SMASH MONOGAMY: SEXUAL REVOLUTION TO POLITICAL REVOLUTION

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In the late 1960s, the radical organization Weatherman practiced "criticism/self-criticism" sessions, wherein the group would select a member in order to attack the individual's character flaws for hours on end. These meetings became central to the Weatherman experience, as their purpose was to break down the individual so that they could rebuild themselves within the collective. Additionally, group members swapped sexual partners, sometimes breaking up established couples in the process; they called this practice "smash monogamy." One night, after hours of censure for her perceived "egocentrism," Susan Stern went to bed "shell shocked."[1] She confided in Weatherman leader, Mark Rudd, that she felt miserable. He tried to reassure her, explaining, "I know how hard that first real criticism is—it's the toughest thing in the world to face how fucked up we are. But you'll be much stronger for it, Susan."[2] That night, as she was trying to sleep, she heard the muffled sobs

[1] David Barber, *A Hard Rain Fell: SDS and Why It Failed* (Jackson: UP of MS, 2008), 196.

[2] Susan Stern, *With the Weathermen: The Personal Journal of a Revolutionary Woman* (New York: Doubleday, 1975), 168.

of her friend Georgia, fending off Rudd in a nearby bed.[3] Earlier, Rudd warned Georgia that she had to "strengthen herself to fight the reactionary tendencies within the collective." Now, Georgia told him "I don't want you. I want Mike… I can't help it. I love him." Rudd told her, "You have to put the demands of your collective above your love. Nothing comes before the collective." Lying there, hands clamped over her ears, Susan Stern thought, "Perhaps… Weatherman is wrong."[4] At the time, the public lacked knowledge of Weatherman's radical sex practices. This incident and the organization's support of smash monogamy, however, constitute vital pieces of the decade's sexual revolution.

The media credited greater structural forces for allowing youths more opportunity and personal freedom. *New York Times* cited class mobility as a causal agent for the sexual revolution. Journalist Andrew Hacker explained, "There is more movement than ever before from place to place, from class to class, with each step forcing adjustments in values and expectations." [5] Historian David Allyn argues that 1960s youths grew up in unprecedented prosperity, which allowed them to "afford to put aside practical concerns about the future in order to savor life's pleasures."[6] Hacker warned that "moral standards become less absolute as the range of choices becomes wider" and inferred that young Americans desired "some kind of fixed relationship" to replace the old ties of family, community and church.[7] The *New York Times* underscored youth participation in the civil rights movement, suggesting that the questioning of some of

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[3] Allen J. Matusow, *The Unraveling of America: A History of Liberalism in the 1960s* (New York: Harper, 1984), 340. This version of the story comes from a combination of Matusow, Barber and, of course, Stern's personal account. Rudd makes no mention of this incident in his own memoir, which was consulted but not cited for this paper.

[4] Ibid., 340-1.

[5] Andrew Hacker, "The Pill and Morality," *New York Times*, November 21, 1965.

[6] David Allyn, *Make Love, Not War: The Sexual Revolution: An Unfettered History* (New York: Little Brown, 2000), 80.

[7] Hacker, "Pill and Morality."

society's rules led easily to the questioning of all.[8] In 1968, the *Los Angeles Times* assessed the situation, finding that the middle class had become a "moral battleground" in America.[9] This article explores the watershed moments in this moral battleground, embodied in every conflict between the old morality and a new morality, in the reemergence of the idea of free love, and the more extreme extension of this idea in smash monogamy. Historians must look closer to understand how Americans in the 1960s defined these gradual changes in morality as radical, how youth ultimately excised radical elements, and finally, how the very institution they tried to destroy, the institution of marriage, became strengthened.

Two types of primary sources, newspapers from the early sexual revolution and memoirs dealing with the later sexual radicalization, provide a window into the changing sexual mores. The eye of the media focused on the sexual revolution for a relatively short period of time. As a more political revolution began to take shape in America, the media stopped looking to the *sexual* revolution and looked to the *political* one. Interestingly, the sexual revolution became more radical when no one was looking. To understand the first battle of the sexual revolution, we must look at the media's perceptions of the movement. As the sexual revolution moved into new terrains, however, media attention became sparse. As a result, historians have also overlooked the sexual revolution in favor of discussions about political radicalism. Where media sources dry up, historians can turn to memoirs. Former radicals, some of whom spent time in prison, have written about their experiences. Some, like Susan Stern, do not shy away from the negative. In order to understand the continuing sexual revolution, scholars must consider firsthand accounts and secondary materials that discuss the counterculture and sexual revolution. Only then can a clearer picture of the sexual revolution and its impact on the fabric of sex and marriage in America, emerge.

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[8] Jonathan Randal, "Relaxed Campus Rules Reflect Liberalized Attitudes on Sex," *New York Times*, April 25, 1966.

