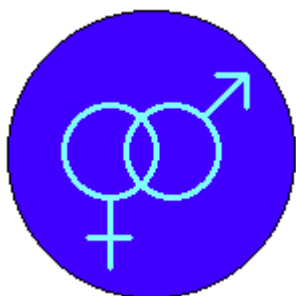


Footnote: The Nuclear Family

The sexual dimorphism of human physiology forces pairs of individuals to co-operate in the instinctive task of continuing the species. Uniquely to humans, what is passed on is not only or even primarily biological genes but also skills, knowledge, wisdom and a consciously developed ideology. [PDF]

Physical Relationship

All instances of the human life-form are of equal stature as sentient beings. All who are whole have the same limbs and potential for physical dexterity. Above everything, they are all equipped with the same model of 200,000 million neuron supercomputer with which they can consciously observe, perceive, discern, reason and build relationships.



There are observable differences between instances of the human life-form. Among these are skin colour, face types and bodily proportions. These are probably adaptations to climate and terrain. Most are trivial, but they give us that bit of variety needed to make people interesting. There is one difference, however, which is so large that it causes one to perceive each instance of the human life-form as belonging to one of two possible types. It is either a male or a female.

Sexual dimorphism between the two types of human extends to the structure of their brains. I think I understand correctly from documentaries and scientific articles that the female has more interconnections between the two cerebral hemispheres. This makes males and females perceive the world from slightly different mental standpoints. This gives a couple working together the added advantage of a 'stereoscopic' view of life.

Nature has built into the human life-form the motivation to continue its species. But it has split the mechanics by which this has to be accomplished between the two types of human life-form. They are thus forced into physical co-operation. They are driven to enter into a physical relationship. The new human life-forms which result from the relationship take a long time and require a lot of help to reach adulthood. This requires that the co-operative relationship between the two originals be long-term. So long, in fact, that for optimum efficiency and effectiveness, the relationship should be for life.

The basic social structure which this life-long relationship creates is called the *nuclear family*. It comprises an adult male, an adult female and the children they procreate. Its purpose is to provide food, clothing and shelter both for the productive adults and the dependent children. It also has a higher purpose, to educate the children in preparation for adult life and responsibility by passing on to them knowledge, wisdom, culture and ethical ideals.

Providing Their Needs

Humans cannot survive without food. There are very few places on this planet where clothing and shelter are not also vital to survival. Providing these - both for each other and for their offspring - is the primary purpose of a family's economic function.

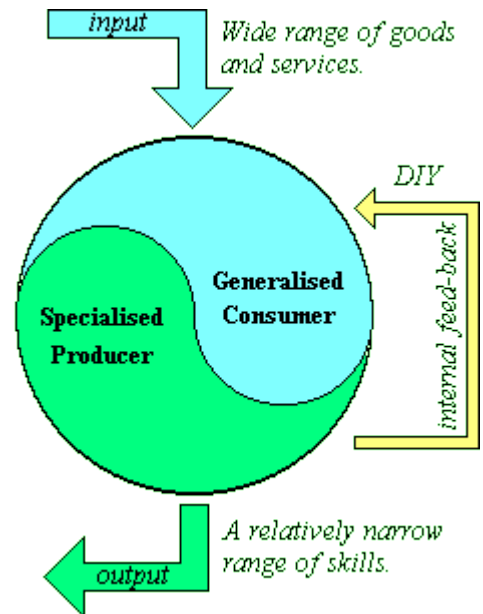
To be able to fulfil their reproductive functions, an adult pair must establish a home. For the home to be able to provide the needs of their family, the couple must set up and sustain a domestic economy.

A family's needs are many and varied. But the skills which its two economically active members are able to offer in exchange for these needs are necessarily limited. This is because different individuals have different natural abilities. In a capitalist economy, a family redresses the imbalance by in effect exchanging (through a mechanism we call the free market) their specialised skills for the various goods and services they need.

Every couple, however, will have a wider range of natural abilities than is demanded by the average job. These they can apply directly to the operation and betterment of their home through DIY (Do It Yourself).

