

How The Left's Attachment To Abortion Reflects Its Inner Marxism

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The American left's panic over the Supreme Court possibly overturning *Roe v. Wade* goes beyond the stated fear of government controlling sexuality. Abortion's prominence in the American left's thought directly reflects its prominence in Marxist thought, which today enjoys a deep influence in this country. Re-branded as "critical theory" from the Frankfurt School of philosophy, Marxism now permeates the academy. Re-branded as "democratic socialism," Marxism now permeates the Democratic Party.

To understand the connection between abortion and Marxism, consider first Dr. Antoinette Konikow's [comments](#) in her 1923 pamphlet, "Voluntary Motherhood." Konikow—who supported Leon Trotsky and helped found the U.S. Communist Party in 1919—performed illegal abortions in Boston in the early 20th century while engaging in socialist activism:

Women can never obtain real independence unless her functions of procreation are under her own control. The woman married to a worker finds in Voluntary Parenthood the same source of leisure and economic relief that her husband received through his labor union. To her Voluntary Parenthood means the eight- or six-hour day, instead of the 12 or 16-hour day, which the mother of many children is bound to endure. The professional woman through Voluntary Parenthood is enabled to combine her professional work with marriage. Ellen Key [a 19th century Swedish feminist] points out that every professional woman has the serious question before her: marriage or independence. Voluntary Parenthood permits her to combine both [italics and capitals in original].

Now consider Chelsea Clinton's [remarks](#) during an August rally to support *Roe v. Wade*: "It is not a disconnected fact ... that American women entering the labor force from 1973 to 2009 added three and a half trillion dollars to our economy. Right? The net, new entrance of women—that is not disconnected from the fact that *Roe* became the law of the land in January of 1973."

Marxists believe abortion frees women from domestic and economic pressure by limiting the number of unplanned children. In the Marxist mind, the nuclear family in a capitalist society turns women and children into means of production and exploits them economically. Women become no more than incubators and domestic servants. Lenin himself called housewives "domestic slaves."

"It is just for this reason," Trotsky [wrote](#), "that the revolutionary power gave women the right to abortion, which in conditions of want and family distress ... is one of her most important civil, political and cultural rights."

In 1920, the Soviet Union became the first European nation to legalize government-sponsored abortion on demand. By 1924, the Soviets limited abortion to pregnancies that risked the lives of either the mother or the unborn child.

Support for abortion reflects Marxism's contempt for the nuclear family. None other than Karl Marx proclaimed in "The Communist Manifesto" that destroying the nuclear family was a fundamental Marxist goal.

"Abolition of the family!" [Marx](#) demanded. "On what foundation is the present family, the bourgeois family, based? On capital, on private gain. ... The bourgeois family will vanish as a matter of course when its complement vanishes, and both will vanish with the vanishing of capital."

Marxists also view abortion as part of a larger strategy to give all child-rearing responsibilities to the state, making the nuclear family irrelevant, as Trotsky advocated in his book, "The Revolution Betrayed," a comprehensive critique of the Soviet Union under Stalin.

“The place of the family as a shut-in petty enterprise,” Trotsky [wrote](#), “was to be occupied, according to the plans, by a finished system of social care and accommodation: maternity houses, crèches, kindergartens, schools, social dining rooms, social laundries, first-aid stations, hospitals, sanatoria, athletic organizations, moving-picture theaters, etc. The complete absorption of the housekeeping functions of the family by institutions of the socialist society was to bring to woman, and thereby to the loving couple, a real liberation from the thousand-year-old fetters.”

Those ideas animate today’s leftists, such as Johanna Brenner, a professor emeritus at Portland State University and a feminist who supports the Democratic Socialists of America.

“So what would we put in place of the family as we know it? I argue for the importance of building democratic caring communities,” Brenner [said](#) in 2017. “These, I think, are a more progressive grounding of relational life than family households — although I’m not opposed to family households being one part of such communities. Enlarging our affective bonds beyond a small circle, whether defined by blood and kinship or otherwise, is an essential part of any laboratory project.”

Evelyn Reed embodied the alliance between Marxism, feminism, and abortion. One of Trotsky’s acolytes during his exile in Mexico, Reed founded the Women’s National Abortion Action Coalition in 1971. In 1985, Reed wrote a paperback, “Abortion is a Woman’s Right!” Reed also [reiterated](#) Friedrich Engel’s views of the family in her 1970 article, “Women: Caste, Class or Oppressed Sex?”

“Women were then given two dismal alternatives,” Reed wrote. “They could either seek a husband as provider and be penned up thereafter as housewives in city tenements or apartments to raise the next generation of wage slaves. Or the poorest and most unfortunate could go as marginal workers into the mills and factories (along with the children) and be sweated as the most downtrodden and underpaid section of the labor force” (parentheses in original).

Reed's French contemporary, Simone de Beauvoir, best represented the ultimate Marxist attitude: "I am for the abolition of the family. The family is the intermediary by which this patriarchal world exploits women," wrote [de Beauvoir](#), who revealed her fanaticism during an interview with fellow feminist Betty Friedan in 1975. Friedan suggested that women who care for children full-time could receive government vouchers for that purpose.

"No, we don't believe that *any* woman should have this choice," de Beauvoir [replied](#). "*No woman should be authorized to stay at home to raise her children. Society should be totally different. Women should not have that choice, precisely because if there is such a choice, too many women will make that one. It is a way of forcing women in a certain direction*" (emphases added).

Contemporary scholar Christina Hoff Summers recognized the ramifications in her criticism of de Beauvoir in her book, "Who Stole Feminism? How Women Have Betrayed Women."

"Though she does not spell it out," [Summers](#) wrote, "she must have been aware that her 'totally different' society would require a legion of Big Sisters endowed by the state with the power to prohibit any woman who wants to marry and stay home with children from carrying out her plans."

De Beauvoir's haunting remarks, which reflect nearly two centuries of Marxist thought, demonstrate that the left's ultimate goal in promoting abortion is not personal emancipation, but ideological slavery.