

SEX and Judeo-Christian Morality

Unfortunately, the Bible stands in stark contrast to the modern concepts of healthy sexuality and women's rights: Women are portrayed as unclean, and their physicality leads to servitude, lewdness, and degradation;

women are the property of men, to be bought, sold, abducted and raped; rape is viewed as a crime against men and their honor.

“Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.” – 1 Tim 2:11-14

Both men and women are unclean after sex until evening; a menstrous woman is unclean for 7 days; a woman is unclean for 7 days after the birth of a son and 14 days after the birth of a daughter. --Leviticus 12:1-14, 15:19-23.

“Their children also shall be dashed to pieces before their eyes; their houses shall be spoiled, and their wives ravished.” Isaiah 13:16

City Rape: If a man rapes an engaged virgin in the city, he shall be stoned because he “has humbled his neighbor's wife”; and she shall be stoned because she “cried not” --Deut 22:23-24

Field Rape: ...only the man shall die, since “there was none to save her”. Deut 22:25-27

Unbetrothed Rape: The man must pay the damsel's father 50 shekels of silver and marry her, with no possibility of divorce. -- Deut 22:28-29

Lord Rape: “Because the daughters of Zion are haughty, and walk with stretched forth necks and wanton eyes, ... making a tinkling with their feet: Therefore the Lord will smite [them] with a scab ... and the Lord will discover their secret parts.” --Isiah 3:16-17 (The Catholic version censors this.)

The debate over PORN typically conflates the morality of human sensuality with the morality of domination and violence. Christian Fundamentalists seem more concerned with *eliminating sensuality* than with making it healthy, and with controlling adults as one would children.

Does the Bible offer any wisdom for today's world? Or are we asked to surrender our rationality, and follow the dictates of very old stories?

[see A.L. Gaylor, Woe to the Women: The Bible Tells me So]

Science and Judeo-Christian Scripture

“The Church says the Earth is flat. But I know that it is round. For I have seen the shadow on the Moon. And I have more faith in a shadow than in the Church.” -- Ferdinand Magellan

“...For in much wisdom is much grief, and he who increases knowledge increases sorrow.” Eccl 1:18

SCRIPTURE:

Universe, Earth, and Man created in their present form 6000 years ago

[Oct. 22, 4004 BC per Bishop Ussher]

A global flood killed all human and animal life 5000 years ago, except those in Noah's Ark.

Man is created in the image of God; but woman led Man into the sin of knowledge.

SCIENCE:

Visible Universe ~14 Billion yrs

Tree rings ~ 10,000 y

Ice Bores, C¹⁴ ~ 50,000 y

Plate tectonics ~100 Million y

DNA and Evolution is the core of modern Biology

The Bible is consistently wrong with regard to all substantive scientific issues. The early Christian Church opposed the development of science through imprisonment and death. During the Dark Ages, the Muslims supported science, and were the custodians of earlier Greek knowledge; the Crusades heralded the end of this flowering.

The European Enlightenment developed despite the oppression of Church orthodoxy, leading to our modern world. Two key ideas were Geological Time, inconceivable 2000 years ago, and belief based on empirical tests, independent of faith or superstition.

The Christian Wedges

Modern Christians choose to defend the faith through

1) a fervent base of Fundamentalists, who take Scripture to be the literal word of God and thereby reject all modern science and moral reasoning; and
2) “Wedge Issues” such as Sexuality and Evolution, where nationally funded obfuscation can make progress against modernity.

This is exemplified by, "Discovery Institute's Center for the Renewal of Science and Culture [which] seeks nothing less than the overthrow of materialism and its cultural legacies."

“If we view the predominant materialistic science as a giant tree, our strategy is intended to function as a ‘wedge’ that, while relatively small, can split the trunk when applied at its weakest points.

“Governing Goals: -- To defeat scientific materialism and its destructive moral, cultural and political legacies. -- To replace materialistic explanations with the theistic understanding that nature and human beings are created by God. -- To see design theory permeate our religious, cultural, moral and political life.”

It may seem strange that the Wedge attacks modern science, which is arguably the healthiest part of modern culture. However, scientists are generally too busy to fight back, and the American public is woefully uninformed:

Half the public thinks that humans lived with dinosaurs; only 1/3 can identify DNA as a key to heredity; half believe in Creationism. In contrast, Creationism is believed by about 5% of the Japanese public, and by 0.14% of earth and life science academics. [www.APS.org/apsnews/105/100518.cfm]
Within this mix, faith-based obfuscation and stupidification are working wonders.

The University community will be well served if PORN NATION helps clarify the nature of the current U.S. Culture Wars. The Political Right seeks to eliminate the social programs of the New Deal, allied with the Christian Right's agenda to reverse the Enlightenment. The Secular Humanists seek to form a just society based on human desires, needs and aspirations, balancing individual freedom with responsibility. Mix in everyone's discomfort with Capitalist greed and Hollywood pandering, and one has a lot to discuss.