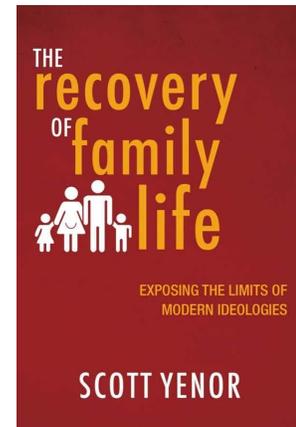


DISCUSSION GUIDE

*The Recovery of Family Life:
Exposing the Limits of Modern Ideologies*
by Scott Yenor, Baylor University Press, 2020



“The way marriage and family life are lived reflects a way of understanding and ranking goods such as love, independence, equality, justice, and community.”

Scott Yenor

Part I: The Rolling Revolution Part II: Curbs on the Rolling Revolution Part III: The Post-Rolling Revolution World

links to the videos about the book are at yenorbook.com/chapters

Chapter 1: Our New Family Regime? | Introduction

“By *rolling revolution* I mean the seemingly unfinishable series of changes in marriage and family life toward the realization of individual autonomy. Virtually all changes in law, practice, and opinion in this area have had the effect of stripping away the ... traditional aspects of marriage... The rolling revolution affects marriage and family life in many untold ways.”

Scott Yenor

1. Watch 1-minute video about Chapter 1.
 - 1.1. Which “two permanent institutions in human life” does Yenor mention?
 - 1.2. Yenor mentions that our current “political community,” our “individualistic” political culture “challenges family life.” He contrasts this with how “family can also challenge our political democracy.” Why is it valuable to have pockets of power in society located outside of the state?

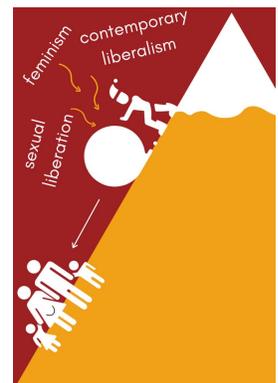
Based on the book, Chapter 1:

2. Yenor defines a political community's "regime" as "its way of life of its common understanding of the advantageous, good, and just." **How does the sexual revolution define "advantageous, good, and just"?**
 3. **According to Augustine and Toqueville, what does a society need to function and why?**
 4. According to St. Augustine, a political community or a people "is an assemblage of reasonable beings bound together by a common agreement as to the objects of their love." **What are the sexual revolution's "objects of...love"?**
 5. **How do the sexual revolution's "objects of...love" shape the political aims of this movement?**
 6. **What are the two ideas that "especially transformed marriage and family life in modernity?"**
 7. **What does Yenor mean by "the rolling revolution"?**
 8. **How does the "Old Wisdom" prioritize goods?**
 9. **How do modern "autonomy-centered ideas" prioritize goods?**
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Part I: The Rolling Revolution

"The rolling revolution rejects our condition as embodied and relational human beings, capable and interested in attachment to community ... finding meaning in sacrificial love for one another."

Scott Yenor



Chapter 2: Feminism and the Abolition of Gender

“I think that the family must be abolished.” / “...artificial reproduction” is needed to “free women...from their biology” and undermine the “social unit...organized around biological reproduction.” / “...the monogamous couple...would become obsolescent.”

Shulamith Firestone

“No woman should be authorized to stay at home to raise her children. Women should not have that choice...” / “...women will “be oppressed” as long as “the family and the myth of the family and the myth of maternity and maternal instinct are not destroyed” / “The family must be abolished...with absolute assurance.”

Simone de Beauvoir

1. *Watch 1-minute video about Chapter 2.*
 - 1.1. What are the “two key elements” of modern feminism Yenor identifies?
 - 1.2. What does Yenor mean by “retail feminists”?
 - 1.3. Yenor argues, “Because they lack any limiting principle, very few ‘retail feminists’ would ever resist the abolition of the _____.”

