

4

Edwardian Libertine Ladies

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The previous chapter documented the conception of an alternative ‘new morality’ to rival the Christian consensus which predominated during the Victorian era. This chapter documents the emergence of that ‘new morality’ into common public awareness and also the beginnings of its manifestation in British society in that period from the reign of King Edward VII until Queen Elizabeth II’s accession to the throne in 1953.

Early twentieth century pornography

In 1901 King Edward VII succeeded to the throne on the death of his long-reigning mother Queen Victoria. Victoria’s death was truly the end of an era. Edward was a very different monarch and he personified the change of sexual morality and conduct in British society which was beginning to take place at the turn of the century; Edward had several mistresses in his earlier life, most notably the stage actress Lillie Langtry (who was considered a great beauty of the time). In the Edwardian era (1901-1910) the development of mechanical reproduction meant that for the first time photographs became commonplace on postcards, cigarette cards and in newspapers and periodicals. Pornographers have always been at the forefront of exploiting new technology to open up profitable new markets.

The first pornographic magazines The first magazines containing female nudity, or at least women as revealingly undressed as the publishers could get away with, were established in America around the turn of the century. *Munsey’s Magazine* included such features as “Artists’ Models” [that old ‘art’ chestnut again] and “Types of Beauty”. Its publisher Frank Munsey was also behind New York’s *Sun* newspaper; pornographers have long held shared interests with journalism. Another American magazine the *Metropolitan* regularly featured photography of *tableaux vivants* in which several lightly dressed girls posed in the style of famous paintings or sculptures; the portrayal of Rubenesque nudes and other classical artworks provided the defence that the nudity of ‘living picture’ photography was acceptable because as a homage to fine art it shared the same intrinsic artistic merit. Presumably this preoccupation with high-minded painterly appreciation was the primary motive behind the success of *Sarony’s Living Pictures* magazine which contained very little other than the title suggested. Similar ‘erotic periodicals’ existed in the major European countries and most notably in France – indeed in keeping with its surreptitious status as ‘the capital of erotica’ Paris was the pre-eminent European production and distribution centre for countless continental publications containing erotic photographs, cartoons and illustrations. The English magazine *Photo Bits* began in 1898 and featured photography of very lightly dressed women engaged in rowing, skipping and bathing amongst other activities. *Photo Bits* changed name but not content to become *Photo Fun* in 1906 and gradually ratcheted up the flesh factor. The London publishers of *Photo Fun* and similar magazines also offered photographs for sale via mail order.

Pornographic postcards More important than magazines though as *the* mass medium for reproducing and distributing Edwardian ‘erotic photography’ was the highly

collectible picture postcard (which needless to say was never used for its nominal purpose). Once again Paris was a major centre of production for the printing and distribution of the millions of postcards which secretly circulated in the years before the First World War (1914-1918). In addition to 'erotic postcards' the reputation of Paris as the capital city of sex was justified by the city's many common prostitutes and the notorious streets and brothels in which they conducted their trade, by the photographic visiting cards of its more celebrated courtesans and by the long-established French tradition of pornographic literature. The paintings of the French artist Toulouse-Lautrec (1864-1901) captured on canvas the 'midnight civilisation' of the Parisian cafes, cabarets and brothels of the 1880s and 1890s and it is a testimony to the prevalence of prostitutes and their permeation in Parisian society that they were a staple subject of this artist. The French pornographic novel *Les Cousines de la Colonelle* (1882) is perhaps the most famous example of the French 'erotic literary tradition'; like so many of that era's 'erotic novelists' the author remained anonymous but it is attributed to the Marquise de Mannoury d'Ectot, a literary hostess who mixed in high society circles. Whoever wrote it one thing is certain: it is very explicit! As a 'classic' of its 'genre' it was translated into English and is still in print today along with countless similar works of 'adult fiction' like *The Boudoir*, *Parisian Frolics*, *The Altar of Venus*, *Roman Orgy*, *The Lustful Turk*, *Confessions of an English Maid* etcetera. The French were also responsible for many of the earliest (illegal) pornographic films such as *A L'Ecu d'Or Ou La Bonne Auberge* (1908).

Pornographic cigarette cards Just as postcards deviated from their original purpose so too did cigarette cards when manufacturers realised that the blank card stiffeners they inserted into packets to prevent crushed cigarettes could serve a secondary and altogether more profitable stiffening function. Cigarette manufacturers began to print on the stiffening cards for marketing purposes and quickly concluded that alluring female images would serve best to encourage brand loyalty; sex has sold long before the slogan 'sex sells' became the currency of advertising executives. Cards were printed in series such as "French Actresses" or "Gallery of Beauty" and featured contemporary 'actresses' and girls in bathing costumes; collecting the cards became a craze (and gave rise to the term 'cartophile' to describe keen collectors of picture postcards and cigarette cards). Indeed though the titillating cards were originally intended only to sell more cigarettes, for many smokers they became as important a part of the purchase as – if not more important than – the smokes they served to stiffen.

Nudist camps and 'art' magazines The first nudist camps were established in Germany in the 1920s and subsequently spread to France and England; German 'naturists' also published nudist periodicals and these were the first magazines to feature photography of fully naked bodies during the inter-war years. At the same time the production began of so-called 'art' magazines (with titles like *Artists and Models*) which featured fully nude models on the flimsy pretext that it was not pornography but an alternative to live models for serious artists! Within a few years many pornographic publishers felt comfortable enough to drop their pretences of artistic motives or the promotion of a radical alternative lifestyle on the European continent but 'naturist' and 'artist-model' magazines were not

on public sale in the UK before the Second World War (1939-1945) as they were of dubious legality and remained morally unacceptable to the majority of the British people. 'Naturist' and 'artist-model' pornography did circulate secretly in the UK however; such pornography was usually of foreign origin (typically produced in Paris) and was imported surreptitiously for a market of secretive purchasers. The idea that such material might be on sale and prominently displayed in local shops and newsagents was inconceivable during the inter-war years but as these 'nudie books' circulated illegally in the 1920s and 1930s they acted as a pornographic primer paving the way for public acceptance of 'pin-up' magazines during the war years, which in turn preceded those modern publications, launched in the 1950s and 1960s which were recognisably the first overtly pornographic magazines to go on public display (and which broadly compare to the 'softer' top-shelf material of today). Indeed several of the first generation of modern pornographic magazine titles launched in the 1950s and 1960s are now fifty-year-old brand name traditions.