[9] Dial Torgerson, "The New Morality: Is It New or Just in the Open?" *Los Angeles Times*, November 24, 1968.

Historians have examined the sexual revolution from a variety of angles. Nancy Cott, for example, argues that marriage and the U.S. government are interconnected; changes in one lead to changes in the other.[10] The community, she explains, has historically defined marriage in America. The sexual revolution involved a conflict—often direct, always perceived—between two moralities, two ways of life. Few historians have examined the sexual revolution directly; most treat it as a side note to political revolution and upheaval. Accordingly, Elaine Tyler May argues that, "fears of sexual chaos tend to surface during times of crisis and rapid social change."[11] May links the roots of the sexual revolution to the Cold War, finding that fears over communism created anxieties over sexual practices. Americans targeted their fears at what Matusow calls "the Dionysian impulse in the hippie counterculture."[12] David Allyn injects medical advances into the debate as contraception became "clean" with the pill.[13] Clean contraception meant the young generation, including college and high school students, willingly stepped outside accepted behavioral boundaries by engaging in non-marital sex.

This triumph over human biology granted youth greater degrees of physical freedom, which frightened older generations. Critics of the new morality "complained that the family-centered ethic of 'togetherness' gave way to the hedonistic celebration of 'doing your own thing.'"[14] The focus shifted from the family to the individual and the emphasis on marriage lessened as young people looked for new ways to make connections through numerous partners, anonymous sex, and free love. Smash

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[10] Nancy F. Cott, *Public Vows: A History of Marriage and the Nation* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2000). Cott's draws on issues over consent, slavery, immigration, polygamy, obscenity to changes in official policy in regards to marriage. She explains that the government affirmed monogamous marriage and rejected any challenges.

[11] Elaine Tyler May, *Homeward Bound: American Families in the Cold War Era* (New York: Basic Books, 1988), 93.

[12] Matusow, 293.

[13] Allyn, 33.

[14] May, 221.

monogamy represented the zenith of the radical sexual movement, hoping to tear away the patriarchal roots of marriage for something better. This came at a personal cost for some as detachment from the norm required more force than some revolutionaries supposed. They saw the American nuclear family as "isolated in its privacy, conformist in its security-mindedness and dull in its routine, often hypocritical mode of existence [that] seemed to confine and diminish the self."[15] This view of the family presented a new and distinct challenge to sex, marriage, and the old morality in America.

This revision—the sexual revolution—was the "stock magazine piece" of the 1960s.[16] Newspapers reported on the "alleged breakdowns in teenage morals"[17] and became a topic of public discourse and of private conversation, debated in the home, in church, and on college campuses across the nation. The media presented the new freedom as a danger to the youth and a challenge to the old morality. *New York Times* cited a child-study organization in calling the "hue and cry" over the new morality a "smokescreen to protect the adult world from seeing that its entire moral code is in dire need of revision."[18] The *Los Angeles Times* blamed adult hypocrisy, suggesting that American adults had a "lascivious preoccupation on sex at one extreme and a tongue-tied, blind, paralyzing fear of it at the other."[19]

The perception of the sexual revolution as a moral battleground took root in the ideas that the old morality, now known as the nuclear family, was crumbling. Barbara Epstein argues that "for the left to identify with 'the family' [it]…associated itself with authority and conventional

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[15] Gilbert Zicklin, *Countercultural Communes: A Sociological Perspective* (Westport: Greenwood, 1983), 9.

[16] Russell Baker, "Observer: The Bacchanalia Gap," *New York Times*, April 29, 1965.

[17] Natalie Jaffe, "Adults' Morality Called Hypocrisy," *New York Times*, March 8, 1966.

[18] Baker, "Observer."

[19] Mary Ann Callan, "Nuclear Family: Sex Morality Tug-of-War," *Los Angeles Times*, March 12, 1964.

morality."[20] This conventional morality held that one man and one woman married, had children and raised a family, and the State supported these units because it led to a more stable society.[21] Freedom from traditional restrictions countered the very purpose of marriage. Lillian Faderman finds that monogamy's inhibition of sexual exploration did not make it appear antiquated to the new morality, but rather it "smacked too much of patriarchal capitalism and imperialism. It was men's way of keeping women enslaved."[22] In its series on the nuclear family, the *Los Angeles Times* argued the weakening of traditional marriage and family in scientific terms. One article stated, "its 'atoms' are held together not by economic necessity but by a voluntary relationship based on emotional need and, hopefully, loyalty."[23] Sex fit within these bonds for practical reasons.

Sex also fit as a spiritual exercise, reinforced by Christianity, particularly Catholic doctrine. In the *Journal of Social Hygiene* in 1951, Edward B. Lyman explained that American society recognized marriage as "a natural law as well as a divine precept."[24] In the 1960s, the old morality operated under the assumption that sex within "the bond of matrimony" was morally correct, whereas "relations outside the protection of marriage" were immoral.[25] In 1968, the Pope even proclaimed that sex was "not for pleasure and not even for the maintenance of a happy relationship between…couples. It has only one purpose, utilitarian, essential… the procreation of children."[26]

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[20] Barbara Epstein, "Family Politics and the New Left," *Feminist Review* 14 (Summer 1983): 35-45.

