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Edmund Leites

Queens College of the City University of New York

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THE DUTY TO DESIRE: LOVE, FRIENDSHIP, AND SEXUALITY IN SOME PURITAN THEORIES OF MARRIAGE

Edmund Leites

When philosophers or political scientists look for early statements of some modern Western ideas of marriage, they are likely to turn to Locke's *Two Treatises of Government*, for there we find elements or hints of the modern view that marriage is a contractual relation between two autonomous and equal partners. Husband and wife jointly set the terms of their relationship; their particular interests determine its character; they retain the freedom to leave when the terms of the contract are no longer satisfied. In this search of forerunners, however, it is a mistake to limit one's reading of seventeenth-century texts to Locke's. In the following pages, I hope to persuade you that a number of seventeenth-century English theologians and preachers, for the most part Puritan, deserve equal attention. I shall consider William Ames and Richard Baxter, two of the most important casuists for seventeenth-century Puritans; Thomas Gataker, William Gouge, and Daniel Rogers, three Puritan clergymen who distinguished themselves particularly in their writings on marriage; and Jeremy Taylor, who was no Puritan, but whose attitudes toward marriage were in many respects like those of the Puritan casuists and theologians.

By calling someone "Puritan," I mean to say that he or she was part of the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century popular movement to reform English Christianity. In spite of the many divisions within this movement, there are general features which characterize all the intellectual and social tendencies I call "Puritan." Puritans demanded that they and others lead a life which was, in the realm of everyday conduct, ethically

strict; in the realm of belief, meticulously scrupulous; in matters of ritual, simple (thus they were suspicious of cross and mitre, surplice and relic); and in matters of piety, deeply concerned with the inward state of the soul (thus they were hostile to a church satisfied with the perfunctory performance of outward acts).¹ This piety, as we shall see, has its analogue in the Puritans' notion of conjugal love: an outward fulfillment of the duties of marriage was not enough; the proper intentions and feelings toward your spouse also had to exist.

I

A few reflections on the Roman Catholic background of Puritan ideas are in order. Let us begin with the Roman Catechism of 1566, "a careful distillation of Counter-Reformation theology," in which we find a statement of the ends of marriage as established by God; we should seek at least one of them in marrying, although we may have other ends as well (Noonan, 1965: 313-314). It tells us that the first of the appropriate ends is the

. . . very partnership of diverse sexes—sought by natural instinct, and compacted in the hope of mutual help so that one aided by the other may more easily bear the discomforts of life and sustain the weakness of old age. Another is the appetite of procreation, not so much that heirs of property and riches be left, but that worshippers of the true faith and religion be educated . . . And this is the one cause why God instituted marriage at the beginning. . . . The third is one which after the fall of the first parent was added to the other causes, . . . [for man's] appetite began to fight with right reason; so indeed he who is conscious of his weakness and does not wish to bear the battle of the flesh may use the remedy to avoid the sins of lust (Roman Catechism of 1566: 2. 8. 13, 14; quoted by Noonan, 1965: 313).

In making companionship, specifically mutual support and comfort, one of the chief purposes of marriage, in making this quite distinct from the procreative purpose, and in listing companionship first among these purposes, the authors of the catechism went against

those within the Catholic world, such as Augustine, who made little of this side of marriage. Genesis (2. 18-23) tells us that God did not find it good for man to be alone; therefore, he gave Adam a helpmeet: woman, bone of his bone, flesh of his flesh; she pleased him greatly. But why, asks Augustine (*De Genesi ad Litteram Libri Duodecim*, 9. 7) did Adam need a woman to be his helpmeet? As far as he can see, he replies, she would have been of no use to him, or any man, if she had not been capable of bearing children: "Non itaque video, ad quod aliud adiutorium mulier facta sit viro, si generandi causa subtrahitur." What, then, of woman as delightful companion to man, comforter, supporter? What of man as this to woman? This receives scant mention in the theology of Augustine, who was, in matters of marriage, sexuality, and the status of woman, often more liberal than other Fathers of the Church. In his commentary on Genesis (9. 7), he repeats what he had said some years before in *De Bono Coniugale*: the goods of marriage are three, *fides*, *proles*, *sacramentum*. *Fides*, "fidelity," includes paying the marriage debt as well as keeping from intercourse with others; *proles*, the good of offspring, includes the support and education of children as well as their creation; marriage is a *sacramentum*, a "symbol of stability," therefore indissoluble. None of these goods, as Noonan (1965: 127-128) convincingly argues, includes the delight in the companionship and comfort which a man and a woman can give to each other.

Within the medieval and early modern Roman Church, Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics* sustained those who sought to give a more honored place to marriage as friendship. In the *Ethics*, Aristotle says that marriage is a kind of friendship, indeed, one more natural to human beings than the friendship of those who constitute the polis (*Nichomachean Ethics* 1162^a15-20). True, we are by nature political animals (*Politics* 1253^a5-10), but we are even more inclined to form

couples than we are to form cities. We are, as it is put in the Latin Aristotle upon which Thomas commented, "in natura coniugale magis quam politicam" (Thomas Aquinas, *Sententia Libri Ethicorum* 8. 12).

Aristotle sees three grounds for friendship: friends can be useful to each other, they can delight in one another's company (for a variety of reasons), and they can love one another's virtue. All three are available to the married couple. Spouses can be useful to each other in the running of a household, they can please and delight each other in their sexual relations, and they can love one another's virtue, if they are virtuous (*Nichomachean Ethics* 1162^a25-30). Marriage love is special, for it can unite into one all the kinds of friendship we can ever have: virtuous men can love each other for their virtue; youths typically love each other for sheer pleasure; old men may well be friends because it is useful to them, since people "at that age pursue not the pleasant but the useful" (*Nichomachean Ethics* 1156^a5-1156^b10). Spouses, however, may love one another for all these reasons, at any stage of life.

The idea of marriage as friendship is taken up by Thomas. Indeed, he relies upon Aristotle's notion that there must be a certain equality in all relationships to defend his belief that a man can have only one wife at a time. If reason deems it improper for a woman to have several husbands at one time, as it does, then, Thomas argues, it is wrong for a man to have several wives at one time, for marriage is a friendship, and "equality is a condition of friendship." "Were it lawful for a man to have several wives," but not lawful for a wife to have several husbands, "the friendship of a wife for her husband would not be freely bestowed, but servile as it were," for she would not be his true equal. "And this argument," says Thomas, "is confirmed by experience: since where men have several wives, the wives are treated as servants" (*Summa Contra Gentiles* 3. 124). "The greatest friendship" seems to be between

spouses, Thomas writes, for husband and wife "are made one not only in the act of carnal intercourse, which even among dumb animals causes an agreeable fellowship, but also as partners in the whole intercourse of daily life: so that, to indicate this, man must leave father and mother (Gen. 2. 24) for his wife's sake" (*Summa Contra Gentiles* 3. 123).

The approach of Aristotle and Thomas to marriage lives on in the sixteenth-century Roman catechism from which I quoted earlier.³ The same belief that marriage is a friendship, and a source of mutual delight and comfort, sustains some of the liberalizing tendencies within the late medieval and early modern church concerning sexual delight within marriage. Augustine took the position that God warrants and permits the pleasure and delight of intercourse among spouses only to the extent that it furthers the end of procreation: "What food is for the health of man, intercourse is for the health of the species, and each is not without carnal delight which cannot be lust, if modified and restrained by temperance, it is brought to a natural use," that is, done for the sake of procreation (*De Bono Coniugale* 16. 18). Unlike Aristotle, he did not think of sexual delight as a constituent of marriage friendship. Aristotle's belief remained alive in spite of Augustine. It was fully presented by Thomas in his commentary on the philosopher's *Ethics*; moreover, Thomas accepts Aristotle's outlook, although he does not make much of it, in the *Summa Contra Gentiles* (3. 123). The Scotsman John Major, professor of theology at the Universities of Paris, Glasgow, and St. Andrews during the first half of the sixteenth century, does much more with it. In his commentary on the sentences of Peter Lombard, he writes that "whatever men say, it is difficult to prove that a man sins in knowing his own wife for the sake of having pleasure," for husband and wife marry not only to have children, but to provide "consolation" to one another (John

Major, 1519: 4. 31; quoted in Noonan, 1965: 311). Others argued for the opinion permitting intercourse between spouses for pleasure on different grounds; the defense of this opinion in the seventeenth century provoked fierce opposition from rigorists within the Church, especially the theologians of Louvain, led by the Irishman John Sinnigh, who called the opinion permitting intercourse for pleasure "brutish" (Noonan, 1965: 326).

