
 Review

Sexual Freedom and Its Impact on Economic Growth and Prosperity,
by Feler Bose

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Feler Bose's important new book addresses the impact of sexual freedom on economic progress and overall social viability. Adopting a primarily Christian perspective, he evaluates Joseph D. Unwin's (1934) thesis that expanded sexual freedom leads inevitably to social decadence. According to Unwin, abstinence, fidelity, and restraint foster or are at least positively correlated with family security, social order, economic growth, and cultural progress. Unwin's perspective is diametrically opposed to the currently pervasive views that either all kinds of freedom, economic, sexual, and social, are synergistic, complementary, and positively correlated, or the more extreme view that sexual freedom is desirable but economic freedom is not.

The principal impetus for Bose's inquiry was his observation that among the 50 states, those with the most apparently progressive sexual legislation and social policy tended also to be the least free economically. It might be argued that where a left-progressive philosophy dominates policy will favor increasing non-economic rights but restrict economic freedoms that may aggravate social inequality. Conversely right-conservative views generally favor expanding economic rights but restricting sexual freedom. Taboos against discussing sexuality facilitated quacks and charlatans including Alfred Kinsey and Margaret Mead, who had a disproportionate and undeserved influence on the scientific consensus, such as it was, and on subsequent legal and policy reform.

The book's analysis is especially well grounded in the relevant literature and profusely illustrated with historical and biblical examples. It is especially noteworthy that Bose is reopening a conversation which has not really advanced since the 1930s. This area of discussion has profound implications for the future direction and success of our civilization. Bose's perspective is informed by traditional Judeo-Christian theology and ethical norms which emphasize temperance, family security, child-rearing, monogamy, marital fidelity, etc. Although it is not central to his thesis, Bose distinguishes between social norms enforced by state coercion and informal enforcement through social ostracism. Second-wave feminist critiques of conventional marriage held that monogamy was exploitative, unfulfilling, demeaning, and contributed to adultery (de Beauvoir 1949, pp. 466, 518-521; Friedan 1963, ch. 11; Greer 1970). Some second-wave feminists proceeded from explicitly Marxist premises, condemning capitalism as inherently patriarchal and implicitly looking to central economic planning as the key to growth prosperity. In *The Feminine Mystique*, Betty Friedan (1963) argued that American women increasingly found traditional marriage unfulfilling, and had to either

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supplement it with a career, or substitute the career for marriage. She prefigured a demographic shift where women entered the U.S. labor force in large numbers between 1965 and 1980.

Unwin viewed sexual and economic freedom as substitutes—concluding from historical observation that more of one means less of the other. Bose notes that Unwin and allied researchers were unable to articulate why this should be the case and adopts as his task here one of framing a compelling explanation. This book would make an outstanding text for an undergraduate course offering an alternative or complement to the ever-popular liberal studies courses in human sexuality typically offered by psychology departments. It would also be a useful supplementary text for courses in law and economics, development economics, etc.

Chapter 1, *Sexual Freedom and Economic Freedom*, reviews how various philosophers analyzed the relationship between sexual freedom, often characterized as permissiveness or libertinism, and economic prosperity. Economic freedom, such as is measured by the Fraser Institute's Economic Freedom of the World index or the Heritage Foundation's Index of Economic Freedom, is strongly correlated with economic growth and performance. Economic freedom is characterized by secure property rights, low taxes, low barriers to engaging in commerce and starting new businesses, etc.

For comparison, how should sexual freedom be measured? Bose constructs an index of sexual freedom based on the ideal of Pauline absolute monogamy as described in Genesis 2:24. Sexual freedom increases as pre-marital and extra-marital sex are first decriminalized and eventually become socially accepted, along with divorce, contraception, polygamy, homosexuality, same-sex marriage, abortion, etc. Sexual freedom operates on a continuum extending to allowing even more extreme permissiveness, including practices that generally remain illegal such as incest, pedophilia, bestiality, etc. A potential shortcoming of Bose's index is that there is no metric for reciprocity among male-female sexual freedom—institutions that subordinate women could still score relatively high. Nevertheless, his choice of a single monotonic score helps operationalize the comparison with the similarly monotonic economic freedom indices.