The division of the reproductive mechanism between the two kinds of human imposes different physical constraints upon each. One type has to rest before it gives birth to a new human. It must also remain in proximity to provide special food for a considerable time after the event. The other type is not equipped to fulfil these roles. It is therefore more mobile, but does not have the same opportunity to bond with the new arrival.

Their differing physiologies constrain the two kinds of human to specialise functionally in activities other than reproduction. This leads them to specialise economically. The two types are best suited to different roles within their domestic economy. However, though different, these roles are inherently complementary and mutually supportive.



The Idyllic Past

In the deep idyllic past, the domestic economy was more complete and self sufficient. People built their own homes from the wood of the forest. They grew their own food in the sanctuary of land surrounding it. They gathered their winter fuel from the woods. They made their own clothing from the hides of their cattle and the wild flax. At least for the most part, the things they made and exchanged were not the necessities but the luxuries of life - those extras, which gave benefit but were not vital to survival.

Under this régime, the activities of *both* types of human in the relationship were based at, and centred upon, the home. It is a very flexible régime. The freedom to work at home provides the flexibility to handle [illness or incapacity](#) with little disruption to the economic process. Yet, with appropriate space and facilities, it can actually enhance wider social interaction.

Going back to the diagram, this idyllic domestic economy would have a very broad 'internal feed-back' arrow and relatively narrow 'input' and 'output' arrows. Some say that such an economy never existed. If it didn't it was because of war and oppression. Others say that it could never support the high living standards of today. But engineers have never had the motivation to design and develop technology for efficient operation within such small-scale economic units. I am confident that they could if they would.

The Diminutive Present

The domestic economy of today is very different. It has been severed from the natural hinterland from which its predecessor derived its needs of life. All economic resources were long ago

confiscated by the now-captains of free-market capitalism. They alone are now the source of a family's needs of life. But only in exchange for money, and the only way they can get that is to sell their labour to these captains of capitalism.

But these captains of capitalism will not buy just any labour. They demand increasingly specialised skills. The adult members of the typical family are therefore becoming ever more specialised to fit ever-narrowing industrial and commercial job functions. Hence they are becoming increasingly useless in the broad range of skills needed to operate a domestic economy. This has resulted in an ever-increasing proportion of the products and services to do with the direct day-to-day running of the home being taken over by commercial enterprises.

The typical family no longer has land. It cannot therefore grow and raise its own food, materials and fuel. Some still actually build their own houses, but rarely if ever without bought-in materials, labour and expertise. Nevertheless, in the past, no self-respecting family would ever consider not doing their own washing, painting & decorating, lawn mowing, gardening - and even landscaping. But now I see families who hire cleaning services to dust their homes, use collect-and-return washing services for their clothes, have their houses professionally decorated, call in landscape gardeners to lay flower beds and lawns - and even to cut their lawns and hedges.

The one domestic function I always thought would be sacrosanct against commercial exploitation was the preparation of the family meal. But today, even this has been taken over. Factories now even produce ready-made full meals pre-packed and frozen in specially shaped personalised packages ready to serve. A modern family simply buys them and stores them in a freezer. When they want a meal, they take out one for each member, place them in a microwave oven for a few minutes, then put them on the table and eat them.

The 'input' and 'output' arrows of the modern domestic economy are getting wider and wider. The domestic 'internal feed-back' arrow is getting thinner and thinner. In the not too distant future, I expect many upper middle class families will be hiring commercial services to wipe their bums. From that point onwards I think I can safely eliminate the 'internal feed-back' arrow on my diagram altogether.

At the other extreme are the poor and unemployed. We cannot afford profit-driven commercial services aimed and priced at a majority middle class market. I have had to perform tasks which only those who happened to possess the relevant specialist skills anyway could sensibly attempt to do for themselves. These included major structural repairs to our house roof, plus the repair and maintenance of our domestic appliances, water and electricity systems and our family car. However, manufacturers are making products increasingly unserviceable by the owner-user - deliberately I think. It makes these tasks ever more difficult but no less necessary. For the choice for me is stark. I either 'do it myself' or it doesn't get done.

There is thus a creeping change in two opposite directions. It is relentlessly increasing the gap of disparity between the rich and the poor.