1930s 'glamour photography' The term 'glamour photography' was coined by the late 1930s to describe a style of 'pin-up' photography that was beginning to emerge; the term partly referred to technical advances in photographic equipment, studio lighting and set design but mainly described the subjects and their characteristic poses. 'Glamour' quickly came to mean photography of attractive young women with heavily applied cosmetics, often revealingly undressed or nude and, significantly, posed deliberately with a sultry and suggestive expression and in a sexually provocative posture. This new method and style of 'glamour photography' was no longer 'merely' photography of the nude female form but was much more strikingly pornographic as it also conveyed the mood of sexual desire and instant availability presented by its female subjects. This heavy sexual mood was partly attributable to a focus which captured women's eyes staring intently as if into the viewer's eyes through the camera lens, thus magnifying the sexual potency of the image far beyond the arousal level of a general impression of a naked woman.

Wartime 'pin-up girls' From the 1930s onwards, into the early 1950s, outright pornographic magazines and calendars were illegally produced and circulated by organised criminal businesses (in addition to the 'naturist' and 'artist-model' magazines which with their fig-leaf pretensions were marginally more acceptable). It meant an awful lot of photography of naked women fell into the hands of ever more men. The acceptance of full female nudity in legal publications took several years to catch up though as, almost imperceptibly, the moral bar of objection was lowered ever downwards. In order to move on from scantily-clad women (revealingly exposed but their breasts, buttocks and 'erogenous zone' covered) to fully naked women in legal pornographic publications the essential intermediate stage in the process proved to be the wartime 'Pin-up Girl'. This was the practice of servicemen far from female company pinning up photos of sweethearts or other attractive women. The Americans were the main pin-up propagators and they took thousands of copies of their enlisted mens' weekly *YANK* magazine all over the world. *YANK* consisted mainly of serious reportage and was certainly nothing like a modern pornographic magazine but it always had several pin-up

photographs, sometimes in the format of a centrefold spread. *YANK*'s definitive pin-up girl was Betty Grable. Many of the pin-ups were of Hollywood actresses and starlets typically wearing a two-piece swimsuit; by the mid-1940s it had become permissible for mass circulation magazines to publish photographs in which women exposed all of their limbs, midriff and cleavage – a standard which mirrored the actress publicity shots of the Hollywood film studios. Given the huge influx of American armed forces personnel into the UK during the war years it is unsurprising that this aspect of their culture, as with others like their music, left an indelible impression upon the host population; it was becoming publicly acceptable for British men to see photos of revealingly under-dressed women in certain circles like the armed forces. Perhaps this phenomenon's most public expression – though it was painting and not photography – was the pin-up style girls displayed on the side of aircraft fuselages.

***Playboy* pornographic magazine (and Marilyn Monroe)** The watershed moment when a legal pornographic publication featuring colour photography of fully naked women launched into the public mainstream came in the USA in 1953. The magazine was *Playboy* and significantly it was available publicly at many American news-stands; its appeal soon spread across the Atlantic. The whole *Playboy* phenomenon was effectively launched on the back – or rather the breasts – of just one woman and in turn the fledgling magazine's overnight success propelled that woman to cinematic superstardom. The woman was Norma Jean Baker, or Marilyn Monroe as she became known the world over. Marilyn appeared on the front cover of the magazine's inaugural issue and was also the centrefold. The front cover declared: "First time in any magazine ... Full Color ... the famous MARILYN MONROE NUDE."¹ In fact at the time of publication Marilyn wasn't all that famous yet – not in the sense of the worldwide cinematic icon she later became – but she was undoubtedly nude; her big break and the magazine's success were inextricably linked, each contributing to the other. In the famous colour centrefold Marilyn appeared completely naked in a semi-reclining posture against a red velvet background; the pose was such that her erogenous zone was not displayed owing to the position of her right thigh, but nothing else was left to the imagination as the only thing she had on was make-up. The photograph was four years old and had already been reproduced and distributed widely, by 1953 it was exclusive to *Playboy* only in the sense that it was the photograph's first appearance in magazine format. The actual photoshoot took place in Hollywood in 1949 when Marilyn was an impoverished twenty-three-year-old wannabe actress; Marilyn encountered a Hollywood photographer looking to recruit a model to pose for a 'nude calender' assignment and was paid a paltry fifty dollars for baring all; Marilyn had already posed for several underground 'nude magazines' but regular acting work was still eluding her and so she was desperate for the money. The *Playboy* photograph first appeared in a 1951 calender two years after it was taken and two years before it was snapped up by the magazine. The calendar sold millions of copies and

¹ The lasting cultural significance of the inaugural *Playboy* was demonstrated twenty five years later when an image of the first front cover depicting Marilyn Monroe featured in the opening sequence of the hit Hollywood musical film *Grease* (1978).

the 'sex-goddess' status which came with the calendar's sales assisted Marilyn to win her first minor Hollywood film roles. After Marilyn's *Playboy* debut however, from 1953 onwards Marilyn won major film roles and it was these appearances, combined with the celebrity lifestyle which soon grew out of the fame which came from those films, which made her *the* global Hollywood sex symbol of the 1950s. Although Marilyn's major film performances proved she had genuine acting talent and despite her charismatic persona, it is undeniable that her stardom was founded on her previous pornographic-prostitution.

Despite the celebrity Hollywood image by which she is remembered Marilyn was a tragic figure who endured misery for much of her brief life. She was born to a mentally unstable single mother and had a bleak childhood in Los Angeles. Prior to her acting breakthrough and *Playboy* celebrity Norma Jean had posed for various photographers whilst wearing little or nothing since the tender age of sixteen. She committed suicide with an overdose of sleeping pills in 1962 aged just thirty-six. One can only imagine the destructive cumulative effect of a troubled childhood, pornographic posing, fame, drugs and promiscuity.

