

VI. Sociological Concerns

Our culture has provided ready access to a great variety of birth control options for two generations. These take a variety of forms: a) hormonal alteration of the female body delivered by pill, patch, shot, implant and IUD; b) barriers in the form of condom, diaphragm, and cervical cap intended to prevent mating of sperm and ovum; c) spermicides; d) abortion; e) sterilization of male or female; and f) periodic abstinence based on fertility awareness—Natural Family Planning. These are typically already available for free or very low cost for those unable to purchase them. Is our society better because of this ready availability of birth control? By virtually any reasonable measure, the answer is a resounding NO! The already high (25%) divorce rate in 1960 doubled in the ten years following introduction of the birth control pill and continues to hover near 50%. Studies indicate that birth control-using-couples have sex less often, and enjoy sex less, than couples who don't use birth control. Sex outside of marriage and sex with a non-spouse

(adultery) are more common, facilitated by the expectation that birth control will eliminate the risk of pregnancy. Unplanned and unwanted pregnancies are common, leading to over a million surgical abortions/year, and a 40% out-of-wedlock birth rate. The negative impact on society due to birth control is further evident in the loss of over 50 million innocent human lives since abortion was universally legalized in 1973, the high incidence of depression and suicide in aborted women, and the pre-term births and low birth weights of their future children. Children born into unstable (not committed to lifetime marriage) relationships suffer higher rates of poverty, abuse, incarceration, generally anti-social behaviors, poor education, and repetition of their parent's anti-social behaviors. The emotional, healthcare and productivity costs to society of these birth-control-induced behaviors are enormous, but largely ignored in favor of an ideology that promotes a false concept of freedom over responsibility.

What Contraception Does to the Individual, to Marriage, to Family, and to Society

By Fr. Matthew Habiger, OSB, PhD

1) We start with the impact of contraception upon the individual.

Contraception destroys the natural connection between love and life, between sex and babies. Sterilized sex is unnatural sex; it is technological sex. Sex is meant to be expressed by a man and a woman who are deeply in love and committed to each other. The marital act has profound meaning. It means that the man and woman engaged in this act intend to make the total personal gift of self to the other. They are totally open to the goodness of the other person. This includes their life-giving powers, their fertility. That is what the language of the body means and accomplishes during the marital act.

Contraception reduces all this to the level of recreational sex. There are only two restrictions: 1) don't get pregnant; and 2) don't catch a sexually transmitted disease. Fidelity and the possibility of a new pregnancy are all part of marital commitment. If there is no possibility of a pregnancy, then people begin to think that there is no reason to commit themselves to just one mate. That leads to extra marital sex, and pre marital sex. The technical terms for these are adultery and fornication. Contraception changes loving a person into using a person: it degrades love into lust.

If sex only means the pursuit of intense genital pleasure, then why tell young people to save sex for marriage? Today we find young people experimenting with sex at ever earlier stages. Instead of encouraging young people to grow into the virtue of self-mastery and the virtue of chastity, Planned Parenthood encourages them to yield to their inclinations and become promiscuous. They call this comprehensive sex education, where every form of sex and contraception, except chastity, is explained. The accurate description of Planned Parenthood is the "corruption of our youth." A promiscuous person is not preparing himself, or herself, for marriage and a lifetime commitment to one's spouse. Rather they are preparing themselves for many partners, and divorce.

There is a direct connection between contraception and abortion. Abortion is the remedy to failed contraception. The culture of death says: "If you want fewer abortions, then use more contraception." But that is very deceptive language. Contraception always leads to more abortion, not less abortion. When International Planned Parenthood wants to change the laws of a country so as to bring in legalized abortion, it always begins by promoting every form of contraception. They know that more contraception leads to more promiscuous sex, and this, in turn, leads to an inevitable greater demand for abortion. I have seen this again and again the Third World, where most people live.

What led to the infamous 1973 Supreme Court ruling, Roe V. Wade, which withdrew the protection of the law from the unborn child? It was the appearance of the Pill in the 1960s, which led to greater sexual promiscuity, the rejection of the child, and a demand for abortion as a backup for failed contraception.