Based on the book, Chapter 2:

2. What are the goals of feminism?
3. What means do feminists use to achieve their goals?
4. How do feminists envision the ideal woman in society?
5. Why are feminists hostile to marriage and family?
6. According to feminists, what do women need to achieve to attain equality with men?
7. In what ways do feminists suggest women conform their body to a modern sexual identity instead of conforming their sexual identity to their bodies?
8. According to feminists: “True love proceeds only when individuals are free from biological and cultural expectations and are self-sufficient.” **What impact would attaining ‘self-sufficiency’ have on a person’s quest for ‘true love’?**

Chapter 2, continued

9. “Feminism professes the superiority of the career-oriented, independent woman.” **Provide examples of how we see feminism’s prioritization of women’s careers and independence manifested in how we educate girls today.**
10. Yenor argues that Feminism’s “principles demand a liberated world beyond gender, and use of the state’s coercive power is necessary to get there.”
 - 10.1. **Why is “the state’s coercive power...necessary” to attain feminist liberation?**
 - 10.2. **How do feminists’ claims about the purpose of government differ from the views articulated in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution?**
11. **In what ways does transgender ideology grow out of feminism? Are there resources within feminism to oppose transgender ideology?**

Chapter 3: Contemporary Liberalism and the Abolition of Marriage

“Informing the liberal wringer is the liberal demand for neutrality. ... As marriage becomes so thin under the law, “untying the knot” between marriage and the state is possible. Therefore, liberals ... think neutrality culminates in the abolition of marriage as a legal category.” Scott Yenor

1. *Watch 1-minute video about Chapter 3.*
 - 1.1. According to Yenor, “Contemporary liberalism is the view that the state should not take _____ in moral controversies.”
 - 1.2. “Many contemporary liberal thinkers,” explains Yenor, “recommend that the family be replaced with what are called ‘intensive care-giving units,’ state-created institutions, that will be registered with the state and supported by the state...gone are _____ basis for the family.”

Based on the book, Chapter 3

2. **How do contemporary liberals view the role of the state for marriage and family?**
3. **Why does Yenor argue that moral legislation such as that which supports family life cannot survive what he calls “the liberal wringer”?**
4. **How do contemporary liberals form an alliance with feminist thinking?**

Chapter 3, continued

5. Why does the demand for neutrality informed by feminist choice ultimately lead to the abolition of the family for contemporary liberals?
6. Why does Yenor argue that shifting the definition of marriage away from the understanding that sexual consummation that may produce children instead toward adults' personal choice, "reflects a dramatic, unprecedented shift toward abolishing marriage as a legal category"?
7. What are the implications for the definition of marriage in public policy and culture when intimacy is severed from procreation?
8. What would "commitment" mean if it were "unmoored from its relationship to procreation, parenting, or exclusive marital relations"?
 - 8.1. What implications would this redefinition of commitment have for the role of the state in relationships?
9. Why do some contemporary liberals hope "to abolish marriage as a legal category and to replace it with Intimate Care-Giving Units (ICGUs)"?
 - 9.1. In your future, would you prefer to form a family or be part of a non-permanent ICGU? Why?
10. Why does Yenor argue that "the result" of the contemporary liberal approach to marriage, "Is an ever-thinner, more minimal marriage expanded to more varieties of relationships culminating in the abolition of marriage"?

Chapter 4: Beyond Sexual Repression

"The modernization of sex is *the isolation of sex from any larger context and from the physical consequences that follow from it.*"

"Virtual sex separates sex from procreation; it separates sex from human love and even from other human beings, and thus even from the need for consent."

Contrast:

"Traditional morality connects and nourishes connections between sexual desire and love or responsibility."

"Traditional morality connects sexual desire

to love, children, and marriage.”

Scott Yenor

1. *Watch 1-minute video about Chapter 4.* Advocates of sexual liberation argue that “If we can get rid _____, _____, and _____ _____, we can liberate human beings so that they can follow their sexual passions.”

Based on the book, Chapter 4:

2. What are the goals of sexual liberationists?
3. What are liberationists trying to liberate sex from?
4. What reasons do sexual liberationists give for arguing there is an “imperative that legal, cultural, and corporeal obstacles to the expression of human sexuality be removed”?
5. How do advocates of sexual liberation view marriage and family?
6. How do sexual liberationists view the role of government regarding all matters related to sex?
7. Why will it be difficult to know when “sexual liberation” has been accomplished?
8. How do sexual liberationists differ from contemporary liberals? How are they similar?