At the time Hugh Hefner launched *Playboy* in America it was a quantum leap. It was really the first pornographic magazine to establish itself as a brand and to be sold legally via public retail outlets. *Playboy's* production standards outstripped most of the 'artist-model' type of underground 'nude magazines' which it quickly superseded. The first issue sold well because of its novelty and curiosity value as much as the motive of its erotic appeal but once the public grasped what *Playboy* was offering and decided to come back for more, Pandora's box exploded wide open and the pornographic magazine market mushroomed madly. *Playboy* soon inspired many imitators, notably the British *Mayfair* magazine which closely copied Hefner's blueprint and thus helped to establish a homegrown pornographic magazine tradition. The embryonic 'top-shelf magazines' of the 1950s contained full female nudity but the women that appeared in them tended to be posed in postures which obscured their vulvas, however within a few years there came the first shots of full frontal nudity in which the pubic hair of pornographic-prostitutes was visible. This was the start of a long process in which censors gradually allowed pornographers to transgress ever more boundaries as they pushed to publish more explicit material in order to survive and thrive amongst ruthless competition in a marketplace prone to the whims of purchasers constantly craving the 'bigger thrills' demanded by their growing, unquenchable lust.

Something A-stirring Between the Wars

1920s 'flappers' The growth of pornography was one of several trends occurring between the First and Second World Wars which together provided the earliest sign of what was to become so obvious in the 1960s. In the aftermath of the First World War a type of 'new young woman' emerged; known as the 'flapper' she exuded a markedly different attitude to the accepted and respected middle-class femininity of the fading pre-war era. 1920s flappers viewed themselves as more 'liberated' and carefree than their

mothers' generation and many were daringly open in their hedonistic expression of this 'new womanhood'. Following the complete cover-up only twenty years before some flappers broke the taboo against the public exposure of bare limbs; at the beach these flappers wore summer bathing costumes like leotards in which the upper thighs and trunks of their bodies were covered but most of their arms and legs were not. The flapper phenomenon was partly an inevitable social response to the demoralising effect of the long, depressing war – a mentality of 'Life's too short, let's lighten up and let off some steam' – but more significantly than that it was the first fruit for radicals of the intelligentsia hellbent on sexual revolution and an indication also of the growing influence of new marketing methods which were beginning to change the behaviour of women for commercial reasons.

Marketing and mass media The advent of a modern, mass-market media in the 1920s meant that for the first time advertisers began to create an image of femininity that suited them, though the best interests of a gullible audience were seldom served by the subtle and insidious ploys of advertising propagandists.² Advertisers and the media created and propagated the belief that the 'ideal', 'modern' young woman of the 1920s was cool and confident, sensuous and sophisticated; quite simply she had 'It'. Though this 'it' quality was never well defined it was tangibly the image portrayed by film actresses to a generation of women through the new mass medium of cinema; the film star Clara Bow was the original "It Girl" because "she had it." Often the 'it' these film stars had was a sex appeal which needed no great feat of acting for many of Hollywood's 'fast' women. The power of cinema was profound in influencing everything from fashion and cosmetics to speech and behaviour. Suddenly lots of ordinary girls and housewives followed the example of Hollywood actresses (and advertisers' photographic models) and regularly began to use lipstick, nail varnish and mascara; this was something of a cosmetics revolution because until that time the heavy use of make-up had been a distinguishing mark of prostitution. The powder compact became an essential handbag accessory almost overnight. And who stood to benefit from creating this first generation of women obsessed with fashion, cosmetics, cigarettes and whether they had 'it' glamour? Nobody really except for those businessmen who could turn a profit from making women feel self-conscious and unworthy in order to exploit them.

'Flapper' fashion By the late 1920s dress hemlines had risen just above the knee and the fashion was for diaphanous stockings (which made a wearer's legs seem bare). The motivation for wearing such stockings was laid bare by the popular quip of the time: "What happens to a girl in black stockings? ... Nothing at all!" As the flapper generation began to look more like prostitutes – with their make-up, ostentatious jewellery and new fashions which exposed more flesh and figure than was decent – so many of them also began to behave more like them too. One contemporary social commentator, Dr. Murray

² For example, faithful married couples – free of disease and fond of family – have never had any *need* for condoms, so manufacturers have always stood to profit from promoting promiscuity whereby the need arises for an otherwise unnecessary product; note the condom kings' support for school 'sex education' today because kids are deviously and deceitfully indoctrinated that they *need* condoms.

Leslie, described the flappers' ethos thus: "The frivolous, scantily clad, jazzing flapper, irresponsible and undisciplined, to whom a hat or a man with a car are more important than the fate of nations. They appeal to man's lower nature instead of exercising the power to elevate his ideals. Our boys and young men are being spoiled before our eyes."

Contraception Contraceptive practice began slowly to grow in popularity amongst the middle classes in the 1920s as 'family planning' propagandists' efforts began to take effect. Increasingly middle-class husbands were convinced by wives of the 'merits' of having fewer children such as the financial prosperity that would supposedly follow. Condoms were the main means of preventing conception; known then as 'French letters' they had been in use since the early nineteenth century but only became common in the UK during the First World War when they were distributed to soldiers to lessen the spread of disease. Diaphragms known as 'Dutch caps' were also in existence but as a diaphragm or a handful of condoms cost ten shillings the practice of contraception was prohibitively expensive. Regardless of affordability most men weren't keen on wearing condoms and saw no benefit in limiting their offspring and so large families remained common, especially amongst the working classes. Many people were concerned that contraception wouldn't just diminish the size of families but also break them up; they saw that attempts to popularise condoms were less about 'family planning' and more about introducing a licence for promiscuity. Furthermore the First World War's destruction of a generation of young men led to a strong sense that the strength of the population required restoration, not limitation. The *Sunday Express* editor James Douglas summed up the mood: "The British Empire and all its traditions will decline and fall if the motherland is faithless to motherhood. We cannot risk it."³

Abortion There was little demand for abortion in the 1920s – which was not to become legally available for another forty years – because the majority of sexually active women were married and thus had no desire to get rid of the babies growing within them. Amongst the minority of promiscuous women though there was a steady stream to the back-street abortionists, or else desperate DIY attempts to induce early miscarriage. Of these unmarried pregnant women, many suffered grievously from the horrific self-inflicted procedures by which they attempted to effect abortion, such as inserting knitting needles inside themselves. Several of these unfortunate women died; if only they'd kept themselves for a loving husband. No woman wanted to become a single mother in the 1920s on account of the social stigma and because – several decades before the socialists started anti-family social engineering by means of manipulative welfarism – single motherhood was financially untenable without the State to act as a surrogate father.