A Futile Way of Life

Two humans - one of each kind - join in a physical relationship. This may or may not ultimately involve them in procreating new humans. It does not matter either way. To provide the basic needs to sustain their relationship, they establish an economic entity called a home. And they all live happily ever after. So what? It may be very basic. It may have every luxury. But if that is all it is, then it all seems in the final analysis to be pretty boring and pointless.

Two yuppies fall in lust. They shack up. They save hard from their well-paid whiz kid jobs. They put down a deposit on a house. They contract with the mortgage provider not to have children for 5 years because the mortgage payments + living costs can be sustained only by their combined income. They both keep working hard at their boring narrow stress-laden adrenaline-driven jobs. They have no time to wash clothes, make meals, decorate, or any of the domestic functions which, years ago, everybody did for themselves. They hire the appropriate services. They live on Chinese take-aways and frozen TV dinners. On stolen time they rush out on impulsive shopping sprees to buy posh furniture and other material luxuries. They gain fleeting relief from pre-formatted foreign holidays. They fit snugly into the approved go-getting free-enterprising norm.

The frantic five years pass. They have a child. Why? It seems the natural thing to do. Natural drive and social ego demand that they prove they can produce one. But the female does not want to give up her job. The physical imposition nature placed upon her during the last stages of pregnancy were quite enough. She does not want to be permanently imprisoned in the isolation of her suburban home. She hungers for daily immersion in the company of her work colleagues. So they farm out their child to a minding service. It has little if any prime-time contact with its natural parents. It starts to develop into a nice little brat.

And here is the next market opportunity for the perceptive capitalist. Why not provide a complete child-rearing service? It should be quite a profitable enterprise. Once their baby is born, the couple hire the service provider to take it completely off their hands. They can pre-specify its educational biasing and the political views with which it is to be indoctrinated. Then it is re-introduced to them when it has become a young adult. The couple have thus satisfied their social egos that they can procreate. And they can both continue their separate powerful careers without the nuisance of child rearing.

Ultimately, it seems, the female would rather be as the male, upon whom nature does not so unfairly inflict a three-month career interruption just to have *their* baby. Why not extend the service to solve the whole problem? Simply hire women (or develop computerised artificial wombs) whose function it is to produce surrogate babies. Then employ further specialist staff to rear and educate them? It would be like a boarding school whose function is extended to produce, nurse and prep its own intake. All our modern career couple would then have to do is buy and sponsor as many babies as they wanted, and boast among their peer groups about its staged achievements. It is the natural next step for the modern career-focused working couple.

But they had better not stop and think. They might suddenly realise how pointless it all is. They must instantly suppress the sudden flashes of perception which question the purpose of their frantic lives. But inevitably they realise how shallow was their initial flush of mutual lust. They become depressed and fed up with each other. They grow apart. One becomes charmed by a work colleague with whom he or she eventually moves in. The other is left alone. The mortgage and credit card debts are too much for one income. Everything gets re-possessed. It is all so sapping and debilitating.

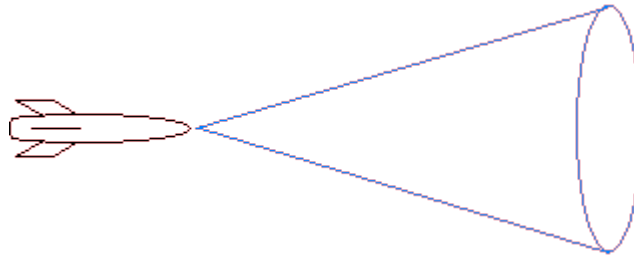
So they have high-powered jobs. So they have a well appointed house or apartment in the right part of town. So they have posh furniture and snobby friends. So what? A physical relationship is pointless. An economic relationship is pointless. Unless, that is, they are mere adjuncts to a strong and enduring intellectual relationship.

The Intellectual Dimension

Impulsive lust is a bad guide to evaluating prospective partners. Physical attraction is necessary, but not sufficient. For a relationship to be enduring and fulfilling, there must be also an intellectual attraction. Partners in a relationship need to be both similar and complementary to each other. They

need sufficient similarities to provide the common ground for the intense communication vital to sustaining their relationship. They must have complementary strengths which, when combined, form a balanced set, optimally tuned to the task of providing their physical, emotional and intellectual needs.

