



KULTURA PRAWNA

ISSN: 2545-3734

CZASOPISMO INSTYTUTU NA RZECZ KULTURY PRAWNEJ ORDO IURIS
THE LEGAL CULTURE. THE JOURNAL OF THE ORDO IURIS INSTITUTE

NR 1 (1/2018)

S. 98-112

WWW.KULTURAPRAWNA.PL

PROF. BRYCE CHRISTENSEN

PROFESOR LITERATURY ANGIELSKIEJ NA UNIWERSYTECIE W POŁUDNIOWYM UTAH, DOKTORAT Z LITERATURY ANGIELSKIEJ UZYSKAŁ NA UNIWERSYTECIE MARQUETTE, A LICENCJAT I MAGISTRA NA UNIWERSYTECIE BRIGHAM YOUNG. PUBLIKOWAŁ ARTYKUŁY NA TEMATY KULTURY I LITERATURY W PHILOSOPHY AND LITERATURE, CHRISTIANITY AND LITERATURE, RENASCENCE, MODERN AGE I INNYCH AKADEMICKICH CZASOPISMACH. POEZJĘ DRUKOWAŁ W RÓŻNYCH MAGAZYNACH, W TYM W THE FORMALIST, FIRST THINGS I TRINACRIA.

THE ARTICLE WAS CREATED AS PART OF AN INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE *LEGAL AND SOCIAL DETERMINANTS OF FAMILY POLICY* (WARSAW, 22 SEPTEMBER 2017)

THE FISSIONING OF THE MODERN FAMILY IN UTOPIA- THE REAL- WORLD CONSEQUENCES OF POLITICAL ILLUSIONS

INTRODUCTION

Since the mid-20th century, the United States--like many European countries--has witnessed dramatic changes in family life. The marriage rate has plummeted, while the divorce rate—after skyrocketing in the late Sixties and Seventies—has stabilized at a historically high level. Meanwhile, overall fertility—and even more dramatically, the fertility of married American women--has

dropped sharply, while births out of wedlock have surged. The number of couples living together without entering into wedding vows has soared, but not enough to keep the number of single-person households from climbing to unprecedented levels¹. Analysts have typically relied on sociological research in trying to understand and interpret these changes in family life. But to understand fully these radical changes in family life in recent decades, analysts studying sociological research need to draw interpretive clues from imaginative literature, especially literature beckoning readers toward and warning them against utopia². Such literature can illuminate the motives of political leaders framing policies that harm marriage and family. Such literature can clarify why such leaders remain blind to the baleful consequences of such policies. Surprisingly, such literature can even alert analysts as to where to look in the sociological studies to identify the most portentous results of family changes and can shape their interpretive perspective on these changes.

Analysts may not need to study utopian literature to realize that recent changes in family life have hurt men, women, and children. A raft of empirical studies have documented this sobering reality³. Without the support of a spouse and the nurturance of home life, men and women have suffered economically, psychologically, and physically. Life outcomes look even worse for children deprived of stable parental marriages and secure home lives—such vulnerable children begin to manifest distinctive psychological and medical problems even as infants in daycare and continue to suffer from mental and physical handicaps into adulthood. But analysts intent on understanding the dynamics of the political and social changes behind these empirical realities will learn much from a careful investigation of utopian literature.

THE UTOPIAN IMPULSE: A THREAT TO MARRIAGE AND FAMILY

Accounting for the astonishing erosion of marriage and family life in recent decades requires more than careful scrutiny of economic and technological context. To be sure, changes in technology and in the global economy do explain these changes in part. The technological and economic transformations that have de-industrialized large areas of the United States, for instance, have made it hard for men in those areas to find the kind of employment that once made them attractive husbands⁴. But neither technological nor economic change fully account for the truly dramatic changes in marriage and family life⁵. An underappreciated cause of these changes in the family is the potent influence of thinkers, writers, and activists devoted to building utopia. Utopian literature allows those concerned about trends in family life to recognize and gauge that influence.

1 “The American Family Today,” Parenting in America, Pew Research Center, 17 Dec. 2015, p. 15-16; “Women’s Marital Status.” Historical Marital Status Tables, United States Census Bureau, Nov. 2017, Figure MS-1b, <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/visualizations/time-series/demo/families-and-households/ms-1b.pdf>, “Percent of Children Under 18 Who Live with Their Mother Only”.

2 For an illuminating conceptual definitions of *utopia* and *utopian*, please consult Peter Medawar’s *The Threat and the Glory*, pp. 38-42.

3 Lundberg, Shelly, Robert A. Pollak, and Jennna Stearns. “Family Inequality: Diverging Patterns in Marriage, Cohabitation, and Childbearing.” *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, vol. 30, no. 2, 2016, pp. 79-99. Carlson, Allan C., and Paul T. Mero. *The Natural Family*. Spence, 2007, p.99-169.

4 E. B. Pinderhughes, *African American Marriage in the 20th century*, *Family Process*, vol. 41, no. 2, 2002, p. 272-274.

5 C. Jencks, *Deadly Neighborhoods. Rev. of the Truly Disadvantaged: The Inner City, the Underclass Public Policy.*, *The New Republic*, 13 June 1988, p. 28.