Divorce After 1923 women became entitled for the first time to petition for divorce on the grounds of adultery alone, as men had long been able to do. As a result the divorce rate marginally increased but the break-up of marriage was still extremely rare and carried

³ Mr. Douglas certainly got that right!

a heavy social stigma. In 1937 divorce law again increased in scope as women were allowed to petition on grounds of their husbands' cruelty, desertion or madness.⁴ Though it was entirely right that women should be equal with men under the law, the principle of the gradual relaxation of divorce requirements thus established would ultimately lead to a state where divorce became so easy that a marriage could be dissolved for any and every reason, thus trivialising marriage and severely undermining stable family life, because once marriage is no longer for life there's a lot less life in marriage.

1930s 'family planning' After 1930, following several years of sustained campaigning by sex-radicals like Marie Stopes, health professionals were allowed to give contraceptive 'advice' to married women – in the face of strong opposition from the majority of doctors and the disapproval of churchmen. Married women had little interest in condoms of course but for the sex-radicals it was a small step towards the acceptance of their ideology in a process which would take another forty years to be completed. 'Family planning' has always been a euphemism from its inception; for the sex-radicals it was a convenient cover story in the early history of the sexual revolutionary movement when the real agenda was always about destroying marriage and creating a state of absolute sexual permissiveness. In the 1930s for a working-class man to have a large family was a matter of pride and, for many, a statement of virility also and so many working-class men remained unpersuaded over contraception for another thirty years.

1930s film censorship In the 1930s the British Board of Film Censors was the ferocious guardian of the nation's moral integrity. The cinematic film industry exploded in the 1930s both in terms of the production of new films and the number of cinemas to which the British public flocked in droves. This was the heyday of cinema when it was *the* mass entertainment medium; having killed off the music halls it thrived until it was itself severely curtailed by the explosion of television thirty years later. In 1930 the British Board of Film Censors [now the British Board of Film *Classification* – note the difference!] stated that it had made cuts to an astonishing three-hundred films in the previous twelve months; a myriad of reasons were given in this era of serious censorship including: 'Girls and women in a state of intoxication'; 'Vamping'; 'Vulgar noises'; 'References to birth control'; 'The Salvation Army shown in an unfavourable light', and countless others. The chairman of the board Lord Tyrrell said in 1936: "The cinema needs continual repression of controversy in order to stave off disaster." Contrast that view with today when censorship has been abandoned to be replaced by labelling and the most depraved and violent pornographic films are of no concern to the authorities. Just as with films there was strong intervention in publishing in the 1930s, typically for unacceptable sexual content. D.H. Lawrence was one author whose material was considered beyond the pale; his novel *Lady Chatterley's Lover* (1928) was deemed obscene and was not first published legally until 1960. In 1935 the Attorney General Thomas Inskip pursued a successful obscenity prosecution against the novel *Bessie Cotter* of which he said: "This book deals with what everybody will recognise as an unsavoury

⁴ 'Madness' is not a morally acceptable basis for divorce!

subject; the gratification of sexual appetite.” There was stiff opposition from many quarters to any change in British sexual attitudes and behaviour in the first third of the twentieth century but change was on its way regardless.

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The early twentieth century ideological foundations of the sexual revolution

The previous chapter considered some of the key Victorian sex-radicals: Place, Carlile, Drysdale, Besant, Bradlaugh, Nietzsche, Freud, Carpenter, Ellis, Wilde and others. What follows is a look at some of the key sex-radicals of the first half of the twentieth century – those men and women that followed in the footsteps of the aforementioned. During the Edwardian era the moral climate of the UK began to creep away from the Victorian Christian consensus, a gradual change which accelerated after the First World War and into the 1920s; in the vanguard of this growing movement were ‘intellectual’ figures such as H.G. Wells, Rebecca West, Lytton Strachey, Leonard and Virginia Woolf, Maynard Keynes and Marie Stopes, to name a few. These people succeeded in forcing the discussion of sex into the public arena as they refused to be silent about their sex-radical ideas for ‘free love’ sexual promiscuity and alternatives to marriage. These were the ‘new men’ and the ‘new women’ who rejected all things Victorian and especially the Victorian era’s Christian standards; the ‘new women’ hated marriage and equated it with a form of bondage akin to an institution of legalised prostitution! These radicals were a small group of ‘intellectual’ libertines drawn mainly from the middle and upper classes – unrepresentative of society as a whole, and condemned by most ordinary people who heard their views – but they were nevertheless the founders of twentieth century sexual revolution and it was their seed sown which produced such a bumper harvest in the 1960s.

H.G. Wells The immensely popular novelist Herbert George Wells (1866-1946), the author of such classic works as *The Invisible Man*, *The War of the Worlds* and *The Time Machine*, was a radical Fabian socialist, a eugenicist who advocated the sterilisation of the ‘underclass’ and a utopian humanist who believed mankind could and should create its own amoral utopia devoid of religion. H.G. Wells was enormously influential in his own generation and also upon subsequent generations which discovered his more popular works; through his writings he was quite simply outstanding in his passion and talent for advocacy of ‘free love’ sexual promiscuity and he practised what he preached in his notoriously promiscuous lifestyle. Wells was a womaniser. He was married twice and had numerous affairs, including with the ‘new woman’ novelist Rebecca West who bore him one of his two illegitimate children [he had two legitimate sons with his second wife]. In his novel *Ann Veronica* (1909) Wells created the central character of a rebellious young woman who rejects suburban life for one of promiscuous ‘adventure’ in London; the novel was widely condemned for its sexual immorality and banned in public libraries at the time of its first publication.