But "in all the gin-joints, in all the world" how can you possibly find that one beautiful person who is exactly right for you? You can't. You don't need to. A perfect match is not necessary, only an approximate one. Once its radar has locked onto a target, a missile will usually successfully chase and destroy it. However, in order for it to be able to acquire an initial lock, the target has to be, at the time, within what is called the missile radar's *cone of acquisition*.



So it is with prospective partners. You merely have to be within each other's cone of acquisition: not necessarily dead on target. Being within the other's cone of acquisition means being *close enough* in cultural background. It means having *similar* ideas and opinions about "life, the universe and everything". It means having *similar* levels and *complementary* types of education. Then, if the chemistry is right; if the attraction is there, you can get a 'radar lock'.

The target is well within its cone of acquisition. Its radar is locked on. But if it keeps going as it is, a missile will miss its target. When you first acquire your human target, you will not be anywhere near on course for a permanently successful relationship. If you keep going as you are, you will 'lose lock' and eventually split up. The missile's guidance system must now keep working to minimise the angular error between its heading and the direction of its target. You have to use your 200,000 million neuron intellectual guidance system to grow closer to your partner's perspective.

The missile's target may duck and weave. Its systems may have to work quite hard to maintain radar lock. Situations and circumstances may uncover unforeseen differences between you and your partner. These may begin to pull you apart again. So you have to keep working at the relationship. You must keep talking.

[Please understand that it is your relationship, not your partner, for which the missile's target is the analogy; and that the mission objective is construction; not annihilation.]

Together you have to establish the basic routine tasks and build the ritual interactions that will underpin your relationship. These will then provide the constancy, comfort, confidence and assurance you will both need to be able to face the perils of the world and sustain you when the going gets tough. It forms the only truly effective emotional and intellectual cradle for the delicate minds of children.

A Formal Basis

Going into business with anybody without a formal contract is a bad idea. Even with a contract which is anywhere short of a full definition of a business relationship, it usually ends in animosity. Partners who were formerly co-operative friends become enemies. They exchange accusations. They broadcast recriminations. A complete and definitive formal contract would have saved them and kept their relationship stable and happy.

At first thought, the need for a formal contract would seem to suggest that the parties concerned distrust each other. Hence they should not be going into business together anyway. This may be a factor, because as human beings we all have our moments of doubt. But it is not the main purpose of a formal contract. Its main purpose is:

1. to define, in detail, what the relationship actually involves, and
2. to make sure that its signatories all understand exactly what it is.

Each is then absolutely clear as to what his rights and duties are in the relationship.

The relationship between a male and a female human is far broader, deeper and more complex than a business relationship. It comprises a physical relationship, an emotional relationship, an economic relationship and an intellectual relationship. These require the setting up and running of an economy in miniature, complete with education, training, catering and care systems. It is a systems analyst's ultimate challenge. It is a designer's most rewarding creation. It is a manager's most fulfilling charge.

The formal basis for this kind of relationship is marriage. Marriage is not an exhibition of mutual distrust. It is the definitive framework upon which the stable and permanent nuclear family is established. It is the original and most fundamental of all contracts. It is the vessel within which other constructive relationships can form and grow between parents and children, between siblings.

Within this intimate socio-economic domain, a father becomes also an artisan and each son his apprentice, thus passing on his economically productive skills and knowledge. This way parents are also able to pass on and improve their culture, traditions, philosophy, system of belief and sense of mission.

Under Attack

The nuclear family has an enemy. It is called capitalism. The capitalist system exerts a relentless divisive pressure upon marriage and frequently destroys it. It has caused a social schism between the genders. Divorce statistics are stark witness to its success.

First of all, a powerful few confiscated all land. The land thus became the possession of a small elite clique of capitalists. By so doing they dispossessed the *working many* of their fair share of the earth through which they once had been able to transform their labour directly into their needs of life. All the typical individual had left were his skills. He could only exchange these for his needs by selling them on the free market. He was thus able to gain his needs of life only in return for work he did for others.

