political and other authorities are insufficient. As the fundamental instrument and the foundation unit of patriarchal society the family and its roles are prototypical. Serving as an agent of the larger society, the family not only encourages its own members to adjust and conform, but acts as a unit in the government of the patriarchal state which rules its citizens through its family heads. Even in patriarchal societies where they are granted legal citizenship, women tend to be ruled through the family alone and have little or no formal relation to the state. As co-operation between the family and the larger society is essential, the body would fall apart, the fate of three patriarchal institutions, the family, society, and the state are interrelated. In most forms of patriarchy this has generally led to the granting of religious support in statements such as the Catholic precept that "the father is head of the family," or Judaism's delegation of quasi-priestly authority to the male parent. Secular governments today also confirm this, as in census practices of designating the male as head of household, taxation, passports etc. Female heads of household tend to be regarded as undesirable; the phenomenon is a trait of poverty or misfortune. The Confucian prescription that the relationship between ruler and subject is parallel to that of father and child points to the essentially feudal character of the patriarchal family (and conversely, the familial character of feudalism) even in modern democracies. Traditionally, patriarchy granted the father nearly total ownership over wife and children, including the powers of physical abuse and often those of murder and sale. Classically, as head of the family the father is both begetter and owner in a system in which kinship is property. Yet


24 Family, society, and state are three separate but connected entities: women have a depressing importation as one goes from the first to the third category. But as such of the three categories exists within or is influenced by the overall institution of patriarchy, I am concerned here less with differentiation than with pointing out a general similarity.


26 Mental as well as consensual relation to the head of the family made one his property.
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that marriage involves an exchange of the female's domestic services and (sexual) consortium in return for financial support. The chief contribution of the family in patriarchy is the socialization of the young (largely through the example and admiration of their parents) into patriarchal ideology's prescribed attitudes toward the categories of role, temperament, and status. Although slight differences of definition depend here upon the parents' grasp of cultural values, the general effect of uniformity is achieved, to be further reinforced through peers, schools, media, and other learning sources, formal and informal. While we may judge over the balance of authority between the personalities of various households, one must remember that the entire culture supports masculine authority in all areas of life and outside of the home—permits the female's role at all.

To ensure that its crucial functions of reproduction and socialization of the young take place only within its confines, the patriarchal family insures upon legitimacy. Bronislaw Malinowski describes this as "the principle of legitimacy" formulating it as an insistence that "no child should be brought into the world without a man—and one man at that—assuming the role of a sociological father." By this apparently consistent and universal prohibition (whose penalties vary by class and in accord with the expected operations of the double standard) patriarchy decrees that the status of both child and mother is primarily or ultimately dependent upon the male. And since it is not only his social status, but even his economic power upon which his dependents generally rely, the position of the masculine figure within the family—as without—is materially, as well as ideologically, extremely strong. Although there is no biological reason why the two central functions of the family (socialization and reproduction) need be inseparable from or even take place within it, evolutionary or utopian efforts to remove these functions from the family have been so frustrated, to beset by difficulties, that most experiments so far have involved a gradual return to tradition. This strong evidence of how basic a form patriarchy is within all societies, and of how pervasive its effects upon family members. It is perhaps also an admission that change undertaken without a thorough understanding of the sociopolitical institution to be changed is hardly productive. And yet radical social

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In strict patriarchy, kinship is acknowledged only through association with the male line. Adoption excludes the descendants of the female line from property right and often even from recognition. The first formulation of the patriarchal family was made by Sir Henry Maine, a nineteenth-century historian of ancient jurisprudence. Maine argues that the patriarchal basis of kinship is put in terms of descent rather than blood, since, though outsiders, are assimilated into the line, while sister's sons are excluded. Basing his definition of the family upon the patria potestas of Rome, Maine defined it as follows: "The eldest male parent is absolutely supreme in his household. His dominion extends to life and death and is as unqualified over his children and their household as over his slaves." In the archaic patriarchal family "the group consists of animate and inanimate property, of wife, children, slaves, land and goods, all held together by subject to the despotic authority of the eldest male."

McLennan's "tribal" to Maine argued that the Roman patria potestas was an extreme form of patriarchy and by no means, as Maine had imagined, universal. Evidence of matrilineal societies (patrilineate societies in Africa and elsewhere) refute Maine's assumption of the universality of patriarchy. Certainly Maine's central argument, as to the primaeval or state of nature character of patriarchy is best but rather nearly rationalization of an institution Maine tended to ascribe. The assumption of patriarchal's primaeval character is contradicted by much evidence which points to the conclusion that full patriarchal authority, particularly that of the patria potestas is a late development and the total erection of female status was likely to be gradual as has been its recovery.

In contemporary patriarchies the male's de jure priority has recently been modified through the granting of divorce protection, citizenship, and property to women. Their status as persons consistent in their line of name, their obligation to obey the husband's domicile, and the general legal assumption that of which the omen is the failure to recognize only through male heirs; rather than through sister's sons. Thus in a few generations descendants of female branches lose worth. Only those who "have the name," those descended from male branches, may be recognized for kinship or inheritance.


Maine took the patriarchal family as the cell from which society evolved as gentes, plebs, tribe, and nation grew, rather in the competitive manner of Isaac's twelve toles descending from Jacob. Since Maine also dated the origin of patriarchy from the discovery of agriculture, barely a primaeval condition, the two operate against the natural character of patriarchal society.

Many patriarchies granted divorce to males only. It has been accessible to women on any rule only during this century. Goode states that divorce rates were so high in Japan during the 1860s as they are in the U.S. today. Goode, op. cit., p. 4.

Divorce is granted to a male for his wife's failure in domestic service and economy; it is not granted him for his wife's failure to render him financial support. Divorce is granted to a woman if her husband fails to support her, but not for his failure in domestic service or conviction. But see Karczewski versus Baltimore and Ohio Railroad, 274 F. Supp. 156-175 N.D. Illinois, 1965, where a provision was held and the common law that divorce a wife might not sue for loss of consortium over-read.
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change cannot take place without having an effect upon patriarchy. And
not simply because it is the political form which subordinates such a large
percentage of the population (women and youth) but because it serves as a
catalyst of property and traditional interests. Marriages are financial alliances,
and each household operates as an economic entity much like a corporation.
As one student of the family states it, "the family is the keystone of the
stabilization system, the social mechanism by which it is maintained."[22]

