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MECHANISMS FOR GENDER ROLE STASIS

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ABSTRACT

Sex differences, resulting from hormonal and neurological patterns which arise during fetal development, provide the female with an advantage in verbal and social skills and the male with an advantage in visual/spatial, math and aggressiveness. In addition to the differential physiological equipping for reproduction, men and women are provided with unique motivational differences which are role-related and insure the continuance of the family. The most powerful evidence for creation is in the feature of stasis, or permanence, since what is characteristic of design is foreign and unacceptable to evolution. Because all alternatives to the family have failed both to provide for families and to do so without the "gender division of labor", the family unit has demonstrated a resistance to change not unlike that of the "living fossil".

INTRODUCTION

Key Findings from Sex Difference Research

Significant sex differences have been documented in a variety of areas, all of which may be understood by the creationist as preparation for complementary gender roles. These include differences in every major system, that is, skeletal, muscular, endocrine, metabolic and neurological [1,24,28]. The most well-established differences are a verbal advantage for females and a similar advantage for males in visual-spatial, math, and aggressiveness [1,24,28].

Baker's book [1] documents sex differences in physical stamina, physiological response to environmental stress, pain sensitivity and cognitive performance. Researchers have found a visual advantage for males and an auditory one for females [1]. For example, the female is better able to locate the source of an auditory stimulus while the male has better dynamic visual acuity. Researchers have also found differences for such basic sensory modalities as audition, vision, taste, smell, temperature, touch and pain with greater female sensitivities in most cases [1].

The basis for structural and behavioral differences lies in the process of sexual differentiation which begins prior to birth, reflected in neurological differences which are apparent soon after birth [24,40]. For example, male and female infants show an inverse relationship for tactility sensitivity and muscular strength, higher tactile/lower muscular for females and lower tactile/higher muscular for males with almost no overlap between score distributions [40, p. 18]. Adult females also show greater tactile sensitivity than males on 19 out of 20 body areas tested [28]. Female infants also show more interest in, and sensitivity for, auditory, verbal and social stimuli, while male infants demonstrate more interest in novel shapes and the manipulation of objects [28,40].

Origins Perspective

Evolutionists remain perplexed by the origin of sex since it meant that any presumably "beneficial mutations" which appeared would have had a lower probability of being passed on [2]. However, what appears to be solely disadvantageous from an evolutionary perspective acts both to conserve 'kind' and to confer survival benefits on the species through increased genetic variety, something only recently recognized by evolutionists [9,23]. They are also puzzled by the human infant who is dependent both physically and socially much longer than other primates [9,23].

According to sex difference researcher Diane Halpern, the evolution-based sociobiology "provides neither an explanation of, nor a justification for, sex differences" [24, p. 5]. In contrast, the creationist can view the features of biological and social interdependency, along with the lengthy dependency of the child, as representing the creative intentions of a faithful God, features which result in the ideal opportunity for bonding and instruction.

As pointed out by Battson, the critical discriminant between creation and evolution is "stasis" or resistance to change, since it is in fact the key difference between a system which was created and one which could have been evolved [51]. The limiting of change to within kind variation has been well-documented from research with fruit fly mutations [25]. Romer's law views biological mutations as acting to preserve the creature's basic nature, "birdness" for example, rather than acting to transform one type into another [34]. Creationists will recognize that this is in fact the role of within kind variation since mutations are inherently destructive.

Tiger suggests that cultural variations reflect such within kind variation which act to preserve innate social behavior patterns rather than to alter them, thus variation is limited while flexibility is preserved [34, p. vii]. For example, Norwegian linguist Blakar analysed gender norms as expressed in his own language and concluded that language both "reflects" and "conserves the existing sex role pattern", even to the extent that it could be said to "counteract change" [6, p. 121]. Biological continuity is represented by "living fossils", species which have provably failed to alter their basic form throughout their known history [25]. As the family has persisted worldwide despite efforts to alter it, we should regard the family as just such a "living fossil".