Ch.
4



The Nature of Sex in Traditional Morality	Sexual Liberation in Modernization of Sex
"joins" things, sex and love are brought together	<i>"separating things"</i>
connects people to each other	isolates sexual desire or the sex act from other aspects of human experience and nourishes that isolation
things seen as "complex"	<i>"simplifying things"</i>
human sex is distinct from animal sex	<i>"the equation of human and animal sex"</i>
order exists in nature; humans submit to nature	<i>"modernized sex, human sexuality, and human relational life are plastic"</i>
humans submit to the nature of sex	belief it is possible and desirable to bring sexuality "under <i>our</i> control and organized according to <i>our</i> wills by <i>our</i> logic"
integration of sex into the context of marriage and resulting family	<i>"...the isolation of sex from any larger context and from the physical consequences that follow from it."</i>
value sex in marriage; discourage sex outside of marriage	liberate and de-stigmatize "nonmarital, nonmonogamous sexual experiences"
"These connections must be understood and taught, reinforced and imagined, interpreted by a welcoming culture leading people to a good life."	<i>"...sexual liberation consists in emancipating the "real me" from civilization's artifices."</i>
"connects and nourishes connections between sexual desire and love or responsibility."	<i>"independence, self-centeredness, and focus on pleasure are central to modernized sexuality."</i>
objective: (1) unites husband and wife and (2) procreates (when possible)	objective: "orgasm" is "the <i>real</i> end of sexual action"
in the flesh, with a complimentary "other," with monogamous commitment, and resulting when possible in new life	<i>"Virtual sex separates sex from procreation; it separates sex from human love and even from other human beings, and thus even from the need for consent."</i>

Part II: Curbs on the Rolling Revolution

“These aspirations of the rolling revolution can never be completed to the satisfaction of its advocates. Each branch runs up against demands and realities of human life and political life...”

Scott Yenor



Chapter 5: Sexual Difference and Human Life: On the Limits of Feminism

“The human body is not simply standing reserve to be manipulated at the behest of bureaucratic authorities or self-determining individuals.”

Feminists prioritize “independence from the family.” Feminist pioneer Betty Friedan “links liberation or autonomy to what promotes mental health, personal fulfillment, and self-actualization.” But “love and sex imply dependence.”

Scott Yenor

1. *Watch 1-minute video about Chapter 5.* Yenor argues, “We are not just meaningless _____ that are subject to the human will, but rather there is a _____ to human _____ that cannot be eliminated.”

Based on the book, Chapter 5

2. What problems does feminism pose for marriage and family?
3. Should society encourage girls and women to prioritize being alone in life to pursue feminist goals or orient education toward the dependence involved in love and sex? Why?
4. How is does the feminist ideal for women differ from the actual choices many women make in life?
5. What are some hardwired differences between men and women that are outside of our control?

Chapter 5, continued

6. Yenor proposes we would be happier conforming to our nature instead of trying to manipulate it. Do you agree or disagree? Explain why.
7. Who is in the situation of greater vulnerability in premarital sex, men or women?
 - 7.1. Should this particular vulnerability be taken into account when deciding whether sexual education programs should encourage or discourage premarital sex? Why or why not?
8. What evidence does Yenor present for his argument that societies' differentiation between women and men is not arbitrary?
9. Why does Yenor argue that "The 50/50 world of the radical feminist imagination is neither possible nor desirable"?
10. Why does Yenor conclude, "The dialogue between nature and culture continues... the problem with feminism is that there is no dialogue"?
11. Yenor describes an "alternative to feminism" in which "Men and women should be prepared for living together in marriage and as parents... a rule of thumb is this: treat all people like they are spouses, parents, and citizens or future spouses, parents, and citizens." How impact would viewing men and women have on the priorities of public policy?

	
ALTERNATIVE TO FEMINISM	FEMINISM
"Women are not simply victims and men simply oppressors."	Men oppress women by patriarchal control of culture and institutions. Women must be liberated from patriarchy.
Happiness and fulfillment lie in harmony with (not defiance of) human nature.	Male/female "equality," no matter how much coercion is required to achieve it, is viewed as a, if not the, source of human happiness and fulfillment.
"Sex informs how people imagine and lead their lives as men and women."	Women need to be liberated from their own bodies.
"Sex and the body limit our ability to construct a world beyond gender or to bring about a new independent woman."	Women need to be liberated from nature through will power.
"Biology ain't nothing."	Simone de Beauvoir: women's "sexuality is <i>in no way</i> determined by anatomical fate."