IV Class

It is in the area of class that the cattelike status of the female within
patriarchy is most liable to confusion, for sexual status often operates in a
superficially confusing way within the variable of class. In a society where status is
dependent upon the economic, social, and educational circumstances of
class, it is possible for certain females to appear to stand higher than some
males. Yet not when one looks more closely at the subject. This is perhaps
easier to see by means of analogy: a black doctor or lawyer has higher social
status than a poor white sharecropper. But race, itself a caste system which
subordinates class, perverts the latter citizen that he belongs to a higher order of
life, just as it opposes the black professional in spirit, whatever his
material success may be. In much the same manner, a truck driver or
butcher has always his "masking" to fall back upon. Should this final vassal
be offended, he may contemplate more violent methods. The literature of the
next thirty years provides a staggering number of incidents in which the
case of virility triumphs over the social status of wealthily or even educated
women. In literary contexts one has to deal here with wish-fulfillment. Inci-
dents from life (bullying, obscene, or hostile remarks) are probably another
sort of psychological gesture of ascendancy. Both convey more hope than
reality, for class divisions are generally quite impervious to the hostility of
individuals. And yet while the existence of class division is not seriously
threatened by such expressions of envy, the existence of sexual hierarchy
has been reaffirmed and reestablished to "pamish" the female quite effectively.
The function of class or ethnic mores in patriarchy is largely a matter of how
overly displayed or how loudly pronounced the general ethic of mascu-
line supremacy allows itself to become. Here one is confronted by what
appears to be a paradox: while in the lower social strata, the male is more
likely to claim authority on the strength of his sex cash alone, he is actually
obliged more often to share power with the women of his class who are
economically productive; whereas in the middle and upper classes, there is less
tendency to assert a blatant patriarchal dominance, as men who enjoy such
status have more power in any case.[23]

It is generally accepted that Western patriarchy has been much softened
by the concepts of courtly and romantic love. While this is certainly true,

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such influence has also been vastly overestimated in comparison with the
power of "machismo" or oriental behavior, one realizes how much of a con-
cession traditional chivalrous behavior represents—a specious kind of reforma-
tion to allow the subordinate female certain means of saving face. While a
palliative to the injustice of woman's social position, chivalry is also a tech-
nique for disguising it. One must acknowledge that the chivalrous stance is
a game the master group plays in elevating its subject to pedestal level. His-
torians of courtly love stress the fact that the ruptures of the poets had no
effect upon the legal or economic standing of women, and very little upon
their social status.[24] As the sociologist Hugo Beigel has observed, both the
courtly and the romantic versions of love are "grants" which the male con-
cedes out of his total power.[25] Both have had the effect of obscuring the
patriarchal character of Western culture and in their general tendency to
surrogate impossible virtues to women, have ended by confining them in a
narrow and often remarkably constricting sphere of behavior. It was a Vic-
torian baby, for example, to insist the female assume the function of serv-
ing as the male's conscience and living the life of goodness he found tedious
but felt somehow ought to do anyway.

The concept of romantic love affords a means of emotional manipulation
which the male is free to exploit, since love is the only circumstance in
which the female is (ideologically) pardoned for sexual activity. And convic-
tions of romantic love are convenient to both parties since this is often the
only condition in which the female can overcome the far more powerful
conditioning she has received toward sexual inhibition. Romantic love also
obscures the realities of female status and the burden of economic depend-
ence. As to "chivalry," such gallant gesture as still resides in the middle classes
has degenerated to a tired ritualism, which scarcely serves to mask the status
situation of the present.

Within patriarchy one must often deal with contradictions which are
simply a matter of class style. David Riesman has noted that as the work-
ing class has been assimilated into the middle class, to have its sexual mores and
attitudes. The fairly blatant male chauvinism which was once a pron-
inence of the lower class or immigrant male has been absorbed and taken on a
certain glamour through a number of contemporary figures, who have
made it, and a certain number of other working-class male attitudes, part of a
new, and at the moment, fashionable lifestyle. So influential is this working-
class ideal of brute virility (or more accurately, a literary and therefore
[24] This is the gist of Vallency's summary of the situation before the troubadours, ac-
knowledging that courtly love is an utter anomaly: "With regard to the social back-
ground, all that can be said with confidence is that we know nothing of the objective
relationships of men and women in the Middle Ages which might coarsely motivate
the strain of love-poetry which the troubadours developed." Maurice Vallency, In Praise
of Love (Macmillan, New York, 1953), p. 3.
P. 352.
middle-class version of it) become in our time that it may replace more discreet and "gentlemally" attitudes of the past.27 One of the chief effects of class within patriarchy is to set one woman against another, in the past creating a lively antagonism between whose and matron, and in the present between career woman and housewife. One envious the other her "security" and prestige, while the envied yearns beyond the confines of recognizability for what the takes to be the other’s freedom, adventure, and contact with the great world. Through the multiple advantages of the double standard, the male participates in both worlds, empowered by his superior social and economic resources to play the estranged women against each other as rivals. One might also recognize subsidiary status categories among women— not only is virtue class, but beauty and age as well.

Perhaps, in the final analysis, it is possible to argue that women tend to transcend the usual class stratifications in patriarchy, for whatever the class of her birth and education, the female has fewer permanent class associations than does the male. Economic dependency renders her affiliations with any class a tangential, vicarious, and temporary matter. Aristotle observed that the only slave to whom a commoner might lay claim was his woman, and the service of an unpaid domestic still provides working-class males with a "cushion" against the buffets of the class system which incidentally provides them with some of the psychic luxuries of the leisure class. Thrown upon their own resources, few women rise above working class in personal prestige and economic power, and women as a group do not enjoy many of the interests and benefits any class may offer its male members. Women have therefore lost of an investment in the class system. But it is important to understand that as with any group whose existence is parasitic to its rulers, women are a dependency class who live on surplus. And their marginal life frequently renders them conservative, for like all persons in their situation ("saves are a classic example here) they identify their own survival with the prosperity of those who feed them. The hope of seeking liberating radical solutions of their own seems too remote for the majority to dare contemplate and remains so until consciousness on the subject is raised.

As race emerges as one of the final variables in sexual politics, it is pertinent, especially in a discussion of modern literature, to devote a few words to it as well. Traditionally, the white male has been accustomed to concede the female of his own race, in her capacity as "his woman" a higher

27 Miller and Miller occur to one in this connection, and Lawrence as well. One might trace Rejoice's very existence as a fictional figure to the virility symbol of Jack London's Ernest Everhard or Tennessee Williams' Stanley Kowalski. That Rejoice is also literate is nothing more than an ungentle finish upon the furniture of his "manhood" solely based in the hard taken graft of his mastery over every and every "broad" he can bide,bludgion, or bugger.

status than that attributed to the black male.28 Yet as white racism ideology is a token and begins to erode, sexism's older protective attitudes toward (white) women also begin to give way. And the priorities of maintaining male supremacy might outweigh those of white supremacy; sexism may be more endemic in our own society than racism. For example, one notes in authors whom we would now term overtly racist, such as D. H. Lawrence—whose contempt for what he so often designates as inferior breeds is unshaken—instances where the lower-class male is brought on to master or humiliate the white man's inordinate mate. Needless to say, the female of the non-white races does not figure in such tales save as an exemplum of "true" womanhood's servility, worthy of imitation by other less carefully instructed females. Contemporary white sociology often operates under a similar patriarchal bias when its rhetoric inclines toward the assertion that the "macho" (e.g. machiavellian) aspect of black society and the "attraction" of the black man are the most deplorable symptoms of black oppression in white racist society, with the implication that racial inequality is capable of solution by a restoration of masochistic authority. Whatever the facts of the matter may be, it can also be suggested that analysis of this kind presupposes patriarchal values without questioning them, and tends to obscure both the true character of and the responsibility for racist injustice toward black humanity of both sexes.

