

## Evolution and Ethics - Evolution, Liberalism, Universalism and Christianity

Sir Arthur Keith

A classic. A sweeping work of scholarship set in the middle of history's greatest war

This is an essay of my own, a short encapsulation of the major themes of this wonderful book, written the year after I was born.

The Liberals the Enlightenment believed that the purpose of life was the fulfillment of every person's potential, their inner yearnings. Enlightenment era documents talk about happiness. The Preamble to our Constitution enshrines "the pursuit of happiness." Jeremy Bentham's Utilitarianism sought "The greatest happiness for the greatest number." "The ultimate purpose of creation," wrote Herbert Spencer, "is to provide the greatest amount of happiness."

Enlightenment philosophers took it as a given that men harbored great aspirations which they had been unable to realize due to their ignorance, poverty, and servitude. The goal of the liberal project was to provide them the individual liberty - political and economic - necessary to realize their happiness. Twentieth Century political liberalism dedicated itself to satisfying these conditions: provide every individual with their "fair share," that they might realize their potential.

Some went beyond happiness, or attempted to define it as self-fulfillment. Aristotle wrote "Now with us reason and intelligence are the end of Nature." Kant wrote that our purpose was broader than happiness: "the evolution of all the germs God has implanted in man's nature." However, even substituting fulfillment for happiness, it comes down to the individual. The greatest good is framed in terms of what individual citizens deem to be good. The health of society is seen as no more than the collective happiness of its individual members.

Liberalism bleeds into universalism, today titled the "New World Order" or NWO. Simply stated, the premises are these. (1) Conflict, especially war, is antithetical to the the pursuit of individual happiness. (2) A prime, and generally successful function of government is to prevent conflicts within the realm. From this follows that (3) the world needs a global government, to maintain a universal peace under which individuals will be free to realize themselves fully.

Christianity takes a different view of the purpose of life. Christ preached that the goal of life was salvation, and that would be achieved by submission to God's will, through kindness, service and even subservience to others. St. Augustine preached that our life on earth is only a prelude, and if the purpose of life is fulfilled only if one loves God above all, working to establish a "City of God" here on earth. Its emphasis is on the individual, but on the soul rather than the flesh. St. Paul wrote of the "mortification of the flesh," passive and even active denial of the interests of the human body and its natural desires as the path to salvation.

Christianity resembles liberalism in that its focus is on the individual. People go to heaven individually, not corporately. The role of family and society is to support the individual aspirant in his search for individual salvation. The Christian sacraments of marriage, baptism and confirmation are designed to create succeeding generations of believers. When Thomas Malthus wrote derisively that the purpose of Islam was "procreation of worshippers" he might as well have been speaking for his coreligionists, especially Catholics. Christianity also resembles liberalism in the matter of governance. The church has striven constantly, albeit unsuccessfully, since its infancy to centralize its power and unify its dogma. The idea is that world peace will be realized when all believers believe the same thing, and believe it truly and wholeheartedly.

Evolution comes without creeds, dogmas and ethics. It simply is. Our challenge is to understand how it worked to bring about the world as we experience it, how it continues to work among human populations, and the ways in which we would be prudent to modify our behaviors, to nullify the more pernicious effects of evolution, or our beliefs, to take into account the realities of evolution.

Both liberalism and Christianity seek to deny evolution. Sir Charles Sherrington summed it up in an epigram: Nature represents in the case of man a revulsion of the product against the process." Sir Arthur Keith explains that "Here product stands for modern or evolved man; the process for the means used by Nature in his creation." In my words, men now see themselves as more refined than the process of evolution which put us here. When we are confronted

with evidence to the effect that evolution leads to differences among peoples which are not in accord with our liberal beliefs, we deny evolution. Like Wily E. Coyote churning his legs over the abyss after he has run off a cliff, we find ourselves denying a vast number of facts that seem obvious to me. Topping the list, certain people just don't have the God-given wit to manage technical jobs, mortgages, or even supporting themselves, and the systematic distribution of these people indicates that it is undeniably the product of evolution.

We now have more leisure than at any former time in world history. Yet, the arts, invention literature everything seems rather stagnant and puerile. People are simply not using the newfound free time productively. Instead, they waste it with electronic entertainments and chemically-induced distractions from reality. The liberal premise that, given the chance, people will aspire to improve themselves simply has not been borne out. They led more meaningful lives as laborers, farmers, tradesmen, perhaps even as serfs and slaves.

There is a saying that if you want something done, give it to a busy man. It may be that in prior ages, when people had many demands on them, among them raising families, they cherished their free time and make good use of it by being creative. There is also a question of the quality of people. We have been in a dysgenic mode of evolution for the past century or more. The underskilled, underintelligent underclass, supported by government, has outreproduced the more productive members of society. Although people refuse to accept the measurements of this phenomenon, they are certainly present. Look at the NAEP(National Assessment of Educational Progress) as an example, or SAT scores in the United States over time.

Therefore, looking for the purpose of life, the liberal ideals, brought from Aristotle, doesn't seem to have led to anything vastly productive.

One thing that has come of rampant liberalism and rampant individualism over the past half century, is such a focus on the self that families are no longer being created. In a world threatened with overpopulation, this is not altogether bad thing. It is as if the society is committing suicide, or shrinking its numbers. Western society is behaving just like John B. Calhoun's rats in his wryly named "Universe 25" utopia. Overfed, overprotected and quickly overpopulated in their utopia, they turned to homosexuality, meterosexuality (then not yet named), meaningless violence and abandonment of litters. His rat colonies hit a population peak, then shrank - not back to a sustainable number, but to zero! In every case they had simply forgotten how to be rats, and they died out.

I compute from the CIA World Factbook and IQ and the Wealth of Nations (which I review) that every country with an average IQ above 96 (Argentina) is having children at a rate below reproduction. Moreover, fertility rates are even dropping in most of the rest of the world. Liberalism has done its work! It has blunted the effects of evolution, our native drive to increase our numbers. The question for me, now, is how to raise the child of my old age to defy the logic of liberalism and of his times, and reproduce. My book Edward addresses the issue.