Many readers, of course, know that a Catholic saint (Thomas More) wrote the book--*Utopia*--which lefts its name on the entire genre of politically oriented literature now in view. Given that the Catholic faith strongly affirms marriage and family life, how could the utopian tradition then subvert these fundamental social institutions? After all, in his *Utopia*, Saint Thomas More depicts strong family life sustained by religious faith in the imaginary society he there depicts, a society in which "matrymoneie is . . . never broken but by death"⁶. Similarly, in his 17th-century *Christianapolis*, Johanne Valentine Andreae describes an ideal--that is, utopian--society in which profound Christian faith inspires unwavering commitment to marriage and child-rearing. "Nowhere," he assures his readers, "is it safer to marry than here"⁷ and nowhere do people so fully recognize "the crown of married women [as] the bearing of children"⁸.

However, among most of those intent on erecting utopia, the project of building that ideal society displaces rather than expresses religious faith. As they make their utopianism itself a counterfeit surrogate faith—a kind of "spilt religion" (to steal a phrase from T. E. Hulme)--they turn against the kind of marital and family commitments that Christian and Jewish faith has traditionally sustained. Though they differ in important ways, a large number of utopian blueprints share a basic outlook making them subversive of both religious faith and family life. Though this list would include important European works—including Tommaso Campanella's *City of the Sun* (1602), the Abbe Morelly's *Code De La Nature* (1755), Dom Léger-Marie Deschamps' *Le Vrai Système* (1761), William Morris' *News from Nowhere* (1891), and H.G. Wells' *A Modern Utopia* (1905)--it would also reserve prominent places for works by American utopians, works such as such as Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward: 2000-1887* (1888), Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *Moving the Mountain* (1911), and B.F. Skinner's *Walden Two* (1948).

Highlighting the reason that the utopian project outlined in such books proves corrosive to religious faith--and consequently to family life--Nobel laureate Peter Medawar has asserted that "the essence of Utopianism" is "audacious and irreverent"⁹ and that Utopian man "look[s] forward, never backwards, and seldom upwards"¹⁰. Again and again, in utopian literature we see the audacious irreverence—sometimes crossing into Promethean blasphemy—the great reluctance to look upwards toward heaven.

Though it remains implicit in some utopian works, the fundamentally antireligious character typical of utopianism repeatedly surfaces in key passages of a number of utopian classics. In *Le Vrai Système*, for instance, Deschamps unfolds a thoroughly secular utopian plan convinced that "the little confidence that men, in general, have in religion, in its promises and threats, proves that they do not internalize it any more than it deserves"¹¹. In *News from Nowhere*, Morris' utopians forge

6 T. More, *Utopia*, Translated by Ralph Robinson, Three Renaissance Classics, Scribner's 1953, p. 202-203; But as translator Clarence Miller has pointed out, because More depicts a society characterized by "both good and bad features," his *Utopia* "does not fit the ordinary meaning of the word as it came down in modern languages, where it signifies an unreservedly 'good place'" (ix).

7 J. V. Andreae, *Christianapolis* (1619), Translated by D.S. Georgi, Calwer Vergag, 1972, p. 199.

8 J. V. Andreae, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

9 Medawar, Peter. *The Threat and the Glory*, HarperCollins, 1990, p. 39.

10 *Ibidem*, p. 103

11 Translation by Professor Wade Provo of Rockford University; Deschamps, Dom [Léger-Marie]. *Le Vrai Système*, edited by Jean Thomas and Franco Venturi, Librarie E. Droz, 1939, p. 138.

a utopian future only after rejecting the “Judaic god” of “times past”¹². Likewise, in *Moving the Mountain*, Gilman’s utopians find their way to utopia only after they abandon “the old tribal deity of the Hebrews” and begin to worship “Social Energy” as the new “God”¹³. As believers in this new deity, the builders of her new American utopia no longer feel any “fear of death—much less of damnation, and no [longer worry about] such thing as ‘sin’”¹⁴. The same blasphemous spirit animates the leader of the utopia in *Walden Two*, who frankly admits that he “like[s] to play God,” boldly asserting that his utopia constitutes “an improvement on Genesis” manifest in “a society in which there is no failure”¹⁵.

The complacent confidence with which Skinner’s utopian asserts his faith in his failure-proof society brings to mind the reason the Anglo-American poet T.S. Eliot mocked utopians for “dreaming of systems so perfect that no one will need to be good”¹⁶. Of course, it is precisely because they begin their construction of their perfect systems by rejecting the God of the Bible that utopians want to relieve those who live in those systems of the kind of goodness—more properly termed *righteousness*—demanded by that God. Indeed, utopians are particularly active in steering those who live in their perfect systems away from the kind of goodness attained through obedience to the God who divinely ordained marriage and the family (cf. Gen. 1: 27-28; 2: 23-24; 3: 16-17; Ex. 20: 12, 14; Matt. 19: 5-6; I Cor. 6:18; Eph. 5: 22-33; 6: 1-3).

Nowhere in the society-remaking project do utopians manifest their repudiation of the God of the Bible more fully than in their attitude toward wedlock and family life. Again and again in utopian literature we find plans either to abolish marriage completely¹⁷ or to undercut the institution (as in Morelly, Bellamy, Morris, Wells, Gilman, and Skinner) so that it binds husband to wife only weakly. A rather typical utopian on the question of marriage, Morris imagines a future society in which couples do marry but wedlock is enshrined in no laws so that disaffected couples separate without legal proceedings and so that women who do bear children out of wedlock feel no shame for “following their natural desires”¹⁸. Virtually all utopians share Bellamy’s concern for a new economic order under which “wives are in no way dependent on their husbands for maintenance”¹⁹ but rather receive such support through non-family channels. And utopians generally share Morris’ fear that any arrangement that leaves wives economically dependent on husbands gives those husbands “an opportunity of tyrannizing over the women” they have married²⁰.