Adam Smith (1776, I ch. VIII "Of the Wages of Labour;" IV ch. III pt. II "Of the Unreasonableness of those extraordinary Restraints, upon other Principles;" V ch. I pt. III Art. III "Of the Expense of the Institutions for the Instruction of People of all Ages") viewed society as divided into an affluent leisure class, the so-called "people of fashion," and the laboring class. Smith's people of fashion faced fewer incentives to control their appetites, though to the extent they behaved responsibly and augmented their family's generational wealth and status, they would be admired. However, idle hands are the devil's playthings, and the leisure class's wealth enabled some prominent members to indulge in scandalous extra-marital affairs or have relations with servants and prostitutes, generally without requiring them to provide for their illegitimate children. In contrast, the working class had less time to stray, and less discretionary income to waste on vices like prostitution, drink, or gambling. Such scandalous activities were likely to prove ruinous for the more resource-constrained working class, whom Smith observed generally displayed more circumspect behavior than their supposed betters, because the cost was relatively high.

Smith noted further that if the working class were to widely emulate the looser moral standards of the leisure class, that could prove ruinous for society. One thing that keeps this from happening is that even among people of fashion, profligacy was never much admired, whether sexual or material. Smith's view was that the more numerous working class, with their stricter moral standards enforced by relative poverty, was the key to a nation's social and economic progress. Only later would this be seen as pursuing a hypocritical Victorian respectability. The concern for uplifting and preserving the morals of the masses in the U.S. inspired the temperance movement which culminated in Prohibition, though the motivation was primarily to improve assimilation of predominantly Roman Catholic immigrants.

Freud (1920) held that mental health required individuals to overcome neurotic fixations such as the Oedipus and Electra complexes and that civilization itself was merely a product of sexual repression that might be inherently unhealthy and unsustainable (Freud 1901, 1927). Freud's interpretive approach was informed by his patients' therapeutic histories, but his analysis of literary, historical, and biblical sources is both problematic and questionable. For example, in *Moses and Monotheism* (Freud 1939, pp. 56-81), he arbitrarily posits two distinct individuals, an Egyptian priest of Aton and a Midianite prophet, whom he

conflated with the biblical Moses. Freud's main support for his idiosyncratic account was consistency with his psychoanalytic theories, not any external or historical evidence. Unwin would not be the last scholar to criticize Freud, notably being joined by Simone de Beauvoir (1949, p. 59) in *The Second Sex* and Betty Friedan (1963, ch. 5) in *The Feminine Mystique*, both of which became foundational texts for second-wave feminism.

Unwin's scholarship arose from his attempt to confirm the sexual repression thesis Freud developed in the *Psychopathology of Everyday Life* and *Totem and Taboo* (Freud 1901, 1927). However, in looking for such confirmation Unwin observed a strong and persistent correlation between social progress and strict marital fidelity. Societies seem to flourish only when they successfully enforce a strict sexuality that protects the family and supports child rearing. Strict sexual morality leads to cultural advancement as it reinforces individual fidelity and work ethic, and discourages hedonistic practices like promiscuity, gambling, immoderate consumption, alcoholism, drug use, etc. Societies with strict sexual codes possess the energy to explore and expand through international trade and navigation and even impose their morals on less disciplined societies (Unwin 1935, p. 20). He concluded that a society could achieve rapid cultural progress and economic growth, or sexual liberation, but not both (Unwin 1934, p. 412).