But the greedy capitalists wanted a share of the artisan's gain. They used their wealth to buy influence to persuade the *mindless many* that the best place from which to buy the artisan's products and skills was not from the artisan himself, but from their large commercial enterprises. Thus was the artisan pushed out, and then effectively barred from selling his labour directly through the free market. Capitalism had confiscated not only the land, but now the free market also.

This left the artisan with no choice but to go humbly to the capitalist to plead for a job. Capitalists are thieves. Their wealth was, after all, originally stolen or traded off those they dispossessed. So can you trust a thief? What is certain is that the capitalist does not trust his artisans. When he employs them, he does not send them each to his own home to continue plying their skills. He requires them to leave their homes and ply their skills in his factory where he can keep his watchful eye on them. He has thus taken the man from his home, leaving his wife alone to raise their children. Man and woman no longer work together. In the realm of economic production, at least, they are now no longer a team.

People who gain their needs of life directly from terrestrial resources under their control are naturally distributed. They live in a pleasant natural environment. They have space. They do not get under each other's feet. Each family is free to engage in any kind of normal activity around their home without annoying or interfering with their neighbours. But the forcing of men into factories and offices also forced them to live close to these factories and offices. The facilities of commuter transport did not exist in the beginning. Families therefore became crammed into housing estates around the factories and offices of the capitalists.

A capitalist sets up an industrial operation (such as a mill, mine or oil rig) in a remote place close to the geographic source of its raw inputs. He needs workers to run it. They need somewhere to live close by. Around this mill, mine or oil rig there grows a cluster of huts to accommodate the pioneering workers. The sole centre of focus around which these huts are arranged is the industrial operation.

The workers are initially separated from their families. This is unnatural. It cannot be tolerated long. The workers' families move into the huts. Time passes. The huts are upgraded. Eventually, what may have originally been wooden shacks are replaced by brick ones. The labyrinth of muddy tracks leading to them become paved roads. The area around the industrial focus becomes less and less pleasant as a place to live. The better-paid move further out to better quality housing some distance away. This forms a ring of satellite clusters round the industrial centre. The commuter is born.

These new clusters of better houses are often seeded around a dying or declining village. What was once the village centre is sidelined. It becomes an insignificant ghost town overwhelmed by the sheer weight of boxed housing now surrounding it. The focus of each satellite estate is still the central economic entity of the capitalist. There is no community. The physical layout of the roads and streets stifles the formation of any recognisable centre. Those who are not concerned directly with the industrial operation itself are cut off and isolated. There is nothing to connect them. These are mainly the wives and children of the men who work for the capitalist. Schools and shopping facilities spring up. But these are merely ancillary services to keep the capitalist's workers functional. Any social activities at all are organised exclusively by the capitalist's industrial operation.

Driven by the need for these new employees to commute, roads are improved. It becomes easier to commute over greater distances. Workers are no longer tied to employers who are close to where they live. Employees in housing estates re-distribute where they work. Neighbours work for different employers in different places and do totally different jobs. They have little if anything in common. Each family lives in its little brick box in its postage-stamp garden in a sociological desert. The fluid nature of the national economy puts pressure on people to move frequently to where they can find employment. Staying put means you will nowadays experience quite a fast turnover in neighbours. This further stifles the formation of social connections. Incompatible [neighbours](#) are crammed together like rats in cages. They get under each other's feet. They annoy and irritate each other. Strife and feuds take root.

Her husband is away doing the bidding of his capitalist master. Her 2·4 children are at school being subtly indoctrinated in the merits of the system under which they live. She is left alone with only the family's ½ Labrador [dog] for company. As a sentient being with her grossly under-challenged 200,000 million neuron brain, it is little wonder that she yearns to escape from the bland unstimulating unchallenging eventless isolation of her smart well-furnished fully-gadged suburban prison cell. The world of work looks like heaven by comparison.

She is beguiled by the [spin-generated](#) glamour of corporate employment. So, like her husband, she forfeits the prime time of her life to a narrow, boring, monolithic job as an insignificant cog within the vast machine of capitalism. But how often have I eavesdropped on canteen conversations in which highly qualified men - engineers, scientists and managers - have been expressing their idyllic

dreams of leaving their corporate lives behind to live in the country on their own working small-holding while continuing also with their specialist work as home-based artisans.