Not even John Major went so far as to make the life of the married equal in merit to the life of committed celibates. The doctrine that celibacy is the superior state, virtuously defended by writers like Jerome and Chrysostom in the ancient world (Noonan, 1965: 276), was fully upheld by Thomas, close as he was to Aristotle; upheld, as well, by the theologians of the late medieval and early modern Church who took the view condemned by Sinnigh as "brutish." They would have no doubt assented to the views on celibacy found in the 'large' catechism of Cardinal Bellarmine, the *Dichiarazione piu copiosa della dottrina cristiana* (1598), of great influence in the seventeenth-century Church. In his catechism, published in English in 1604, the "Student" asks, "Whether it is better to take the Sacrament of Matrimonie or to kepe virginitie"? The "Master" replies,

The Apostle S. Paul hath cleared this doubt, having written that he who joyneth himself in Mariage doth wel, but he that doth not joine himself, but kepeth virginite doth better. And the reason is, because Mariage is a thing humane, Virginitie is Angelical. Mariage is according to nature, Virginitie is above nature. And not only virginitie but widowhood is also better than mariage. Therefore whereas our Saviour said in a parable, that the good sede yelded in one fild thirtie fold fruite, in an other threescore, in an other a hundred fold: the holie Doctors have declared, that the thirtie fold fruite is of Matrimonie, the threescore fold of widowhood, the hundreth fold of virginitie (Bellarmine, 1604: 257-258).

Bellarmino, the Church's greatest polemicist against the Protestant movement, clearly meant to answer

those Protestants who denied the spiritual superiority of celibacy. Among them were the Puritans. "Let al Papists, Jesuites, Priests, or others," writes Rogers (1642: 9), "with all their fomenters and adherents, tremble and be ashamed, who have dared so many times dishonour marriage, and so many wayes to defile it." "They know not the benefit of the married estate," writes Gouge (1626: 242, 123), "who prefer single life before it." He calls upon "the admirers and praisers of a single estate" to "bring forth the all their reasons, and put them in the other scale against marriage. If these two be duly poised, and rightly weyed," he says, "we should find single life too light to be compared with honest marriage."⁴

The Church of England's rejection of institutionalized celibacy, whether in monastic orders or in the life of the secular priest, permitted a heightened appreciation of marriage. But the character of that appreciation remained to be determined. What was so good about married life? The Puritans rooted their love of marriage in the conviction that marriage is for the mutual support and comfort of a husband and wife, a conviction already developed within the Roman Catholic world. The Puritan William Gouge (1626: I, 122-123) writes that "the ends of Mariage" are three:

1. That the world might be increased . . . 2. That men might avoid fornication . . . 3. That man and wife might be a mutual helpe to one another, (*Gen.* 2, 18.) An helpe as for bringing forth, so bringing up children; as for erecting, so for well governing the family. An helpe also for well ordering prosperity, and well bearing adversitie. An helpe in healtie and sicknesse. An helpe while both live together, and when one is taken by death from the other. . . . No such helpe can man have from any other creature as from a wife; or a woman, as from an husband.

Puritans often argue for the excellence of marriage by pointing out that it was instituted by God *before* humankind had fallen; it was not simply a remedy for our concupiscence (though that it became, once we fell). It was part of the paradisaical state itself. Who first

instituted marriage, where did he do so, and when? In his creation of Eve “to *make a helpe meet for man*,” God established marriage; so the author was God, the place was Paradise, and the time was the most perfect that was “ever in the world” (Gouge, 1626: 121). Ames (1639: 197) writes that marriage, in general, “seemeth more excellent than the single life, for “in the beginning, it was ordained by God, for the bettering of man’s condition.”⁵

But why did Adam need a wife? Why did he need to better his condition in this way? What was wrong with Paradise as it was? The Puritan do not share Augustine’s outlook; Eve is more than the bearer of Adam’s children, she is his *companion*: it was not good that he was *alone* (Gen. 2. 18). Secker (1658: 15) puts it well:

When all other creatures had their mates, *Adam* wanted his: Though he was the Emperor of the Earth, and the Admiral of the Seas, yet in Paradise without a companion, though he was truly happy yet he was not fully happy; Though he had enough for his board, yet he had not enough for his bed; Though he had many creatures to serve him, yet he wanted a creature to solace him; when he was compounded in creation, he must be compleated by conjunction; when he had no sinne to hurt him, then he must have a wife to help him; *It is not good that man should be alone.*

Therefore, God determined to make him a helpmeet. But as Gouge (1626-27: I, 121) writes, none of the birds or beasts that God had already created would do, so Adam’s creator created woman out of “mans substance and side, and after his image.” Her maker then presented Eve to Adam for his consideration. The first man manifested “a good liking to her,” so God gave her to him “to be his wife.” Thus “the inviolable law of the near and firm union of man and wife” was first “enacted.”

It is true, before Adam had Eve, he had God, but this was not enough to remove his loneliness; nor could it be assuaged by the creatures that already “lived on the earth, or breathed the air.” He needed a

woman; and once a woman was created, she needed a man.

The cure of Adam's loneliness was to be love: his love for Eve, and her love for him; Eve's loneliness would be cured in the same way. Marriage provides this balm. The Puritans say that men must love their wives, and wives, their husbands: this is a duty that flows out of one of the purposes for which marriage was first instituted: thus Gouge (1626: 131) tells us that there must be "mutuall love betwixt man and wife . . . else the end and right use of mariage will be perverted." Baxter (1678: II, 40) tells us in firm tones that "*The first Duty of Husbands is to Love their Wives (and Wives their Husbands) with a true intire Conjugal Love.*" "Conjugal Love" is a "mayne and joint duty of the married," says Rogers (1642: 146).

The Puritans' appreciation of conjugal love was accompanied by an acute awareness of how bad a bad marriage was; their sense of this was no doubt sharpened by their appreciation of the pleasures and comfort of a happily married life. Marriage, writes Gataker (1624: 8) "*is a business of the greatest consequence, and that whereon the maine comfort or discomfort of a mans life doth depend; that which may make thine house to bee as an heaven or an hell here upon earth.*"

"They that enter into the state of marriage," writes Jeremy Taylor (1655: II, 224-225), who is in accord with the Puritans on this matter, "cast a dye of the greatest contingency, and yet of the greatest interest in the world, next to the last throw for eternity." A happy marriage provides a joy that lasts throughout life, an unhappy one creates lasting sorrow for both spouses. A wife "hath no sanctuary to retire to, from an evill husband; she must remain at home, the very source of her unhappiness, to "dwell upon her sorrow." A husband can run "from many hours of his sadness, yet he must return to it again, and when he sits among his neighbours he remembers the objection that lies in his

bosome, and he sighs deeply." Puritan authors sometimes referred to the words of Augustine, who, on more than one occasion, said that a bad marriage is like a bad conscience: you cannot get away from it. When love is absent between husband and wife, writes Baxter (1678: II, 41), it is like "a Bone out of joynt; there is no *ease*, no *order*" between them, till they are set right again.

The whole character of the love required, then, is this: spouses should find their mates to be the most special and delightful persons in their lives, throughout their lives. The Puritans who uphold this view are far from being hostile to romance; indeed, they make romance a duty of married life.¹¹

Marriage is by no means only a sensual relation for the Puritan theorists of marriage; spouses must also be spiritually devoted to each other. Baxter (1678: II, 44) tells us that "*A principal duty between husband and wife, is, with special care, and skill, and diligence, to help each other in the knowledge, and obedience of God, in order to their salvation.*" This, too, is an obligation which falls upon both husband and wife: wives as well as husbands for their spiritual and moral well-being. Wives who are normally required to be docile and submissive thus have a certain freedom to be openly critical of their husbands—in the service (or apparent service) of God, of course.

Baxter (1678: II, 18-31; 1675: 307) urged husbands and wives to pray together "in private," as well as with the larger family, which includes children and servants. Gouge (1626: 138-139) made conjugal prayer one of the duties of marriage. He tells us that the need for "a true, spiritual, matrimonial love" between husband and wife is one of the things "most meet to be mentioned in private prayer betwixt" them; spouses should pray "that such needful gifts and graces as are wanting in either of them may be wrought: and such vices and infirmities as they are subject unto may be rendered."

Such prayer between husband and wife provided one private occasion where wives could openly criticize their husbands. We need not simply *assume* that they did so: Baxter (1681: 70-71) tells us, with startling frankness, that his late wife

. . . was very desirous that we should all have lived in a constancy of Devotion, and a blameless Innocency: And in this respect she was the meekest helper that I could have had in the world (the ever I was acquainted with): For I was apt to be over-careless in my Speech, and too backward in my Duty; And [at her death] she was still endeavoring to bring me to greater wariness and strictness in both: If I spake rashly or sharply, it offended her: If I carried it (as I was apt) with too much neglect of Ceremony, or humble Complement to any, she would modestly tell me of it: If my very looks seemed not pleasant, she would have me amend them (which my weak pained state of Body undisposed me to do:) If I forgot any Week to Catechize my Servants, and familiarly instruct them (besides my ordinary Family-Duties) she was troubled at my remisness. And whereas of late years my decay of Spirits, and diseased heaviness and pain, made me much more seldom and cold in profitable Conference and Discourse in my house, then I had been when I was younger, and had more Ease, and Spirits, and natural Vigour, she much blamed me, and was troubled at it, as a wrong to her self and others: . . . [though] of late years, my constant weakness and pain . . . [kept me much in] my bed, that I was seldomer in secret Prayer with my Wife then she desired.