[21] Cott, 2-8.

[22] Lillian Faderman, *Odd Girls and Twilight Lovers: A History of Lesbian Life in Twentieth-Century America* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1991), 233.

[23] Callan, "Nuclear Family."

[24] Edward B. Lyman, "Let's Tell the Whole Story about Sex: A Paper before a Class in Family Living and Sex Education, University of Pennsylvania," *Journal of Social Hygiene* Vol. 37 no. 1 (Jan 1951): 9.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Patrick O'Donovan, "The Church and Sex—Old Doubts," *Los Angeles Times*, August 11, 1968.

Science countered religion here, as mainstream society saw the pill as a de facto invitation to promiscuity and a challenge to the old morality's positioning of sex only within marriage. The *Los Angeles Times* predicted that the pill would "revolutionize, even subvert, moral standards in all parts of the civilized world."[27] A year earlier, the same paper reported in its nuclear family series that scientific advancements, particularly "birth control pills and containment of venereal diseases [had taken] some of the 'don't-ness' out of sex."[28] Cott suggests that the pill "sever[ed] a link in the chain between sex and marriage."[29] In 1967, the *Los Angeles Times* explained to readers that, "with the day of the pill, girls have a sense of freedom… [that] they can go where they please and when they please without threat of pregnancy."[30] Although the article presumed that girls would engage in sexual intercourse with a steady partner, the moral battleground did not allow for this distinction.

Increased sexual activity and freedom granted by the pill, media outlets noted, constituted a danger to the youth of the nation. The media described premarital sex in negative terms. New morality, according to the *Los Angeles Times*, consisted of medical-like "symptoms," suggesting the diseased nature of the sexual revolution.[31] The *New York Times* referred to students as "casualties of the sexual revolution," and correlated sex with mental health problems among students.[32] The media also portrayed the new morality as a danger to runaways. The *Los Angeles Times* reported in 1967 that, "because of the hippie movement, today's runaways are exposed as never before to the

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[27] Hacker, "Pill and Morality."
[28] Callan, "Sex Morality."
[29] Cott, 192.
[30] Paul Houston, "Young Girls Running Away at Record Rate," *Los Angeles Times*, September 3, 1967.
[31] Torgerson, "New Morality."
[32] Donald Janson, "Campus Sex Tied to Mental Ills," *New York Times*, May 20, 1967. At the University of Wisconsin, 86% of unmarried female psychiatric patients had "indulged in intercourse" and 72% had done so with more than one person. Dr. Seymour L. Halleck concluded that "permissive sexual activity seems to be highly correlated with mental illness."

three letter hazards of pot, LSD…and sex."[33] In a series on hippies, the *Los Angeles Times* reported that "many officials saw [hippies] as a serious threat to today's young people."[34] Two years later, the *New York Times* reported on a commune called Oz that had a policy of discouraging runaways from visiting.[35] This reality did not matter as long as the perception was that runaways would be taken in by hippies and would have sex, and their lives would be ruined.

The sexual revolution took on a political valence to prove that these supposed dangers had no validity. Medovoi argues that the revolution referred both to "New Left ambitions of toppling the state [and] the countercultural overthrow of traditional sexual mores." [36] Allyn suggests that "Young feminists equated the 'sexual revolution' with the oppression and 'objectification' of women and saw it, therefore, as something to stop at all costs.[37] The politicization of the sexual revolution complicated all aspects of the battleground. A series in the *Los Angeles Times* about the nuclear family asked readers if the acceptance of the new morality "among youth [was] that start of a slow, tortuous route out of our hypocritical past to finally a healthier attitude toward sex as a basic part of human relations?" [38] The newspaper would not support the sexual revolution explicitly, but it would promote language of progress.

Meanwhile, the sexual revolution found focus on college campuses where the battle over sex and education made headway slowly. More college students, as noted in the studies

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[33] Houston, "Young Girls Running."

[34] "Hippies—Menace to Selves, Youth and Society?" *Los Angeles Times*, April 9, 1967.

[35] Robert Houriet, "Life and Death of a Commune Called Oz," *New York Times*, February 16, 1969.

[36] Leerom Medovoi, "A Yippie-Panther Pipe Dream: Rethinking Sex, Race, and the Sexual Revolution," in *Swinging Single: Representing Sexuality in the 1960s*, ed. Hilary Radner and Maya Luckett (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999) 133.

[37] Allyn, 5.