V. Economic and Educational

One of the most efficient branches of patriarchal government lies in the agency of its economic hold over its female subjects. In traditional patriarchy, women, as non-persons without legal standing, were permitted no actual economic existence as they could neither own nor earn in their own right. Since women have always worked in patriarchal societies, often at the most routine or menial tasks, what is at issue here is not labor but economic reward. In modern reformed patriarchal societies, women have certain economic rights, yet the "woman's work" in which some two thirds of the female population in most developed countries are engaged is work that is

28 It would appear that the "true fuses of white womanhood" has at least at times been something of a disappointment to be the work of a "woman's work." If the historic constant of the Abolitionists and the Woman's Movement is not evidence of this, as well as the incidence of white female and black male marriages as compared with those of white male and black female, pictures on intermarriage are very difficult to obtain: Good (op. cit., p. 37) estimates the proportion of white women marrying black men to be between 5 to 10 times the proportion of white men marrying black women. Robert K. Martin "Interracial Marriage and the Social Structure" Psychiatry, Vol. 4, August 1960, p. 374, states that "most interrace relations—sexes are between white men and Negro women." It is hardly necessary to emphasize that the more extensive sexual contacts between white males and black females have not only been extramarital, but (in the part of the white male) expressly exploitative. Under slavery it was simply a case of rape.
not paid. In a money economy where autonomy and prestige depend upon currency, this is a fact of great importance. In general, the position of women in patriarchy is a continuous function of their economic dependence. Just as their social position is vicarious and achieved (often on a temporary or marginal basis) through males, their relation to the economy is also typically vicarious or tangential.

Of that 24% of women who are employed, their average wages represent only half of the average income enjoyed by men. These are the U.S. Department of Labor statistics for average year-round income: white male, $6704; non-white male $4277; white female, $3991; and non-white female $2812. 40 The disparity is made somewhat more remarkable because the educational level of women is generally higher than that of men in comparable income brackets. 41 Further, the kinds of employment open to women in modern patriarchies are, with few exceptions, menial, ill paid and without status. 42

In modern capitalist countries women also function as a reserve labor force, enlisted in times of war and expansion and discharged in times of peace and recession. In this role American women have replaced immigrant labor and now compete with the racial minorities. In socialist countries the female labor force is generally in the lower ranks as well, despite a high incidence of women in certain professions such as medicine. The status and rewards of such professions have declined as women enter them, and they are permitted to enter such areas under a rationale that society or the state (and socialist countries are also patriarchal) rather than woman is served by such activity.

Since woman's independence in economic life is viewed with distrust, prescriptive agencies of all kinds (religion, psychology, advertising, etc.)

38 Sweden is an exception in considering housework a material service rendered and calculable in diverse units. Thirty-three to forty percent of the female population have market employment in Wassen counties: this leaves up to two thirds out of the market labor force. In Sweden and the Soviet Union that figure is lower.


41 See The 1965 Handbook on Women Workers, United States Department of Labor, Women’s Bureau. “In every major occupational group the median wage or salary income of women was less than that of men. This is true at all levels of educational attainment.” A comparison of the income received by women and men with equal amounts of schooling revealed that women who had completed four years of college received incomes which were only 47% of those paid to men with the same educational training; high school graduates earned only 38%, and grade school graduates only 33%.

42 For the distribution of women in lower income and lower status positions see Background Facts on Working Women (pamphlet) U.S. Department of Labor, Women’s Bureau.

43 In the European Community, women account for 33% of the working population; in the United States, they are 30% of the labor force. In Great Britain, 20% of the labor force is female.

44 See the publications of the Women’s Bureau and particularly Sex Discrimination in Employment Practices (pp. 69.1) and Carolyn M. Bird, Women’s Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor, “Women’s Role in Today’s Economy.”

45 Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act. The inclusion of “sex” in the law upholding the civil right of freedom from discrimination in employment was half a joke and half an attempt on the part of Southern congressmen to force Northern industrial states to abandon passage of the bill.

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continuously admonish or even inveigh against the employment of middle-class women, particularly mothers. The toil of working-class women is more readily accepted as “need,” if not always by the working-class itself, at least by the middle-class. And to be sure, it serves the purpose of making available cheap labor in factory and lower-grade service and clerical positions. Its wages and tasks are so unremunerative that, unlike more prestigious employment for women, it fails to threaten patriarchy financially or psychologically. Women who are employed have two jobs since the burden of domestic service and child care is unquestioned either by day care or other social agencies, or by the co-operation of husbands. The invention of labor-saving devices has had no appreciable effect on the duration, even if it has affected the quality of their drudgery. 43 Discrimination in matters of hiring, matrimony, wages and hours is very great. 44 Is the U.S. a recent law forbidding discrimination in employment, the first not only federal legislative guarantee of rights granted to American women since the vote, is not enforced, has not been enforced since its passage, and was not enacted to be enforced. 45 In terms of industry and production, the situation of women is in many ways comparable both to colonial and to pre-industrial peoples. Although they achieved their first economic autonomy in the industrial revolution and now constitute a large and underpaid factory population, women do not participate directly in technology or its production. What they customarily produce (domestic and personal service) has no market value and is, as it were, pre-capitalist. Nor, when they do participate in production of commodities through employment, do they own or control or even comprehend the process in which they participate. An example might make this clearer: the refrigerator is a machine all women use, some assemble it in factories, and a very few with scientific education understand its principles of operation. Yet the heavy industries which roll its steel and produce the dies for its parts are in male hands. The same is true of the typewriter, the auto, etc. Now, while knowledge is fragmented even among the male population, collectively they could reconstruct any technological device. But in the absence of men, women’s distance from technology today is sufficiently great that it is difficult to say what they could do or repair or improve on their own in any significant scale. Women’s distance from higher technology is even greater: large-scale
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building construction; the development of computers; the moon shot, occur as further examples. If knowledge is power, power is also knowledge, and a large factor in their subordinate position is the fairly systematic ignorance patriarchy imposes upon women.

Since education and economy are so closely related in the advanced nations, it is significant that the general level and style of higher education for women, particularly in their many remaining segregated institutions, is closer to that of Renaissance humanism than to the skills of mid-twentieth-century scientific and technological society. Traditionally patriarchy permitted occasional minimal literacy to women while higher education was closed to them. While modern patriarchies have, fairly recently, opened all educational levels to women,46 the kind and quality of education is not the same for each sex. This difference is of course apparent in early socialization, but it persists and enters into higher education as well. Universities, once places of scholarship and the training of a few professionals, now also produce the personnel of a technocracy. This is not the case with regard to women. Their own colleges typically produce neither scholars nor professionals nor technocrats. Nor are they funded by government and corporations as are male colleges and those co-educational colleges and universities whose primary function is the education of males.