This freedom of wives to criticize their husbands creates a tension within the Puritan conception of marriage: for the Puritans are firmly convinced that men must rule and wives must obey. Gataker (1620: 1) approvingly quotes Colossians (3. 18): "*Wives, submit yourselves unto your Husbands, as it is comely in the Lord.*" When thinking along these lines, the Puritans call for restraint in feeling as well as submission in action. Women must restrain their expressions of anger and discontent, even if their husbands' conduct gives them good grounds.¹² Docility and a loving gentleness toward husbands are prime wifely virtues.¹³ This wifely restraint was to be balanced, according to the theorists of marriage, by husbands' gentle and restrained use of their own authority.¹⁴

II

The love required in marriage is more than a general good will or benevolence towards one's spouse; it is more than the Christian charity we may bear toward many: instead, it is a special sort of love which is required only of the married.⁶ To begin with, it is sensual, as well as spiritual. Rogers (1642: 150) tells us that "by conjugall love," he means "not only Christian love, a grace of God's spirit: (for marriage borders much what upon nature and flesh) nor yet a carnall and sudden flash of affection, completely enflamed by concupiscence: (rather brutish than humane) but a sweet compounde of both, religion and nature," which is "properly called *Marriage love*."

Marriage was instituted to provide mutual support and comfort; sensuous delight in the body of one's spouse is an essential element of the comfort which marriage must provide: thus to take (and encourage) delight is a duty which falls equally on both spouses: "Husband and wife," writes Baxter (1678: II, 42), "*must take delight in Love, and company, and converse of each other*." Gataker (1620: 44) tells us that one of a husband's duties of "love" toward his wife is "*Joy & delight in her*." He continues with a passage from *Proverbs*, often quoted by Puritan writers on marriage: "*Drinke, saith the wise man [of Proverbs], the water of thine own cisterne: . . . and rejoyce in the wife of thy youth: Let her be with thee as a loving Hind, and the pleasant Roe: Let her breasts or bosome content thee at all times: and delight continually, or as the word there is, even doate on the Love of her*" (*Proverbs* 5: 15, 18, 19).⁷

This sensuous love is not simply permitted, given the existence of a higher, holier, 'spiritual' relation between man and wife, nor is it allowed only to forward the other purposes of marriage. It is required as a constituent and intrinsic element of a good marriage. This

sensual affection and delight must continue unabated, with the full intensity of youthful desire, throughout the whole of married life. "*Keep up your Conjugal Love in a constant heat and vigor,*" writes Baxter (1678: II, 43). From the very outset, your spouse must be the apple of your eye. As life goes on, you must delight in your spouse as if he or she were your new and youthful husband or bride: Gataker (1620: 37) writes that you must not suffer your "*love to grow luke-warm.*"⁸

Physical deformities may not weaken your enjoyment of your spouse. If there are (objectively) more beautiful women or handsome men, disadvantageous comparisons should not be made: the pleasure you take in your spouse should be so great, there should be no place for any defect.⁹ Counseling the wife, Rogers (1642: 157) says, "Poare upon your own husband, and his parts, let him be the vaile of your eies, as *Abimelec* told *Sara*, and looke no further." Then counseling the husband, he says, let your wife "bee your furthest object: thinke you no virtues in any beyonde hers: those that are but small, yet make them great by oft contemplation: those that are greater, esteeme and value at their due rate." Gouge (1626: 208) writes that "an husband's affection to his wife must be answerable to his opinion of her: hee ought therefore to delight in his wife intirely, that is, so to delight in her, as wholly and only delighting in her . . . if a man have wife, not very beautiful, or proper, but having some deformity in her body," he should nonetheless "delight in her, as if she were the finest and every way most compleat woman in the world."¹⁰

Life is not all authority and submission; the Puritans knew that they lived in a material world of food and drink, bedstead and fireplace. Thus they said that husband and wife must also care for each other's material and worldly comfort. Men who do not care for the physical well-being of their wives are severely condemned;¹⁵ prudence in managing household affairs is one of the chief virtues of a wife.¹⁶ Gataker

(1624: 18-19) tell us that

It is no shame or staine . . . for a woman to be housewifely, be she never so well borne, be she never so wealthy. For it is the *womans trade* so to be: it is the end of her *creation*; it is that she was made for. She was made for man, and given to man, not to be a *play-fellow*, or a *bed-fellow*, or a *table-mate*, onely with him, (and yet to be all these too,) but to be a *yoake-fellow*, a *worke-fellow*, a *fellow labourer* with him, to be an *assistant* and an *helper* unto him, in the managing of such *domesticall and household affaires*.

Thus the prospect that a woman is prudent ought to weigh heavily when a man is choosing a mate. The wives of not a few eminent ministers in both Old and New England handled all the financial affairs of the family, leaving their husbands with greater liberty to concern themselves with matters spiritual and ecclesiastical; the men praised their women for this in no uncertain terms.¹⁷

Some writers put this obligation to care for the ethical, religious, and worldly well-being of one's spouse in words that will remind you of Aristotle and Thomas: they say that husband and wife must be *the best of friends*; you may have no greater friend than your spouse. It may be asked, says Taylor (1662: 79-83), "whether a friend may be more than Husband or Wife" to you? To which he answers,

. . . it can neither be reasonable or just, prudent or lawfull: but the reason is, because marriage is the Queen of friendships, in which there is a communication of all that can be communicated by friendship . . . other friendships are a part of this [marriage friendship], they are marriages too, less indeed then the other, because they cannot, must not, be all the indearment which the other is; yet that being the principal, is the measure of the rest, and all to be honoured by like dignities, and measured by the same rules, . . . friendships are *Marriages* of the soul, and of fortunes and interests, and counsels . . . [as] they are brotherhoods too . . .¹⁸

The Puritans were familiar with Cicero's *De Amicitia* as well as Aristotle's *Ethics*, but they are closer to Aristotle than they are to Cicero, for the Roman thinks that friendship can occur only among *men*. Cicero finds much of the meaning of friendship in politics and war,

although he thinks it can be enjoyed by those who have honorably retired from these worlds. By their own example, friends must encourage each other to act honorably in these harsh realms: we can love virtuous men "whom we have never seen," says Cicero (*De Amicitia* 8. 28-29); "now," he continues, "if the force of integrity is so great that we love it . . . in those we have never seen, . . . what wonder that men's souls are stirred when they think they see clearly the virtue and goodness of those with whom a close intimacy is possible?" Cicero offers Gaius Luscinus Fabricius, the Roman general and consul of the early third century B.C., notable, to later Romans, as a model of the integrity and simplicity which marked the mores of earlier days, as an example of a man whom he and his contemporaries have never seen, but love. As the tale is told, Fabricius resisted attempts to bribe him; thus, in spite of his high offices, he died poor; provision had to be made for his daughter out of funds of the state.

Women such as Fabricius' daughter could suffer or enjoy a fate created by the virtue of fathers and husbands in politics and war, but they were not, for Cicero, ordinarily active participants in these realms. They were not the stuff out of which friends could be made. Cicero held to the notion that women were by nature weak and light-minded (*infirmitas sexus* and *levitas animi*), although his experience of his first wife, Terentia, should have made him doubt this belief. In his own time, some aristocratic women did take an active part in Roman political life, but none of them were models of political virtue for Cicero; he retained his admiration for the manners and morals of the early Romans, who, with some exceptions, reserved the worlds of politics and war to men.

Eros, too, prevents wives and husbands from being true friends. Although friendship meant devotion, for Cicero, and a delight in being together, it is not an erotic relation, nor one in which *eros* is welcome. He disapproves of the homosexual friendships of Greek culture

to which some Romans of his own time were drawn. Homosexual intercourse is unnatural, says Cicero (*Tusculan Disputations*). The poet Ennius writes that "shame's beginning is the stripping of men's bodies openly"; Cicero agrees: the shameful practice of homosexual friendship had its origin, he thinks, "in the Greek gymnasia" (*Tusculans* 4. 70).

In general, he suspects sexuality, including the love of a man for a woman, "to which nature has granted wider tolerance" than it has to male homosexuality (*Tusculans* 4. 71). In sexual pleasure and sexual longing, we lose the temperate, peaceful, and equable mood which the wise man seeks to have at all times (*Tusculans* 4. 30ff). He condemns Aristotle and the Peripatetics, who say that there is a proper place in our life for the agitated movement of our soul if they are not excessive. This view, he says, "must be regarded as weak and effeminate," *mollis et enervata*. "Those who are transported with delight at the enjoyment of sexual pleasures are degraded," he writes; "those who covet them with feverish soul are criminal. . . . In fact, the whole passion ordinarily termed love [*amor*] . . . is of such exceeding triviality that I see nothing that I think comparable with it" (*Tusculans* 4. 38-39, 68). It is worse than trivial, for it leads us to do foolish and dishonorable things.