Lytton Strachey Another ‘intellectual’ giant (well, he was a Cambridge graduate) and writer who dominated the emerging public debate of sex was Lytton Strachey (1880-1932). Writing in the immediate aftermath of the First World War, Strachey sowed the

seed that the single word “Victorians” stood for everything that was bad about British society at the time (and for decades previously). The notion of Victorian hypocrisy became widely accepted first amongst ‘intellectuals’ and subsequently by broader society (even to this day) thanks largely to the efforts of Lytton Strachey who painted the Victorians as hypocrites and prudes at every opportunity. He did so by employing a highly stylised and impressionistic licence in his technique of biographising Victorian public figures which facilitated a distorted view of Victorian history; Strachey was a character assassin too clever to show the knife in his hand but preferring to deceive his readership with the appearance of ‘character suicide’ committed by his subjects whom he painted as hypocrites by the device of deft smears and smudges of fact from his pen. He missed his true vocation as a nasty courtroom prosecutor, the type unbothered by the truth and out only to ‘kill their prey’. He was a master of ‘oblique technique’, a radical revisionist historian who managed to conceal his malicious motives from most. Strachey was a friend and correspondent of Maynard Keynes; in their letters the two frequently wrote to each other about their homosexual perversions. Strachey was hugely influential upon his contemporaries at Cambridge and younger undergraduates in the years after him.

The ‘Bloomsbury Set’ Lytton Strachey was one of the original group of sex-radical intellectuals known as the ‘Bloomsbury Set’ who delighted in their perversions and promiscuity as justified by their self-invented ‘new morality’ of ‘free love’. Strachey was the driving force and guiding spirit of Bloomsbury, a group – most members of which had been students at Cambridge – which met most Thursday evenings for intellectual discussions in the house of Virginia Woolf. They mainly discussed sex and their sexual activities – their ‘swinging’ – mainly revolved round promiscuous homosexuality. Of the original group, in company with Strachey, was the left-wing journalist Leonard Woolf (who married Virginia Stephen), and also Maynard Keynes (who became a world famous economist), the eminent author E.M. Forster, art critic Clive Bell, artist Rodger Fry and dramatic critic Desmond McCarthy. Both Strachey and Keynes were practising homosexuals and did a lot of their bumming in the Edwardian era. Strachey even ‘did the dirty’ with a male cousin!

Lytton Strachey, H.G. Wells, Bertrand Russell, Carpenter and Ellis were some of the more prominent British intellectuals involved in the birth of the movement out to overturn and replace the extant Victorian morality in the first decades of the twentieth century. They faced the deep-rooted inertia of Christian morals embedded with the majority of the population and enshrined in all aspects of public life, however their ideological seeds were sown and slowly these seeds started to take root and grow. The ‘new men’ and ‘new women’ out for ‘free love’ sexual promiscuity, the ‘normalisation’ of homosexual perversion and the destruction of marriage were artful and clever in their criticism of all things Victorian; according to them the Victorians were nothing but a bunch of hypocritical prudes, spoilsports and killjoys. There was a growing fashion of scorning all things Victorian which spread like a virus from its hotbed in Cambridge to the rest of the country, such that by the end of the First World War anti-Victorian

sentiment was a settled condition of British intellectual culture, to be followed in time in the minds of the masses.

Eventually ordinary people started to believe the incessant ‘intellectual’ clamour coming from the chattering class cliques that Victorian morality had been ‘repressive’ and ‘unnatural’ and thus according to the sex-radicals had done enormous harm to society by breeding sexual ignorance (of the ‘pleasures’ of promiscuity or homosexuality for example). By the 1960s the ideas of the sex-radical ‘intellectuals’ of the late Victorian era and the early twentieth century came to full fruition and the sexual revolution has flourished, blossomed and bloomed from that day to this. And it was all based on the lie that British society needed to be ‘set free’ from the ‘repressive bondage’ of Victorian morality that the people might ‘experience and express their natural sexual inclinations’. One of the central methods by which the sex-radicals succeeded in re-creating society in their own image was ‘sex-educating’ people; the sex-radicals knew they had to first make ordinary people comfortable with publicly discussing intimate sexual matters before they could be conformed to radical ‘new’ ideas and sexual practices. Sex was quite simply an unacceptable subject for discussion for the great majority of British Victorians: the discussion of sex was essentially taboo because it was immodest, indecent and impure. But the success of British sex-radical ‘intellectuals’ in discrediting the Victorians as hypocritical prudes during the early decades of the twentieth century gradually and increasingly filtered through society until by the outbreak of the Second World War there was a definite wind of change beginning to blow through mainstream society’s perception of sexual propriety. The sex-radicals of the early twentieth century deliberately and purposefully set out to ‘re-educate’ the nation about sex, to give the people a ‘sex education’. The outstanding sex-radical who pioneered the national ‘sex education’ of British society must surely be Marie Stopes.

Marie Stopes Marie Stopes (1880-1958) was an author, feminist, eugenicist, ‘birth control’ and abortion propagandist and arguably Britain’s first ‘sex educator’ and ‘sex expert’. Indeed the origin of the ‘sex education’ movement in the UK can be dated to the publication of Marie Stopes’ book *Married Love* in 1918. *Married Love* was essentially a sex manual; it sold over a million copies and made Stopes world famous as an ‘authority on sex’. The book was ostensibly written for the benefit of married couples. It was a groundbreaking publication in that it described the physical nature of sexual intercourse in detailed and explicit language. The fundamental premise of Marie Stopes’ justification of the book was the laughable claim that married women were ignorant about the physical nature of sex! This myth that people are ignorant about sex and need to be ‘educated’ was – and still is – central to the ‘sex education’ movement and it largely originated with Marie Stopes who saw herself as the prophetess of sex and who appointed herself to undertake nothing less than the ‘sex education’ of the entire nation! Of course with historical hindsight the only fair claim Marie Stopes had was to being the prophetess of promiscuity. *Married Love* was widely reviewed and sold over two thousand copies within a fortnight of its first going on sale, by which time all London was discussing the book’s sudden phenomenon. Though some were delighted by the book most were appalled but it materialised that the book and its author were there to stay.