GENDER ROLE DESIGN

Patriarchy

Goldberg cites male dominance as a universal social pattern which results "inevitably" when hormonal-sponsored aggression, risk-taking, and spatiality interact with environmental demands such as the need for provision and protection [19]. From his observations of public gender segregation in 90 nonindustrial societies, Mackey has defined a "plowman/protector" complex as one of two such "universal constants" [34]. These patterns reflect the society's relative need for male as parent v male as "provider/protector" and are the means by which the next generation is socialized into gender-appropriate tasks [34]. While the male can in fact be both warrior and parent at the same time, since the activities are incompatible, society may not assign each to him with equal priority.

The male's greater tendency to seek authority, status, position or achievement, results in them holding the majority of the top positions in organizational hierarchies in every culture [19,32]. This is just as true in countries which have endorsed "equality" such as the Soviet Union, China, and Israel [32,40]. In spite of recent growth in the number of American women elected to political office, there are still seventeen times as many men in the U.S. Congress as women [49, p. 32]. In spite of its election of Margaret Thatcher in 1979, Great Britain has fewer women in politics now than it did in 1945 [40].

Goldberg defines aggression as the ambition, drive, and competitiveness required for success at any task, and notes that the male is more motivated to sacrifice on behalf of competitive success and dominance in personal relationships [19]. Moir and Jessel write that, in contrast, "Women won't; most of them simply are not made that way" [40, p. 162]. In discussing the male bias for competition and dominance, Moir and Jessel [40, p. 159] state that men who fail will give the excuse, "Success isn't worth the effort", while for women it appears to be more of a "self-evident truth" [40, p. 159].

Most women appear to be much less comfortable with competition. For example, women managers and leaders at a conference demonstrated a reluctance to assume leadership even though they were very capable of doing so [59]. Leadership difficulties have likewise afflicted the women's movement where traditional structure and the establishment of leadership authority was rejected [39]. Women's natural adaptability and reluctance to interact competitively with others helps to explain why those who support gender equity have been unable to make a more significant impact though social or legislative changes [11]. For example, Bunch argued that the

problem is that in building feminist strategies around reform goals dependent on existing political and economic structures, feminists often come not only to accept the limitations of form, but also to defend existing institutions instead of continuing to work toward feminist alternatives....Longer range questions [are] put aside in the struggle to survive [cited in 11, p. 249].

The greatest discrepancies in wages and positions result from the greater drive of married males to achieve when compared with either single men or married women who earn similar wages given similar work histories [32, p. 142]. One of the primary reasons for the wage differential is that males typically demonstrate greater "labor force attachment" which leads to greater job-related experience and training [4]. Using actual measures of productivity, such as an hourly wage, payment by results or overtime wages, researchers were able to account for the

differences between male and female pay. Similar findings applied for Stanford graduates in regard to bonuses and commissions [36, p. 38].

Bergmann accounted for 45% of the wage gap using the factors of job experience and training, noting that women significantly more often;worked part-time, took time off for illness, personal/family, placed limits on the job, or were out of the labor force or were planning to stop work [4, p. 78]. Fineman notes that the number of women working part-time has shown no tendency to decline and that having a young child is the most likely reason [15, p. 197]. The average working single mother with a child under 6 missed 10.1 days per year while a married woman with the same age child missed a full 24.8 days a year [37, p. 38]. These figures suggest remarkable motivational differences between the woman who is the "primary" wage earner and the one who is not.

Women's employment has depended upon various efforts to make work more compatible with childcare, such as, "sequencing", part-time, and the controversial "mommy track" which trades time with children for career growth [3,53]. Berg notes that women typically prefer these jobs because they are less stressful, demand less physical energy and traveling, and offer personal freedoms such as telephone access [3]. Women willingly make these choices in spite of the fact it disadvantages them economically and keeps them dependent [4,54].

Men's lower motivation to pursue occupations which are personal or child-related results in higher female employment in these areas [19]. For instance, women in law and medicine predominate in personal and child-related areas such as;OB/GYN, pediatrics and psychiatry, family law and personnel management while males predominate in the areas of academic medicine, surgery and orthopedics. More women doctors are also found in clinics and health maintenance organizations, probably due to more dependable scheduling [36, pp. 159-160]. Women lawyers most frequently work in trusts and estates, domestic relations, and tax law, all areas with more control, less litigation and more client contact.