ALTERNATIVE TO FEMINISM <i>continued</i>	FEMINISM <i>continued</i>
Words (e.g. male and female) have meanings rooted in reality.	“For Butler...the boundary between natural and constructed elements of sexual identity is constructed in language.”
“Maleness and femaleness provide grooves within which gender travels.” / “Sexual grooves in men and women limit the feminist project.”	Seek liberation from the “grooves” of being men and women because these “grooves” (natural categories) “limit the feminist project.”
“The human body is not simply standing reserve to be manipulated at the behest of bureaucratic authorities or self-determining individuals.”	My body can be whatever I want my body to be.
“Sex informs how people imagine and live their lives as men and women.”	I am autonomous. I choose how I want to live.
“All disparities have multiple causes, and some causes reflect different tendencies of the sexes.”	Differences between males and females are due to males oppressing females.
Male and female are different by nature as seen, for example, in athletic ability, aggression and agreeableness, sex and sexual desire, motherhood and fatherhood.	Differences between males and females are not real. Differences are only the result of males oppressing females.
“The dialogue between nature and culture continues.”	“...the problem with feminism is that there is no dialogue.”
Accept, enjoy, and structure society around the fact that “love and sex imply dependence.”	Structure society to enable women’s autonomy, independence, self-actualization, and “independence from the family.”
“Men and women should be prepared for living together in marriage and as parents.”	Educate and enculturate girls and women to be autonomous. Perpetual conflict with men.
Policy goal: marriage and family life are thriving, attractive, and possible.	Policy goal: female autonomy and empowerment.
“...a rule of thumb is this: treat all people like they are spouses, parents, and citizens or future spouses, parents, and citizens.”	Assume men are at fault. Assume women are victims. Treat women as autonomous beings.

Chapter 6: The Problems of Contemporary Liberalism

According to contemporary liberalism, "...people must be free to form relationships that they want and to exit them when they no longer serve their life plans." And "sex" is "an avenue for self-exploration, pushing the boundaries of one's identity, and reconstructing the self...Plastic sexual desire, divorced from reproduction through contraception..."
Scott Yenor

1. *Watch 1-minute video about Chapter 6.* What three examples does Yenor present to argue that states are not "morally neutral" and that "laws always reverberate through the culture"?

Based on the book, Chapter 6:

2. **What are the consequences in society of individuals prioritizing their own needs and thus eliminating all obligations between parents and children?**
3. Yenor argues that contemporary liberalism's "aspiration for neutrality is an impossibility." Instead, "Marriage and family life are shaped by what the laws do and by what they leave undone." **Provide two to four examples of ways that laws and the absence of laws shape our lives generally and marriage and family in particular.**
4. Yenor argues that "...law serves as a form of educator...laws *shape* future opinions, actions, behaviors, and possibilities." **How does this contrast with the claim of contemporary liberals that the state can be "neutral"?**
5. Contemporary liberals seek to use government mechanisms to *affirm* autonomy and self-oriented choices. **What impact does this have on individuals and institutions who seek to uphold the values of traditional marriage?**
6. **Contemporary liberalism peddles a morality, according to Yenor. What are the principles of the morality it seeks to teach?**
7. **What is involved in the proposals by contemporary liberals to have governments conduct "parental licensing" and "procreative licensing"?**
 - 7.1. **How would you feel if you needed to apply for a government license before being allowed to have a child?**
8. According to Yenor, "Those who would defend the family in the modern world must begin with the recognition that parents have a legal and moral obligation to mind the children they bring into the world." Drawing on Aristotle, Yenor argues that "the family is a pre-political institution, acknowledged by the state rather than created by it." **In**

comparison to these views, how does contemporary liberalism view the relationship of the state to reproduction and family?

Chapter 7. The Problem with Ending Sexual Repression

“Sexual liberation promotes an “atomized” society, one where moral bonds between individuals are difficult to build.”

“Sexual modernizers and liberationists err in seeing sex as pleasure or release.” Sex is “a solid expression of human eros that points to higher and other longings. Sex alone cannot and should not satisfy human beings.”