Stopes' claim that the book was aimed at married women was of course a deliberate lie because married women didn't stand to learn anything from it and were the people least in need of contraception. The book was really intended to promote 'free love' sexual promiscuity and to disseminate information about contraception to those who did need it, namely the promiscuous; however in the lingering afterglow of the Victorian Christian consensus and what that meant regarding what was considered decent for publication – to avoid prosecution and a ban for obscenity – Stopes had to maintain that her 'advice' was for married people only (despite the fact they didn't need it). Stopes believed firmly that explicit references to sexual anatomy and physiology were essential to getting her message across and in that respect she was a pioneer going one step beyond her preceding sex-radicals and influences, men like Havelock Ellis and Edward Carpenter. Stopes knew that before people began to act promiscuously she first had to get them to think and speak promiscuously and that meant encouraging people to talk openly and indiscreetly about 'penises' and 'vaginas' and 'masturbation' and 'ejaculation' and so forth. Furthermore getting people to think and talk explicitly also meant they were focused in an unbalanced manner on the physical side of sex separated off from its moral and spiritual realities.

Marie Stopes was careful to avoid publicising her support for 'free love' extra-marital sex although she was fully in favour; she was an astute propagandist who knew she could not afford for her cover to be blown. Therefore Stopes never openly advocated 'free love' sexual promiscuity and insistently maintained the deception that her sex 'advice' was intended only for married couples (in addition to the need to dodge prosecution for obscenity). And Marie Stopes succeeded in getting away with it, and so 'sex education' was first established with Stopes as its matriarchal figurehead. The truth is that Stopes believed society could be improved only by 'satisfying' everybody through the 'catharsis' of a regular orgasm and by everybody being able to participate in sexual free-for-all – the idea that those who are 'making love' are not 'making war'. The truth is that 'love' is not 'made' by indulging sexual lust willy-nilly but the 'free love' notion is nevertheless now a popular and prevailing myth.

Stopes' private vision of a utopia based upon 'free love' sexual promiscuity and indeed her whole sense of sexual morality was consistent with her rejection of and enmity towards Christianity; Stopes especially despised the Roman Catholic Church because it condemned her sex-radical ideas. In a speech at the Criterion Theatre reported by the *Daily Mirror* newspaper (16.03.1925) Stopes uncharacteristically let her guard down and admitted: " 'I am out for a much greater thing than birth control. I am out to smash the tradition of organised Christianity... ' " There was never a clearer statement made of Stopes' manifesto commitment to promiscuity.

Margaret Sanger Marie Stopes was powerfully and directly influenced by the extremely radical American Margaret Sanger (1883-1966), the woman who founded the international movement for 'birth control' and indeed the one who coined the term 'birth control'. It might reasonably be said that Stopes' opened the 'British Branch' of the 'birth control' movement at Sanger's behest. As a young woman Sanger was influenced by the writings of Friedrich Nietzsche, Sigmund Freud, Edward Carpenter and Havelock

Ellis; Sanger met both Carpenter and Ellis in England in 1914 and it was Havelock Ellis who was instrumental in persuading Sanger to focus her energies specifically on the single issue of 'birth control' rather than dissipating her energy on too many different causes. Thus it was that Sanger wholeheartedly devoted the rest of her life to the promotion of contraception, a mission which Sanger – unlike Stopes – never pretended was confined to a married audience. Sanger was brazenly a passionate and public propagandist for 'free love' sexual promiscuity (and by extension the need of the promiscuous for readily available contraception).

In 1912 the socialist New York newspaper *The Call* published two pieces by Sanger advocating contraception entitled *What every woman should know* and *What every girl should know*. In 1916 Sanger – a founder of the American Birth Control League – opened a 'birth control' clinic in Brooklyn, New York five years before Stopes followed suit in London. Sanger and Stopes met in London in 1915 whilst Sanger was on the run from the American authorities having jumped bail following indictment for postal obscenity law violation. Sanger persuaded Stopes to follow in her footsteps and start a British 'birth control' campaign. Stopes duly obliged and three years later produced *Wise Parenthood* (1918) in which she gave explicit contraceptive advice and which marked the beginning of an ongoing campaign of contraception propaganda writing which increasingly led to her recognition as an 'authority on birth control'. Financed by her second husband Marie Stopes founded the first 'birth control' clinic in London in 1921. Despite its being a virtual failure, with only a handful of women attending, throughout the 1920s several other 'birth control' clinics were opened around the country. The following year (1922) Stopes' publications like *Wise Parenthood* received the wrath of the editor of *John Bull* magazine (08.04.1922) who commented: "...Stopes has unloaded onto the market a series of books ... which contain the frankest and most intimate discussion of sexual matters that has ever been permitted in this country." Furthermore he noted that these books which he described as Stopes' "propaganda" were: "...paraded for sale in the company of pornographic French novels and other accessories of vice..."

In fact *Wise Parenthood* was one of Stopes' milder efforts compared to her sinister eugenicist publications such as *The Control of Parenthood* (1920), from which: "...utopia could be reached in my life time, had I the power to issue inviolable edicts ... I would legislate compulsory sterilisation of the insane, feeble-minded ... half-castes." Or consider this comment from Stopes in her book *Radiant Motherhood* (1920) in which she urged: "...sterilisation of those totally unfit for parenthood be made an immediate possibility, indeed made compulsory." What an evil woman Stopes was; she even cut her own son out of her will for no other reason than that he married a near-sighted woman, an act which Stopes viewed as a 'crime against eugenics'! Instead of her son a large portion of Stopes' estate went to the Eugenics Society.

'Birth control' and the so-called Family Planning Association In the 1920s the giving of 'birth control' 'advice' at public maternity welfare centres (under the ultimate control of the Ministry of Health) was forbidden so Stopes set about removing the ban. It took several years but she got there in the end. In 1930 Stopes and her 'birth control' co-workers, in conjunction with the Labour Party, held a major conference at which was

passed a resolution to direct to the Ministry of Health the conference's request that 'birth control' 'advice' to married women should be permissible in public maternity welfare centres. Several months later the Ministry discreetly issued new guidance that the maternity centres could henceforth give 'birth control' 'advice' to married mothers in limited circumstances where there was genuine medical concern that further pregnancies would endanger a mother's own health. This was a watershed moment: albeit with great reluctance, the State had been persuaded to condone and provide contraceptive 'advice' to married women. State sponsored sexual immorality began and the decline of the British birth rate was set in motion as was the chain of events whereby contraception was extended from married mothers to single women and in time even to our children. Stopes had her victory; from 1930 'birth control' officially had the backing of the State. In 1930 Stopes united a handful of voluntary-run 'birth control' clinics under the banner of a new national organisation, the National Birth Control Council. Nine years later a better sounding euphemism was adopted and the Council became the Family Planning Association, a name which – amongst other things – smacked less obviously of the eugenic agenda. By the outbreak of the Second World War Stopes had become a figure of international importance in her field and her status as a sex-icon was assured for posterity.