Like the scriptural teaching that makes of husband and wife a divinely ordained union, the scriptural teachings that bind parents to children come in for utopian attack. Generally, utopians press that attack

12 Morris, *William News from Nowhere: Or An Epoch Of Rest*, Roberts Brothers, 1891, p. 86.

13 C. P. Gilman, *Moving the Mountain*, Charlton, 1911, p. 243-244.

14 *Ibidem*, p. 47-48.

15 B.F. Skinner, *Walden Two* (1948), Macmillan, 1976, pp.274, 280-281.

16 Eliot, “*Choruses from the Rock*.” *The Complete Poems and Plays, 1909-1950*, Harcourt, 1971, pp. 96-114 (VI, line 23).

Again and again in utopian literature we find plans either to abolish marriage completely or to undercut the institution

17 C. Tommaso, *City of the Sun* (1602). Translated by Thomas W. Halliday, *Ideal Commonwealths* (1901), Kennikat, 1968.; Deschamps, *Dom [Léger-Marie]. Le VraiSystème*, edited by Jean Thomas and Franco Venturi, *Librairie E. Droz*, 1939.

18 Morris, *William News from Nowhere: Or An Epoch Of Rest*, Roberts Brothers, 1891, s. 112.

19 E. Bellamy, *Looking Backward. From 2000 to 1887*, Boston 2000, p. 211

20 Morris, *op. cit.*, s. 112.

by taking children away from their parents (particularly their mothers) and putting them in the hands of government-credentialed experts. In Campanella's *City of the Sun*, for instance, utopians "deny (...) that is natural to man to recognize his offspring and to educate them"²¹, so mothers surrender their children to state-appointed childcare-providers at age two. The leaders of Gilman's utopia recoil in horror at the very idea that "babies [were once] left at the mercy of amateurs"²²—namely, their parents. These utopian leaders allow no mother "to care for her children without proof of capacity," as determined by utopian criteria²³. Regardless of certification, it is not mothers but government experts who bear the primary responsibility in Gilman's utopia for ensuring that children receive "proper nourishment, and clothing, and environment—from birth"²⁴. Credentialed experts similarly replace mothers in Skinner's ideal society, where utopians believe that "group care is better than parental care" because group care allows for the systemic application of psychological principles unknown to parents whose traditional forms of child-rearing remain rooted in "the old pre-scientific days"²⁵.

When utopians—even relatively modern utopians such as Morris, Bellamy, Wells, Gilman, and Skinner—first published their social blueprints, the utopian world they depicted seemed far away. Even Skinner's postwar *Walden Two* struck many as a fantasy very far away from the real America in which it first appeared, an America on the verge of a Baby Boom sustained by resurgence of religious faith and by a renewal of marriage and home-centered parenting²⁶. However, Skinner perhaps sensed that the United States (like much of the rest of the post-industrial world) was on the cusp of a new era when utopian fantasies would become realities, so marginalizing religion and traditional family life.

SOCIOLOGICAL LIFE IMITATES UTOPIAN ART

Writing in 1946 in the Foreword to a new edition of his 1931 novel *Brave New World*, Aldous Huxley marveled, "It looks as though Utopia were far closer to us than anyone, only fifteen years ago, could have imagined"²⁷. As evidence of the surprising proximity of utopia, Huxley pointed to the disintegration of a family institution utopians have usually targeted—namely, wedlock. "There are already certain American cities," Huxley remarked, "in which the number of divorces is equal to the number of marriages," adding caustically, "In a few years, no doubt, marriage licenses will be sold like dog licenses, good for a period of twelve months, with no law against changing dogs or keeping more than one animal at a time"²⁸.

With due allowance for Huxley's dog-license hyperbole, the essential accuracy of his prediction that the next few years would bring the world closer to utopia's marriage-subverting social order may be inferred from a 1957 pronouncement of Harvard sociologist Pitirim Sorokin.

21 C. Tommaso, *op. cit.*, p. 156.

22 C. P. Gilman, *Moving the Mountain*, Charlton 1911, p. 198

23 *Ibidem*, p. 104

24 *Ibidem*, p. 197

25 B.F. Skinner, *Walden Two* (1948). Macmillan, 1976, p. 131

26 A. C. Carlson, *Family Questions: Reflections on the American Social Crisis*, Transaction 1988, p. 66, 266.

27 A. Huxley *Foreword to Brave New World*, 1946, p. 17

28 *Ibidem*

Perceiving a crisis in family life as part of a broader breakdown of the Ideational values of the sort that society has usually found in religion, Sorokin predicted, “The family as a sacred union of husband and wife, of parents and children will continue to disintegrate. Divorces and separations will increase until any profound difference between socially sanctioned marriage and illicit sex-relationship disappears. Children will be separated earlier and earlier from parents”²⁹. As further vindication of Huxley’s mid-century perception that utopia had grown astonishingly close, we have the 1963 assertion of political scientist George Kateb that even though “a sufficient anti-utopian case could be made to rest on the sanctity of the family,” the world had evolved so that “antiutopian positions on the nature of government” were “out of touch with what had already become part of the political life of the United States, the British Commonwealth, and Scandinavia”³⁰.