In their conception of marriage love, the Puritans reject Cicero's attitude toward women, friendship, and sexuality. Husband and wife are to be the best of friends; sensuality and sexuality are to be integral parts of this friendship: friendship and erotic romance go hand in hand. The unselfish devotion that men were to have for each other in the Ciceronian tradition must give way, not to a new world of unqualified egoism toward all, but to a kind of friendship with one's wife that was never called for by the Roman senator.

In this notion of marriage love, many of the themes of classical and medieval texts on friendship, including some of Cicero's, are retained or given new form. The

Puritans do not think that a major element of the friendship between husband and wife is the mutual encouragement to honorable action in politics and war, yet they do conceive of marriage friendship as one which should ethically and spiritually nourish husband and wife, whatever their callings. Then again, while Cicero does not make the usefulness of friends in practical matters the fundamental principle of friendship, he does give it a place: your true friends will help you in politics and business if they can. The Puritans, too, see husband and wife as joined in practical affairs, though not matters of state; let the reader recall Gataker's comment that woman was made to be a "*yoake-fellow*" as well as a "*play-fellow*" to man, a "*fellow labourer . . . in the managing of . . . domesticall and household affairs.*"

Some notions are lost. Cicero thought friends must nourish each other in the realm of letters, manners, conversation, and thought, in short, in the realm of urbane culture.¹⁹ The Puritans did not think that marriage had this purpose, nor, for that matter, did Cicero, which may be one more reason why he did not think of marriage as a kind of friendship. There are some startling new notions, as well, in the Puritan idea of marriage friendship. The same Puritans who believed that husband and wife should concern themselves with the ethical and spiritual character of their spouse also believed that one of the greatest goods of life is *being loved* by one's spouse. This love is a great good not because it leads our husband or wife to lavish great gifts on us, or do whatever we say, but because the love itself is comforting: someone cares for us, delights in us; we are no longer alone in the world. In the works of Aristotle, Cicero, and in the New Testament, this is a theme that is hardly to be found, if at all: it is a great good to *be loved* by another human; above all, it is a great good for a man, if he is loved by a woman, and a great good for a woman, if she is loved by a man. This idea is a foundation of the Puritan theory of marriage.

Much of this idea is found in Jeremy Taylor's thought. Objecting to the exalted belief that we should love a friend only for his virtue and not for what we hope from him, Taylor (1662: 29-31) writes, "although I love my friend because he is worthy, yet he is not worthy if he can do no good." But what kind of good? True, "he is onely fit to be chosen for a friend who can give me counsel, or defend my cause, or guide me right, or relieve me, or can and will, when I need it, do me good: onely this I adde: into the heapes of doing good, I will reckon" *loving me*, "for it is a pleasure to be beloved." Marriage is the model of all other human friendships, for in no other relation with a man or woman, can we be loved so well.

In a full-scale attempt to see Puritan ideas of marriage as part of the history of friendship, both in idea and practice, we should not ignore Montaigne, who shares much with Cicero. As far as friendship goes, *none* of "the four ancient forms of association—natural, social, hospitable, erotic," writes Montaigne, "come up to real friendship, either separately, or together." The love of woman "is more active, more scorching, and more intense" than that of true friendship. "But it is an impetuous and fickle flame, undulating and variable a fever flame, subject to fits and lulls, that holds only by one corner. In friendship it is a general and universal warmth, moderate and even, besides a constant and settled warmth, all gentleness and smoothness, with nothing bitter and stinging about it" (*Essais*, I, 28 ["De l'amitié"]; English translation, 1958: 136-137).

Montaigne thinks that the logics of desire in friendship and in our love of women are quite different. Adopting the view so characteristic of the Roman poet Martial, Montaigne thinks that a man's full possession of a woman destroys his desire for her: "la jouyssance le perd"; we become satiated, uninterested.²⁰ Friendship is different; the more it is enjoyed, the more it is desired. The pleasure of a woman's friendship must thus deprive a man of his desire for her: to the extent

that he desires her, she must not be his, but what is the pleasure of her friendship without his secure knowledge of her love for him?

But what of marriage, which is supposed to be a stable relation? A man cannot even hope that he and his wife will be friends, for friendship must be freely given, but marriage "is a bargain to which only the entrance is free—its continuance being constrained and forced, depending otherwise than on our will—and a bargain ordinarily made for other ends." Montaigne adds that women are not ordinarily suited for friendship. They commonly lack the "capacity" (perhaps he means the powers of spirit and mind) which sustain the "communion and fellowship" of friendship; "nor does their soul seem firm enough to endure the strain of so tight and durable a knot" (*Essais*, I, 28; English translation, 1958: 138). Who can be surprised that the same Montaigne who devotes a remarkable essay to the memory of his friend, Etienne de la Boétie, makes but little and passing mention of his wife? The distance between Montaigne and the Puritans is great: I need only mention the extraordinary records of conjugal devotion left by Richard Baxter (1681), in his memoir of his wife, and by Lucy Hutchinson, in her memoir of her husband, written for the sake of her children.²¹

III

Benjamin Nelson (1969: 139-164), in his extraordinary essay on the history of friendship in the West, says that the older ideal of an unselfish devotion of a man to his friend gave way, in early modern Europe, to a new view, unsympathetic to this devotion. He believes this shift in attitude is part of a larger passage in the West from the older world views of "tribal brotherhood" to the newer one of "universal otherhood," *not* universal brotherhood. The older idea of friendship, in which devotion was but to one or a few, did not become a basis

for a new and triumphal view in which devotion was to be given to even wider human groups; it was not successfully universalised. Instead, the idea of friendship came under attack and was ultimately replaced by an ethic which emphasised the disciplined pursuit of one's own personal good.

The belief that a man should stand surety for a friend in need, even if this means the risk of all his wealth, is often part of medieval and Renaissance ideas of friendship. We find it dramatically and profoundly developed in Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*. Nelson describes sixteenth-century attacks on this expression of unlimited devotion to one's friend, the most striking of which is Luther's (1524; quoted in Nelson, 1969: 152): "Standing surety is a work that is too lofty for a man; it is unseemly, for it is presumptuous and an invasion of God's rights. For . . . the scriptures bid us to put our trust and place our reliance on no man, but only on God; for human nature is false, vain, deceitful, and unreliable." In this matter, Luther finds an ally in Sir Walter Raleigh (1751: II, 351-352; quoted in Nelson, 1969: 147-148), who tells his son,

. . . suffer not thyself to be wounded for other men's faults, and scourged for other men's offences, which is the surety of another; for thereby millions of men have been beggared and destroyed, paying the reckoning of other men's riot, and the charge of other men's folly and prodigality; if thou smart, smart for thine own sins; and, above all things, be not made to carry the burdens of other men: if any friend desire thee to be his surety, give him a part of what thou hast to spare; if he press the further, he is not thy friend at all . . .

No doubt, Nelson is right to say that in early modern Europe, the belief that friends ought to be devoted to one another without limit gave way, in *the realm of commerce*, to the belief that we ought to be governed by principles of rational business practice at all times, and make no exceptions on grounds of love or affection. The harshness of the world of commerce is not qualified by the idea that man should be a friend to man. The

claims of friendship do not disappear from the world, however; indeed, in the sphere of marriage, they become more powerful than they ever were. In economic life, tribal brotherhood gives way to universal otherhood, but in the realm of marriage, the belief in brotherhood and friendship moves forward. It is sad that the aristocratic idea of friendship among males could not become a norm governing *all* human relations, among *all* human beings, in *all* spheres of life. It did not simply give way, however, to another ethic in which friendship had no place; it would be better to say that the idea of friendship among males gave way to the love between husband and wife. The claims of friendship remained circumscribed in their application, "tribal," but they made their home, and they *still* make their home, in one of the most common relations of modern life. The world of commerce lost some of the restraints that might have mitigated its harshness, but the world of marriage gained an ethic, which if heeded at all, makes it more humane.

In a later essay, Nelson (1974: 94-95) takes account of some of these developments: "too few seem to perceive that in the medieval world and in the early modern world—prior, actually, to the Puritans—a full religious sacralization of the family or family property did not exist. There did, indeed, not occur the sacralization of what might be called the special friendship with one's own wife." He interprets the Puritan call for friendship with one's spouse, however, in a curious way: it is "the sacralization of a collective egoism of the family and its property." It is thus far from the idea of male friendship in antiquity and the middle ages, which Nelson says "was conceived as the union that transcended all calculation and egotism whether of family or of person. From at least the time of Plato forward, the moralists and novelists insisted on preeminence of friendship, going so far as to deny that one's wife or members of one's family could truly be friends in the highest sense."

This is a prejudiced reading of friendship's twists and turns in history. Puritan marriage love is no more a collective egoism than the friendship among virtuous men espoused by Cicero. Cicero does call for a collective egoism among friends, for friends ought to favor each other over others. At the same time, this alliance has its limits: friends must not ask each other to do what is shameful; as we know, they must be exemplars of virtue to one another (*De Amicitia* 26, 35-40). The union of man and wife in Puritan thought is no less ethical.