Alfred Kinsey Before the British sexual revolution really took off in the 1960s, the other sex-radical figure besides Stopes whose work proved tremendously influential in changing British attitudes to sex was the American Alfred Kinsey (1894-1956) – the man of the notorious 'Kinsey Reports'. The Kinsey Reports were *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (1948) and *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* (1953); the reports received huge media interest and quickly became global bestsellers, thus helping to ignite the impending sexual revolution. Though Kinsey's work has since been proven to be fraudulent and has been discredited as seriously biased and grossly misleading, at the time of its release – and even to this day – it has had a huge effect on sexual morality, on the popular public understanding of sexuality and has become the bedrock of British and American 'sex educationalists' approach. Kinsey masqueraded as a scientific researcher into human sexuality but he was not an objective scientist; Kinsey was a sexual revolutionary and a propagandist operating behind the front of 'science'.

Kinsey claimed to be an objective scientist searching for scientific facts but in reality he was a flagrant liar and cheat who twisted scientific method to get the conclusions he wanted from the outset and yet attached with the undeserved credibility of being 'scientifically acquired'. In pursuit of his propagandist pseudo-science Kinsey ensured by careful recruitment that his team of researchers were like-minded individuals in tune with his own ideology, methodology and motivation. Furthermore Kinsey's research samples were seriously unrepresentative of the general population, for example his sample of male interviewees was drawn heavily from amongst sex-offenders and other prisoners. Moreover Kinsey's statistical handling of the data he obtained was so dubious as to render his results misleading to the point of being meaningless. Kinsey's strategy from the outset was to 'de-normalise' marriage and heterosexuality, to normalise homosexuality, and to normalise 'cross-generational' or 'inter-generational sex' –

paedophilia in other words. In *Kinsey, Sex and Fraud* (1990) Dr. Judith Reisman (and her co-authors) concluded: “In view of Kinsey’s grossly and knowingly unrepresentative interviewee populations, his use of data from illegal sexual experimentation on children, his history of deception in other endeavours, his predetermined bias and selection of like-minded co-researchers, his unethical and deceptive omission of data injurious to his own hypotheses, and his lucky coincidence in finding out about human sexuality exactly what he wanted to find out, we believe Kinsey’s research to be worse than worthless – we believe the evidence overwhelmingly points to a fraud.”

Kinsey became an atheist whilst still a young college student and was deeply hostile to the Christian perception of human sexuality; he hated Christian morality and made his life a mission to decriminalise any and every form of perverted sexual behaviour. Predictably he jumped on the bandwagon and blamed the Victorians. Kinsey was in favour of adultery and fornication and asserted that no sex act is abnormal or perverted: homosexuality, paedophilia and bestiality were all fine according to Alfred Kinsey based on his animalistic view of humanity and human sexuality in which sex is reduced to nothing more than a biological function unconnected to morality. He constantly referred to us as “human animals” – he thought humans are animals.

Kinsey’s deep sympathy for paedophilia was never better demonstrated than in *Sexual Behavior in the Human Female* (1953) in which he wrote: “It is difficult to understand why a child, except for its cultural conditioning, should be disturbed at having its genitalia touched, or disturbed at seeing the genitalia of other persons, or disturbed at even more specific sexual contacts.” For Kinsey children were sexually mature beings, capable of enjoying sex with other children and adults; he believed even young children could experience sexual orgasm and were motivated by sexual desires in their ordinary play activities. And Kinsey ‘concluded’ from his ‘research’ that 60% of pre-adolescent boys engage in homosexual activity! That ridiculous figure was consistent with Kinsey’s claim that homosexuality is commonplace; he asserted that over half of all men are homosexual or bisexual! Kinsey saw human sexuality as a continuum on which people are innately bisexual and most fall somewhere between the opposite extreme ends on the continuum of 100% homosexuality or 100% heterosexuality.

He was even an advocate for bestiality. In *Sexual Behavior in the Human Male* (1948) he wrote: “Masturbating the male animal, whether it is a dog, horse, bull or some other species, may provide considerable erotic excitement for the boy or older adult. He senses the genital similarities between the male animal and himself, and he recognises the relationship between the animal’s performance and reactions and his own capacities.” Furthermore for those who were concerned as to whether sex with animals is okay Kinsey advised: “The clinician who can reassure these individuals [ie the ‘beasty boys’] that such activities are biologically and psychologically part of the normal mammalian picture ... may contribute materially toward the resolution of these conflicts.”

Interestingly in 1949 a British study of sexual habits (based on 2052 personal interviews) and known as the ‘Little Kinsey Report’ came to very different conclusions than those of Kinsey. For example the British study found that more than six-in-ten Britons strongly

disapproved of sex outside marriage. But it was Kinsey's message which was soon to carry all before it and establish itself as the popular and prevailing sexual orthodoxy in the fast-approaching 1960s.⁵

Sex and the Second World War

The brilliant twentieth-century writer and thinker C.S. Lewis (1898-1963) described the changes which took place between the wars (and which continued after the Second World War) in his book *Mere Christianity* (1952) – a book based on radio broadcasts given by Lewis ten years previously; the following extracts represent his insight into British society circa 1943: “Contraceptives have made sexual indulgence far less costly within marriage and far safer outside it than ever before, and public opinion is less hostile to illicit unions and even to perversion than it has been since Pagan times.” Furthermore: “...you and I, for the last twenty years, have been fed all day long on good solid lies about sex. We have been told, till one is sick of hearing it, that sexual desire is in the same state as any of our other natural desires and that if only we abandon the silly old Victorian idea of hushing it up, everything in the garden will be lovely. It is not true. The moment you look at the facts, and away from the propaganda, you see that it is not. They tell you sex has become a mess because it was hushed up. But for the last twenty years it has not been hushed up. It has been chattered about all day long. Yet it is still in a mess.”