The considerable human suffering resulting from the disintegration of what Sorokin refers to as “a sacred union of husband and wife, of parents and children,” has been well documented by social scientists. But utopians pay remarkably little attention to such suffering. As their literary blueprints make clear, their objective has always been to weaken if not sever the tie between husband and wife, between parent and child. Hostile to biblical faith, they have long pressed an unholy crusade against the God who sanctified such ties. Seen through the eyes of such utopians, recent changes in family life constitute victory, the victory of a worldview that constitutes their surrogate faith. True Believers—*sola fide* believers—in the utopian credo, such crusaders will rarely rethink their principles because of empirical evidence of the harm it has caused.

To be sure, the number of conscious and self-identified utopians has never been particularly large. But the books cited would not have risen to intellectual prominence without attracting a resolute cadre of utopian zealots. And the modern world has learned all too well how much a relatively small revolutionary vanguard can do. What is more, as utopians have advanced their agenda in weakening religious faith, marriage and parenthood, they have gained an army of supporters who act not out of ideological conviction so much as raw self-interest.

Thus, political scientist Stephen Baskerville has persuasively argued that in America’s “divorce industry” we now see “a massive (...) machine consisting of judges, lawyers, psychologists and psychiatrists, social workers, child protective services, child-support enforcement agents, mediators, counselors (...) divorce planners, forensic accountants, real-estate appraisers,” all of whom now have “a concrete interest in encouraging family break-up” since “virtually all of their power and earnings”

29 P. Sorokin, *Social and Cultural Dynamics: A Study of Change in Major Systems of Art, Truth, Ethics, Law, and Social Relationships*, Revised and Abridged Edition (1957), Transaction, 1985, p. 700.

30 G. Kateb, *Utopia and Its Enemies*, Free Press, 1963, p. 209, 232.

Divorces and separations will increase until any profound difference between socially sanctioned marriage and illicit sex-relationship disappears. Children will be separated earlier and earlier from parents

31 S. Baskerville, *Taken into Custody: The War Against Fathers, Marriage, and the Family*, Cumberland House, 2007, p. 22.

come from such break-ups³¹. Raw self-interest also gives true-believing utopians willing allies among the credential workers staffing day-care centers and government officials who regulate such centers, thus giving hundreds of thousands a vested interest in seeing children separated from parents at an early age.

UTOPIAN TUNNEL-VISION

Shielded by ideological conviction on the one hand and self-interest on the other, utopians and their mercenary allies rarely pay attention to the social science documenting the distress consequent to family break-up and the harmful effects of day-care. When that social science does come to their attention, they typically interpret it as justification for yet more growth in government bureaucracies providing yet more family-surrogate services delivered on utopian principles—so further undermining the family. A former Fulbright scholar in Sweden, Rutgers sociologist David Popenoe has argued on the basis of what he witnessed in Scandinavia that “the inherent character of the welfare state by its very existence help[s] to undermine family values or familism—the belief in a strong sense of family identification and loyalty, mutual assistance among family members, and concern for the perpetuation of the family unit.” Consequently, Popenoe explains, even though welfare programs may begin with “the goal of helping families to function better,” over time “the very acceleration of the welfare-state power weaken[s] the family still further” (237-239)³².

32 D. Popenoe, *Disturbing the Nest: Family Change and Decline in Modern Societies*, Aldine de Gruyter, 1988, p. 237-239.

Utopians, predictably, will welcome programs that further weaken the family, so they will continue to interpret social science on the effects of family disintegration as justification for yet more government initiatives serving utopian ends. Perversely, they thus convert studies revealing the high cost of past utopian assaults on marriage and the family into justifications for yet more assaults. All too many social scientists are themselves complicit in this utopia-building process. And many of those who find their wallets fatter and their bureaucratic fiefdoms larger as a consequence will consult nothing but self-interest in joining in the broadened assault.

To change the destructive dynamic sustaining ever-more utopianism, those who recognize the indispensable role of the family in a healthy society need more than the research the social scientists who have exposed some of the high costs of the utopian enterprise. They need perspectives that will help defenders of the family know what to look for in social science and how to interpret what they find in order to roll back the utopian project and so renew the sacred union of the family. Those guided by deep religious faith bring such a perspective to their assessment of such research³³. But to the degree that utopians have—as they intended--diminished the cultural influence of religion

33 D. P., “Conclusion.” *The Conjugal Family: An Irreplaceable Resource for Society*, edited by Pierpaolo Donati and Paul Sullins, LibreriaEditriceVaticana, 2015, pp. 241-248.

through their attacks on the God of the Bible, these individuals confront adverse pressures when they challenge utopian measures. As another—and surprisingly potent—perspective that offers hope, those concerned about the future of the family might consider the insights offered by those who have responded to utopianism not with social science but rather with literary art.

THE DYSTOPIAN ANTIDOTE TO UTOPIANISM

It was no accident that Aldous Huxley was among the first to recognize how the approach of utopia imperiled wedlock. His dystopian novel *Brave New World* prophetically anticipates the peril. Other dystopian writers—including George Orwell, Yevgeny Zamyatin, and Anthony Burgess—can, like Huxley, help furnish a much-needed perspective on the social science uncovering the costs of utopians' assault on faith and family.