Women lawyers surveyed were less satisfied than males with their jobs due to its adverse effect on their personal lives [15]. Mason places the blame not on "sinister cultural-conditioning" as feminists do, but on the reluctance of women to choose highly competitive positions which will "overwhelm" all of their time and energies, as they wish to preserve at least the "possibility of motherhood" [36, p. 155]. Even those who are the most successful competitively learn to hate the adversarial approach to solving human dilemmas [35].

While societies can function with little hierarchy and with a dependence on women for the major portion of food, they survive at a subsistence level because they have failed to utilize the male's aggression and organizational strengths [8,19]. While these cultures represent the social egalitarianism advocated by feminists, Chafetz writes in her analysis that

The apparent human desire to improve the material standard of living beyond the minimal level, which is still characteristic of most of the world's peoples, means that those technologies and forms of economic organization that produce most will tend to be adopted wherever the collectivity is able to do so [8, pp. 227-228].

Caretaker

Mackey's second "universal constant" derives from the female's critical biological and social investment in childbearing and childcare, a feature that also frees the male to perform his provider/protector role, a role that is often not compatible with childcare. This biological and economic interdependency has been labeled the "gender division of labor". Mackey [34, p. 142] notes that the female "invariably" serves as the primary caretaker of children since, as he states, "...women do not readily assume behaviors that interfere with childrearing" [34, p. 143]. Fineman explains that it is because of their greater concern for children that women are disadvantaged economically [15]. She argues that, given reproductive realities, women would always bear the children, but if it were men who felt the greater concern, women would be able to exact from them a much higher price for their childrearing tasks [15, p. 196].

Mackey argues that by virtue of the fact that it is paid for, childcare faces an inevitable reduction of quality from what the parent can provide emotionally and socially to the child [34]. Only one of many reasons is that due to the exceptionally high turnover among childcare personnel, continuity in the primary nurturant figure is sacrificed. Because it is so labor-intensive and has strictly regulated caretaker/child ratios, the profitability of daycare is seriously limited and requires some type of subsidization of equipment/facilities such as home care or the church/school option [62].

Mackey points out that every society recorded has relied for its childcare on the "irrational system" of "emotional ties to children" and that there is no successful precedent for depending on the "rational basis" of payment [34, p. 162]. As confirmation, psychologists Bolt and Myers [7, pp. 74-79] describe the high cost of rewards, that is, extrinsic reinforcement, since it robs the individual of the enjoyment of doing something for its own sake, resulting

in a reduced desire to do it without such bribery.

Family Structure

Given the intensity of the mother/child relationship, Mackey concludes that, as universal patterns, only two basic family structures are possible, either a female/child dyad or the traditional male/female/child unit [34]. Research has thoroughly supported the male's capacity to emotionally bond with his infant, as well as his ability to provide competent care [30,42,46].

Rohner noted that, universally, the voluntary presence of the father in the home is associated with the society's acceptance of children [50]. The society which does not adequately accept its children will also not grant males adequate status to elicit their cooperation in the parenting role. Rohner's other findings associate the importance of the father as caretaker with both child acceptance and paternal warmth [50], in other words, the male being accepted as a caretaker promotes the expression of paternal warmth and child acceptance. Paternal warmth is also the best preparation for father care in the next generation [30].

Taylor concludes that poverty is closely associated with the failure of fathers to provide faithful support to their families, thus the male's provider role is essential to the success of the family [58]. The male's role as secondary parent includes far more than material provision, as his contributions are essential for the healthy social, cognitive and moral development of children [30,42]. In fact, it is the absence of the father, not race or poverty, which correlates most closely with future criminality [58]. The failure to socialize males into their family roles has resulted in larger numbers of single uncommitted males who cost society in a variety of ways through significantly higher rates of social irresponsibility, social pathology, and criminality [18].