The Second World War did much to loosen British sexual morals. In the summer of 1939 it was clear to most that the nation was heading towards war and a pervading sense of impending doom spurred a frenzy of romantic liaisons. For committed couples this meant a rush to get married which in the last quarter of 1939 saw the marriage rate soar to the highest recorded. For the uncommitted wartime was the perfect excuse for casual sexual encounters which were excused as being the pragmatic option when the imminence of possible death or separation seemed to make a nonsense of a lifelong commitment. Also the long absence of fathers away fighting the war in the coming years meant that teenage girls were left vulnerable without the traditional paternal guardians of their virginity. The result from 1940 was a significant increase in the birth rate amounting to a modest baby boom. Throughout the war years the illegitimate birth rate increased steadily until as the end of the war finally approached almost a third of babies

⁵ It is interesting to note the high regard in which Kinsey remains held today in certain circles, such as amongst pornographers for instance. The following extract is from a feature on fetishes in *Bamboo* (October 2007) pornographic magazine: “The term ‘fetishism’ to describe unusual sexual interests was first used in 1887 by French psychologist Alfred Binet... But it wasn’t until 1927, when Sigmund Freud shook the world of psychology with his theory of psycho-sexual development, that it came into common use. It took Kinsey’s groundbreaking sex studies of the late ‘40s and early ‘50s to rid the term of its dysfunctional baggage – and the sexual revolution of the ‘60s to allow its free expression.” Clearly this contemporary pornographic source knows whose side Kinsey was on! Furthermore this source correctly implies that Kinsey’s ideology was built upon the earlier (perverted) thinking of Freud – indeed Freud and Kinsey’s ideas about sexuality are virtually identical.

born were to unmarried mothers. The chaos of war provided untold opportunities for promiscuity, such as the darkness of streets and doorways during the blackout, and largescale population displacement caused a breakdown of the normal conventions of life as countless thousands of young adults were thrown together in unfamiliar settings, often temporarily, and where severed from family ties and home community they were facilitated to fornicate. Perhaps the best example of this phenomenon lay in the “overpaid, over sexed and over here” reputation of the thousands of American servicemen stationed in the UK, in respect of whom it was estimated that 70,000 wartime babies had British mothers and American fathers. Long-term separations of married couples caused by the war led some British wives (no doubt desperately lonely) to commit adultery. That the war contributed to marital infidelity can be clearly seen from the figures for divorce: the annual number of petitions in 1938 was 10,000 but by 1945 it had more than doubled to 25,000. Of these 25,000 petitions 71% cited adultery as the reason and more than half were brought by men.

After the War The post-War period into the 1950s was an interesting time in the sexual life of the nation. After the shock of the war many people were happy to stay with or return to the familiar and the comfortable but there were many early indications of what was to come in the 1960s. In August 1946 Maisie Dunn became the first British woman publicly to wear a bikini whilst on honeymoon in Newquay; in the 1950s Italian stiletto-heeled shoes were introduced into British women’s fashion and have remained popular ever since; the ‘uniform’ of the first ‘Page 3’ glamour pornographic-prostitutes twenty years hence was all ready to go. In the 1940s and 1950s the BBC still took its role as a standard bearer of the nation’s morality seriously. The BBC had a guide for scriptwriters, producers and editors which banned all manner of subjects and styles including innuendo and anything inherently immoral, any mention of homosexuality or prostitution and even vague suggestive references such as to knickers or French maids. Nevertheless the *Daily Mirror* warned its readers in 1950 that: “If you let a TV through your door, life will never be the same.” The 1950s was the time of the ‘Beatnik’ anti-establishment movement and also witnessed the birth of Rock ‘n’ Roll; both these cultural phenomena presaged the huge-scale rebellion against traditional moral attitudes and behaviour that erupted in 1960.

The International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) was founded in Bombay in 1952, largely as a result of the efforts of Margaret Sanger; the new organisation was committed to defining contraception, abortion and sex education as ‘human rights’.⁶ Its strategy has always been to persuade governments to give State funding to organisations which provide contraception, abortion and ‘sex education’, especially so-called Family Planning Associations. Furthermore the IPPF and its constituent organisations – such as the Family Planning Association in the UK – have always been ideologically committed to destroying the marriage-based family by any means, advocating higher taxation for

⁶ In 1961 the IPPF had a membership of (so-called) Family Planning Associations from thirty-two countries; by 2000 there were FPAs in over 180 countries.

married couples as a financial disincentive, seeking to make divorce as easy as possible, reducing the age of consent and encouraging women to pursue a career rather than motherhood.

In the 1950s most men and women were married by their mid-twenties and most remained virgins until after their wedding. In tandem with the growth of mass consumerism and the decline of Christian influence more and more couples began to practice barrier methods of 'birth control' and the trend was for a declining birth rate such that mid-decade there were an average 2.4 children per couple. The divorce rate slowly increased but marriage break-ups remained a rare occurrence. In the early 1950s the majority of young married women became housewives focused on child rearing but this culture was beginning to change: in 1951 one-in-five married women worked outside the home but six years later this was one-in-three. That stay-at-home mothers provided the best upbringing for their children was unquestioned and this orthodoxy was upheld by women's magazines which encouraged readers' full-time commitment to husbands and children (in stark contrast to now).⁷ The 1950s was a decade of contrasts as the British people recovered from war and searched for meaning, purpose and identity in a melting pot of traditional standards vying with modern radical ideas offering to shape the future of society. The mood was changing, particularly amongst the younger generation, many of whom began to reject the received wisdom of their parents in favour of anything that appeared to be modern, new, exciting and fun. In the following decade hedonism broke out like a wildfire and the country appeared to change in an instant, though as has been seen, the 1960s' sexual revolution had been brewing for decades beforehand.

⁷ Given the sad state of today's society this philosophy – always obviously rock-solid sound – is now proven beyond doubt and only mindless academics and idiotic politicians still try to pretend otherwise because of their ideological hatred of the marriage-based family and the moral precepts upon which it stands.