Those assessing the costs of the utopian assault on wedlock will find guidance in Huxley's *Brave New World*, where John the Savage—a young man raised by a single mother who schools him in Shakespeare—spins into psychological distress when plunged into a utopian world of sybaritic indulgence where marriage has been so fully obliterated that when John proposes to a young woman with whom he has fallen in love, she dismisses his proposal as “a horrible idea,” while still offering herself for casual sex³⁴. After brief surrender to sensual debauchery, John commits suicide. Huxley's dystopian narrative provides a compelling imaginative context for the sizable body of social science linking permanent single-ness with both psychological distress and suicide risk. The psychological distress of Huxley's character John the Savage, repudiated in his search for a wife in a world of promiscuous sex, may come to mind to those reading a 2012 study finding “a marriage premium for life satisfaction [which] is strong and robust” in part because “single young adults are more likely than the ever-married to have two or more sex partners in the last year, which is in turn related to higher psychological stress”³⁵. And the ultimate fate of Huxley's character may seem relevant to readers of a 2010 study parsing data from over 108,000 individuals living in the United States and nine other developed nations (including France and Germany) and eleven developing nations (including Brazil and Mexico) which concludes that “unmarried status” constitutes one of the significant “risk factors for suicidal behaviors in both developed and developing countries”³⁶.

Readers who approach the social science linking unmarried or divorced marital status to suicide from the perspective Huxley opens will want to probe behind the mere social patterns. Such readers, after all, will have seen Huxley's John the Savage rage against the utopian

34 A. Huxley, *Brave New World*, London 1932, p. 195-202.

35 J. E. Uecker, *Marriage and Mental Health among Young Adults*. “Journal of Health and Social Behavior”, vol. 53, no.1, 2012, p. 64-80.

36 G. Borges, et. al. *Twelve-Month Prevalence of and Risk Factors for Suicide Attempts in the WHO World Mental Health Surveys*, *Journal of Clinical Psychiatry*, vol. 71, no. 12, pp. 1617-1628.

Controller Mustapha Mond for keeping the Bible and other religious books out of the hands of the people living in utopia, so denying them any knowledge of God. They have heard John accuse Mond of preventing people from recognizing God as “a reason for chastity” by foreclosing the possibility that they will “think about God” and consequently refusing “to be degraded by [the] pleasant vices” of promiscuity. They have heard John protest that in suppressing any knowledge of God, Mond and those under his utopian control forget that “God’s the reason for everything noble and fine and heroic”³⁷.

The reason that Mond and other utopians must suppress religion if they wish to destroy wedlock comes into clearer focus in social-science research establishing that religious commitment and involvement are such “powerful and pervasive determinants of marriage” that when “people’s religious commitments declined” in recent decades in America, as utopian assaults on faith had their effect, it inevitably meant a “resulting decline in the prevalence of marriage”³⁸. Not surprisingly, social science also reveals that as Mond-like utopians undermine marriage by suppressing faith, they also subvert faith by destroying marriage. For research finds the relationship between religious commitment and marriage proves “reciprocal”³⁹: social scientists thus find not only does a decline in religious commitment weaken wedlock, but also that “being married or unmarried has a stronger effect on church attendance than anything else” they examine in their analyses⁴⁰.

Huxley’s literary depiction of the relationship between marriage and religious faith in the tragic trajectory of John the Savage might even lead readers to the research of Professor Aaron Kheriaty of the University of California Irvine School of Medicine. Explaining the national upsurge in suicide rates in the United States in recent years as a consequence of “social fragmentation,” Kheriaty echoes Genesis in asserting “It is not good for man to be alone” (cf. Gen. 2: 18)⁴¹. In a way that John the Savage would fully appreciate, Kheriaty then points to “a sizable body of medical research which suggests that prayer, religious faith, [and] participation in a religious community . . . lower the risk of suicide”⁴². Perhaps Huxley is telling readers that although John recognizes the possible value of prayer and religious faith, in a utopian world that denies him any hope of a religious community that supports and sustains wedlock as a sacred union, he remains horribly vulnerable to suicidal despair. Though utopians propose measures for fighting suicide with government-managed hotlines and counseling, Huxley makes clear why such measures will inevitably prove inadequate in a utopian world lacking the religious faith making wedlock a sacred bond.

A second dystopian author—one from whom Huxley learned much—Yevgeny Zamyatin offers a much-needed literary perspective on the empirical science documenting the harm inflicted by another utopian assault—namely that separating young children from their

37 A. Huxley, *op. cit.*, p. 237-243

38 A. Thorton, G. Axinn, H. Hill, *Reciprocal Effects of Religiosity, Cohabitation, and Marriage*, *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 98, No. 3 (Nov., 1992), pp. 648-650

39 *Ibidem*, pp. 651-652

40 R. Wuthnow, *After the Baby Boomers: How Twenty- and Thirty-Somethings Are Shaping the Future of American Religion*, Princeton University Press, 2010, p. 62.