IV

In the foregoing, I have described features of some seventeenth-century theories of marriage which bear significantly upon our understanding of contemporary American attitudes toward the union of man and wife. If we look to Locke's *Treatises of Government*, however, we will find the complex of ideas just described.²² Locke, like Puritan and other seventeenth-century writers on marriage, believed that an agreement to marry had the character of a contract.²³ He was unlike them in thinking that spouses themselves should, in principle, have a great deal of latitude in setting the terms of this contract. Their freedom is not unlimited, for marriage does have natural purposes; spouses may not set terms which would impede their achievement. Marriage's chief purpose is "the continuation of the Species." This purpose, writes Locke, is not fulfilled simply by "Procreation"; it requires that "young Ones" be nourished and supported "till they are able to shift and provide for themselves." "Inheritance," too, must be "taken care for" (*Treatises*, II, §§ 79, 81).²⁴ A man and a woman who have taken on this purpose by marrying must therefore remain together until all this is accomplished.

Locke also says that parental care and support is a "Right" of children; once created, a child has a right-

ful claim to aid "from his Parents" (*Treatises*, §§ 78, 80). "Inheritance," too, is a "Natural" right of children (see *Treatises*, I, §§ 91-93), so their rights extend even beyond their youth; they have a claim against their parents as adults. These rights of children also mean that husband and wife must stay together. But for how long? When children can stand on their own two feet, when, moreover, their inheritance has been taken care of, Locke sees no inherent reason why the marriage compact "may not be made determinable," that is, of limited duration, to end "either by consent, or at a certain time, or upon certain Conditions." This would make it like other "voluntary Compacts," which need not be made for life. There is no necessity in the nature of marriage, "nor to the ends of it, that it should always be for Life" (*Treatises*, II, 81).²⁵ Indeed, beyond the natural purposes of marriage, which bind the partners to certain terms, the ends of marriage should be set by the partners themselves: the terms of a marriage contract should answer the particular interest of those who wed.

Laslett notes that Locke was prepared to go even further than this. In his Journal, Locke made notes for the rules of a society based on reason alone, which he named "Atlantis." In this society, "he that is already married may marry another woman with his left hand. . . . the ties, duration and conditions of the left hand marriage shall be no other that what is expressed in the contract of marriage between the parties." (Locke, 1679: 199; quoted in Laslett's edition of *Treatises*, 1963: 364, note to § 81). Perhaps he thinks that since the business of procreation is taken care of by the husband's first marriage, the parties to the second, "left hand" marriage are free to design their marriage as they wish.)

The difference between Locke's attitude and that of the Puritans can be readily seen if we compare the implicit theory of divorce and remarriage in Locke's

Second Treatise with the explicit theory in Milton's tracts on divorce. From the point of view of pure reason, Locke thinks, mutual willingness to part is, within limits, sufficient to justify a complete divorce: a divorce which permits both parties to remarry. The reasons why they wish to part are not relevant; their wish to do so is enough. Parental obligations alone limit this freedom.

No Puritan writer shared this attitude; all strictly limited the grounds of divorce (Johnson, 1970). Most restricted these grounds to adultery and desertion; some argued that these grounds do not even permit a complete divorce, but only a separation; even the innocent party does not have the right to remarry. Milton was far bolder. Like many of his Puritan colleagues, he believes that the fundamental purposes of marriage are mutual support and comfort.²⁶ He therefore concludes that if differences in temperament between spouses make the fulfillment of this purpose impossible, divorce ought to be permitted, offering the opportunity of remarriage to both parties, although he leaves it up to the husband alone to decide whether a divorce shall occur. To yoke together a man and a woman who cannot give each other the warmth and comfort that marriage should give condemns them to a miserable life; to force them to maintain such a union defeats the purpose of marriage itself. Milton's argument that spouses may divorce when they are temperamentally incompatible reveals an attitude strikingly different from Locke's; for Milton argues his case in the light of the specific purposes of marriage. Spouses are not at liberty to aim at whatever ends they wish, but must guide themselves by the purposes of marriage as they are revealed by scripture and natural reason.

Locke and the Puritan theorists of marriage differ in other ways as well. Locke says that husbands should have the final say in marital disputes over things held in common, for the final decision having to be made by

someone, "it naturally falls to the Man's share, as the abler and the stronger" (*Treatises*, II, § 82). This subjection, however, is not basic to Locke's notion of marriage. We would not be far from his own viewpoint if we argued that husband and wife are equal and autonomous partners in marriage. In arguing for this, however, we would be far from the attitude of the Puritans, who make much of the submission of women to their husbands. We may therefore favor Locke; to be fair, let us keep in mind his failure to develop any conception of the emotional side of marriage as the Puritans do.

Clearly, there are Lockean currents in modern American conceptions of marriage: that husband and wife should meet each other as equals is one; that the interests and inclinations of husband and wife should be decisive in determining the character and objects of marriage is another. But in other respects, we might do better to look to the Puritan writers to find a source of some of our ideas of marriage. Four of their beliefs stand out in this respect: (1) that a chief end, or *the* chief end, of marriage is mutual support and comfort; (2) that sexual and sensual delight is essential to that comfort; (3) that husband and wife must also be the best of friends; (4) that this delight and friendship must last; neither may wane with the years.

V

In view of these ideas, how are we to evaluate Max Weber's belief that the "decisive characteristic" of the Puritans was their "asceticism" which "turned with all its force against one thing: the spontaneous enjoyment of life and all it had to offer" (Weber, 1920: I, 183; English translation, 1958: 166-167)? Much depends on a precise understanding of what Weber thinks asceticism is: a systematic self-discipline in feeling, intention, and action; which, if successful, means "the destruction of

spontaneous, impulsive enjoyment." In the creation of such a discipline, writes Weber, lies "the great historical significance of Western monasticism." It

. . . developed a systematic method of rational conduct with the purpose of overcoming the *status naturae*, to free man from the power of irritational impulses and his dependence on the world and on nature. It attempted to subject man to the supremacy of a purposeful will, to bring his actions under constant self-control with a careful consideration of their ethical consequences . . . this active self-control . . . was also the most important practical ideal of Puritanism. . . . like every rational type of asceticism, [it] tried to enable a man to maintain and act upon his constant motives, especially those which it taught him itself, against the emotions. In this formal psychological sense of the term, it tried to make him into a personality. Contrary to many popular ideas, the end of this asceticism was to be able to lead an alert, intelligent life: the most urgent task the destruction of spontaneous, impulsive enjoyment. The most important means [by which this asceticism achieved its end] was by bringing order into the conduct of its adherents (Weber, 1920: I, 116; English translation, which I have slightly modified, 1958: 118-119).

Weber is certainly correct in saying that the Puritan tried to make man "a personality," that is, sought to make him a being who acts "upon his constant motives" in all spheres of life, at all times. But the logic of self-control in the Puritan psychology of daily life is varied; it does not always involve hostility to spontaneous impulse in the name of psychic "order" and "methodical control," as Weber thinks (1920: I, 118; English translation, 1958: 119). In the case of married life, the Puritans called for an *integration* of ethics and impulse, constancy and spontaneity. The life of duty is a life of discipline, yet they make the spontaneous (and erotic) delight in one's spouse a *duty* of married life. Mutual delight in one another is not simply desirable, it is required: husband and wife together must make this a reality.²⁷

Some might consider this odd, for how can one make such love a *duty*? Can romantic love truly be governed with the same rigor as the more emotionally neutral benevolence of eighteenth-century humanitarianism?

From the point of view of Kant, and many contemporary moral philosophers, "ought" implies "can." Thus, love is beyond the rule of morals if it is wholly, and naturally, outside of our control. If it is so, then a fusion of ethics and eros in marriage love is beyond our control as well. This is Weber's conviction; like many German intellectuals and artists of the twentieth century, he thinks that rational self-discipline is no friend of erotic spontaneity: they are in harmony only in exceptional circumstances.²⁸ "Rarely," writes Weber (1920, I: 563; English translation, 1946: 350), does life grant us the fusion of the two "in pure form." "He to whom it is given may speak of fate's fortune and grace—not of his own merit."

VI

The Puritans understood that there was something beyond reason's control in the love which must be found in marriage. It is mysterious, writes Rogers (1642: 147-148), as the

. . . league of friendship, wherein we see God doth so order it, that by a secret instinct of love and sympathy, causing the heart of one to incline to the other, two friends have beene as one spirit in two bodies, as not only we see in *Jonathan* and *David*, but in heathens which have striven to lay downe their lives for the safeguard of each other. . . . oftimes a reason cannot be given by either partie, why they should be so tender each to other: it being caused not by any profitable or pleasurable meane, but by mere sympathy, which is farre the more and noble cement of union, than what else so ever.

There is a similar mystery at the heart of marriage love. Its causes are largely hidden and unknown; hence beyond our control: "the elme and the vine doe naturally so entwine and embrace each other, that its called, the friendly elme; who can tell why? much more then in reasonable creatures, it must be so."²⁹ Rogers even celebrates marriage love's distance from the dictates of cool judgement: "through this instrument of sympathie . . . two consent together to become husband and

wife," setting all others aside, although they are "more amiable in themselves, more rich, better bred, and the like." It must not be our own doing, but God's.