Without sufficient legal and social support for the family, the male's commitment to family will be seriously undermined [15]. These hardships have often been intensified by unrealistic assumptions made regarding equality, prompting some to label equality either a "trap" or an "illusion" [36,15]. While some feminists have expressed the realistic fear that "feminism has freed men first" [54, p. 227], others have recognized that divorce is "double-edged" and that, along with "freer abortion", may have further undermined male obligation to support women and children [29, p. 48].

Family values, that is, valuing the family, has increasingly been revealed as essential to the survival of society [61]. Taylor indicts government welfare programs which incur dependency and yet cannot transmit the essential values of self-reliance, self-control and faithfulness [58]. Regarding higher infant mortalities in the economic underclass, Thomas Sowell wrote, "The difference between married and unmarried reflects differences in attitudes, and attitude differences have consequences which can be literally fatal to infants" [quoted in 58, p. 297].

MECHANISMS WHICH PRESERVE GENDER ROLES

Biological Mechanisms

Innate behavior has been explained as the result of environmental "triggers" which release pre-programmed behavioral sequences called "fixed action patterns" [FAPs]. These have been applied by ethnologists Bowlby and Ainsworth to human attachment behavior [cited in 26]. For example, the infant demonstrates various complex behaviors such as grasping, cuddling, and staring, all behaviors to which parents respond with care and attention [22,26]. Infants even a few hours old have demonstrated a propensity to attend to the 'most human' faces, voices and eyes [26].

Research has shown that not only can inexperienced fathers provide competent care to their newborns [42], they instinctively use "caretaker speech", raising the pitch of their voices with rarely any awareness [46]. They are clearly able to bond with their infants, bonding which has been associated with their participation in later care [22,30,46]. Based on his observation of strong consistencies in paternalistic behaviors, Mackey concluded the basis for paternal behavior patterns lie in inherited behavioral tendencies which were "best viewed as biased motivational states" [34, p. 171].

Gender character likewise is supported by hormonal and neurological patterns. Restak reports that innate gender movement patterns in infants are recognizable by other infants when the subjects were cross-dressed [48]. Spiro concluded from his research that the contrasting play preferences of preschool boys for riding and climbing, and girls for fantasy, verbal and visual play should be credited to an "innate biological dimension" [cited in 28, pp. 208-209]. This pattern appears early with greater activity, risk-taking and dominance behavior even in young boys [20,28]. For example, males of every age incur higher pedestrian death rates [43]. Halpern credits biological sex differences with playing "a role in establishing and maintaining cognitive sex differences" [24, p. vii].

Social Mechanisms

Those who support gender equity are confronted by various evidences and arguments to the contrary [18,19,32,34]. A major puzzle to feminists is that women appear to "legitimate the very system that disadvantages and devalues them" [8, p. 78]. Feminist scholar Sherry Ortner has in fact warned that "female subordination" could not be altered by simply "rearranging a few tasks and roles" or even by "reordering the whole economic structure" [41, pp. 67-68]. Chafetz undertook a comprehensive analysis to determine upon what social factors gender inequity depended. She identified four primary targets for change; the gender division of labor, gender norms, superior male access to resources, and, membership in the elite [8].

Some of the most powerful factors are the "myths" that support gender norms and the gender division of labor. These "myths" represent innate social perceptions that appear to reveal deeper truths than even observed realities do. For example, Goldberg notes that "male dominance" exists everywhere as the belief that males "should be" in control, even if, in reality, they are not [19]. This feature has been labeled "mythical dominance" by Sanday who finds it more difficult to understand than the obvious support/protection role of the male [52, p. 182]. Likewise, the male as primary provider is a similar "myth", protected at great effort by dual-income couples [5], and so critical that men who are not able to provide for their families will often leave [18, p. 59].

According to Peitchinis [44, pp. 34-37], a series of "myths" undermines the true economic significance of women's employment, as well as their commitment to it. The power of these "myths" is revealed in a review of gender-related occupational choices. For example, significantly fewer women have worked for as long as 20 years and a much higher percentage of women [26%] than men [7.8%] preferred to work part time [44]. A full 86 percent of those not working full-time were married and thus had other responsibilities, as well as not having to be self-supporting [44].