As patriarchy enforces a temperamental imbalance of personality traits between the sexes, its educational institutions, segregated or co-educational, accept a cultural programming toward the generally operative division between "masculine" and "feminine" subject matter, assigning the humanities and core social sciences (at least in their lower or marginal branches) to the female—and science and technology, the professions, business and engineering to the male. Of course the balance of employment, prestige and reward at present lie with the latter. Control of these fields is very eminently a matter of political power. One might also point out how the exclusive dominance of males in the more prestigious fields directly serves the interests of patriarchal power in industry, government, and the military. And since patriarchy encourages an imbalance in human temperament along sex lines, both divisions of learning (science and the humanities) reflect this imbalance. The humanities, because not exclusively male, suffer in prestige:

46 We often forget how recent an event is higher education for women. In the U.S. it is barely one hundred years old; in many Western countries barely fifty. Oxford did not grant degrees to women on the same terms as to men until 1946. In Japan and a number of other countries universities have been open to women only in the period after World War II. There are still areas where higher education for women scarcely exists. Women do not have the same access to education as do men. The Princeton Report stated that "although at the high school level more girls than boys receive grades of "A," roughly 50% more boys than girls go to college." The Princeton Report to the Alumnae Co-Education (Princeton), Princeton, N.J. 1968, p. 10. Most other authorities give the national ratio of college students as two males to one female. In a great many countries it is far lower.

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the sciences, technology, and business, because they are nearly exclusively male reflect the deformation of the "masculine" personality, e.g., a certain predatory or aggressive character.

In keeping with the inferior sphere of culture to which women in patriarchy have always been restricted, the present encouragement of their "feminine" interests through study of the humanities is hardly more than an extension of the "accomplishments" they once cultivated in preparation for the marriage market. Achievement in the arts and humanities is reserved, now, as it has been historically, for males. Token representation, be it Susan Sontag's or Lady Musgraves, does not vitiate this rule.

VI. FORCES

We are not accustomed to associate patriarchy with force. So perfect is its system of socialization, so complete the general assent to its values, so long and so universally has it prevailed in human society, that it scarcely seems to require violent implementation. Customarily, we view its brutalities in the past as erotic or "primitive" custom. Those of the present are regarded as the product of individual deviance, confined to pathological or exceptional behavior, and without general import. And yet, just as under other total ideologies (racism and colonialism are somewhat analogous in this respect) control in patriarchal society would be imperfect, even inoplicable, unless it had the rule of force to rely upon, both in emergencies and as an ever-present instrument of intimidation.

Historically, most patriarchies have institutionalized force through their legal systems. For example, strict patriarchies such as that of Islam, have implemented the prohibition against illegitimacy or sexual autonomy with a death sentence. In Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia the adulteress is still stoned to death with a mulish presiding at the execution. Execution by stoning was once common practice through the Near East. It is still condoned in Sicily. Needless to say there was and is no penalty imposed upon the male correspondent. Save in recent times or exceptional cases, adultery was not generally recognized in males except as an offense one male might commit against another's property interest. In Tokugawa Japan, for example, an elaborate set of legal distinctions were made according to class. A samurai was entitled, and in the face of public knowledge, even obliged, to execute an adulterous wife, whereas a chōnin (common citizen) or peasant might respond as he pleased. In cases of cross-class adultery, the lower-class male convicted of sexual intimacy with his employer's wife would, because he had violated solemn bonds of class and property, be beheaded together with her. Upper-class males had, of course, the same license to seduce lower-class women as we are familiar with in Western societies.

Indirectly, one form of "death penalty" still obtains even in America today. Patriarchial legal systems in depriving women of control over their own
bodies drive them to illegal abortion; it is estimated that between two and five thousand women die each year from this cause. 48

Exempting a social license to physical abuse among certain class and ethnic groups, force is diffuse and generalized in most contemporary patriarchies. Significantly, force itself is restricted to the male who alone is psychologically and technically equipped to perpetrate physical violence. 49 Where differences in physical strength have become immaterial through the use of arms, the female is rendered innocuous by her socialization. Before assault she is almost universally defenseless both by her physical and emotional training. Needless to say, this has the most far-reaching effects on the social and psychological behavior of both sexes.

Patriarchal force also persists in a form of violence particularly sexual in character and explored most completely in the act of rape. The figures of rapes reported represent only a fraction of those which occur, 50 as the "shame" of the event is sufficient to deter women from the notion of civil prosecution under the public circumstances of a trial. Traditionally rape has been viewed as an offense one male commits upon another—a matter of abusing "his woman." Vendetta, such as occurs in the American South, is carried out for masculine satisfaction, the exhalations of race hatred, and the interests of property and vanity (honore). In rape, the tensions of aggression, hatred, contempt, and the desire to break or violate personality, take a form consummately appropriate to sexual politics. In the passages analyzed at the outset of this study, such emotions were present at a barely subdued level and served as a key factor in explaining the attitude behind the author's use of language and tone. 51

Patriarchal societies typically link feelings of cruelty with sexuality, the latter often equated with evil and with power. This is apparent both in the sexual fantasy reported by psychoanalysis and that reported by pornography. The rule here associates sexism with the male ("the masculine role") and victimization with the female ("the feminine role"). 52 Emotional response to violence against women in patriarchy is often curiously ambivalent; 53 since abortion is estranged, figures are difficult to obtain. This figure is based on the estimates of abortionists and referral services. Similar incidents are not officially reported either.

Vivid exceptions come to mind in the West of liberation conducted by Vietnamese, Chinas, etc. But through most of history, women have been harassed and forbidden to exhibit any defense of their own. 54 They are still high. The number of rapes reported in the city of New York in 1967 was 19,489. Figure supplied by Police Department.

It is interesting that male victims of rape at the hands of other males often feel twice imposed upon, as they have not only been subjected to forcible and painful intercourse, but further abused in being reduced to the status of a female. Much of this is evident in Greece and in the contemporary homosocial society reserved for its "positive" or "female" partners.

Masculine monogamy is regarded as exceptional and often explained as sexually homonormative, as a matter of the subject playing "the female role"—e.g., victim.

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The research of wife-bearing, for example, invariably produce laughter and some embarrassment. Exemplifying atrocity, such as the mass murders committed by Richard Speck, greeted at one level with a certain scandalization, possibly hypocritical indignation, is capable of eliciting a mass response of stiltation at another level. At such times one even hears from men occasional expressions of envy or amusement. In view of the sadistic character of such political acts as are performed by men, in pornographic media, one might expect that a certain element of identification is by no means absent from the general response. Probably a similar collective frisson sweeps through racist society when its more "logical" members have perpetuated a lynching. Unconsciously, both crimes may serve the larger group as a tactical act, cathartic in effect.