Others did not go this far, but agreed that love is rooted in temperamental affinities which we cannot rule.³⁰ If we are wrongly joined, happiness is beyond our reach. Puritan casuists therefore counselled their readers to make a very careful choice of partner. It is not necessary to be deeply in love to marry, but a real likelihood that such love will develop is necessary. No one ought to marry a person he thinks he cannot, or is not likely, to love. This sense of one's affinity to a proposed spouse is of greater importance than the wishes of one's own parents, weighty as those are.³¹ In *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, Hermia loves Lysander, as he loves her; Helena loves Demetrius, who loves not her, but Hermia. Yet once touched with the juice of Oberon's magic herb, Lysander has eyes only for Helena; a sign, he thinks, of his good judgment, for he says to his new-found love that "The will of man is by his reason sway'd;/And reason says you are the worthier maid" (*Midsummer Night's Dream* 2.2. 115-116). With further application of the juice of the same herb, Demetrius comes to love Helena. Oberon's Titania even comes to love Bottom, with his ass's head. Titania tells Bottom she loves him, but Bottom replies, "Methinks, mistress, you should have little reason for that. And yet, to say the truth, reason and love have little company together now-a-days" (*Ibid.*, 3. 1. 142-144). The happy resolution of the romantic tangles of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* are not solved by reason giving love its orders: we must have eyes for one another to love, but this is no work of reason: Oberon claims back Titania's love by another touch of her eyes. It is sweet magic, not cool logic, that does the trick.

Temperament is basic, but it is not all: Spouses can cultivate their delight in each other. The Puritans saw this cultivation as daily responsibility of spouses: "Put

case," writes Rogers (1642: 156), that "thou hadst grounds of first love to thy companion: what then? thinkst thou that this edge will holde without dayly whetting?" To help couples keep the edge on their marriage love, Puritan writers offer practical advice: Gouge, (1626: 133-134), for example, tells us that "*outward mutual peace*" is "one of the principall . . . means of maintaining an inward loving affection betwixt Man and Wife"; they should therefore "avoid offence"; if it is given, they should pass it by: "Let them suffer their own will to be crossed, rather than discontent be given to the other." If both be incensed together, "offer reconciliation"; if it is offered, accept it. Do not bring "children, servants," or others "in the family" into your frays. Do not compare your spouse to another. "Bee not jealous." "Endavour to please one another." Counseling husbands, Baxter (1678: II, 41) says, "Make not the infirmities" of your wives "to seem *odious faults*, but excuse them as far as you lawfully may, by considering the frailty of the Sex . . . and considering also your *own* infirmities, and how much your *Wives* must bear with you."

Like the sharpening of a knife, however, the Puritan's advice on cultivating marriage love tends to be superficial, inadequate to the task of enabling us to be husbands and wives who are the deepest of loves and the best of friends. For the demands upon us are very high in this idea of marriage, even when we are married to someone to whom we are temperamentally suited. Not many of us find it easy to achieve what the Puritans say we must. There are many reasons for this; I shall note two rather general ones: first, there is in many of us, a great deal of mistrust and fear of those we love or want to love; often there is a great deal of anger and defensiveness toward them as well. At least in part, these attitudes have their source in our experience of our own family when we were children; this past makes it difficult for us, as spouses, to nourish and maintain

the required love of our husbands or wives. In addition, those we love, or seek to love, may have a similar mistrust or fear. They thus may not find it easy to accept, indeed, may actively discourage, our expressions of love and affection.

Such fears and defensiveness are not easily gotten at through the means the Puritans advise us to use. Beyond this, their notion that wives ought to forego expressions of anger hardly seems appropriate to a marriage in which wives as well as husbands are to receive deep forms of comfort and support from their partners. Anger is a natural occurrence from time to time in any close relation; if we repeatedly ignore it, believing we ought to be docile, it does not thereby go away, at least not in ordinary cases, but reveals itself in a variety of ways; for example, in a generally bad temper, pervasive coldness, or loss of interest.

Moreover, the Puritans' emphasis on the unique friendship of marriage poses problems. They call upon husband and wife to be the best of friends, but they do not call upon each spouse to have close and intense friendships with anyone else. This is unwise. Perhaps our spouse should be our best friend, and the only one with whom we have sex, but it is difficult to develop a friendship and sustain it, if all our (emotional) eggs are in one basket. The penalty we pay if our trust is misplaced is too great, for we have no one to turn to if our best friend, our husband or wife, fails us in some way: no one to turn to but the very source of our sorrow. It is *possible* to nourish a friendship on this basis, but it seems to me difficult.

These difficulties can be removed. Husbands and wives can give up the notion that men must rule and women submit. We can develop strong friendships with others, so that there will be others to whom we can turn in times of marriage trouble. But more general difficulties remain. We cannot easily heal the psychic wounds that disable us from loving our spouses or accepting

their love, for these injuries lie deep. They are found in parts of our psyche that do not commonly respond to sage words of advice, nor are they removed by the peremptory demands of conscience.

We might therefore conclude that the Puritan demands are impossibly high, since very many of us cannot fulfill the duties of marriage they describe without a deep personal transformation that is surely not to be accomplished by following the kind of advice they give to spouses who don't come up to snuff. But the Puritan conceptions of marriage have *not* died out; my own impression is that they are very much alive in the United States. It is a commonplace of nineteenth and twentieth-century America that the family is supposed to be a haven in a heartless world, an island of ease and sweetness in the midst of an unforgiving world of commerce and industry, an oasis away from the "work ethic." For many of us, perhaps, it has been the other way around: doing well in business is *easy* compared to what is expected of us at home.³³ Perhaps this is why some of us work so hard: we can do so much better in career than we can do at home, where the claims of intimacy, friendship, and true love loom so large. Work is a haven from a home asking more than our hearts, or our spouses' hearts, can give.

Perhaps Puritan notions of marriage also account for some of the popularity of psychoanalysis and allied therapies in this country during the last half-century, for in the American context, these therapies have held out the promise of enabling men and women to meet the demands of marriage (or similar non-legal relations) more successfully.³⁴ It is curious that American psychotherapy, so often seen as hostile to "Puritanism," in fact often serves this Puritan end. Indeed, for some, therapy becomes the test of whether a marriage is to continue or not.³⁵ If a marriage is in trouble, one or both spouses seek therapy; if, after due time, they still cannot provide each other with the needed

warmth and comfort, then they think a divorce justified. For they believe that nothing more can be done. The temperamental failings lie too deep to be cured.

In retrospect, it appears that the Puritan demands upon spouses were not matched by the means which they gave to married couples to meet these demands. A similar situation may be still true today. Nonetheless, we might attribute at least some of the popularity of psychotherapies in the United States to their ability (or presumed ability) to make us what we should be as husbands and wives. In any case, if we want to look at the sources of some of the present perplexities of marriage, we had better look not only at Locke, but at Gouge, Gataker, Rogers, and their colleagues. The Puritans were fanatic about many things, including marriage; at least in this area, many of us continue a devotion to their demands, although we are not so sure about how well we are able to meet them.

*Queens College, City University of New York, and the
Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton*

NOTES

*I thank the many who commented on this paper for their help. Frequent conversations with Fred Lipschitz and Susan Leites, my wife, have provided me with much food for thought. Two texts stand out as insightful introductions to Puritan theories of marriage: Levin Schücking's *Die Puritanische Familie in literar-soziologischer Sicht* (1964; English translation, 1969) and William and Malleville Haller's "The Puritan Art of Love" (1941-1942).

¹Those who were Puritan in the ways described divided on the details of their ethics, belief, rite, and piety, and on other matters as well. The legitimacy of clerical authority and, more generally, of all hierarchies of wealth and power was a great point of contention. For an interesting discussion of this issue at the end of the Interregnum, see Reay (1978). For a discussion of the meaning of 'Puritan' in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, see Hall (1965). Much, too, can be learned from Kavolis (1979).

²In *De Bono Coniugale* (3. 3), Augustine writes that the marriage of old people must have some other purpose than procreation: it is the good of "mutual companionship between the two sexes" (*in diversu sexu societatem*). This notion of companionship as a good is omitted, however, in his general statements in this work concerning the good of marriage (Noonan, 1965: 128).

³It lives, too, in Noonan's *Contraception* (1965), an excellent and subtle work.

⁴Taylor (1657: 81-82) disagrees with the Puritans on this point. In his estimation of celibacy, he is close to Bellarmine. He praises a chaste widowhood, but reserves his highest esteem for the virginal life: It is "a life of Angels": "being unmingled with the world, it is apt to converse with God: and by not feeling the warmth of a too forward and indulgent nature, flames out with holy fires, till it be burned like the Cherubim . . . Natural virginity of itself is not a state more acceptable to God: but that which is chosen and voluntary in order to the conveniences of Religion and separation from worldly incumbrances, is therefore better than the married life; . . . it is a freedom from cares, an opportunity to spend more time in spiritual employment; . . . it containeth in it a victory over lusts, and great desires of Religion and self-denial, and therefore is more excellent than the married life." It allows, as Taylor says elsewhere (1655: 222), "a perfect mortification of our strongest appetites."

