

## Introduction

Our societies are dying out. We are not having enough children. Europeans – and northeast Asians – are not having babies.

Not much can be done about people who simply don't believe in themselves and their civilization, or don't want to be bothered with children. There are, however, quite a few who would like but are unable to have children, and others who would like them but are afraid because the future looks too risky.

This article proposes that those two groups – cannot and afraid to – join together to raise a new generation. The mechanisms would be adoption or godparenting.

## In whose interest is it to have children?

Having children is in the genetic interest of human parents, just as in every other species. It is not, however, in their material interests. It is a costly endeavor for the family. It is human society – family, clan, tribe or nation – that benefits materially. More people make society richer. There will be more good minds to solve societal problems, and more warriors for its defense.

Societies evolve the same way as species. Evolution favors social mechanisms that lead to the growth of a gene pool. Since it takes children for a society to prosper, successful societies evolved social practices that encouraged people to have children. One of the biggest ones is religion. Societies also accord a higher status to successful fathers and mothers. They gauge success by the number of children, the attention and education parents give to the children, and their worldly accomplishments.

Throughout the animal kingdom, and throughout human history, offspring have been born into a web of conflicting interests. Society wants children as taxpayers and warriors. The family does not want those children to sacrifice their lives and incomes – and the potential to produce grandchildren – for some government.

The reproductive interests of men have been served by polygamy, those of women by monogamy. Being an only child benefits the kid; having siblings is in the genetic interest of the parents. Robert Trivers wrote the book on these conflicts half a century ago.

The parents' genetic interest is most obviously, but not exclusively, served by having children and grandchildren. Their children each carry half of each parents' genome. Nieces and nephews carry one eighth. A childless person can further his own genetic interest by contributing to their upbringing. Frank Salter's [On Genetic Interests](#) describes the mathematics.

Nations are large populations with a common ancestry and language. Prior to the recent period of unprecedented third world immigration, England was a nation. Most Englishmen were as close genetically as sixth or seventh cousins. States are governments; nations and states used to more or less coincide. A person supporting his government was supporting his genetic interest. The genetic interest was even more pronounced in smaller groupings, such as African or Native American villages, which were even more closely related.

People supported one another. Adopting from one's own tribe was in one's own genetic interest. If the adoptee contributed to the family, such as by helping raise natural children or defend the family, the contribution was all the stronger.

Today our villages, towns, states and nations –communities of genetically related individuals – have been so dispersed by movement to distant cities, and diluted by immigration, that potential parents find themselves all alone. Few have kin nearby, and neighbors are often vastly different from one another. There needs to be a mechanism to replace the vanished community of like people, interested in raising children like themselves.

### Adoption in History

Adoptions were frequent within extended families of the Roman elite. Caesar Augustus was Julius Caesar's nephew and adopted son. Roman law required that an estate go to a male heir. A family with only daughters could keep the estate together by adopting a son. Conversely, estates were split among male heirs. If there were too many, they could wind up with not enough property and hence income, to maintain their way of life. Allowing their sons to be adopted solved two families' problems at once.

The Roman elite, like the elite in modern society, were not very fertile. Adoption helped them by providing male heirs. Christianity, which Emperor Constantine adopted in 312 A.D., encouraged married couples to have their own children and discouraged adoption. With the fall of the Roman Empire adoption gradually fell out of practice.

Adoption reemerged by degrees in recent centuries. The Enlightenment, the Enclosure and the Industrial Revolution moved young Europeans from the countryside into cities, away from their parents and kinfolks.

Women living alone have always been vulnerable to the charms of young men and the predations of older ones. Women working in factories or at modest clerical jobs would get pregnant. Religious orders founded orphanages in which they could be supported by charity. Mothers could anonymously deposit infants at a convent, ringing a bell to let the nuns know to retrieve it. The practice was widespread. Nine Italian family names, the most common of which is Esposito, equate to "abandoned."

Orphans' wards, whether church or civil institutions, looked for opportunities to place them permanently, with better funding than mere charity. Governments set up and supervised foster home systems. Some benevolent souls adopted because they simply wanted children in their households. Others recognized that such children could be converted from a liability to an asset by putting them to work, *Oliver Twist* style. Legal mechanisms evolved, mostly in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, to formalize the process and to protect the children. As society grew richer, and natural children fewer, adoptive children have been increasingly treated as part of the family.

In the middle of the last century, as abortion and the birth control pill became more widespread, the supply of adoptable American children dried up. No longer could a couple luck into adopting a Steve Jobs, Jeff Bezos or Gerald Ford. American couples looked overseas, to European war orphans, then to children from then-poor China and Korea, later Latin America.

## A return to the Roman system

There would be considerable advantage in returning to the Roman system of elites adopting the children of the elite. Or, in the modern context, at least middle-class couples adopting each other's children.

