

## Revenge of the Dykes, Choicers, Witches, Ghettoites and Single/Working/Welfare Moms

1992

**A**ny time some unctuous hypocrite pontificates about the absolute morality of the traditional family, reach for your pocketbook, look around for lurking fascists in government, and cling like mad to your personal integrity.

Male politicians, dutifully echoed by wife-robots, are trying to make you, the *victims* of their horrible anarchy, into the reason for economic disaster and social dysfunction. How dare they!

How dare these extollers of a system that starves and exploits and crucifies untold billions blame the underpaid and the destitute for the poverty, miserable education and training, crime, dope, cynicism, domestic turmoil, and rejection of obsolete middleclass values *that the profit system itself generates?*

**T**he sinister self-righteousness flown under the “family values” banner at the '92 Republican convention powered a thinly veiled, proto-Nazi blitzkrieg against the way enormous numbers of people live their lives. Feminists were damned, single moms denounced, working mothers scolded, any and all abortions reviled, lesbians and gays excoriated. The problems of racial minorities were totally ignored—but every reference to welfare abusers and criminals was a coded allusion to persons with dark skin.

Nor did President-Elect Charming and the Democrat brat pack defuse the incendiary call-to-arms against us lifestyle criminals. They knocked themselves out to parade their own mom and pop orthodoxy. The Clintons schlepped their teenage daughter to every photo opportunity imaginable, while Gore made his accident-victim son the subject of unbearably schmaltzy oratory.

But all those macho office-holders with carefully coiffured, mostly-blond wives and beautifully garbed children cannot speak for the U.S. majority, who do not live or think like them or own checkbooks like theirs.

We've come a long way, baby, since antiquity, when property was communal, relations between men and women democratic, and females revered and central to the matriarchy—not only as the mothers, but as chief providers of food, medicine and political decisions.

When private property landed in male hands—*accidentally*, because men controlled the herds that became the first money commodity—women lost their economic equality. Their work became *private*, no longer public. Men became a ruling *class*, and women—after centuries of resistance—became virtual slaves.

Ever since, the male unconscious has carried within it this memory of original guilt, of their world overthrow of the female sex, of a primal *mea culpa*, and men deny or justify this historical abomination by asserting male supremacy.

The family has no eternal or holy or cosmic values of its own. Family values reflect and express the conditions of production of a given period. A certain set of economic relations requires a certain kind of kinship structure. And the patriarchal, male-dominated, monogamous family came into being for the purpose of transmitting inheritance of property through the male line.

As with the family, so with the state, which also exists to

promote the ruling class. The state ends up *decreeing* a specific type of family to perpetuate the system it guards. The capitalist state needs women to be subordinate; taken to its outer limits, this means *kinder, kirche, küche*—“children, church, kitchen”—the slogan of Hitler, the Quayles, shorthaired preachers, and, I fear, the muzzled Hillary.

So anybody who thinks that the Democrats are going to vanquish the New Nazis is suicidally naive. The U.S. today is Weimar Germany after World War I, facing the same choice between fascism and socialism. And the U.S. today will set the pace for the rest of the world—Germany, Japan, France—in deciding what to do about Hitler’s heirs. That is why militant activism by anti-fascists is vital.

Feminists, people of color, lesbians and gays, all workers: wake up! Social revolution is the only viable alternative to the concentration camps—and the only answer to vanishing jobs. With a technology geared to produce goods without producing jobs, high-tech capitalism is becoming an oxymoron, a contradiction in terms. Socialism is computers plus justice.

The global order of competitive trade and multi-currencies is absurd. It cries out to be replaced with production for use, not for greed, so as to eliminate the endless wars and hatreds spawned by dwindling markets and poverty.

A rational analysis for the mess can provide a rational solution—but *never* while the reason for the worldwide crisis is massively attributed to women, gays, ethnics, and unions. The family values brouhaha is a depraved and insulting attempt to deflect our attention from the basic problems of the world economy onto the usual scapegoat suspects.

Don’t let this happen! Give the looters-with-license hell. Tell ’em to take their bourgeois values and shove ’em. And once we have created a revolution in the way we deal with wealth, this proper Jewish mother promises you that family values will take care of themselves. As always.