Hostility is expressed in a number of ways. One is laughter. Misogyny literature, the primary vehicle of masculine hostility, is both a bountiful and comic genre. Of all artistic forms in patriarchy it is the most frankly propa-
gandistic. Its aim is to reinforce both sexual factions in their status. Ancient, Medieval, and Renaissance literature in the West has each had a large element of misogyny. 55 Not is the East without a strong tradition here, notably in the Confucian strain which held sway in Japan as well as China. The Western tradition was indeed moderated somewhat by the introduction of courtly love. But the old disasters and attacks were coterminous with the new ideologization of woman. In the case of Petrarca, Boccaccio, and some others, one can find both attitudes fully expressed, presumably as evidence of different moods, a courtly pose adopted for the ephemeral needs of the vernacular, a grave animosity for sober and elegant Latin. 56 As courtly love was transformed to romantic love, literary misogyny grew somewhat out of fashion. In some places in the eighteenth century it declined into ridicule and ex-
hortative satire. In the nineteenth century its more atrocious forms almost disappeared in English. Its resurrection in twentieth-century attitudes and literature is the result of a restatement over patriarchal reform, aided by the growing permisiveness in expression which has taken place at an increasing rate in the last fifty years. Since the abandonment of censorship, masculine hostility (psychological or physical) in specifically sexual contexts has become far more apparent. Yet in masculine hostility has been fairly conscious, one deals here probably less with a matter of increase than with a new frankness in expressing hostility in specifically sexual contexts. It is a matter of release and freedom to express.

The literature of misogyny is so vast as to make it difficult to enumerate all such examples could be cited, but in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, this form was quite common. It was written in a number of languages, the most important being French, Italian, and German. The works of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe and Friedrich Schiller are the most well-known examples of this type of literature. These authors, along with many others, wrote extensively on the subject of women and their roles in society, often portraying them in a negative light. The works of these authors were widely read and influenced popular opinion on the subject of women for many years to come.
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what was once forbidden expression outside of pornography or other "underground" productions, such as those of De Sade. As one recalls both the euphemism and the idealism of descriptions of coitus in the Romantic poets (Rheat's Eve of St. Agnes), or the Victorian novelists (Hardy, for example) and contrasts it with Miller or William Burroughs, one has an idea of how contemporary literature has absorbed not only the truthfu explicitness of pornography, but its anti-social character as well. Since this tendency to hurt or insult has been given free expression, it has become far easier to assess sexual antagonism in the male.

The history of patriarchy presents a variety of cruelties and barbarities: the same execution in India, the crippling deformity of foot-binding in China, the lifelong ignorance of the veil in Islam, or the widespread persecution of sequestration, the gymnism, and purdah. Phenomenon such as clitoridectomy, clitoral incision, the sale and enslavement of women under one guise or another, involuntary and child marriages, concubinage and prostitution, still take place—she first in Africa, the latter in the Near and Far East, the last generally. The rationale which accompanies that imposition of male authority euphemistically referred to as "the battle of the sexes" bears a certain resemblance to the formulas of nations at war, where any belligerence is justified on the grounds that the enemy is either an inferior species or really not human at all. The patriarchal mentality has concocted a whole series of rationales about women which accomplish this purpose tolerably well. And these traditional beliefs still invade our consciousness and affect our thinking to an extent few of us would be willing to admit.

VII ANTHROPOLOGICAL: MYTH AND RELIGION

Evidence from anthropology, religions and literary myth all attests to the politically expedient character of patriarchal convictions about women. One anthropologist refers to a consistent patriarchal strain of assumption that "women's biological difference set her apart... she is essentially inferior," and since "human institutions grow from deep and primal anxieties and are shaped by irrational psychological mechanisms... socially organized attitudes toward women arise from basic tensions expressed by the male.

Under patriarchy the female did not herself develop the symbols by which she is described. As both the primitive and the civilized worlds are male worlds, the ideas which shaped culture in regard to the female were also of male design. The image of women as we know it is an image created by men and fashioned to suit their needs. These needs spring from a fear of the "otherness" of woman. Yet this notion itself presupposes that patriarchy has already been established and the male has already set himself as the human norm, the subject and referent to which the female is "other" or alien. What

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ever its origin, the function of the male's sexual antipathy is to provide a means of control over a subordinate group and a rationale which justifies the inferior station of those in a lower order, "explaining" the oppression of their lives.

The feeling that woman's sexual functions are improper is both worldwide and persistent. One sees evidence of it everywhere in literature, in myth, in primitive and civilized life. It is striking how the notion persists today. The event of menstruation, for example, is a large clandestine affair, and the psycho-social effect of the stigma attached must have great effect on the female ego. There is a large anthropological literature on menstrual taboo; the practice of isolating offenders in huts at the edge of the village occurs throughout the primitive world. Contemporary slang denounces menstruation as "the curse." There is considerable evidence that such discomfort as women suffer during their period is often likely to be psychosomatic, rather than physiological, cultural rather than biological, in origin. That this may also be true to some extent of labor and delivery is attested to by the recent experiment with "painless childbirth." Patriarchal circumstances and beliefs seem to have the effect of poisoning the female's own sense of physical self until it is often truly becomes the burden it is said to be.

Primitive peoples explain the phenomenon of the female's genitals in terms of a wound, sometimes tracing it that she was visited by a bird or snake and mutilated into her present condition. Once she was wounded, now she bleeds. Contemporary slang for the vagina is "gash." The Freudian description of the female's genitals is in terms of a "contrasted" condition. The unwanted and disgust female genitals arise in patriarchal societies is attributed to through religious, cultural, and literary proscription. In preliterate groups fear is also a factor, as in the belief in a straining vagina devastata. The penis, badge of the male's superior standing in both preliterate and civilized patriarchies, is given the most crucial significance, the subject both of endless taunting and endless anxiety.

Nearly all patriarchies enforce taboos against women touching ritual objects (those of war or religion) or food. In ancient and preliterate societies women are generally not permitted to eat with men. Women eat apart today in a great number of cultures, chiefly those of the Near and Far East. Some of the inspiration of such customs appears to lie in fears of contamination, probably emotional in origin. In their function of domestic servants, females are forced to prepare food, yet at the same time may be liable to spread their contagion through it. A similar situation obtains with blacks in the United States. They are considered filthy and infectious, yet as domestics they are forced to prepare food for their masters, who are expected to be clean and wholesome. In both cases the dilemma is generally solved in a debasingly illogical fashion by segregating the act of eating itself, while cooking is carried on out of sight by the very group who would infect the table. With an admirable consistency, some Hindus make do not permit their wives to touch their food at all. In nearly every patriarchal
group it is expected that the dominant male will eat first or eat better, and even where the sexes feed together, the male shall be served by the female.\textsuperscript{59}

All patriarchies have hedged virginity and defloweration in elaborate rites and reindications. Among patrilines, virginity presents an interesting problem in ambivalences. On the one hand, it is, as in every patriarchy, a mysterious good because a sign of property received intact. On the other, it represents an unknown evil associated with the status of blood and terrifyingly "other." So auspicious is the event of defloweration that in many tribes the owner-groom is willing to relinquish breaking the seal of his new possession to a stronger or older personality who can neutralize the attendant dangers.\textsuperscript{60}

Fears of defloweration appear to originate in a fear of the alien sexuality of the female. Although any physical suffering endured in defloweration must be on the part of the female (and most societies cause her—bodily and mentally—to suffer anguish), the social interest, institutionalized in patrilineal social and custom, is exclusively on the side of the male's property interest, prestige, et al. (among patrilinears) biased.