“The effort to separate *eros* not only robs human beings of imagination, greater striving, stable relationship, and the best things, but it underestimates connections at the heart of human experience.”

“It is a mistake to see sexual passion divorced from other human experiences, just as it is a mistake to think that social problems around abuse and rape will be solved to the liberation of sexual desire. The idea is not to repress *eros*, but to educate it and improve it toward higher human goods, including those goods around nuptials.”

Scott Yenor

1. *Watch 1-minute video about Chapter 7.* Yenor argues that repression of sexual expression is “a sign that” human beings are trying to protect something deeply important to them.” What are the three examples he provides of what human beings are trying to protect?
 - 1.1. According to Yenor, humans’ traditional limits on sexual relations are “an expression of a deep human need for human _____.”
 - 1.2. Yenor asks, “Is sex special?” **Do you think sex is special? Why or why not? In what ways is sex different from other bodily activities?**

Based on the book, Chapter 7:

2. Purpose of sex.
 - 2.1. How do sexual liberationists view the purpose of sex?
 - 2.2. What human goods are lost when the purpose of sex and eros are reduced to just “pleasure or release”?
 - 2.3. How does Yenor view the purpose of sex?
3. Yenor asks: “Is the sexual revolution a rearranging or a recreating” of human beings and human society?

- 3.1. “If it is a rearranging, what guides the rearranging?”
- 3.2. “If a recreating, what guides the recreating?”

Chapter 7, continued

4. **What is the liberal ideal of a “pure relationship”?**
 - 4.1. In what ways is the “pure relationship” incompatible with family life?
5. When pleasure becomes the purpose of sex, sex becomes removed from a relational context. **What are the problems for individuals and society with isolating sex in this way?**
6. **How does “Sexual liberation” promote “an “atomized” society, one where moral bonds between individuals are difficult to build”?**
7. Yenor characterizes the “hook-up culture” as “The separation of sex from emotional attachment, enduring relations, and responsibility.” **In what ways is the “hook-up culture” useful for advancing feminist objectives?**
8. **What does the outrage against rape imply about sex?**
9. Modesty.
 - 9.1. **What is the problem with sexual liberationists trying to desensitize people to the natural reaction of feeling ashamed by immodesty?**
 - 9.2. **Why are women disproportionately disadvantaged when modesty is lost?**
 - 9.3. **What are the benefits of modesty Yenor identifies?**
10. **Why has been the impact of sexual liberation on marriage and family?**

Part III: The Post-Rolling Revolution World

Get off the “defensive couch”!

We need to identify and articulate, “how Society goes about translating sex into love and respect” and “why the state is concerned with marriage and family life and how the state can help to shape an environment where natural passions are ordered towards marital and parental duties.”

Scott Yenor



Chapter 8. A Sketch of a Better Family Policy

“This new balancing ethic, integrated into a public philosophy, emphasizes responsibility and duty, not rights; the long term over the short term; the body and its necessities, not autonomy; the goods associated with human dependence such as love, not the glory of autonomy and independence; and the virtues associated with sexual difference, not gender neutrality.”

“A better orientation must be based on an accurate account of who men and women are and how human beings aspire and must account for the interrelation between the individuals, the family, and the political community.”

“Responsible family policy begins with a political community protecting marital and parental rights... A political community’s reigning idea of marriage supplies a notion of duty that tutors interests and passions.”

“Nature provides the building blocks, and political society participates in the building.”

Scott Yenor

1. *Watch 1-minute video about Chapter 8.*
 - 1.1. What examples does Yenor provide of “indirect” policies regarding marriage?
 - 1.2. According to Yenor, “We want to create... a moral environment that _____ choices toward marriage, never forcing, but never thinking that it’s unimportant what people do with their private lives.”

Based on the book, Chapter 8:

2. How would a “better family policy” approach the Rolling Revolution?
3. Why do some policies for marriage and family need to be indirect?
4. Which family-related rights should the government protect?
5. Why is it important for government to encourage, even incentivize, duty toward family?
6. In what ways does nature provide the stuff out of which family and marriage can form?
7. Why is nature not enough to foster marriage and family life?
8. Why should a government foster a sense of duty to family?

9. Explain how “a political community’s reigning idea of marriage supplies a notion of duty that tutors interests and passions.”