41 A. Kheriaty, *Dying of Despair*, “First Things”, No. 275, Aug./Sep. 2017, p. 22.

42 A. Kheriaty, p. 24.

mothers by putting them in day-care centers. Epidemiologists have amassed a small mountain of studies showing that day-care centers expose children to a sharply elevated risk of various diseases, including those spread by antibiotic-resistant pathogens⁴³. But Zamyatin brings into view an ill effect of day-care that matters even more than physical disease when he identifies the utopian institution that cares for children in his novel *We* as a “Child-Rearing Factory”⁴⁴. Zamyatin brings into full view the de-humanizing effect of replacing a mother with a utopian surrogate when he prompts his protagonist, D-503, to yearn, “If I had mother, like the ancients: mine—yes precisely *my* mother. To whom I would be . . . not number D-503, and not a molecule of the One State, but a simple human being—a piece of herself”⁴⁵. The acute psychological distress expressed by D-503, who has experienced a Child-Rearing Factory but has never known a mother, comes out of a work of fiction but provides disturbing interpretive context for the report of clinical psychologist John M. Ross, who finds among the children of employed mothers (and typically left in day-care centers) “an anhedonic quality, a feeling of joylessness, an inability to experience pure pleasure”⁴⁶.

Zamyatin also primes his readers to appreciate the profound non-medical implications of research establishing that the more time a child spends in non-maternal care, the “less sensitive and engaged” the mother of that child will likely be with him or her⁴⁷. Zamyatin well understood that utopians fully intend to break—or at least weaken—the bond between mother and child. His dystopian novel therefore gives readers an imaginative—not merely a medical—understanding of an epidemiological study finding that the way bacteria spread among children in day-care centers looks very like the way they spread in orphanages⁴⁸ and so to recognize why cultural scholar Jacques Barzun speaks of two linked 20th-century “novelties: the day-care center and the semi-orphan”⁴⁹.

Zamyatin’s dystopian image of the “Child-Rearing Factory” therefore renders predictable rather than surprising the finding of a 1988 study by scholars from the University of Maryland concluding that while mothers instill a sense of family and obedience in rearing their children, day-care center workers encourage children to act independently, consulting only their own desires as guides to their conduct. Day-care centers, the researchers acknowledge, seems to be “altering a social pattern characterized by willingness to sacrifice one’s needs to those of the family”⁵⁰. By exposing the anti-family utopian impulse governing the “Child-Rearing Factory,” Zamyatin puts his readers on guard against the inevitable utopian response to children coming out of day care manifesting—as researchers have shown they do—distinctly elevated levels of “problem behavior (...) disobedience, and aggression”⁵¹. That utopian response will be more government programs to control and police the unruly children that utopia itself has helped create.

43 P. Yagupsky, *Outbreaks of Kingellakingae Infections in Daycare Facilities*, “Emerging Infectious Diseases”, vol. 20, no. 5, 2014, pp. 746-753. R. A. Hoekelman, *Day-care, Day-care: May Day, May Day!*, *Pediatric Annals*, vol. 20, no. 8, 1991, p. 403; M.M.M. Nestland M. Goldbaum, *Infectious Diseases and Daycare and Preschool Education*, “*Jornal de Pediatria*”, vol. 83, no. 4, 2007, pp. 299-308.

44 Y. Zamyatin, *We* (1924), Translated by M. Ginsburg, Viking, 1972, p. 107.

45 *Ibidem*, p. 189.

46 A. Shreve, *Remaking Motherhood: How Working Mothers Are Shaping Our Children’s Future*, Viking, 1987, p. 143.

47 National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, *Mother-Child Interaction and Cognitive Outcomes Associated with Early Child Care: Results of the NICHD Study, Early Child Network*, Apr. 1997, ERIC Number ED047149, p. 60.

48 H. Dabernat, et al., *Haemophilus influenzae Carriage in Children Attending French Day Care Centers: A Molecular Epidemiological Study*, “*Journal of Clinical Microbiology*”, vol. 41, no. 4, 2003, pp. 1664-1672.

49 J. Barzun, *From Dawn to Decadence: 500 Years of Western Cultural Life, 1500 to the Present*, HarperCollins, 2000, p. 794.

50 S. D. Holloway, S. G. Kathleen and B. Fuller, *Child-Rearing Beliefs Within Diverse Social Structures*, “*International Journal of Psychology*”, vol. 23, 1988, p. 303-317.

51 National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, *Mother-Child Interaction and Cognitive Outcomes Associated with Early Child Care: Results of the NICHD Study, Early Child Network*, Apr. 1997, ERIC Number ED047149, p. 1001.

52 E. A. Carson and E. Anderson, *Prisoners in 2015*, Bulletin, U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, December 2016, NCJ 250229, p. 1.

53 D. Kaeble, and L. Glaze, *Correctional Populations in the United States, 2015*, Bulletin, U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Dec. 2016, NCJ 250374, p. 1.

54 G. Orwell, *1984* (1949), Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1961, p. 57.

55 *Ibidem*, p. 57.

56 G.K. Chesterton, *The Superstition of Divorce* (1920). Collected Works, edited by George J. Marlin et al., Ignatius, vol. 4, 1987, p. 67.

57 D. Courtwright, *Violent Land: Single Men and Social Disorder from the Frontier to the Inner City*, Harvard University Press, 1996, pp. 37-41, 53., B. Western, *Incarceration, Marriage, and Family Life*, Russell Sage Foundation, September 2004, [https://www.russellsage.org/.../Western_Incarceration,%20Marriage,%20%26%20Fam., p.2, \(21 Sep. 2017\)](https://www.russellsage.org/.../Western_Incarceration,%20Marriage,%20%26%20Fam., p.2, (21 Sep. 2017))

58 D. Courtwright, *op. cit.*, pp. 225-26, 244.

59 G.L. Chesterton, *Marriage and the Modern Mind, As I Was Saying: A Chesterton Reader*, edited by Robert Knille, William B. Eerdmans, 1985, p. 126.