Self-mortification is a well-developed theme in both the Puritan and Roman Catholic worlds of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but the Puritans do not make much of self-mortification through the denial of the sexuality which belongs to marriage love, a love both spiritual and yet sensual, a love which leads couples to marry and sustains them once married. For this reason, Max Weber's characterization of Puritanism as an "inner-worldly asceticism" is misleading. The Puritans *do* call for mortification of sexual desire when illicit, but they call for an *integration* of sexuality of *husband and wife* with other elements of the good and holy life. They therefore reject the admiration of sexual self-mortification found in the Roman Church of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, for example, in authors as different as Ignatius of Loyola and Pascal. Weber is plainly wrong when he writes that "the sexual asceticism of Puritanism differs only in degree, not in fundamental principle," from that of Western medieval monasticism. (Weber, 1920: I, 169-170; English translation, 1958: 158).

In this matter, the case of Baxter is instructive. Unlike most of the Puritans who wrote about marriage, and in spite of the spiritual support he received from his wife, he thought the single life gen-

erally more suitable to the main ends of the Christian life. These ends are three: to "serve God," advance our "spiritual welfare," and increase our "Holinesse." Yet he does not praise those who choose the chaste single life for their sexual renunciation, nor does he list the sexual aspect of marriage as one of its spiritual disadvantages. In the main, his objection is that marriage creates so many worldly cares and concerns that it easily impedes both the active and contemplative elements of the Christian life, a theme well-known in the writings of the Roman Church, but linked in that tradition to an admiration of sexual renunciation (Baxter, 1678: II, 3-12).

⁵For a like passage, see Rogers (1642: 6). Secker (1658: 17) writes, "One of the Popes of *Rome*, sprinkles this unholy drop" upon marriage: "*carnis pollutionem & immunditiam*." "It's strange," says Secker, "that that should be a pollution, which was instituted before corruption: or that impurity, which was ordained in the state of innocency."

⁶See Gataker (1620: 37).

⁷For a similar use of this passage, see Griffith (1634: 280-281, 286) and Baster (1678: II, 42).

⁸For similar remarks, see Gouge (1626: 239-241).

⁹Also see Gataker (1620: 44) and Gouge (1626: 134).

¹⁰For a like passage, see Gataker (1620: 44).

Lucy Hutchinson (1665: 18-19), wife of a Puritan soldier, herself a Puritan, and brought up in a Puritan household, begins her description of the physical appearance of her late husband in the following way, in a memoir of him prepared for the benefit of their children: "He was of middle stature, of a slender and exactly well-proportioned shape in all parts, his complexion fair, his hair of light brown, very thick set in his youth, softer than the finest silk, and curling into loose great rings at the ends; his eyes of a lively grey, well-shaped and full of life and vigor, graced with many becoming motions; his visage thin, his mouth well made, his lips very ruddy and graceful, although the nether chap shut over the upper, yet it was in such a manner as was not unbecoming; his teeth were even and white as the purest ivory, his chin was something long, and the mould of his face; his forehead was not very high; his nose was raised and sharp; but withal he had a most amiable countenance, which carried in it something of magnanimity and majesty mixed with sweetness, that at the same time bespoke love and awe in all that saw him; his skin was smooth and white, his legs and feet excellently well-made; he was quick in his pace and turns, nimble and active and graceful in all his motions; he was apt for any bodily exercise, and any that he did became him; he could dance admirably well, but neither in youth nor ripen

years made any practice of it . . ." She goes on to describe other admirable qualities, including those he possessed in music, dress, and wit. A separate and major section of her memoir is devoted to his moral and spiritual virtues.

Her description of her husband, no doubt, owes much to modes of thought and perception that do not have their *origins* in Puritan culture. She is familiar with elements of the culture of the court, which owed much to the aristocratic manners and arts of the Continent. Her father was a gentleman who had spent time at court; she herself grew up in the precincts of the Tower of London, "whereof her father" had been "made lieutenant" (Hutchinson, 1965: 10).

She writes of herself as a child, "I thought it no sin to learn or hear witty songs and amorous sonnets or poems, and twenty things of that kind, wherein I was so apt that I became the confidant in all the loves that were managed among my mother's young women" (Hutchinson, 1965: 15). These sonnets or poems were not of Puritan origin, yet they were shared and sung in a Puritan household; as a grown woman, she disapproves of them, yet her own description shows that when she seeks to express her love of *her husband*, she still favors the amorous style learned in her youth.

The literature of knightly romance—*Amadis of Gaul* and the like—so popular in Elizabethan and Stuart England, even among the pious, also taught the Puritans something about the passion of love. (To assuage the conscience of the pious reader, the stories were often given a moral veneer; see Wright [1935].) Such literature is less in evidence in seventeenth-century New England, though it is by no means absent (see Wright, 1957: 141-144). For an amusing use of the literary style of the romance in early eighteenth-century New England, see the journal of Sarah Kemble Knight first published in 1825; for a twentieth-century edition, see Knight (1920). A lively excerpt is published in Miller and Johnson (1963: II, 425-447).

The literature of romance, as developed in the more refined forms of English poetry, may have also played a part in encouraging the flowering of romantic notions of marriage love among the Puritans. John Leverett, later to be president of Harvard College, while still a student, copied out several stanzas from Cowley's "Elegie upon Anacreon" and "The Mistress." Elnathan Chauncy, son of Harvard's President Charles Chauncy, copied out lyrics of both Herrick, including most of "Gather ye rosebuds while ye may," and Spenser; he gave twenty pages of his notebook to the latter poet (Morison, 1936: 46-52). Milton was not the only Puritan who read Spenser.

For the Spenserian background of Milton's thoughts on marriage love, see Haller (1946). For a complex and sophisticated discussion of ideas of marriage, love, and sexuality in Spenser and in Shakespeare, see Watkins (1950).

¹¹Puritan writers often turned to the Song of Songs to illustrate the love that a husband must have for a wife, and a wife for a husband, as the Hallers have noted (1941-1942: 243). See, above all, Rogers (1642: 313); also Perkins (1616-1618: III, 691); Gouge (1626); Griffith (1634: 289); and Milton (1645a: 335). For further documentation of the place of sexual love in marriage, as it is seen by Puritans who affirm its place in no uncertain terms, see Frye (1955).

Not all Puritans emphasise the sexual and sensual delight of marriage love. William Perkins does not make much of it. True, he says that "the Communion of man and wife" is a duty which "consisteth principally in the performance of speciall benevolence to one another, and that not of courtesie, but of due debt." Spouses must show "a singular and entire affection towards one another," among other ways, "by an holy kind of rejoycing and solacing themselves with each other, in a mutual declaration of the signes and tokens of love and kindness." To support his position, he quotes, in addition to Proverbs 5: 18, 19, Song of Songs 1. 1: "*Let him kiss mee with the kisses of his mouth, for thy love is better than wine.*" On the other hand, Perkins does not say anything of this joyous, and sensuous intimacy in his discussion of the ends of marriage, though he does say that mutual comfort is one of them (Perkins, 1616-1618: III, 689, 691, 671).

Baxter, too, fails to make much of the sensual and sexual side of marriage. He does tell husband and wife that they must take delight in each other; he adds the comment that men are perverse enough to turn "the *lawful delight* allowed them by God . . . into loathing and disdain." This, they must not do: Proverbs 5: 18-19 must be their guide (Baxter, 1678: II, 42). Yet he does not make the mutual delights and comforts of marriage a chief reason to marry. We must marry if we can serve God and ourselves better by doing so; we must marry if our parents require it of us (and there is "no greater matter on the contrary to hinder it"); we must marry if we are free to do so and "have not the gift of *Continence*." The good of mutual support and comfort comes in by the back door, in answer to the question, "*May the aged marry that are frigid, Impotent, and incapable of procreation?* Answ. Yes, God hath not forbidden them: And there are other lawful ends of marriage, as mutual help and comfort &c. which may make it lawful" (Baxter, 1678: II, 3-4). It takes a question about *the aged* to make him mention comfort as reason for marriage; he does not think that

they are that interested in sexual delight: he quotes Bacon, who says that wives are "old mens nurses"—a good enough reason for an elderly man to marry. Baxter was less willing than others to integrate the sexual with the affective, ethical, and even spiritual elements of marriage.

With respect to sexuality in marriage, Baxter is thus sometimes close to the anonymous author of *The Practice of Christian Graces or The Whole Duty of Man* (1659: 168-169; quoted by Schücking, 1969: 23), an enormously popular guide to conduct in late seventeenth-century England, the England of the Restoration. This author writes that in "lawful marriage . . . men are not to think themselves let loose to please their brutish appetites, but are to keep themselves within such rules of moderation, as agree to the ends of Marriage, which [are] . . . the begetting of children, and the avoiding of fornication."

