

## CONTRACEPTION AND CULTURAL CHAOS

When Margaret Sanger and her followers started promoting the use of contraception in the early 1900's, wise men and women predicted that severing sex from procreation would eventually lead to sexual and social chaos. Today's culture of adultery, divorce, premarital sex, sexually-transmitted diseases, out-of-wedlock births, abortion, "fatherless" children, the "normalization" of homosexuality, poverty, crime, drugs, and violence was all foreseen.

What is the connection between these societal ills and contraception? While today's culture chaos is certainly complex, the following demonstrates the inner logic of contraception's contribution. People are often tempted to do things they shouldn't. Deterrents within nature itself and within society help curb these temptations and maintain order. For example, what would happen to the crime rate in a given society if the police force were disbanded and all the prisons were closed? A society in which criminals can act without consequences is a society headed towards anarchy.

Apply the same logic to sex. What would happen to society if we were under the illusion that we could follow all of our fallen sexual impulses without consequences? For example, people throughout history have been tempted to commit adultery. But one of the main deterrents from succumbing to this temptation has been the fear of pregnancy. What would happen if this natural deterrent were taken away? As history demonstrates, the adultery rate would skyrocket. And what is one of the main causes of divorce? Adultery. Apply the same logic to pre-marital sex and you will understand why that, too, has skyrocketed.

But it doesn't stop there. Since no method of contraception is one hundred percent effective, an increase in adultery and premarital sex will inevitably lead on to an increase in "unwanted" pregnancies. The "need" for an abortion will logically follow. As the Supreme Court recognised in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* (1993): "In some critical respects abortion is of the same character as the decision to use contraception... For two decades of economic and social developments, people have organised intimate relationships and made choices that define their views of themselves and their places in society, in reliance on the availability of abortion in the event that contraception should fail."

Many people consider contraception to be the solution to the abortion problem. This is like using gasoline to extinguish a fire. Why? Because, in the final analysis, there is only one reason we have abortion – men and women are having sex without being "open to life". When fertility is viewed as a disease, contraception is considered the preventative medicine, and abortion the cure. In this way we recognise, as Pope John Paul II observed that "contraception and abortion are often closely connected, as fruits of the same tree" (Gospel of Life 13).

Not everyone will resort to abortion, of course. Some mothers will place their children up for adoption. Others will raise their children by themselves. Hence, the number of children who grow up without a father (which has already been increased by the rise in divorce) will be compounded. And a culture of "fatherless" children inevitably becomes a culture of poverty, crime, drugs and violence. And all of these social ills compound exponentially from generation to generation since "fatherless" children are

also much more likely to have out-of-wedlock births themselves and, if they do marry, to divorce.

Homosexuality also comes to be seen, very logically, as a “normal” lifestyle. Why? Sever sex from procreation and any means to sexual pleasure is justified. Most Christians have no compelling response to homosexuality because most have already bought into its basic premise: sterilized sex.

Nearly fifty years since the start of the so-called “sexual revolution”, we can see that contraception was the stone that set off this massive cultural landslide. We can reverse this landslide, but it will take each of us standing firmly on the rock of married love and sexual intimacy as God intended them to be.