60 B. Christensen, *The Family in Utopia*, "Renaissance", vol. 44, no. 1, 1991, p. 38-41

And when some of these unruly children grow into adult criminals, the utopian state will fully manifest its coercive strength as it throws ever more of them into a prison. During the decades when utopian impulses have remade America, the prison system of the United States has metastasized into a complex housing more than 1.5 million prisoners⁵², complemented by a broader correctional system bringing the total number of American adults under correctional supervision to almost seven million. One in 37 adult Americans is now under the vigilant eye of the government's correctional officers⁵³.

That Utopia finally puts its inhabitants under the watchful eye of a governmental Big Brother is, of course, a central theme of George Orwell's dystopian *1984*. Underscoring everything Zamyatin teaches about such public institutions as a replacement for in-home mothers, the utopians in Orwell's novel have abolished natural parenthood by ensuring that "all children [are] begotten by artificial insemination (...) and brought up in public institutions"⁵⁴. Although Orwell's utopians have not abolished marriage, they bureaucratically manage wedlock so as to prevent husbands and wives from "forming loyalties which [the utopian state] might not be able to control"⁵⁵.

Utopians do indeed fear marriages they cannot control: the reason emerges clearly in the assertion by novelist and poet G.K. Chesterton that "the ideal for which [marriage] stands in the state is liberty" because it is the only social institution that is "at once necessary and voluntary. It is the only check on the state that is bound to renew itself as eternally as the state, and more naturally than the state"⁵⁶. One way in which wedlock preserves liberty stands out clearly in statistics showing that married men are far less likely than unmarried men to end up in prison⁵⁷, just as the sons of married parents are far less likely to end up behind bars than are the sons of single mothers⁵⁸.

But as Orwell makes clear, Utopia wants control of more than just the ordinary criminals who would end up in government incarceration under almost any regime. Utopians want to bring all of society under their control, but to do so they absolutely must break marriage as an institution that—as Chesterton explains—allows "a free man and a free woman (...) to found on earth the only voluntary state; the only state which creates and which loves its citizens"⁵⁹.

At least in the United States, utopians have not directly attempted to prevent couples from marrying in the way utopian bureaucrats do in *1984*, though their assault on faith has helped drive down the number who do. But what America's utopians have done is break up existing marriages in ways at least partly anticipated by Burgess in his *The Wanting Seed*. Though the utopian state metamorphoses in stunning ways in this complex novel⁶⁰, readers may recognize how it illuminates the way utopia currently subverts wedlock in the United States in its chronicling of the unravelling of the marriage of the protagonist,

Tristram Foxe, and his wife, Beatrice-Joanna. The marital bond between this couple comes unravels as they are bombarded with government propaganda attacking God as “a dangerous idea in people’s minds” (113)⁶¹ and constrained by Malthusian dogmas that criminalize the normal fertility of married couples (who are limited by law to a single child) and that subject them to a steady stream of “mechanical stories about good people not having children and bad people having them, homo[sexual]s in love with each other, Origen-like heroes castrating themselves for the sake of global stability” (184)⁶². As this combination of utopian forces tears this couple apart, utopian officials further undermine wedlock (and aggressively advance their Malthusian objectives) by presiding over a truly lethal battle of the sexes, arranged in carefully arranged and terribly bloody inter-gender combat.

NO-FAULT DIVORCE AS A UTOPIAN PLOY

As historian Allan Carlson has demonstrated, the American elite invoked Malthusian doctrine in their decisive turn against parenthood in tax policy the Seventies, educational curricula, and abortion law⁶³. This utopian attack on fertility also undermined wedlock. For reasons that Burgess’ depiction of Tristram and Beatrice-Joanna illuminates, social scientists report that childless couples are decidedly more prone to divorce than couples with more children⁶⁴. Even among couples who have children, American utopians have undermined marriage by provoking ceaseless and widespread inter-gender conflict—not as lethal but still very real⁶⁵--so deliberately fostering an atmosphere in which “gender distrust has increased”⁶⁶. No wonder millions of marital partners bail out on their marriages through the utopian innovation of no-fault divorce. Putting the state in automatic alliance with whichever partner wants to end the marriage, no-fault divorce has markedly driven up the divorce rate⁶⁷ as it has drawn many completely innocent men and women into a world dominated—as Baskerville rightly asserts—by an Orwellian rhetoric justifying the abridgement if not termination of parental (usually paternal) rights and confiscation of property and income without any legal finding of wrong-doing⁶⁸.

But for utopians, the burgeoning of the divorce-court network counts as progress: after all, in harmony with utopian aspirations, this network weakens marriage and separates children from parents (often doubly so, effectively taking the father out of the family and compelling mothers to rely more on daycare centers as they start or increase employment). Utopians indeed see progress in the burgeoning of the divorce-court network because, as Chesterton rightly perceived, “the trend toward divorce” fits within “that modern change (...) mak[ing] the state infinitely superior to the Family”⁶⁹. And as the utopian state has triumphed over the family, it has brought an unprecedented number

61 A. Burgess, *The Wanting Seed*, 1996, W.W. Norton Company, p. 113.

62 *Ibidem*, p. 184.

63 A. C. Carlson, *op. cit.* pp. 52-60.

64 A. Shapiro, J. M. G. Fearnley S. Carrère, *The Baby and the Marriage: Identifying Factors That Buffer Against Marital Dissatisfaction After the First Baby Arrives*, “Journal of Family Psychology”, vol. 14, no. 1, 2000, p.68.