Prioritize “Old Wisdom”	De-prioritize “Autonomy-Centered Ideas”
responsibilities and duties	rights
long-term objectives	short-term objectives
the body and its necessities	autonomy
the goods associated with human dependence such as love	glorification of independence
the virtues associated with sexual difference	gender neutrality
celebrate what women contribute as mothers	elimination of sexed roles, acknowledge only generic role of “parents”
celebrate what men contribute as fathers	
education for interdependence	education oriented to autonomy
education that recognizes human limits	education for self-realization, limited only by individual will and ability to overcome society repression
marital duties, commitment	freedom to leave relationships at will
parental rights	state is responsible for forming children
governmental and cultural integration of “new balancing” into public philosophy	state favoritism of individual autonomy (so-called state “neutrality”)
“Nature provides the building blocks, and political society participates in the building.”	create a “new human”; individuals build only themselves, others must affirm what autonomous individuals want
“translate natural passions into civilized, marital, and familial duties”	liberate passions
encourage and honor commitment	stigmatize commitment

Chapter 9. Toward a New, New Sexual Regime

Rule 1: “The ideology of public of recognition, supplemented with the reigning civil rights ideology, undermines public harmony and limited government.”

Rule 2: “Sexual self-control and modesty would be favored as public morality.”

Rule 3: “Dismantling stereotypes cannot be the object of public policy or education.”

Scott Yenor

1. *Watch 1-minute video about Chapter 9.*

1.1. Yenor argues, “We want _____ policies and a good moral _____.”

1.2. According to Yenor, “These are conflicts over what a _____ is.”

1.3. Why does Yenor asserts, that “the framework of our current civil rights regime does not effectively deal with these conflicts”?

Based on the book, Chapter 9:

2. **What examples does Yenor offer of *indirect* ways government policy could support family life?**

2.1. **What additional ideas do you have for *indirect* ways government policy could support family life?**

3. **What are some of the problems created by the Civil Rights framework blaming all problems on discrimination?**

4. **One purpose of Civil Rights laws is to dismantle stereotypes. Why does Yenor argue this is problematic?**

5. **What are the ways Yenor advocates for marriage and family to “get off the defensive couch” and go on the offensive?**

6. What are ways private citizens could “Foster a culture of honoring mothering and fathering”?

Chapter 9, continued

7. What are ways government could “Foster a culture of honoring mothering and fathering”?
8. Why does Yenor argue that “The public has an interest in promoting responsible self-control in sexual matters so that sexual passion can be a subordinate part of a life well lived”?
9. What are the problems with what Yenor calls “the reigning civil rights ideology”? (177-182)
10. Why is there a worldwide decline in birthrates?
11. How does Yenor suggest that countries approach the decline in birthrates?
12. How would offering *and honoring* part-time work support families, especially mothers?

ACTIVITY: Debate

“No progress toward a reconstruction of public opinion is possible without first piercing through the syndrome of opinions and partial truths undergirding the rolling revolution.”

Versus

It is possible for traditional family and the rolling revolution to coexist in the same political regime.

WRITING ASSIGNMENT:

You are a speechwriter for a member of your state legislature. Write an 800-word speech proposing an indirect policy to incentivize family life and explain why your colleagues should support this policy.

**Chapter 10. Choosing One’s Choice:
Consent’s Incomplete Guidance for Public Policy**

“Fighting” rape “most effectively requires the Old Wisdom that sex is special because it is related to love and through love to personal integrity and marital community.”

Scott Yenor

1. *Watch 1-minute video about Chapter 10.*

- a. According to liberal theory, "legitimate relationships are established by _____."
- b. Why does Yenor argue that, "consent itself is an ambiguous concept"?