Patrilineal myth typically posits a golden age before the arrival of women, while its social practices permit males to be relieved of female company. Sexual segregation is so prevalent in patriarchy that one encounters evidence of it everywhere. Nearly every powerful circle in contemporary patriarchy is a man's group. But men form groups of their own on every level. Women's groups are typically auxiliary in character, imitative of male efforts and methods on a generally trivial or ephemeral plane. They rarely operate without recourse to male authority, church or religious groups appealing to the superior authority of a cleric, political groups to male legislators, etc.

In sexually segregated situations the distinctive quality of culturally enforced temperament becomes very vivid. This is particularly true of those exclusively masculine organizations which anthropology generally refers to as men's house institutions. The men's house is a fortress of patriarchal association and emotion. Men's houses in preliterate society strengthen masculine communal experience through dances, gestip, hospitality, recreation, and religious ceremony. They are also the armament of male weaponry.

David Riesman has pointed out that sports and some other activities provide males with a supportive solidarity which society does not trouble to provide for females.\textsuperscript{61} While hunting, politics, religion, and commerce may play a role, sport and warfare are consistently the chief cement of men's community. The luxury conditions of the "better" restaurant affords a quaint exception. There not only the cuisine but even the table service is conducted by males, at an expense commensurate with such an occasion.

*See Sigmund Freud, *Toews and Taboo*, and Ernst Crawley, *The Mystic River* (London, Methuen, 1903, 1937).\textsuperscript{62}


\textsuperscript{60} See Sigmund Freud, *Toews and Taboo*, and Ernst Crawley, *The Mystic River* (London, Methuen, 1903, 1937).


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from their society. The term and ethos of men's house culture is sodic, power-oriented, and laterally homosexual, frequently narcissistic in its energy and motives. The men's house involves that the penis is a weapon, end-lessly equated with other weapons, is also close. The practice of castrating prisoners is itself a comment on the cultural construction of anatomy and status with weaponry. Much of the glorification of masculine combat in warfare originates in what one might designate as "the men's house sensibility." Its sadistic and brutalizing aspects are disguised in military glory and a particularly cloying species of masculine sentimentality. A great deal of our culture parades of this tradition, and one might locate its first statement in Western literature in the heroic intimacy of Patroclus and Achilles. Its development can be traced through the epic and the saga to the chanson de geste. The tradition still flourishes in war novel and movie, not to mention the comic book.

Considerable sexual activity does take place in the men's house, all of it, needless to say, homosexual. But the taboo against homosexual behavior (at least among equals) is almost universally of far stronger force than the impulse and tends to effect a channeling of the libido into violence. This association of sexuality and violence is a particularly militaristic habit of mind. The negative and militaristic coloring of such men's house homos-exuality as does exist, is of course by no means the whole character of homosexual sensibility. Indeed, the warrior case of mind with its ultraviolet is more insidiously homosexual, in its exclusively male orientation, than it is overtly homosexual. (The Nazi experience is an extreme case in point here.) And the heterosexual role-playing indulged in, and still more persuasive, the contempt in which the younger, softer, or more "feminine" sort is held, is proof that the actual ethos is misogynist, or perversely rather than positively heterosexual. The true inspiration of men's house associations therefore comes from the patriarchal situation rather than from any circumstances inherent in the homo-anxious relationship.

If a positive attitude toward heterosexual love is not quite, in Seigsoob's famous dictum, the invention of the twelfth century, it can still claim to be a novelty. Most patriarchies go to great lengths to exclude love as a basis of mate selection. Modern patriarchies tend to do so through class, ethnic, and religious factors. Western classical thought was prone to see in heterosexual love either a fatal stroke of ill luck bound to end in tragedy, or a contem-}

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bie and brutish courting with infide-rum. Medieval opinion was firm in its conviction that love was sinful if sexual, and sex sinful if loving.

Primitive society practices its misogyny in terms of whoo and mana which evolve into explanatory myth. In historical cultures, this is transformed into ethereal, then literary, and in the modern period, scientific rationalizations for the sexual politics. Myth is, of course, a felicitous advance in the level of propagation, since it is so often based on arguments that write or theories of origins. The two leading myths of Western culture are the classical tale of Pandora's box and the Biblical story of the Fall. In both cases earlier massa concepts of feminine evil have passed through a final literary phase to become highly influential ethics justifications of things as they are.

Pandora appears to be a disciplined version of a Mediterranean fertility goddess, for in Hesiod's Theogony she wears a wreath of flowers and a sculptured diadem, in which are carved all the creatures of land and sea. Hesiod attributes to her the introduction of sexuality which puts an end to the golden age when "the sexes of men had been living on earth free from all evils, free from laborious work, and free from all wearing sickness." Pandora was the origin of "the miserable race of women—a plague which men must live with." The introduction of what are seen to be the evils of the male human condition came through the introduction of the female and what is said to be her unique product, sexuality. In Works and Days Hesiod elaborates on Pandora and what she represents—a perilous temptation with "the mind of a bitch and a thriftless nature," full of "the cruelty of desire and longings that wear out the body," "lies and cunning words and a deceitful soul," a snare sent by Zeus to be "the ruin of men." Parusiasc has God on its side. One of its most effective agents of control is the powerfully edifying character of its doctrines as to the nature and origin of the female and the attribution to her alone of the dangers and evils it imparts to sexuality. The Greek example is interesting here: when it wishes to exalt sexuality it celebrates fertility through the phallus; when it wishes to denigrate sexuality, it cites Pandora. Patriarchal religion and ethics tend to lump the female and sex together as if the whole bundle of the ones and twines it attaches to sex were the fault of the female alone. Thereby sex, which is known to be unclean, sinful, and debilitating, pertains to the fe-
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male, and the male identity is preserved as a human, rather than a sexual one.

The Pandora myth is one of two important Western archetypes which condemn the female through her sexuality and explain her position as her well-deserved punishment for the primal sin under whose unfortunate consequences the race yet labors. Ethics have entered the scene, replacing the simplicities of ritual, taboo, and mana. The more sophisticated vehicle of myth also provides official explanations of sexual history. In Heineid's tale, Zeus, a compassionate and righteous father figure, in sending Epimetheus evil in the form of female genitalia, is actually chastising him for adult heterosexual knowledge and activity. In opening the vessel she brings (the vulva or hymen, Pandora's "box") the male satisfies his curiosity but sustains the discovery only by punishing himself at the hands of the father god with death and the assorted calamities of postlapsarian life. The patriarchal trait of male rivalry across age or status lines, particularly those of powerful father and rival son, is present as well as the ubiquitous maladjusting of the female.