## Forward to the Past: The New Puritanism

1997

**R**epent, all ye sinners. The age of neo-prudery is upon us and fire and brimstone await. The scarlet letter, that shameful badge of Adultery, has returned to berate us.

The media wallows these days in news of people “cheating” on their state-approved significant others. Dick Morris confesses, Bill Cosby apologizes, Madonna announces a turn to virtue, and talk show hosts and counselors moralize about betrayal and deceit, as if departure from monogamy is high treason.

Just why is adultery the number one Thou Shalt Not?

Here’s a clue. Cheating is a financial term, and it can only be applied to sexual relationships if female and male bodies are seen as personal property—which, in this commodity-ruled patriarchy, they are, since paternity still dictates who inherits what. In today’s climate of economic anxiety and blind narcissism, the noxious idea that *people can own people* (as in slavery) erupts like a beanstalk.

But crass reality must be dressed up if medieval mores are to sell. So here comes GOD to ordain fidelity to be Right and fornication (extracurricular) Wrong.

For the nonbelievers, pop culture takes over. Jealousy is not even depicted as mercenary or egomaniacal or super-possessive any more. It’s currently *noble*. The good wife who

uses any bloody means necessary to ward off interlopers, à la *Fatal Attraction*, is a movie cliché.

What's more, celibacy is the prescription du jour even for singles, especially females, teenagers, and the poor. The new welfare destruction bill allots not one penny for jobs, but provides millions to push abstinence!

The flight from the more relaxed practices of many people is part of a larger retrenchment. Renewed sexual conservatism is rooted in and nurtures the general regression. And nowhere is the backsliding more pronounced than in the mass movements of the '60s, which have all shape-shifted into their veritable opposites.

**F**or instance. When feminists first proclaimed “the personal is political,” we hardly expected that the personal would *replace* the political, with tawdry gossip about officials' bedroom peccadilloes substituting for discussion of their policies and becoming the basis for measuring their “character”! Certainly, we condemn sex harassment, but truly consenting behavior is nobody else's business, and rarely reveals much about someone's integrity or worth.

Our point back then was that the oppression of women is not accidental or isolated, but a symptom of a universal second-class role that the whole dismal for-profit system depends on. This fact, however, has been stood on its head in the recent welfare laws, which blame individual women for broad social ills. And the National Organization for Women's top strata failed to robustly resist this monstrous “reform” because they support Bill Clinton, despite his treachery on the issues.

**L**ikewise, when street queers and drag queens revolted at the Stonewall Inn in 1969, the upsurge they set off prioritized sexual liberation as a matter of principle. They correctly identified homophobia as key to deification of the

traditional family. But now the movement focuses on sexual self-policing and respectability mongering.

Gay pacesetters demand entrance into the heavenly domain of bourgeois wedded bliss, as gay couples plead they are straighter than straights—less inclined to “stray” or (gasp) divorce. Granted, the right of gays to marry is legitimate, but how foolish to elevate it to First Cause—and how ironic, at a time when old-school marriage is exiting the stage of history.

The civil rights movement, for its part, started out fired up to abolish the color line and gain total integration—not assimilation, but access to every civic benefit.

Yet, after decades of backlash, the African American cause has largely subsided into cultural nationalism, which stresses differences with other races and with Jews rather than human similarities. It glamorized separatism and unrealistically champions Black business as the solution to ghetto poverty. This ideology is disastrous, because when people of color remove themselves from their workingclass sisters and brothers, they remove an essential *leadership* sector from the common struggle of all the have-nots.

Nationalism, moreover, is infused inevitably with sexist baggage, relegating women to inferior status and outdoing the white establishment in condemning homosexuality.

All right, you’ve heard it from me before. Reform must grow into revolution or twist into reaction. It’s an immutable law of nature—things go forward or backward. At the moment, society is headed cataclysmically in the wrong direction.

To a socialist, personal relations should be symbolized by openness, *not* a chastity belt. To a socialist, it’s not the market that should be free but love.



<http://www.RedLetterPress.org>