Peitchinis [44] argues that because women, as well as others, perceive the primary role of women to be the family, they underestimate their interest and competency for employment. He reports that the mandating of equal pay in Australia without adjustments in this perception has resulted in a negative impact since employers are less willing to hire women when they must be paid equally with men. Another such "myth" is the belief that women must imitate men to be successful, and that women are unable or unwilling to prepare adequately for careers [44].

In spite of the conviction of feminist parents that gender norms should be altered, they have failed to figure out how. In spite of their efforts to discourage it, feminist parents and kindergarten teachers note "chauvinistic" behavior among young boys seeking to establish their masculine identities [20,57]. Pleck recounts Pogrebin's concern that feminist parents felt more comfortable endorsing assertiveness for girls than they did sensitivity for boys. When feminist parents were asked how they were accomplishing the "non-sexist" childrearing they espoused, they "either had no response or expressed fears that any changes in traditional childrearing would make their sons homosexual" [45, p. 83].

Voluntary communal arrangements have repeatedly failed, both to function without the gender division of labor, or to provide the long-term commitment required of parenting [56]. Stacey questions the feminist belief that "equality" can be promoted and secured within the family since egalitarian relationships appear to her to be contradictory to the demands for intimacy and security required by a long-term commitment [56]. She also cites the "blurring of clearly demarcated roles and spheres" as contributing to the "instability" in modern primary relationships regardless of sexual orientation [56, p. 230].

Gender roles have likewise reasserted themselves in both in the Soviet Union and in Israel despite years of at least an outward commitment to change. The Soviet state never evidenced an ideological commitment to "equality" but only a very practical need to replace the men killed off in war and in Stalinist purges [21, p. 33]. Soviet society faced inevitable conflict when its leadership demanded that its women serve as both "producer and reproducer" [21, p. 33]. Israeli women as well experienced their lowest birthrates while the most involved in nontraditional occupations. Gender segregation of work has returned as nine out of every ten women left jobs like truckdriving for more traditional and domestic occupations, all in spite of the fact that income was irrelevant on the kibbutz [40]. These changes were motivated by the desire of Israeli women to play a larger role in their children's lives. A study of the Israeli kibbutzim using computer analyses and sociological techniques has confirmed that universal patterns have reappeared despite the commitment of their leadership to eliminate them [60].

Co-equal parenting has been offered by feminists as a strategy to alter gender norms and therefore gender inequity [13,54]. Early care that is exclusively maternal has been credited with resulting in the male's fear of female-held power since it is a reminder of his own helplessness and vulnerability. This might also be applied to women's reluctance to vest power in the hands of women [39]. Evidence cited in support of this thesis could include Coltrane's finding of greater opportunities for women in public decision-making roles whenever fathers were more involved in the routine care of their young children [10]. Sanday also reported that the more closely that fathers related to their children the more equal the society was [52]. Mackey identifies the father/child relationship as reflective of the society's demand for the male's provider/protector role [34]. These findings all reflect a "mechanism" whereby changing environmental demands result in altered socialization patterns.

Another better explanation locates the problem not in the intensity of the mother/child bond but in the lack of a strong father/child bond. Unless they see male role models who are strong and caring, young males often reject anything "feminine" in order to establish their own masculine identities, resulting in the "hypermasculinity" Gilder associates with social misbehavior and criminality [18]. This finding is endorsed as well by Taylor's association of father absence and future criminality [58]. Greater male involvement in childcare does have several very specific positive benefits such as greater marital intimacy and reduced gender stereotyping in children [12]. Most importantly, Pruett notes a greatly reduced rate of abuse of children by males who have been involved in the routine care of young children [46, p. 38].

Mackey notes that actual co-equal parenting is found nowhere in the world, not even among the Tchambuli, a people who, according to Margaret Mead, exhibit "role reversion" [cited in 34, p. 156]. In spite of the obvious social, moral and cognitive benefits to children of greater fathering, in his study of 16 primary-care dads, Pruett found that after two years, only half of the families continued this pattern. However, after a total of four years seven fathers still remained as the primary caretaker [46]. The Cowans found that only 20 percent of their subject couples continued this pattern after two years [12]. Besides economic realities, the "obstacles" that must be overcome in order to continue this pattern include the perception that women are better or more natural parents, an intense maternal/child bond which discourages male participation since he may fear being inadequate as a parent, as well as assorted other feedback from friends, relatives and co-workers on the "proper role" of men and women [12].