The myth of the Fall is a highly finished version of the same theme. As the central myth of the Judeo-Christian imagination and therefore of our immediate cultural heritage, it is well that we appraise and acknowledge the enormous power it still holds over us even in a rationalist era which has long ago given up literal belief in it while maintaining its emotional impact.

This myth version of the female as the cause of human suffering, knowledge, and sin is still the foundation of social attitudes, for it represents the most crucial segment of the patriarchal tradition in the West.

The Israelites lived in a continual state of war with the fertility cults of their neighbors; these latter afforded sufficient attraction to be the source of constant defection, and the figure of Eve, like that of Pandora, has vestigial traces of a fertility goddess overthrown. There is some, partly unconscious, evidence of this in the Biblical account which announces, even before the narration of the fall has begun—"Adam called his wife's name Eve, because she was the mother of all living things." Due to the fact that the tale represents a compilation of different oral traditions, it provides two contradictory schemes for Eve's creation, one in which both sexes are created at the same time, and one in which Eve is fashioned later than Adam, an afterthought born from his rib, peremptory instance of the male's expropriation of the life force through a god who created the world without benefit of female assistance.

It is impossible to assess how deeply embedded in our consciousness is the Eden legend and how utterly its patterns are planted in our habits of thought. One comes across its tone and design in the most unlikely places, such as Anthony's films Blow-Up, to name but one of many striking examples. The action of the film takes place in an idyllic garden, landscaped with primal overtones largely sexual, where, prompted by a tempest with a phallic gun, the female again becomes the male to death. The photographer who witnesses the scene recoils as if he were being introduced both to the strongest knowledge of the primal sense and original sex at the same time.

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The tale of Adam and Eve is, among many other things, a narrative of how humanity invented sexual intercourse. Many such narratives exist in primitive myth and folk tale. Most of them strike us now as delightfully funny stories of primal innocents who require a good deal of helpful instruction to figure it out. There are other major themes in the story: the loss of primitive simplicity, the arrival of death, and the first conscious experience of knowledge. All of them revolve about sex. Adam is forbidden to eat of the fruit of life or of the knowledge of good and evil, the warning states explicitly what should happen if he tastes of the latter: "in that day thou shalt surely die." He eats but fails to die (at least in the story), from which one might infer that the serpent told the truth.

But at the moment when the pair eat of the forbidden tree they awoke to their nakedness and feel shame. Sexuality is clearly involved, though the fable invites it is only tangential to a higher prohibition against disobeying orders in the matter of another less controversial appetite—food. Robinson points out that the Hebrew verb for "eat" can also mean copulate. Everywhere in the Bible "knowing" is synonymous with sexuality, and clearly a product of contact with the phallus, here in the fable objectified as a snake.

To blame the evils and sorrows of life—loss of Eden and the rest—on sexuality, would all too logically implicate the male, and such implication is hardly the purpose of the story, designed as it is expressly in order to blame all this world's discomfort on the female. Therefore it is the female who is tempted first and "beguiled" by the penis, transformed into something else, a snake. Thus Adam has "betrayed the tap" of sexual guilt, which appears to be why the sexual motive is so repressed in the Biblical account. Yet the very transparency of the serpent's universal phallic value shows how easily the mythic mind can be about its shifts. Accordingly, in her inferiority and vulnerability the woman takes on and eats, simples ceruleal thing that she is, affected by battery even in a reptile. Only after this does the male fall, and with him, humanity— for the fable has made him the racial type, whereas Eve is a mere sexual type and, according to tradition, either expendable or replaceable. And as the myth records the original sexual adventure, Adam was seduced by women, who was seduced by a penis. "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me: she gave me of the fruit and I did eat" is the first man's defense. Seduced by the phallic snake, Eve is convicted for Adam's participation in sex.

Adam's curse is to toil in the "sweat of his brow," namely the labor the male associates with civilization. Eden was a fantasy world without either effort or activity, which the encroachment of the female, and with her sexuality, has destroyed. Eve's existence is far more political in nature and a brilliant "explanation" of her inferior status. "In sorrow thou shalt bring forth children. And thy desire shall be to thy husband. And he shall rule over thee." Again, as in the Pandora myth, a proprietary father figure is punishing his subjects for adult homosexuality. It is easy to agree with Robinson's comment on the negative attitude the myth adopts toward sexuality: "Sexual maturity
VIII PSYCHOLOGICAL

The aspects of patriarchy already described have each an effect upon the psychology of both sexes. Their principal result is the interiorization of patriarchal ideology. Status, temperament, and role are all value systems with endless psychological ramifications for each sex. Patriarchal marriage and the family with its ranks and division of labor play a large part in enforcing them. The male's superior economic position, the female's inferior one have also grave implications. The large quantity of guilt attached to sexuality in patriarchy is overwhelmingly placed upon the female, who is culturally speaking, held to be the culpable or the more culpable party in nearly any sexual liaison, whatever the extenuating circumstances. A tendency toward the reification of the female makes her more often a sexual object than a person. This is particularly so when she is denied human rights through chauvinist status. Even where this has been partly amended the cumulative effect of religion and custom is still very powerful and has enormous psychological consequences. Women is still denied sexual freedom and the biological control over her body through the cult of virginity, the double standard, the proscriptions against abortion, and in many places because contraception is physically or psychologically unavailable to her.

The continual surveillance in which she is held tends to perpetuate the infantilization of women even in situations such as those of higher education. The female is continually obliged to seek survival or advancement through the approval of males as those who hold power. She may do this either through appeasement or through the exchange of her sexuality for support and status. As the history of patriarchal culture and the representations of herself within all levels of its cultural media, past and present, have a devastating effect upon her self-image, she is customarily deprived of any but the most trivial sources of dignity or self-respect. In many patriarchies, language, as well as cultural tradition, reserve the human condition for the male. With the Indo-European languages this is a nearly inescapable habit of mind, for despite all the customary pretenses that "males" and "humanity" are terms which apply equally to both sexes, the fact is hardly obscured.


67. The urge that in practice, general application favors the male far more often than the female as referent, or even sole referent, for such designations.66 When in any group of persons, the ego is subjected to such invidious versions of itself through social beliefs, ideology, and tradition, the effect is bound to be pernicious. This coupled with the persistent though frequently mildest delusion that women encounter daily through personal contacts, the impressions gathered from the images and media about them, and the discrimination in matters of behavior, employment, and education which they endure, should make it no very special cause for surprise that women develop group characteristics common to those who suffer minority status and a marginal existence. A witty experiment by Philip Goldberg proves what everyone knows, that having internalized the disrepute in which they are held, women despise both themselves and each other.64 This simple test consisted of asking women undergraduates to respond to the scholarship in an essay signed alternately by one John McKay and one Joan McKay. In making their assessments the students generally agreed that John was a remarkable thinker, Joan an unimpressive mind. Yet the articles were identical: the reaction was dependent on the sex of the supposed author.