The character of Baxter's thought and feeling perhaps misled Weber in his judgment of Puritanism, for the sociologist takes Baxter as an exemplar of Puritan attitudes toward marriage sexuality. Perhaps this is why Weber thinks that modern dissociations of sexuality from the deeper dimensions of emotional life are congenial to the Puritan sensibility. For the fortunate, Weber thinks, there exists, beyond the realm of reason and cultural demands, a life of desire, love, and passion, tragic in its irrationality, yet profoundly sustaining in its meaning. He abhorred the "moderns" of his time who had no inkling of this darkly luminous realm, who made sexuality a merely medical, physiological, or hygienic phenomenon: a purely "rational" matter.

Writing of his own time, Weber remarks that "in a lecture, a zealous adherent of hygienic prostitution—it was a question of the regulation of brothels and prostitutes—defended the moral legitimacy of extra-marital intercourse (which was looked upon as hygienically useful) by referring to its poetic justification in the case of Faust and Margaret." Weber comments: "To treat Margaret as a prostitute and to fail to distinguish the powerful sway of human passion from sexual intercourse for hygienic reasons, both are thoroughly congenial to the Puritan standpoint." (Weber, 1920: I, 170, n. 1; English translation, 1958: 263-264). Weber is mistaken; the Puritans understood and even sanctified the passionate desire and erotic longing for another which endowed the Puritan marriage bed with life-meanings far deeper than those captured by physiology. In marriage love, with its sexuality, we find a true friend and companion, a second self: we are redeemed from our loneliness. The Puritans would have condemned love that joined Gretchen and Faust together, but they call for a love, *within marriage*, no less deep and no less passionate.

The "hygienic" view which Weber abhors was perhaps the outlook of Bertrand Russell's mother and father. In his autobiography (1967-1969: I, 10), Russell writes that his parents obtained for his brother "a tutor of some scientific ability," who was, however, "in an advanced state of consumption." "Apparently upon grounds of pure theory, my father and mother decided that although he ought to remain childless on account of tuberculosis, it was unfair to expect him to be celibate. My mother therefore allowed him to live with her, though I know of no evidence that she derived any pleasure from doing so."

¹²See, for example, Rogers (1642: 200, 304-306).

¹³See Gataker (1624: 20): "A Meeke and quiet spirit, in a woman especially, is a thing, saith Saint Peter, much set by in Gods sight." Gataker quotes from I Peter 3. 4.

¹⁴See, for example, Ames (1639: 156) and Rogers: (1642: 236-253).

¹⁵See Rogers (1642: 220), who quotes Paul (I Timothy 5. 8): "He that provides not for his family hath forsaken the faith, and is worse than an Infidell." For Rogers' extended reproof of improvident husbands, whom he divides into nine sorts, see 1642: 230-236.

¹⁶See Rogers (1642: 288-296).

¹⁷Baxter (1681: 67) writes that he "never knew" the "equal" of his wife's reason in "prudential practical" matters: "in very hard cases, about what was to be done, she would suddenly open all the way that was to be opened, in things of the Family, Estate, or any civil business. And to confess the truth, experience acquainted her, that I knew less in such things than she; and therefore was willing she should take it all upon her."

¹⁸Ames (1639): tells us that a husband "ought to reckon of his Wife in all things, as his neerest Companion, and as part of himselfe, or of the same whole, in a certaine parity of honour."

¹⁹In answer to a letter from Appius Claudius Pulcher, who has just returned to Rome, Cicero (*Ad Familiares* 3. 9. 1) writes, "At last, after all, I have read a letter worthy of Appius Claudius—a letter full of kindly feeling, courtesy, and consideration [*plenas humanitatis, officii, diligentiae*]. Evidently the very sight of your urban surroundings has given you back your pristine urbanity." Brunt (1965: 5) writes that "sermo" [conversation], "litterae" [letters, in the broad sense], and "humanitas" were recognised in Cicero's Rome "as qualities which might make even a disreputable man a welcome associate on whom the name of friend could be bestowed."

²⁰Thus, for Martial, the difficulty of gaining a woman makes her attractive; there must be some difficulty, else no desire can arise: Moechus es Aufidiaae, qui vir, Scaevine, fuisti;

rivalis fuerat qui tuus, ille vir est.
 cur aliena placet tibi, quae tua non placet, uxor?
 numquid securus non potes arrigere? (*Epigrams* 3. 70)

In Ker's translation (Martial, 1919):

You are the paramour of Aufidia, and you were, Scaevinus, her husband; he who was your rival is her husband. Why does another man's wife please you when she as your own does not please you? Is it that when secure you lack appetite?

For further examples of the same strain of thought in the *Epigrams*, see l. 57 and l. 73.

²¹For a recent edition of this, written after her husband's death in 1664, but not published until 1806, see Lucy Hutchinson, *Memoirs of Colonel Hutchinson* (1965).

²²A careful reading of Locke's statements on marriage is found in Shanley (1979).

²³For one Puritan discussion of marriage as a contract, see Rogers (1642: 96-126).

²⁴I quote throughout from Peter Laslett's edition of the *Treatises* (1963), which is based on the third printing (1968), as corrected by Locke. "I" and "II" indicate the *First* and *Second Treatises* respectively. I refer to the sections of the *Treatises*, rather than to pages of Laslett's edition, for the convenience of readers who use other editions.

²⁵Locke's view is a version of an argument rejected by the young Thomas Aquinas in his commentary on the sentences of Peter Lombard (*Scriptum in IV Libros Sententiarum* 4. 33. 2. 1). "The union of man and woman in marriage is chiefly directed to the begetting, rearing, and instruction of offspring. But all things are complete by a certain time. Therefore after that time it is lawful to put away a wife without prejudice to the natural law." Thomas replies, "By the intention of nature marriage is directed to the rearing of offspring, not merely for a time, but throughout its whole life. Hence it is of natural law that parents should lay up for their children, and that children should be their parents' heirs." Because sustaining the welfare of children is not a limited task of marriage, but a permanent one, husband and wife "must live together for ever inseparably." Different notions of the obligations of parents to their grown children divide Thomas and Locke. For Thomas, the solidarity of the family unit remains crucial to the welfare of grown children; therefore, the marriage of their parents is not to be dissolved. The same point can be sustained by an examination of some of Thomas' arguments for the indissolubility of marriage in the *Summa Contra Gentiles* (3. 123). The strain of individualism in Locke's thought surfaces in his unwillingness to have parents bound by obligations to their children throughout

their whole lives: just as children must become free of parents, so parents must become free of children. The realities of English life, in Locke's time, however, often made grown children of the better classes very much dependent upon their parents' good will.

²⁶See Milton (1644, 1645a, 1645b) and Milton's edition of Bucer's work on divorce (Bucer, 1644). Also see Haller and Haller (1941-42) and Haller (1946).

²⁷On "integration" as a formative principle of the Puritan personality, see Barbu (1960: 145-218).

²⁸The conviction that we must choose between erotic self-expression and rational discipline is well expressed in *Die Strasse* (1923), *Die Freudlose Gasse* (1925), "street films" of the 1920s, as well as in *Der Blaue Engel* (1930). After the Second World War, the same theme runs through *Das Mädchen Rosemarie* (1958). On the movies of the 1920s and 30s, especially the street movies, see Kracauer (1947).

²⁹See Gataker (1623: 11-12).

³⁰Baxter (1678: II, 12) writes, "*Next to the fear of God make choice of a nature, or temperament that is not too much unsuitable to you. A crossness of Dispositions will be a continued vexation: and you will have a Domestick War instead of Love.*" Yet he would not praise, as Rogers does, the mysterious source of the love of a man and a woman which leads them to wed: "*Take special care, that fansie and passion over-rule not Reason, and Friends advice in the choice . . . of the person [you marry]. I know you must have Love to those you match with: But that Love must be Rational, and such as you can justifie in the severest trial, by the evidences of worth and fitness in the person whom you love. To say you Love, but you know not why, is more beeseeming Children or mad folks, than those that are soberly entering upon a change of so great importance to them*" (Baxter, 1678: II, 10).

³¹The Puritan casuists, Milton excepted, thought that although temperamental affinity was of prime importance in the choice of a partner, a man had no right to divorce because he made a bad choice; see Gataker (1620: 35). Milton went a daring step further.

³²Puritans sometimes say that if you are unfortunate enough to choose a mate that does not suit your temperament, you must strive to achieve what is beyond human power: you must bring yourself to love, by dint of effort and reason, a spouse that does not suit you. Gataker (1623: 11; 1620: 35), speaking of the choice of a mate, says that "there are secret links of affection, that no reason can be rendered of: as there are inbred dislikes, that neither can be resolved, nor reconciled." "As there is no affection more forcible" than love, "so there is none freer from force and compulsion." He quotes Cassiodorus: "*Amor non cogitur.*" Yet he

tells those who have married one they cannot love "to strive even to enforce their affections; and crave grace at Gods hand, where by they may be enabled to bring themselves to that disposition, that God now requireth."

³³I owe these points to discussion with my wife, Susan Leites.

³⁴For solid evidence of this, see Hale (1978).

³⁵This was pointed out to me by my father, Nathan Leites, in a conversation which took place in a Moroccan restaurant on (I believe) the Boulevard St. Germain (1977).

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