The obstacles to co-equal parenting involve not only social-economic realities like the wage differential but the gender-related preferences of men and women. Rarely suggested as an explanation for these patterns is that women themselves hold unique influence within the household/family as a result of their greater contributions and involvement [31, pp. 215, 217]. This power is especially evident as regards the father's relationship to his children, as she may act as a "gatekeeper", either supporting or thwarting his efforts to father, since she regards the house and children as her exclusive domain [22]. Citing a study by Zaslow, Pruett notes that new fathers frequently become depressed by their loss of control, resulting from a process of "freeze-out", although perhaps "freeze-in" is a more accurate label. This process is used by the mother to thwart the father's desire for direct contact with his child, thus increasing her opportunities for interaction [46, p. 30].

Feminists have recognized that women in pursuit of co-parenting and "equality" in the marketplace will first have to give up some of this "power" [13,54]. For example, Miner & Longino state,

The role of mother and manager of the household are the two roles in which women's authority has not been questioned; together, they constitute the one area in which women have had real power and control. Increased paternal involvement may threaten this power and pre-eminence [39, p. 20].

Segal describes why it is so difficult for women to "share" parenting, commenting on the unwillingness of mothers to off-load the "labor or joys of parenting", or even the "dead of night demands for attention" [54, p. 158]. She includes the account of a mother who lost her non-biological child who spoke of gaining a "sense of power" or confidence as a result of her commitment to and care of this child, not just over a "helpless child" but in regard to other adults [54, p. 158]. Berg [3] comments on the difficulty working mothers have finding satisfactory childcare, often using as many as 4 or 5 different services on a regular basis, perhaps at least partly because they are not satisfied, or because they are reluctant to share their child's affections.

Egalitarian parenting appears to depend more on practical need than on ideological commitment. Even "egalitarian" couples studied during their transition to parenting took on increasingly specialized roles around the house compared to what they had previously, and were unable to meet their own expectations regarding "egalitarian parenting" [12]. Cowan reports that these couples

describe the change as if it were a mysterious virus they picked up when they were in the hospital having their baby; they don't seem to view their arrangements as choices they have made [12, p. 98].

The greater male control over resources Chafetz notes derives from their innately greater dominance, something no legislation or social movement can change. In contrast, even successful women allocate less salary to themselves and spend less on expense accounts than men do [40]. The promotion of feminism has been handicapped since women who do have resources have seldom been willing to commit solely on this basis [8, p. 223].

Legislative efforts are doomed whenever they ignore innate factors like male dominance and female caretaking motivation. Women's jobs were lost when no longer 'protected' by gender stereotyping since greater numbers of men took formerly female jobs than females took male jobs [40, p. 252]. Peitchinis notes that "equal pay" in Australia has had a negative impact on women's employment [44] which would result here if "comparative worth" advocates

had their way. Better pay would increase male interest in jobs which have been female-dominated, resulting in their loss to males. Chafetz fears that the higher pay comparative worth would bring would retard women's progress into other areas since it wouldn't be necessary to change fields to secure salary increases [8, p. 109].

Chafetz identified equal representation among elites as the key to establishing and maintaining gender equity [8], something that, according to all the evidence, has never occurred, and isn't likely to [19,32]. Chafetz herself admits that "equal access to the elite roles constitutes the most difficult and intractable problem in achieving gender equality" [8, p. 221]. In the first place, elites view their role as protecting the status quo and are reluctant to share power. Tokenism is fact one way of preventing the new member from establishing himself/herself as a legitimate member of the group, while still allowing their entrance.

Chafetz cites a study by Gamson of 53 challenging groups where only 2 out of 16 groups who wanted the total replacement of leadership were able to achieve any degree of success [8]. She also cites Holter's study which found that women achieve success precisely when key decision-making roles are becoming "obsolete", that is, losing skill, prestige, pay, responsibility, autonomy, and general social importance, such as, for example, on school boards and in mayoral positions as a result of the loss of autonomy to state and federal government [8]. Levin does in fact confirm this in his book [32].

Many of those women who do attain leadership positions fail to endorse feminism, women such as Indira Ghandi, Golda Meir, Margaret Thatcher, and Corazon Aquino [8, p. 221]. Several years ago, Lynn Martin while then Representative from Illinois stated,

There isn't any politician, male or female, who likes these issues, because they're such trouble. You think anyone who got far enough to be elected to Congress is going to bring up these issues on her own? [17, p. 215].

Remarkable gains have been made for women in international leadership. Heads of state or government are up 25 from the 3 who held office twenty-five years ago [Ghandi, Meir, and Bandaranaike], there are six women prime ministers, three presidents and 300 ministers in 142 countries. However, with the exception of Bhutto in Pakistan and Mary Robinson in Ireland, these women are rarely pressuring their constituencies for women's causes or candidacies [33, p. 45].

Achieving equal representation among the elite depends upon the continuing economic need for women's services along with the potential impact of coparenting [8]. However, Chafetz admits that women are an "expendable labor force", subject to the potential for male incursion into female employment areas, depriving women of power both at home and in the marketplace. She notes that women's employment opportunities are subject to the dangers of recession or depression robbing them of any gains made. She closes her discussion with,

The key to the consolidation of power is the continued presence of most women in the labor force and their movement in more than token numbers into the ranks of elite gatekeepers, resource and opportunity distributors, and social definition makers. It remains to be seen if this will occur [8, p. 231].

CONCLUSIONS

Despite shifts in emphasis over time, geography, and culture, universal gender patterns have persisted. This persistence depends upon a number of specific elements, elements such as the male's physical and social dominance and the female's adaptability. These translate into greater male control of resources, including membership in the elite. In addition to these, widespread "myths" regarding male as provider or female as caretaker, support the gender norms, resisting any efforts to change them. Because these "myths" reflect what each gender finds most innately satisfying they are the most profound pressure in support of traditional roles and provide an underlying foundation which supports the family structure. Legislative efforts inevitably fail when they conflict with these innate capacities and desires regarding family and work obligations.

Gender role persistence in the face of these varied challenges provides us with an even greater confidence in its having been designed since permanence is an essential quality in any design. Only when the limits of some device or structure are tested do we understand its true nature, that is, we have determined what purposes it serves and why we need it. This role persistence represents the provision of what is both useful and satisfying as well as what is essential, that is, without it, the structure fails. Flexibility can also be better recognized as an innate feature of the design, something the "coparenting" trend has explored.

Chafetz concluded that she was faced with a "discomfiting conclusion" and "an inescapable quandary" since the only way she could see for women to alter gender equity was to behave more like men and compete successfully

for male power roles, even though it would mean sacrificing the feminine qualities like caring and connectedness that our culture is most in need of [8, p. 226]. However, we know that the best choices are for both men and women to exercise moral leadership as they have opportunity realizing that there are no gender restrictions when it comes to the Christ-like behavior and attitudes which God expects of each of us.

Because both men and women are equipped with unique physical and emotional strengths, it is essential that they both be held accountable for using their gifts sacrificially on behalf of the family and society rather than for the selfish exploitation of the other. In order to do so they will need to have an appreciation of the source of their unique qualities. Donald Joy discusses the contrast between patriarchy, or males dominating because they can, and biblical headship, which means men sacrificing self-interest on behalf of providing for and protecting their families [27].

The permanence of the family certainly represents to us the faithfulness of our Creator. The social nature of the individual and of the family reflects the social nature of God. That is, not only is the social unit essential to our survival but this unit itself depends on the social support of society at large. The critical nature of these functions fully justifies the biblical injunctions on behalf of commitment to family. It also represents His grace to us since despite the wickedness of man, the family remains as a means of caring for each of us, no matter what.

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