Among the implications of the word "adoption," are the notion that the adoptee is an infant, the families are unrelated, and the process is irreversible. A more flexible arrangement might employ a softer term such as "godparenting." Godparenting kids of parents who, like the Romans, were stable and established in society, would offer several advantages over adoption as practiced today.

Quite a few Americans adopt white children from orphanages in Ukraine, where I live. Here I have visited our orphanages. In the United States I knew Eastern European adoptees and their parents.

The mothers who give up such children lack the wherewithal to raise them. On average, they are not very smart or competent. They may have had heritable physical or personality defects that made them unsuitable for motherhood. The child may be affected by the mother's drug or alcohol use. In the situations I observed, the adopting parents had ongoing struggles with their kids' behavior and schoolwork.

Children from other ethnic groups are visibly different from their adoptive parents. In any case, adopting smart Chinese and Korean kids is mostly a thing of the past. Plagued by their own low birthrates, those countries are reluctant to let children go.

The average intelligence in Latin America, per [viewoniq.org](http://viewoniq.org), ranges from the mid 70s to mid 90s. Children from the smarter countries such as Uruguay and Chile, especially those of European ancestry, are not frequently available for adoption in the first place. The upshot is that these adoptees struggle in a middle-class American milieu, and especially in school.

For these reasons, a family wishing to adopt or assume a godparent role for children who will turn out like themselves will be much better off working with children from intact families of their own social class in America or Europe. Best of all would be blood relatives. In any case they will certainly benefit by getting to know the birth parents before they enter into the arrangement.

Steve Jobs was adopted at birth, though his unrelated birth parents were known. Jeff Bezos and Larry Ellison were adopted by relatives at a young age. None of these cases was a shot in the dark. As was the case in Roman adoptions, each set of adoptive parents was related, or at least knew something about the birth parents. One can only assume that they were grateful and took pretty good care of their adoptive parents when they acquired their fortunes. Note that under the modern abortion ethos such children might not even be born.

There is a strong case to be made for reviving the Roman system of adoption, call it godparenting or whatever. It could lead to more couples with the right genetic stuff having babies, while bringing benefits to the adoptee, the birth parents, and the adoptive parents. That's the thrust of this article.

## Advantages to godparents

Many Baby Boom and Gen X couples don't have children. Others, too old for more kids, find themselves rejected by their woke/gay/trans kids. Their children may have dropped out, overdosed, been killed or injured by vaccines, or been affected by autism, Down's syndrome or any of a number of other afflictions. These parents may want to give parenthood a second shot, through the children of relatives or promising but unrelated kids.

People need grandchildren. We are social animals. Look at the affection people have for step-grandchildren, who are not kin to themselves. Being godparents of the children of older parents would satisfy two desires – have younger people around, and through them, have grandchildren.

## Quality of godchildren

Many in a position to be godparents are too old to bear children of their own, but still have the energy and desire to raise a family. Good health and exercise have kept Baby Boomers – and even us Silent Generation folks – physically capable long past midlife.

For the godparents, the genetic inheritance of their godchildren would be a known quantity. They could ascertain that the child is smart and socially normal before committing.

The children could enter their godparents' home at any point in their childhood. There are many well-situated couples in North America and Western Europe who either have no children, or whose children have grown, who want to have some family connections.

Adoptive children can be selected both by genetics and environment to have good health. As an example, many children in Eastern Europe have not had Covid 19 or even childhood vaccines. They will not have been tainted by the mRNA and spike vaccine problem. They will not be affected by autism and other side-effects attributed to the standard childhood vaccines.

Most children in Ukraine – though there are many other such backwaters, even in the US - are likewise untainted by the pervasive indoctrination about sex, gender and so on that are forced on schoolchildren in the west. Just to have healthy, intelligent children would be a great asset to any family. To have their minds suited to bearing and raising their own children, and passing their culture down to grandchildren, is a rarity in this age.

In a godparent system, since the children would generally remain with the birth parents in early life, those natural parents would bear the genetic risks such as those associated with older parenthood. Though there are more types of difficulties associated with the children of older fathers, the most obvious single risk is Down's syndrome, associated with maternal age. In any case, most such problems usually manifest themselves in the first couple of years of life, before there is any question of the children leaving the birth family.

There could be financial advantages if the arrangement is a legal adoption. The tax breaks for having dependents are worth more to higher income taxpayers. If the adoptive parents happen to be on Social Security, they could apply for Supplemental Social Security for the adoptive child.

### Support in Old Age

Nobody wants to spend their last years in an old folk's home. Grand Oaks retirement home, to which this author used to bring communion on behalf of the Episcopal Church, currently costs \$90,000 per year. Yet the residents are still lonely. About half have dementia.

Few families can afford Cadillac care at \$90,000 per year, and the alternatives are worse. Patients cannot receive much personal attention, good food, or medical care. They are simply warehoused until they die.