In addition, you should know that the Pill has three effects. The first is an attempt to prevent ovulation. But there is always breakthrough ovulation, and then the risk of conception. The second effect is to prevent the migration of sperm from the vagina to the fallopian tubes. This does not always succeed. The third effect is to deal with the reality of an unwanted conception. The Pill reduces the lining of the uterus, the endometrium, and thus makes it impossible for the little conceptus to attach itself to the mother's uterus. This leads to an early on, chemical abortion. One out of four unborn babies is killed by surgical abortion in this country. But there are many more unrecorded early-on chemical abortions. Women are aborting their children and do not even know it.

Human life begins at conception. Then the 23 chromosomes of the mother combine with the 23 chromosomes of the father, and a completely unique and unrepeatable human person is called into existence. All the genetic information is now present, to guide the new life through all of its various stages of life. The entire DNA is there for the entire life of the new person. Notice that at every stage of life, a person's physical body is perfectly integrated. You should know that the medical profession has now changed the definition of conception, to facilitate easy access to chemical abortion. The medical dictionaries now define conception as the time when the tiny zygote implants itself in the mother's endometrium, at implantation. That is entirely dishonest. The child is now already several days alive, since the moment when the father's sperm met the mother's ovum.

Contraception has not improved the life of individual persons; it has greatly harmed it. It diminishes the ability of one person to become deeply committed to another in marriage. It is the abuse of sex, and leads to promiscuity. When the inevitable unplanned pregnancy comes, then abortion follows. All this is devastating to the wellbeing of the individual.

2) Then we move to the impact of contraception upon marriage.

There is a direct connection between contraception and divorce. In our society today one out of two marriages ends in a divorce. Our society thinks in terms of a fault free divorce, where no one is at fault, and where either party can initiate the divorce, regardless of how much the other party wants to save the marriage. 39% of all babies

born today in the United States are born to single moms. In the Black community the rate is up to 75%. The greatest source of poverty today is single parent families, usually unmarried moms. Think of what this does to single mothers and their children.

Because of the high divorce rate, many young couples today don't believe in marriage. They live together, and some have babies, without making commitments to each other. They can split anytime. Because there is a certain fear of the child, many couples do not want to have children. The total percentage of people who are married in this country continues to decline.

What is the connection between contraception and divorce? Why is it that divorce rates began to skyrocket when the Pill arrived in the 1960s? The main reason is that contraception interferes with the bonding of the couple, with their commitment to each other. The marital act is designed to renew the marriage covenant that the couple made at their marriage. Contraception interferes with the total self-donation that the marital act requires. It rejects the goodness of their fertility, and their openness to new life. Now their love is always conditioned, with reservations. Now the emphasis is upon the pursuit of pleasure and the hope that this will enhance their intimacy. Now there is a demand that the woman always be available for the man when he wants her. The woman begins to feel more used than loved. There is no shared responsibility in spacing the pregnancies. The woman is told to take the required medications. It is "her" problem. Or the husband sterilizes himself. One out of every six men in the United States over the age of 35 has had a vasectomy. Contraception is like a corrosive acid working on the bond between the couple.

By contrast, did you know that the divorce rate among couples who use Natural Family Planning, NFP, which requires periodic abstinence during the couple's fertile periods, is less than 5%? NFP couples know God's plan for marriage and spousal love. Their respect for this plan brings them greater intimacy, better communications, a more satisfying sexual life and much happiness. Just look at their low divorce rate.

Everyone wants to have a strong marriage where there is much love, devotion and commitment. How do you get such a marriage? By discovering God's wonderful plan for marriage, spousal love and family, and then embracing it. This demands a rejection of all the false substitutes for that plan, which block it and sterilize it.

3) What is the impact of contraception upon children and family life?

Consider what divorce is doing to our young people. Every young person wants to have a loving mother and father, brothers and sisters, and cousins. You take any of these away, and a young person has additional problems to cope with. 39% of babies today are born to unwed mothers. Think of the additional financial and emotional burdens that are thrown upon that little family. Many fathers today are not involved with their children. This leaves a real gap in the psyche and emotional life of children. Today over 1% of our population is incarcerated, the majority of which are young men who never experienced the supervision, tough love and support of their fathers. Divorce is the obvious factor here, but behind the divorce is the distortive reduction of the marital act caused by contraception.

Children of a divorced family do not experience a normal marriage of their parents as they grow up during their formative years. If they are not to repeat the cycle, then they must learn on their own what a normal marriage looks like, and how to build one. Children of contracepting parents will not be guided into the virtue of chastity by their parents. Contracepting parents cannot teach chastity to their children. And teenagers know if their parents are contracepting. About all such parents can say is: "Be good, but if you can't do that, then at least be safe. Be sure to carry a condom with you."

4) What is the impact of contraception upon the broader society?

It stands to reason that a nation's life is only as strong as its family life. If marriage and family life are weak, then patriotism will also be weak. If good marriages and healthy, happy families are not producing strong and well balanced individuals, then a country will not have the

fountains that supply mature and capable citizens. The basic unit of any society is the family. If the family is in trouble, then that society has real problems. The state exists for the family. The family does not exist for the state. The family predates the state by centuries. Any healthy state will do everything possible to promote strong marriages and healthy, happy families. Contraception and abortion destroy the morals of youth; they foster divorce; they destroy family life and a respect for human life. They destroy youth, which is the greatest asset any country has.

Contraception has changed the way we view many things today. Contraception implies that we have a new "right" today, the right to recreational sex. This means that the pursuit of sexual pleasure trumps everything; nothing can be allowed to interfere with that pursuit. Not even the unborn baby. Contraception is available to everyone today. Thus also is recreational sex. More and more promiscuous sex leads inevitably to more unwanted pregnancies. Thus the pressure upon the legislatures and courts for legal abortion and widespread contraception and sterilization. Pro-abortion forces insist that contemporary life styles, using massive contraception, require easy access to abortion.

If promiscuous sex is accepted by society, then pornography must be accepted. Pornography is presented as harmless entertainment. It is also a multi billion-dollar industry. Patrick Trueman, the former chief of the U.S. Department of Justice Child Exploitation and Obscenity Section, expressed strong concern for the direction of America due to the prominence of pornography. "Since the advent of the internet, pornography has flooded homes, businesses, public libraries, and even schools. The results have been devastating to the social and family fabric of America," he said. "Pornography, in other words, is altering minds, destroying taboos, and reordering society." Addiction to pornography, Trueman noted, is now common among men, women, and even many children, bringing life-long consequences. Pornography use is a significant factor in divorce, a contributing cause of the spread of prostitution and the sexual trafficking of adults and children. He has a website for sound research, news articles and opinion pieces demonstrating the harm from pornography. It is called Pornography Harms.

What about human trafficking of young boys and girls? Is this not a horrible violation of their human dignity and their right to live a normal childhood? Should not every effort be made to stop sex tours by wealthy Americans and Europeans in Thailand and Indonesia? What fuels this trafficking in human bodies? Is it sex out of control. Is that not what contraception is?

There is a strong connection between contraception and population control. Population controllers, beginning with Paul Erhlich and his *The Population Bomb*, want to scare us into believing that there are just too many people in the world. We in the First World cannot maintain our present high material standard of living if more people in the developing countries demand more energy resources like oil, more mineral resources like uranium, and more food. What is their solution? Their solution is to make people in the developing countries believe that their babies are the source of the problem. Their babies are taking all their money and resources, which could be used for economic development. Therefore, restrict the size of poor people's families. In China there is a one child policy and then mandatory abortion.

There are many international agencies, IPPF, USAID, PCUN that will provide developing nations with millions of dollars for every form of contraception, and abortion, but will provide little money for such basic needs as clean water, basic medical care, protection against malaria, good roads, schools, etc. Population controllers forget that babies come not only with mouths for eating, but also with minds for finding solutions to problems, hands and arms and legs for doing the work of the nation, and big hearts with which to love.

Contraception and abortion are not the solution to economic development. They are the taproots of the culture of death and they destroy a nation's greatest asset, which is its youth. (For good analysis of population myths see PRI, Population Research Institute.)

Original article can be found at http://www.nfpoutreach.org/Q%26A/CONTRACEPTION_163_64_65.htm