[38] Callan, "Sex Morality."

above, reportedly engaged in sexual intercourse.[39] However, college physicians hesitated in prescribing the pill to co-eds more so than local practitioners. One college physician explained that "in giving the pill… we would be implicitly condoning the use they would subsequently make of them."[40] College physicians, more parent-conscious because of the idea of *in loco parentis*, practiced caution.[41] In 1963, the *New York Times* conveyed physicians' concerns, explaining that "parents do, under American ground rules, hold the college responsible for their children's intellectual, personal and moral development."[42] Off campus, physicians displayed more tolerance for birth control because "they, unlike their university colleagues, have to deal with what happens when conception has not been prevented."[43] In other words, local physicians have to deal with pregnant, unmarried young women.

This battle over sex on campuses came to a head in 1960 when the University of Illinois in Champaign fired Professor Leo F. Koch for condoning premarital sex in the campus newspaper. Koch's endorsement and firing put the sexual revolution on the national agenda and had Americans choosing sides. The controversy started when two students, Dan Bures and Dick Hutchison, wrote a letter entitled "Sex Ritualized" that criticized campus dating habits. The missive articulated that with a "compulsion to participate, the inevitable result is the neglect of the dating partner as an individual."[44] Koch, a biology professor, wrote a lengthy response that Bures, a year later, called "a bitter

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[39] Linda Mathews, "Campus 'Sex Revolution' Seems Limited to Girls," *Los Angeles Times*, October 9, 1968. The Packard survey in 1968 found that 57% of college males and 43% of college females had engaged in sexual intercourse. More importantly, the Packard survey found that 30% of "men" had had intercourse with more than two partners, while 14% of "girls" admitted to more than one sexual partner.

[40] Hacker, "Pill and Morality."

[41] Ibid.

[42] Grace Hechinger and Fred M. Hechinger, "College Morals Mirror Our Society," *New York Times*, April 14, 1963.

[43] Hacker, "Pill and Morality."

[44] Dan Bures, "Was Koch 'Bitter'? Here's New Opinion," *Champaign Urbana Spectator*, February 20, 1961.

criticism, written with a streak of hardness running through the grain of everything he said."[45] The often quoted excerpt from Koch's letter suggests the acceptability of sexual intercourse on campus specifically that a "mutually satisfactory sexual experience" might lead to "longer lasting marriages." No one wanted to hear his conclusions as long as his argument "condoned premarital sex relations."[46] Koch argued that "with modern contraceptives and medical advice readily available at the nearest drugstore, or at least a family physician, there is no valid reason why sexual intercourse should not be condoned among those sufficiently mature to engage in it without social consequences and without violating their own codes of morality and ethics."[47] Moreover, he noted that "A mutually satisfactory sexual experience would eliminate the need for many hours of frustrated petting and lead to happier and longer lasting marriages among our young men and women." [48] Most individuals who read Koch's statements could not get past his assessment that "premarital intercourse among college students is not, in and of itself, improper," despite some cogent statements about new morality.[49]

Reverend Ira Latimer, member of the Bureau of Public Affairs and the University of Illinois' Dad's Association, wrote a letter to the university's female students and called Koch's "exhortation to sexual promiscuity…an audacious attempt to subvert the religious and moral foundations of America."[50] He identified Koch's approach as the "standard operating procedure of the Communist conspiracy [used] to demoralize a nation as a

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[45] Ibid.

[46] "Professors Score Ouster of Author of Sex Article," *New York Times*, March 19, 1963.

[47] Quoted in Hugh Hefner, "The Playboy Philosophy Part 5," Playboy, April 1963, reprinted on CouplesClick.tv April 4, 2009, http://www.couplesclick.tv/featured-lifestyle-articles/the-playboy-philosophy-part-5/2009/04/04/ (accessed November 15, 2011).

[48] Ibid.

[49] Quoted in *Koch v. Board of Trustees of University of Ill.*, 187 N.E. 2d 340, 39 Ill.App.2d 51 (Ill.App. 1 Dist., 1962).

[50] Ibid.

necessary preliminary to taking over… Professor Koch's letter follows this formula point by point." Latimer further detracted from Koch's argument, stating "Animal Koch would reduce us to a sub-animal level… All this, of course, is a calculated appeal to the appetites of young men who thoughtlessly suppose that a college campus would be a paradise if coeds were no more 'inhibited' than prostitutes."[51] Koch appealed the university's decision but lost. The Court of Appeals described Koch's views as "offensive and repugnant and contrary to commonly accepted standards of morality and his espousal of these views could be interpreted as an encouragement of immoral behavior."[52] The same court decision called Koch's letter "an uncomplimentary reflection on the standards of morality presently existing at the University of Illinois" and refused to repeat the text of his letter, saying, "it would not be profitable to set forth its full text for the purpose of this opinion."[53]

Koch also had his supporters. A committee of the American Association of University Professors censured the University of Illinois for firing Koch, calling his ouster "outrageously severe and completely unwarranted." [54] On campus, students demonstrated in support of the professor and hung University President David D. Henry in effigy complete with a sign that read 'Hanged for Killing Academic Freedom.'[55]

Koch remained infamous for years. When he was hired in 1964 as a science instructor at the "progressive" Camp Summerland in North Carolina, "rumors of nudism and free love swept the area."[56] Locals distributed hate literature around town,

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[51] Ibid.