It is claimed that governments used Covid 19 treatment as an excuse to kill "useless eaters" by isolating them, putting them on ventilators and deadly drugs such as remdesivir, starving them and labeling them "Do not resuscitate." Their death is a boon to government - they stop drawing pensions and using government medical insurance. The resident of a "care" home cannot have faith that the staff does in fact care. They may be paid not to.

Dementia is prevalent at older ages. About 3% of adults ages 70 to 74 had dementia in 2019, compared with 22% of adults ages 85 to 89 and 33% of adults ages 90 and older. Even without such a diagnosis, we all gradually lose our grip as we age. Having a good diet and regular conversation with someone in the house stimulates the mind and forestalls dementia.

As society becomes more automated and more complex, older people correspondingly need more help. We need to use computers to go online to deal with our pensions, our investments, our medical appointments, home repairs, utility bills and many other everyday activities. A computer savvy adoptive child or godson could indeed be a godsend in dealing with these mundane but troublesome aspects of life.

An adult in a position to assume the responsibility of an adoptive or a godchild is presumably financially independent. Nonetheless, dealing with investments, taxes and the like becomes more challenging with each passing year. The government is unforgiving. If you failed to make the minimum required withdrawal from your IRA, or fail to file your taxes, they will not be understanding. It is useful to have somebody younger to rely on for help.

We lose mobility as we get older. Having a younger person to help with driving can be a lifesaver.

Adoptive parents could benefit financially. In recognition of the fact that the paternalistic state has overpromised to Boomers and the Silent Generation, the cupboard is bare. Gen X and below will not get much money or support from the failing state in retirement. It is a mathematical certainty that pensions will have to shrink – there are simply too many pensioners and not enough taxpayers. Grateful godchildren could provide for them.

### Advantages to Godchildren

The give-and-take of a godparent arrangement would be temporally out of balance. The godparents, on the giving end during the child's early years in school, would hope to receive help when they need it at the end of life. There aren't any guarantees, but especially if the godparents and child were related it would be a pretty good bet.

The cost of home ownership makes it difficult for a young person to live independently. A well-established godparent, inviting a younger person to share a house, would help that person towards independent living.

Half of all adults under thirty in modern America still live with their parents, which makes it difficult for them to start families. It could be easier living with godparents. First, there could be less of a sense of obligation. It could be easier to get rid of a kid who was not carrying his weight. Secondly, the godparents could be more eager for grandchildren, and make room for a spouse and family.

The godchildren could benefit from the godparents' social connections. They could be better situated to help with schoolwork, obtaining admission to university, and finding work. Just as Julius Caesar was able to give the promising young Octavian, later Caesar Augustus, a leg up in life.

### Advantage to Birth Parents

An advantage to birth parents would be in the continuation of their genome. Adoptive parents could be more able to provide more material support and spend time passing down their skills and knowledge. They would probably afford the godchildren a different social environment and geography. A mutually beneficial arrangement would build a relationship between the birth and adopting families through which the children could benefit from both.

Having children is always a gamble. The parents must have faith that there will be money enough to raise them to adulthood. Ironically, having the intelligence to be concerned about the future deters parents of the potentially most valuable members of society from having them.

Intelligent, sociable young adults are eagerly sought by the business world. Their talents are put to work gaining an education and then making money rather than raising children. Young people will hit 30, then 35, and then 40 waiting for the time when they feel sufficiently economically secure to start a family. At which time they don't, because they are too old.

In more traditional societies such as Ukraine or Latin America grandparents usually accept that they are expected to pitch in and help with the family. Extended families are not as close in the United States, physically or emotionally. Grandparents may be too distant to help even if they want to.

An adoptive or godparent situation would allow healthy couples with good genetic material to confidently have children even in the face of potential financial difficulties or a lack of time to spend with them.

The risks inherent in having children used to be spread among an extended family and other inhabitants of one's village or town, many of whom would be relatives of one sort or another. They looked out for one another. A godparent system would replace what has been lost through the atomization of modern society – a backstop, an assurance that the nuclear family is not totally isolated.



## Conclusion

[It is widely agreed](#) that our society needs more children to survive. The rich countries are not reproducing themselves. The richer – and most talented – strata within those societies are the least fertile.

As the night follows the day, since the smarter people are not the ones having children, as nations within the world or as people within nations, [the world is getting dumber](#). Things we used to take for granted – such as keeping our infrastructure repaired – have stopped working.

Fixing the situation will first require the conviction that our civilization is worth saving, and secondly, that we citizens have a moral obligation to contribute to its salvation by having children. That is already a tall order.

Assuming agreement on those premises, the next step is to make parenthood less risky – more attractive – to the people the passing on of whose genome would most benefit society. And, secondly, to provide people who have the desire and wherewithal, but not the biological ability to have children, to contribute to the perpetuation of their society by supporting other people's children.

The Romans did it over several centuries through a system of adoption and godparenting. We should consider the same.