It seems that the constraints of capitalism have imbued the sexes with opposing views. Women want to escape from the home into corporate employment while men want to escape from corporate employment back to the home. This is not a sexual dichotomy of the human mind. It is the effect of the opposing pressures which capitalist society exerts upon the different sexes. The 'home' to which the man wants to return is *not* the same 'home' as that from which the wife wishes to escape.

The market forces of capitalism have divided the nuclear family and are well on the way to destroying it. They have driven the man from his home to which he wants to return. But the idyllic home from which he was driven no longer exists. They have isolated his wife in a suburban prison from which her only desire is to escape. Husband and wife are thereby forced by default to live separate lives. Their children are farmed out so they can both work a 9 to 5 day. The brick box they go to each night is just a bunk house in which they gawp passively at the television and then crash out in utter exhaustion ready for the next day. Then once again they gaze on the moronic faces for a rattling hour on the commuter train followed by a mind-numbing day of entering invoice after invoice into a computer, typing memo after memo or moving their arms in an endless repetitive cycle as a production line automaton.

Industrial free-market capitalism has cut off the nuclear family from its direct economic use of the terrestrial biosphere. It has confined it to the intellectually sterile isolation of the modern housing estate, which functionally is nothing more than an up-market work camp. Is this what thinking people would choose if they had a real choice?

"Choose life. Choose a job. Choose a career. Choose a family. Choose a big fucking television. Choose washing machines, cars, compact disc players and electrical tin openers ... choose DIY and wondering who the fuck you are on a Sunday morning. Choose sitting on that couch watching mind-numbing, spirit-crushing game shows, stuffing junk food into your mouth. Choose rotting away at the end of it all pishing your last in a miserable home, nothing more than an embarrassment to the selfish fucked up brats you spawned to replace yourself. Choose your future. Choose life ... But why would I want to do a thing like that?"

- The character Mark Renton from the film "Trainspotting (1996)".

Trapped in the isolation of their brick boxes, surrounded by neighbours with whom they have nothing in common, the inhabitants of suburbia crave the natural human community which capitalism destroyed. But they cannot form one. The people around them do not fall naturally into a community. They have no direct and immediate social or economic interdependencies necessary to build the relationships and mutual trust required. So they start by socialising with their incompatible neighbours through puerile parties. They overcome their social inhibitions through alcohol and party drugs, which invoke an immediate and welcome illusion that these incompatible strangers are bosom friends. But with time, the illusion fades. They upgrade from party drugs to street drugs in order to keep on chasing that evaporating illusion of community. But it never works. It never really fulfils the in-built human need to be part of a true [anthropological community](#).

The character *Mark Renton* in the film *Trainspotting* [quoted above] later said self-satisfyingly that he "chose something else" other than the boring suburban existence of most. What he chose was a life on the streets with beer, sex and [hard drugs](#). But what he chose was not really *something else*. It was merely an escape *from* the futile life-style he condemned and rejected. It was an escape to nowhere. He rebelled against *the system*, but by so doing, he allowed *the system* to break him.

To beat *the system* you must dismantle and destroy it. Peacefully, if possible. You must then replace it with [a better one](#). This requires a clear mind and cogent thought. It requires self-discipline and a sense of mission. It requires the determination not to be beaten.

Conclusion

The nuclear family is the fundamental building brick of human society. Its function and structure are decreed by nature. Its natural base is the idyllic home which must include control and use of adequate terrestrial resources. But modern capitalism has severed it from its natural means of self-support. It has divided the nuclear family by forcing its members to spend all their prime time in separate places serving different masters.

As a result, the home has lost the rich diversity of form and function of its idyllic past. It is now nothing more than a dormitory in which a group of biologically related human life-forms sleep at night. They have little else in common. There is little else holding them together as a family.

It is the desire and mission of many to restore the nuclear family to its former status as the fundamental building brick of human society. But this will demand nothing short of a global socio-economic revolution.

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