Based on the book, Chapter 10:

2. What are the problems Yenor identifies with using consent as the guiding principle for relationships involving sex?
3. How does basing relationships on "consent" contribute to the rolling revolution?
4. What is the alternative to a consent-centered approach in shaping law and societal values regarding sexual relations?
5. How do our complex ideas of consent affect our ideas of rape law, age of consent laws, and divorce laws?
6. Yenor seems to suggest consent must be mixed with other realities in these three areas. How should consent be limited in these three policy areas of rape law, age of consent laws, and divorce laws?
7. How could public education help foster what Yenor calls "the kind of character associated with enduring marriage" and discourage "a divorce ethic"? (see below)

	Ch. 10	
Character of Enduring Marriage	Character of a Divorce Ethic	
<p>"The kind of character associated with enduring marriage forms a sober sense of expectations; exercises self-control; recognizes the goodness and meaning and obligations, duties, and dependencies; studies itself on habits, familiarity, and working things out; and keeps long-term, time resource-intensive goal firmly in mind as the couple navigate the difficult shoals of life. Feelings, arbitrary and capricious, take on a subordinate place in a common life, as couples come to feel more alike as they grow together.</p>	<p>"The kind of character associated with a divorce ethic emphasizes the value of experimentation; individual Independence, autonomy, and self-sufficiency; a greater emphasis on adult interest as opposed to a common life or a child's interest; and, perhaps, a greater emphasis on</p>	

Marital character seems based on an ability to love a good and to share that love with another person.”

romantic, passionate, and hence unstable love.”

Chapter 11. The New Problem with No Name

“Never have so many suffered so much so that so few could be so happy!”

“A happy future for human beings will have sex differences.”

“Our culture should expect, in the main, men and women to contribute differently to that common life” of marriage
“and to enter common life for somewhat different reasons.”

Scott Yenor

1. *Watch 1-minute video about Chapter 11.*
 - 1.1. How does Yenor describe the “pre-civilized decline of marital character”?
 - 1.2. How does Yenor describe “hyper-civilized” decline of marital character?

Based on the book, Chapter 11:

2. What is “the new problem with no name”?
3. Which character qualities make people suitable for marriage?
4. Which character qualities work against preparing people for marriage?
5. How can society foster the character suitable for marriage?
6. Yenor argues that our education system should “treat”” each person as a future spouse.”
What are some ways this might change education in America?
7. How can society discourage anti-marriage character qualities?
8. How does the rolling revolution foster anti-marriage character?
9. Why does Yenor anticipate that allowing expression of sex difference in culture and in the design of public policy will yield a happier society?

10. **Why does Yenor keep coming back to feminism? How is this discussion of feminism different from his others?**

ACTIVITY: Public Speaking Exercise

Host a competition to see which student can give the most compelling delivery of the proposed politician's speech on p. 242.

Chapter 12. Dilemmas of Indirection:

Maintaining Family Integrity In Late Modernity

“Society's interest in making certain actions illegal and in stigmatizing them concerns maintaining a moral environment in which marriages are more likely to form and in which more spouses will fulfill their duties.” **Scott Yenor**

1. *Watch 1-minute video about Chapter 12.* What are the two examples Yenor provides of the state providing policies of indirection?

Based on the book, Chapter 12:

2. How does the end of obscenity fit in with the ideologies of the rolling revolution?
3. Yenor asserts that “the proliferation of pornography changes political attitudes about the form of marriage.” **How does the proliferation of pornography do this?**
4. **Why does government have an interest in limiting obscenity?**
5. **What can place limits on the rolling revolution in this regard?**
6. **What framework would help us reconceptualize the way government thinks about politics and family life?**
7. **Why does government have an interest in fostering a culture of self-restraint?**
8. Yenor argues that “The long-term goal of a responsible obscenity policy is helping to maintain an environment or public morality shaped the building of self-restraint as a preparatory personal virtue for collective self-government;” it “fosters enduring love and the ability to take on the duties of family life...” **How might the government of a modern, liberal democracy limit obscenity?**
9. **Why does Yenor think that the framework of parental rights is not enough?**
10. **What explains the legitimate domain of state and parental power?**

11. When can the state limit parental power legitimately, in Yenor's view?
12. Yenor seems to object to child labor laws. Why?
 - 12a. Do you agree with Yenor's framework for investigating child labor laws?
 - 12b. Should parents have control over their children's medical future? What are the legitimate limits on their discretion?

Chapter 13. What Is to Be Said and Done? | Conclusion

"Political communities...should foster an environment where sex elevates and connects people, not where it leaves people alone."

"...we should not throw out what it means to be human for a dubious, fanciful notion of autonomy."