65 L. C. Stoll, *Race and Gender in the Classroom: Teachers, Privilege, and Enduring Social Inequalities*, Lexington Books, 2013, s. 88-105.

66 N. Cahn and J. Carboni, *Commentary*, “Journal of Law and Bioscience”, vol. 2, no. 1, 2015, p.108-110; N. Cahn, Naomi and J. Carboni, *Marriage Markets: How Inequality is Remaking the American Family*, Oxford University Press, 2014, pp. 75-79, 196-198.

67 T. B. Marvell, *Divorce Rates and the Fault Requirement*, Law and Society Review, vol. 23, 1989, pp. 559-563.

68 S. Baskerville, Stephen, *Taken into Custody: The War Against Fathers, Marriage, and the Family*, Cumberland House, 2007, pp. 20-24, N. Cahn and J. Carboni, *Commentary*... pp. 105-111; N. Cahn and J. Carboni, *Marriage Markets*... pp. 196-198.

69 G.K. Chesterton, *Divorce vs. Democracy* (1916). Collected Works, edited by George J. Marlin et al., “Ignatius”, vol. 4, 1987, p.44.

of non-criminals under the inescapable gaze of an ever-present Big Brother. As the divorce courts help utopians expand their war against biblical faith, Big Brother looks ever more like the new Deity for a post-religious age.

The utopians who have used no-fault divorce as one of their many weapons for ushering in that new age ignore the fact that no-fault divorce has not—as its advocates promised—increased marital happiness by moving men and women out of bad marriages into good marriages but has actually decreased marital happiness by reducing the emotional commitment of couples afraid of betrayal through an easy divorce⁷⁰. These utopians ignore the social science that has now exposed as a cruel illusion the trickle-down happiness theory of no-fault advocates who argued that children would be better off if easy divorce made their parents happier⁷¹. These utopians have acknowledged the millions of children they have helped push into single-parent poverty and stepfamily distress and abuse only when advocating new utopian interventions, new utopian programs, so swelling the utopian state into the proportions Hobbes dreamed of when designing the all-dominating Leviathan State⁷².

70 N. D. Norval, *The Recent Trend in Marital Success in the United States*, "Journal of Marriage and the Family", vol. 53, 1991, pp. 261-270.

71 C. Webster-Stratton, *The Relationship of Marital Support, Conflict, and Divorce to Parent Perceptions, Behaviors, and Childhood Conduct Problems*, "Journal of Marriage and the Family", vol. 51, no.2, 1989, pp. 420-428.

72 Cultural historian Robert Nisbet argues that Hobbes' *Leviathan* is "at bottom as dedicated to the utopian enterprise as Campanella's *City of the Sun*".

CONCLUSION: LITERARY ART AS COMPLEMENT TO SOCIAL SCIENCE IN DEFENDING THE FAMILY

Utopians may ignore the high cost of their project, but that does not mean that everyone else must likewise do so. Some of the greatest creative writers of the modern era—including Huxley, Zamyatin, Orwell, and Burgess—certainly have not ignored that cost but rather have depicted it in compelling literary art. Defenders of the family can draw strength directly from that art and they can rely on that art as an interpretive context when promulgating the findings of social scientists who have adduced empirical evidence of the harm consequent to the decay of family and faith effected by the utopian project.

Framing their resistance to the utopian project in both literary *and* empirical terms will help defenders of faith and family lend imaginative power to their advocacy for measures to dismantle a Leviathan state premised on secular utopian principles. That task is difficult but not impossible. In facing the difficulties, defenders of faith and family may recall the ending of Zamyatin's *We*. Though dark and tragic for the protagonist, like the endings of Huxley's *Brave New World* and Orwell's *1984*, Zamyatin's ending is profoundly hopeful for society at large: anti-utopian rebels have broken down the wall surrounding the utopian city and thrown much of the city into turmoil. For the first time since the rise of the anti-family, anti-faith utopia, birds are now flying in the sky above. Despite the great power utopians wield in 21st-century America (and elsewhere), those who cherish faith and family may yet see the utopian wall breached—and wings, heavenly wings, again filling the skies above free and joyous family homes.

ABSTRACT/ABSTRAKT

Since the mid-20th century, the United States-, like many European countries, -has witnessed dramatic changes in family life, resulting in remarkably low rates for marriage and fertility, remarkably high rates for divorce, cohabitation, and out-of-wedlock births. To understand these changes the article presents, on the example of literature, ideologies, philosophical trends and intellectual opinions, which in a particularly destructive way influenced the contemporary condition of the family.

Od połowy XX w. Stany Zjednoczone, podobnie jak wiele krajów europejskich, są świadkiem dramatycznych zmian w życiu rodzinnym, co skutkuje wyjątkowo niskimi wskaźnikami zawieranych małżeństw i urodzeń, a także wysokimi wskaźnikami rozwodów, konkubinatów i urodzeń pozamałżeńskich. Aby zrozumieć te zmiany, artykuł przedstawia na przykładzie literatury, ideologie, trendy filozoficzne i opinie intelektualne, które w sposób szczególnie destrukcyjny wpłynęły na współczesny stan rodziny.

KEY WORDS/SŁOWA KLUCZOWE

childcare, divorce, dystopia, family, marriage, utopia

opieka nad dziećmi, rozwód, dystopia, rodzina, małżeństwo, utopia