[52] Koch *v. Board of Trustees of University of Ill*. These words echoed the President of the University, nearly word for word, though the court did not cite him. Rather, it reiterated what he said, taking a moral stance against Koch instead of simply upholding his dismissal on contractual grounds.

[53] *Koch v. Board of Trustees of University of Ill*.

[54] "Professors Score Ouster of Author of Sex Article."

[55] Hefner, "Playboy Philosophy."

[56] Roger Ebert, "Making Out Is Its Own Reward," *Roger Ebert's Blog*, January 12, 2010,

accusing the camp counselors of being not only nudists but "sex perverts, Communists and God knows what else."[57] Organized opposition to the camp produced a newspaper that "described alleged nude bathing and reported free love was being taught at the camp."[58] Both state troopers and townspeople attacked the camp "in a violent night raid" and campers evacuated to Camp Midvale in New Jersey.[59] Though not specifically named, Koch's reputation had preceded him. Regardless of any real connection to communists or any political radicals, the old morality identified Koch and his associates with the new morality.

Meanwhile, Reverend Frederick C. Wood, a chaplain at Goucher College, had to defend himself after his audience took one of his sermons as promoting premarital sex. The *New York Times* reported that the "young chaplain…has been answering critics who accuse him of preaching a sermon favoring free love."[60] He dared to say that "premarital intercourse need not be 'bad' or 'dirty…indeed, it can be very beautiful.'"[61] This same piece mentioned the Koch case, comparing Wood's views to Koch's. The President of Goucher College stood by the chaplain, though, saying that "far from preaching immorality, promiscuity, or advocating premarital relationships… he was attempting to sharpen the sense of personal responsibility in sexual as in all other human feeling."[62]

Free love countered the bonds of marriage and the old morality's admonition against premarital sex. Though free love predated the nuclear family's incarnation of the old morality,

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http://blogs.suntimes.com/ebert/2010/01/making_out_is_its_own_reward.html (accessed November 15, 2011).

[57] "Campers in Jersey after Carolina Riot," *New York Times*, July 15, 1963. The article quotes camp counselor Bruce Grund, an instructor from New York University.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Ebert, "Its Own Reward."

[60] "Minister Defends Lenient Sex View," *New York Times*, December 7, 1964.

[61] Ibid.

[62] "Chaplain Defended for Sermon on Sex," *New York Times*, December 22, 1964.

new morality followers used it as a way to reject tradition anew. Yippie John Sinclair explained that "All people must be free to fuck freely, whenever and wherever they want to…in bed, on the floor, in the chair, on the streets, in the parks and fields" to "escape the hang-ups that are drilled into us in this weirdo country."[63] Free love did not necessarily mean unrestrained sex with just anyone. It meant openness among the members of the commune. They tried to overcome the sexual hang-ups of mainstream America. The communards of the counterculture took their position on the moral battleground, making sexual nonconformity a political statement.[64] The communards made free love a lifestyle, "welcoming sexual initiatives from women as well as men, demolishing sanctions on premarital relationships and attempting to do the same for extramarital and cross-racial sex."[65] They ignored the trappings of marriage and monogamy, replacing them with open relationships and free love. Some communes practiced "completely free love, where all members engaged in sexual encounters and where group sex or bisexuality might be accepted."[66] The *New York Times* reported in 1969 that "in some hippie communes, group sex is standard procedure." The veracity did not matter, as long as the media presented it this way, the old morality could reject it sight unseen. The article informed readers that "At a few in the Southwest, newcomers are given to understand from the outset that property and bodies are to be shared freely, on demand. At Oz," a commune near Meadville, Pennsylvania, "orgies were few and far between."[67]

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[63] Medovoi, 153, citing David Farber, *The Age of Great Dreams: America in the 1960s* (New York: Hill & Wang, 1994), 182.

[64] Communard is Zicklin's term, a way to differentiate between hippies living in, say, Haight-Ashbury and those who moved to rural communes. Notably, it was not until late in the decade that newspapers looked outside the urban hippie enclaves to communes like Oz.

[65] Cott, 192.

[66] Terry H. Anderson, *The Sixties*, 3rd ed. (New York: Longman, 2007), 140.

[67] Houriet, "Commune Called Oz."