Scott Yenor

1. *Watch 1-minute video about Chapter 13.*
 - 1.1. "The promise of the Rolling Revolution is that the achievement of human independence or ... autonomy will lead human beings to _____."
 - 1.2. Yenor argues, "Autonomy is not a _____ or _____ condition for human happiness."
 - 1.3. According to Yenor, "the Rolling Revolution['s] greatest compromise to human life is that it _____ human beings, makes them _____, because it is such poor reflection on" human "nature."

Based on the book, Chapter 13:

2. What does the rolling revolution mean by, "No limits!"
3. Why does Yenor mean by, "Know limits!"?
4. Feminists say, "Biology isn't destiny" while Yenor says, "Biology ain't nothing." **How do "The maleness and femaleness of our bodies create tendencies in the sexes"?**
5. Where is the rolling revolution headed next?
6. How do the laws and policies of our democratic government influence the family unit?

7. What are the three components of “effective statesmanship” Yenor says are needed to push back against the rolling revolution?
8. In order to recover family life, which questions should we be asking?



Ch.
13



The Recovery of Family Life	The Rolling Revolution
“Biology ain’t nothing.”	“Biology isn’t destiny.”
“Women are human beings, limits and all.”	“Feminism is the radical notion that women are human beings.”
“Know limits.”	“No limits!”
The Recovery of Family Life <i>continued</i>	The Rolling Revolution <i>continued</i>
“The line between good and evil runs through the heart of all people, men and women.”	“Believe all women.”
“Each regime is a cave, though the cave is not only a cave and is open. And: The personal is also the personal.”	“The personal is political.”
“Womanist (noun): A person who believes in the political equality of the sexes and (still) thinks they will do different things under conditions of freedom.”	“Feminist (noun): A person who believes in the political, social, and economic equality of the sexes.”
“Men and women will always be somewhat different inside and outside the home.”	“Men and women are not going to be equal outside the home until men are equal in it.”
“Family meals are about community and solidarity, and they require someone to shop, cook, and do the dishes.”	“You just want to see women barefoot, pregnant, and in the kitchen.”
“Men can respect and love women –equality’s got nothing to do with it.”	“Men of quality respect women’s equality.”
“How would we know when the work was done?”	“We’ve come a long way, but there’s still lots of work to do.”
“All laws legislate morality.”	“You cannot legislate morality.”

“Two Responses: First, to clear the underbrush: Totalitarians speak first the language of hate, fear, and bigotry about their fellow citizens. Second, to get to the truth: Not all disparities are traceable to discrimination.”	“Hate is not a family value. End homophobia (or misogyny or transphobia or whatever) now. Denying equal rights to other human beings based on your religious beliefs is bigotry.”
“Consent makes love and marriage possible, but it is not what makes it beautiful or virtuous.”	“Whatever happens between consenting adults in private should be legal as long as the consent is genuine.”
“No political community can corrupt its youth and survive.”	“Pedophilia is based on the radical notion that children are human beings.”
“Our laws do not allow kleptomaniacs to shoplift” (as Susan Moller Okin writes).	“I was born this way.” Or: “Your quarrel . . . is with my creator.”
“Some orgasms are better than others!”	“All orgasms are created equal.”

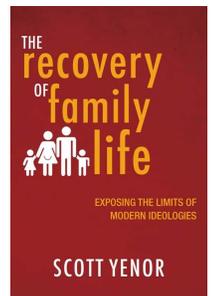
Chapter 13, **ACTIVITY:** Debate

In pairs or small teams, debate the proposition that government should prioritize:

- A. support for deep human attachments, i.e. marriage and family, in the private sphere *versus*
- B. individual freedom and consent in the public sphere

GENERAL QUESTIONS ABOUT THE BOOK

1. Share a favorite quote from the book. Why was this your favorite quote?
2. What surprised you the most in this book?
3. How has this book changed your understanding of the relationship between marriage/family life and public policy?
4. What new questions did this book raise for you about marriage/family life and public policy?



The 1-minute videos about each chapter of this book are available at yenorbook.com/chapters at the [Scott Yenor YouTube Channel](#). Additional resources for this book are available at YenorBook.com.

“Effective statesmanship” to recover family life “involves
(1) exposing the blind spots and radicalism in the rolling revolution;

- (2) identifying and buttressing the resources available in common life that limit the rolling revolution; and
- (3) translating these resources into action that slows the rolling revolution or rolls it back.”

Scott Yenor