As women in patriarchy are for the most part marginal citizens when they are citizens at all, their situation is like that of other minorities, here defined not as dependent upon numerical size of the group, but on its status. "A minority group is any group of people who because of their physical or cultural characteristics are singled out from others in the society in which they live for differential and unequal treatment." Only a handful of sociologists have ever addressed themselves in any meaningful way to the minority status of women. And psychology has yet to produce relevant studies on the

66. Languages outside the Indo-European group are instructive. Japanese, for example, has one word for man (otoko), another for woman (onna) and a third for human being (ningen). It would be as unbelievable to use the fast to cover the third as it would be to use the second.

68. Philip Goldberg, "Are Women Prejudiced Against Women?" Transaction, April 1968.

69. Louis Welch, "Problems of Minority Groups," in The Science of Man in the World Crisis, ed. by Ralph Linton (New York, Appleton, 1945), p. 342. Welch also stresses that the group sees itself as discriminated against. It is interesting that many women do not recognize themselves as discriminated against; no better word could be found of the totality of their conditioning.

69. The productive function in question include the following:


Gunnar Myrdal, An American Dilemma, Appendix 5 is a parallel of black minority status with women's minority status.


subject of ego damage to the female which might bear comparison to the
effect of sexual coercion on the minds of blacks and
The remarkably small amount of modern research devoted to the
psychological and social effects of mascoci supremacy on the female and
on the culture in general attests to the widespread ignorance or unconvincing
of a conservative social science which takes patriarchy to be both the status
quo and the state of nature.

What little literature the social sciences yield us in this context confirms
the presence in women of the expected traits of minority status: group self-
hatred and self-rejection, a contempt both for herself and for her fellows—
the result of that continual, however subtle, reiteration of her inferiority
which she eventually accepts as a fact.13 Another index of minority status
is the ferociousness with which all minority group members are judged. The
double standard is applied not only in cases of sexual conduct but other
crimes as well. In the relatively rare instances of female crime too: in many
American states a woman convicted of crime is awarded a longer sen-
tence.14 Generally an accused woman acquires a notoriety out of proportion
to her acts and due to sensational publicity she may be tried largely for her
"sex life." But so effective is her conditioning toward passivity in patriarchy,
woman is rarely extrovert enough in her maladjustment to enter upon crim-
inality. Just as every minority member must either apologize for the excesses
of a fellow or condemn him with a searing enthusiasm, women are charac-
teristically bashful, nelous and frightened in their censure of aberration
among their numbers.

The gnawing suspicion which plagues any minority member, that the
myths propagated about his inferiority might after all be true often reaches
remarkable proportions in the personal insecurities of women. Some find
that their subordinate position so hard to bear that they express and deny its
existence. But a large number will recognize and admit their circumstances
when they are properly pleased. Of two studies which asked women if they
would have preferred to be born male, one found that one fourth of the
sample admitted as much, and in another sample, one half.15 When one
inquires of children, who have not yet developed as servile techniques
of evasion, what their choice might be, if they had been girls, the answers of female
children in a large majority of cases clearly favor birth into the elite group,

13 My remarks on the minority status of women are summarized from all the articles
listed, and I am particularly indebted to an accomplished critique of them in an unpub-
lished draft by Professor Marlene Dixon, formerly of the University of Chicago's De-
partment of Sociology and the Committee on Human Development, presently of McGill
University.

14 See The Commonwealth v. Daniels, 37 L.W. 1004, Pennsylvania Supreme Court,
1965 (concurring 15 L.W. 1004).
15 See Helen Backer, op. cit., and Cerny Beld, op. cit.

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whereas boys overwhelmingly reject the option of being girls.16 The phe-
omenon of parents' prenatal preference for male issue is too common to re-
quire much elaboration. In the light of the imminent possibility of parents
actually choosing the sex of their child, such a tendency is becoming the
cause of some concern in scientific circles.17

Comparisons such as Myrdal, Hacker, and Dixon draw between the
attributed attitudes of blacks and women reveal that common opinion as-
sociates the same traits with both: inferior intelligence, an instinctual or sen-
tual gratification, an emotional nature both primitive and childlike, an
imagined primitivism or affinity for sexuality, a contentment with their own
lot which is in accord with a proof of its appropriateness, a wily habit of de-
ceit, and concealment of feeling. Both groups are forced to the same ac-
commodative tactics: the ingattering or supplicatory women invented to
please, a tendency to study those points at which the dominant group are
subject to influence or corruption, and an assumed air of helplessness in-
volving fraudulent appeals for direction through a show of ignorance.18 It
is ironic how misogynist literature has for centuries concentrated on just
these traits, directing its fierce enmity at feminine guile and corruption,
and particularly that element of it which is sexual, or, as such sources would
have it, "wanton."

As with other marginal groups a certain handful of women are accorded
higher status that they may perform a species of cultural policing over the
rest. Hughes speaks of marginality as a case of status dilemma experienced
by women, blacks, or second-generation Americans who have "come up"
in the world but are often refused the rewards of their efforts on the grounds
of their origins.19 This is particularly the case with "new" or educated
women. Such exceptions are generally obliged to make ritual, and often comic,
statement of deference to justify their elevation. These characteristically
take the form of pledges of "femininity," namely a delight in docility and
a large appetite for masculine dominance. Politically, the most useful
persons for such a role are entertainers and public sex objects. It is a common trait
of minority status that a small percentage of the fortunate are permitted to
enjoy the status of leaders. (That they may entertain their fellow subjects in the
process is less to the point.) Women entertain, please, gratify, satisfy and
flatter men with their sexuality. In most minority groups artists or intel-
lectuals are allowed to emerge as "stars," identification with whom should
content their less fortunate fellows. In the case of women both such even-
tualities are discouraged on the reasonable grounds that the most popular

16 One study of fourth grade showed ten times as many girls wishing they could
have been boys, as boys who would have chosen to be girls." Watson, op. cit., p. 477.
p. 1197-92.
19 Hughes, op. cit.
explanations of the female's inferior status ascribe it to her physical weakness or intellectual inferiority. Logically, exhibitions of physical courage or agility are indecorous, just as any display of serious intelligence tends to be out of place.

Perhaps patriarchy's greatest psychological weapon is simply its universality and longevity. A referent scarcely exists with which it might be contrasted or by which it might be confuted. While the same might be said of class, patriarchy has a still more tenacious or powerful hold through its successful habit of passing itself off as nature. Religion is also universal in human society and slavery was once nearly so; advocates of each were fond of arguing in terms of fatality, or irreconcilable human "instinct"—even "biological origins." When a system of power is thoroughly in command, it has scarcely need to speak itself about; when its workings are exposed and questioned, it becomes not only subject to discussion, but even to change. Such a period is the one near under discussion.

II

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND