

Sex and Culture by J. D. Unwin, 1934

Stephen Stacey
January 12, 2017



SEX AND CULTURE BY [J. D. UNWIN](#), 1934.
A study in the core reasons for the rise and fall of civilisations

I summarized some of Unwin's main findings from the last chapter of his book – just for ease of access.

You can read the whole book by downloading it from here. archive.org/details/b20442580

The amount of positive energy for growth which a culture displays is directly proportional to the intensity of pre-marital abstinence and post-marital-fidelity that a culture displays. Just as a decrease of sexual opportunity produces a cultural advance, so an increase in sexual opportunity results in a cultural decline. There are 4 types of post marital-culture.

Modified monogamous and modified polygamous cultures (modified = they allowed for divorce). The cultures that adopted either of these traditions ultimately declined as all sexual norms were negatively affected by allowing for divorce.

Any culture that adopted a tradition of absolute, no divorce, polygamy – preserved but did not

increase its tradition. It finds it hard to adopt new ideas; it remains content with its old institutions.

Any culture that adopted a tradition of absolute, no divorce, monogamy – created energy that was transferred into growing and expanding that culture. In the first few generations that energy was transferred into expanding that culture into other lands. After three generations, a rapid development of new ideas always started to be displayed in both the science and the arts. An advanced civilization is being born. All the great civilizations – the Greek, the Roman, the Sumerian, the Babylonian, the Teutonic, the Anglo-Saxon, the Protestant British – ALL started from the exact same foundation – the expectation of both absolute monogamy and chastity before marriage. All these cultures then went through the process of relaxing their sexual norms – and then went into terminal decay. In the history of man there is no example of a society displaying great energy for any appreciable period unless it has been absolutely monogamous. Moreover, all absolutely monogamous societies automatically end up displaying great energy. A culture can have different groups who display different sexual norms. Ultimately, though, a culture becomes dominated by the group that displays the greatest energy – the group that displays the most control over its sexual passions.

No society can display productive social energy unless a new generation inherits a social system under which sexual opportunity is reduced to a minimum.

The only societies that could encourage young men and women to be abstinent before marriage were deistic cultures (as opposed to manistic ancestor worship cultures, and zoistic, we are at the mercy of nature, cultures). If a society permits pre-nuptial sexual freedom, or insists only on an irregular or occasional self-control, it automatically becomes zoistic or manistic in nature.

It has always been the case that it is impossible to maintain a high level of marital fidelity if a culture permits sexual freedom before marriage.

Throughout history, the process of creating absolute monogamous cultures – cultures that grew and flourished and become major civilizations – was always dependent on the subjugation of women's rights (e.g.; property rights, inheritance rights, etc). As the cultures grew and become more refined and cultured, the awareness of the disadvantaged state of married women also grew. This compelled a demand for more rights for women, and with more rights there also came the demand for divorce and also increased levels of sexual promiscuity, and the ultimate decay of these cultures – and often to many appalling outcomes especially for growing numbers of men, women and children. Human societies have never been seen to overcome this paradox – we have never been able to create a society whereby both men and women are respected as equals and at the same time – been able to create the environment where pre-marital abstinence and post-marital fidelity became the expected social norm. The culture that could achieve this fine balance would unleash incredible social forces that would benefit men, women and children and become a culture that blossoms on into the future.

The book Sex and Culture is available online: archive.org/details/b20442580

Another resource: [The Lost Sex Study](#)