Communes like Oz were an exception in having less emphasis on sex, but were quite normal in avoiding any emphasis on politics. Oz did not exist to change the world; rather it existed outside the world. At its peak in the summer of 1968, Oz consisted of twenty men, fourteen women and a two-year-old girl, all of whom shared food and clothing, shared shelter and, most importantly, shared life experiences.[68] They did not practice regular orgies or the more extreme forms of free love, but they did share beds. Seven of the women of Oz were married or had an "old man" with whom they regularly shared a bed.[69] Other communes dealt with sex and marriage in similar or more open ways. Billy Digger spoke of the fluidity of marriage contracts, explaining that "people could still have huge ceremonies when they meet something they dug…if someone dug a different person every day, he could have a different ceremony every day."[70] At Oz, men wore jeans and little else, while women wore long, loose dresses; nudity was commonplace.[71] This, of course, drew attention to the farm among locals in nearby Meadville. "Fed by fears that the farm was converting [or corrupting] numbers of local youth to a radical life style," residents started harassing the people at Oz.[72] Ultimately, state police raided Oz and charged members with "maintaining a disorderly house" in violation of a century-old statute. Police also charged members with "corrupting the morals of a 16-year-old girl" who lived on the farm with her parents' knowledge and "tacit consent."[73] Authorities nailed to the front door of the farm an injunction against using the premises for

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[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid.
[70] Stephen A. O. Golden, "What Is a Hippie? A Hippie Tells," *New York Times*, August 22, 1967. Golden explains that Billy Digger is one of the first Diggers of the Hippie movement. A Digger, Golden says, "works and organizes so that the hippie community can have more freedom and not depend on the 'straight world.'"
[71] Houriet, "Commune Called Oz."
[72] Ibid.
[73] Ibid.

"fornication, assignation and lewdness," and most of the members scattered to new communes or back to their old lives.

The politics of the old morality intruded on the people at Oz, but in other parts of the counterculture, free love went hand in hand with politics. In fact, the very existence of communes constituted a political statement in itself. As Billy Digger explained, "the basic unit of the culture…would be the commune instead of a house with one man and one woman in it."[74] This contradicted and challenged the most basic notions of the old morality. Digger clarified that "the commune would not be owned by one person or one group but would be open to all people at all times, to do whatever they wish to do in it."[75] Communes challenged the Protestant ethic and American capitalism. Children in the communes "would be the responsibility of everyone, not only of the blood mother or father." [76] This idea broke with American tradition, taking parenting out of the realm of the biological parents and putting it on the collective. The new morality redefined marriage and marital relations even outside of the sphere of sex.

The women's liberation movement found common ground with the counterculture and radical sexuality in rejecting the old morality's sense of marriage. The movement did not fundamentally oppose the union of men and women. Rather, it sought to dismantle the patriarchal, oppressive form of marriage. While marriage had become more optional for women, some wanted it entirely done away with. For others, marriage represented the only form of economic security.[77] Stern places emphasis on the beleaguered position of married women. She witnesses "millions of women tired of being mothers, tired of being wives, tired of being mistresses, tired of doing laundry, tired of cooking, cleaning, sewing, serving, chauffeuring, mending, shopping, and suffering the daily tantrums not only of

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[74] Golden, 36.
[75] Ibid.
[76] Ibid.
[77] Tracy Clark-Flory, "Why Feminism Was Good for Marriage," *Salon*, January 12, 2011. http://life.salon.com/2011/01/12/coontz_qa/ (accessed October 4, 2011).

their children, but of their men as well."[78] Dr. Paul H. Gebhard argued that the sexual revolution constituted "a continuation of the trend toward sexual equality with the female being regarded both by males and by herself as less a sexual object to be exploited, and more as a fellow human with her own needs, expectations and rights."[79]

Women's liberation existed now not only as a branch of the sexual revolution but as fuel for it also. The *New York Times* articulated that "the revolution…has primarily to do with women, and middle-class women in particular. They are the ones who have finally come to embrace ways of thinking and behaving that have long been customary for others." Men already had some sexual freedom, but now "women began to stir and breathe, to moan new words: freedom; liberation; independence; employment; unemployment; divorce, birth control. Political, and with a gallop, the Women's Liberation Movement was born."[80] In the greater sexual revolution, others claimed freedom as a more ubiquitous ideal for all sexes, races, and class. Freedom of choice extended beyond the realm of white men.

On a broader level, the entire New Left had reason to reject marriage as well. Digger asserted that hippies had "none of the shut-in paranoid one-man-and-woman-and-children family structure" of the old morality.[81] This negative view of traditional marriage and family spread into the political side of the New Left as well. Zicklin says that the counterculture "spread the idea that contemporary society had become a perversion of nature."[82] This included, and even depended on, traditional marriage. Weatherman member Michael Albert argued that the women's movement "significantly affected" the group; "it was not only out to end imperialism, but also to end patriarchy."[83] Stern

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[78] Stern, 9.
[79] "Scientific Panel Finds 'No Sexual Revolution,'" *Los Angeles Times*, December 30, 1967, 6.
[80] Stern, 9.
[81] Golden, 36.
[82] Zicklin, 10.
[83] Michael Albert, *Remembering Tomorrow: From SDS to Life After Capitalism* (New York: Seven Stories, 2006), 166.

agrees, channeling her younger self, she writes: "I'm no longer content to nurture children, or to give a husband support and strength. I need all my strength for the Movement, to fight imperialism, to create a world in which people can live with dignity and without fear and starvation and war." [84] Stern effectively equated imperialism with the patriarchy of marriage, and explained that the sexual revolution and political revolution moving forward together was no coincidence.

Like Stern, not all individuals in the movement could afford to detach themselves from the world to live in communes; some wanted to more directly confront the old morality. Groups like Weatherman became active in the late 1960s, taking increasingly radical stances and actions to combat the old morality and the American government as well. Some lesbian feminists "believed it a duty to 'Smash Monogamy,' as their buttons proclaimed, sporting a triple woman's symbol and rejecting [even] the notion of the lesbian couple." [85] Zicklin argues that the small size of cells in Weatherman or on most communes operated as a direct "answer to the problem of individuality in a large-scale organizational society." [86] In the nuclear family, the individual made up just one atom within a larger whole, whereas the individual mattered more in a radical cell. Despite the belief in "rugged individualism" and the American Dream, monogamous couples and family units built American society. The revolution fought as much against this system of organization as it did the patriarchy behind it or the imperialism that emerged as a result.

Using the same terminology as the women's liberation movement, Weatherman sought to smash monogamy within its collectives. Weatherman leader Bill Ayers, describing the casualness that smash monogamy could involve, describes a night in which, "Diana and Rachel and Terry and I bedded down together…. In the mayhem we searched our every possibility and I woke up with Terry in my arms, Rachel and Diana curled up

[84] Stern, 123.
[85] Faderman, 233.
[86] Zicklin, 40.

across the way. We were, we said, an army of lovers.[87] Prior to this, Ayers and Diana had been a couple. He told her he would not "allow himself to be tied to one woman" anymore and she started spending time with a "number of other men."[88] In this, Weatherman operated similarly to Redbird, a lesbian community in Vermont, where members thought they would "smash monogamy too by rotating through everyone in the collective until [they] had been with everyone and then having open sexual options within the collective."[89] Forced rotation of partners, self-implemented, as Ayers admits, "took a lot of energy…. [Y]ou were supposed to fuck, no matter what." [90] Weatherman employed slogans such as "SMASH MONOGAMY! NO LOVE! NO LIFE!" [91] The group made up an "army of lovers" who cheered against love and life. This stance, taken literally, could never hold.

This revolutionary trading of partners, however positive in theory, had far more negative effects in practice. The *Los Angeles Times* reported that smash monogamy in Weatherman "led to a situation in which any man could simply announce that he wanted to sleep with a particular woman and she would be required to submit."[92] Stern's account of Rudd's behavior within the collective illustrates that submission. Smash monogamy did not allow for nonparticipants. At Redbird, they chose lovers by "drawing name[s] out of a hat, and then [would] go about loving that person, until, after several months" they would redraw and go again.[93] This randomness did break down old standards and surely countered the old morality, but it valued no one as an

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[87] Bill Ayers, *Fugitive Days: A Memoir* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2001), 142.

[88] "'Days of Rage' Riots a Time of Tempering," *Los Angeles Times*, November 26, 1970.

[89] Paul J. Cloke and Jo Little, *Contested Countryside Cultures: Otherness, Marginalisation, and Rurality* (London: Routledge, 1997), 111. The work cites documentation of the community by Cheney (1985).

[90] Ibid.

[91] Stern, 153.

[92] "Days of Rage."

[93] Cloke & Little, 111.

individual; a person's free will devolved to names in a hat. These campaigns to smash monogamy, Kathy McAfee and Myrna Wood wrote in the New Left magazine, *Leviathan,* in 1969 might "produce effectiveness and homogeneity and loyalty" but would not "produce freedom." [94] These feminist authors understood the problem before the practitioners of smash monogamy did. Theory did not take one's emotions into account. Diana Oughton asked Ayers, "If this is liberation… then why don't I feel free?"[95] Still, the practice continued in Weatherman as long as the collectives could maintain it—after the organization went fully underground in the 1970s, the practice became less rigid. Ron Jacobs argues that smash monogamy "only freed men from responsibility and, consequently, replicated the structures already in existence."[96]

The New Left's inability to fully subvert patriarchy constituted one of the many reasons why smash monogamy failed. The on-demand sex favored the men of the organization. As the *Los Angeles Times* reported, "women quickly came to resent the fact this did not seem to work in the opposite direction."[97] Berger argues that smash monogamy "played out in typically sexist ways, in which women were expected to be sexually available to men."[98] Refusal to participate in sexual relations led to dissent, even among the women. When Stern did not want to participate, she lashed out at Carol, who supported smash monogamy. Stern accused Carol of wanting others to "give up our relationships…because [she didn't] have anyone to fuck."[99] The night Mark Rudd raped her friend Georgia, Stern

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[94] Quoted in Ron Jacobs, *The Way the Wind Blew: A History of the Weather Underground* (London: Verso, 1997), 92. The original article, "What is the Revolutionary Potential of Women's Liberation," appeared in the June 1969 issue of *Leviathan*.

[95] Ayers, 142.

[96] Jacobs, 92.

[97] "Days of Rage."

[98] Dan Berger, *Outlaws of America: The Weather Underground and the Politics of Solidarity* (Oakland: AK Press, 2006), 291.

[99] Stern, 156.

wondered "where did building strength end and torture begin?"[100]

Smash monogamy sowed the seeds of its own destruction. Stern's tone in her memoir changed after this account. "Monogamy was still the number one topic," she wrote, "SMASH SMASH SMASH! The illness was growing like a cancer." [101] The "illness" no longer referred to monogamy, marriage or the old morality. For Stern, smash monogamy became a pathogen. Imprisoned Weatherman member David Gilbert credits the "glorification of violence" for promoting "male supremacy" within Weatherman.[102] But, it seems more likely that male dominance within the organization, not in belief or theory, but in practice, ruined any chance for its success.

The sexual revolution peaked and its most radical aspect failed, but the ideology remained. Weatherman believed that group sex and smash monogamy would "abolish private property and usher in a new age of socialist harmony."[103] The question now is, if Weatherman's code of morality forced the rotation of sexual partners, can we call the theory of smash monogamy immoral? It had social consequences and it certainly had its detractors and victims. But, if everyone in the organization had remained committed, smash monogamy would have worked just as open sexual relations had worked at Oz. Oz's problem, after all, emerged as a result of the outside community's intervention. Not until Weatherman went underground, and in some cases not until it ended, did the public know what had been going on inside the collectives. Weatherman communiqués did not discuss the sexual revolution. They spoke of imperialism and hinted at patriarchy, but even on the moral battleground of the sexual revolution, sex remained relatively private.

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[100] Ibid, 170.

[101] Stern, 180.

[102] David Gilbert, Letter to Cyrana B. Wyker, September 14, 2008. Quoted in Wyker, Cyrana B. "Women in Wargasm: The Politics of Women's Liberation in the Weather Underground Organization" (MA Thesis, University of South Florida, 2009), 41.

[103] Allyn, 224.

So, what changed? A scientific panel found in 1967 that there was no sexual revolution. The *Los Angeles Times* reported that instead there was simply a "continuation of long existing trends…. Newer contraceptive devices do not seem to have prompted any rise in the percentage of women having intercourse before marriage." [104] Lasch argues that contraceptives, as well as legalized abortion in the 1970s, instead merely "weakened the links that once tied sex to love, marriage, and procreation. Men and women now pursue sexual pleasure as an end in itself, unmediated even by the conventional trappings of romance."[105] Still, we have not become as open about sex as the rhetoric of the 1960s suggests. Sex Education makes headlines every time a school district attempts to make the discussion of sex more liberal. Birth control emerges in the political headlines again as a campaign season approaches. The sexual revolution brought America sex education, sex on college campuses, free love, women's liberation and smash monogamy. Each of these challenges to the old morality created a brand new conflict, generating headlines and national debate. The timeline for the moral battleground of the sexual revolution extends beyond the 1960s. Dr. Ira L. Reiss proclaimed in 1967, "[t]here has really be no sexual revolution in a strict sense because the change has been gradual and continuous, and also because the adult institutional control structures of churches, parents, law and such have changed much slower than the youth culture." [106] Gradual changes, initially seen as radical, became lost in the shuffle of later politics.

A strengthening of the institution of marriage became one consequence of the sexual revolution. Monica Mehta explains that "because marriage is now more optional… for the first time ever, men and women have equal rights in marriage

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[104] "Scientific Panel," 6.

[105] Christopher Lasch, *The Culture of Narcissism: American Life in an Age of Diminishing Expectations* (New York: Warner, 1979), 191.

[106] "Scientific Panel," 6.

and outside it." [107] She suggests that "marriage has been tremendously weakened as an institution" but points to only negative aspects that have been removed, namely "its former monopoly over organizing sexuality, male-female relations, political, social and economic rights, and personal legitimacy."[108] Mehta defines "traditional marriage" as one "based on love… for the purpose of making peoples' individual lives better."[109] Clark-Flory agrees that "marriage has become much fairer. It's also become much more satisfying for men and women, when it works."[110] The sexual revolution allowed Americans to redefine marriage as something optional, and based on consent of both partners.

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[107] Monica Mehta, "The Myth of Marriage," *AlterNet*, July 21, 2005. http://www.alternet.org/story/23400/ (accessed October 4, 2011).
[108] Ibid.
[109] Ibid.
[110] Clark-Flory.