Unwin observed that historically societies imposed strict limitations on sex chiefly by restricting the freedom of women and children, often by limiting their ability to own property, and making married women legally dependent on their husbands. Liberalizing sexual conduct weakens the protection these restrictive legal institutions provide the family and the extent they channeled male energy toward spousal and family support. Female emancipation expanded women's sexual opportunities, and perhaps because men do not bear children, Unwin argued that it was more important to restrict female sexual opportunities than male ones (Unwin 1934, p. 323). Some will find this review of outmoded nineteenth-century marriage and property law distressing, but this is the legal environment which ultimately gave birth to today's culture and institutions. The sexual revolution of the 1960s saw divorce law liberalized, contraception and abortion become more common, widespread acceptance of sex outside of marriage, etc. (Bose 2021a). Interestingly, in her discussion of Engels' (1884) argument that private property inherently disadvantages women, de Beauvoir (1949, pp. 64-65) held that it does not—she found that socialism did not deliver on its promise to liberate either sex (de Beauvoir 1949, p. 760).

Curiously Unwin found that the spread of Christianity often weakened the stricter sexual morality of pre-Christian societies by eliminating draconian ostracism against sexual transgressors. Recall that the Old Testament penalty for adultery was death by stoning (Leviticus 20: 10-12 & Deuteronomy 22: 22-24). Pagan societies typically punished adultery with death, banishment, and less commonly, heavy fines. Once these societies converted to Christianity, violators could repent and be forgiven, a comparatively lenient practice seldom seen earlier. Thus pre-existing institutions to discourage infidelity, though often inhumane by modern standards, were generally weakened under Christianity.

Unwin saw a cyclical progression where strict sexual morality strengthens family institutions and allows for cultural and economic progress but ultimately leads to a liberalization of sexual restrictions. Greater sexual opportunities distract society from creation, discovery, economic progress, etc. The cycle repeats if society can reinstate the former strict sexual morality. In Unwin's thesis a society that combines sexual and economic freedom is inherently unstable. In Unwin and Bose's views, marriage should be for life, and until recently this was the view of the Roman Catholic and mainline Protestant Churches. Bose deplores the accommodation of lax modern mores as a step backward—impairing cultural and economic progress by further weakening the already beleaguered family unit.

Harvard sociologist Pitirim Sorokin (1961) extended Unwin's thesis by cataloging historical representations of nudity in European art, finding that it increased steadily from the fourteenth to the twentieth century. However, he also observed a relative decline in erotic representation over the nineteenth century—apparently the Victorian age was as comparatively prudish as its reputation suggests. Sorokin only examined the twentieth century up to 1920, after which the vogue for non-representational modern art might have shifted the depiction of nudes from fine to popular art. Sorokin assumed nudity would become

more common as society degenerates but his work lacks some context—nudity pervaded ancient Greek and Roman art, perhaps best represented by the nude central figure of Apollo in the west pediment of the Temple of Zeus at Olympus. Nudity was reintroduced in western art through the Renaissance’s celebration of classical art and architecture, largely with Church sponsorship, though seldom without controversy.

Sorokin cites as further evidence the large number of English baronetcies that had gone extinct, demonstrating the extent to which “people of fashion” apparently paid the price when they drank too deeply of the sexual freedom their wealth could support (Sorokin 1961, p. 70). It is curious however that Sorokin only found support for his thesis among the lowest rank of hereditary nobility—baronets fall into an ambiguous space of minor nobility who are not peers though their titles are inherited. The rank was only created in 1611 by the Stuart kings to raise money to colonize Northern Ireland and Nova Scotia.

The Church’s principal contribution to strengthening sexual morality was Pauline absolute monogamy, which Unwin dates to the Reformation. It may seem odd that this institution can be ascribed to St. Paul but remained latent until 1517, but in fact the Catholic Church had been opportunistically accommodating of divorce and annulment and the sexual conduct of several Renaissance Popes such as Alexander VI (born c. 1431/ reigned 1492-1503) was so infamous it contributed to the Reformation.

Chapter 2, *Micro and Macro Episodes in the History of Sexual Freedom and its Impact*, presents and discusses two historical episodes of sexual revolution, particularly focusing on how they impacted economic performance and well-being. First Bose looks at the celebrated voyage of H.M.S. *Bounty* and its aftermath. Following the deprivations of the hazardous ten-month journey to Tahiti, Captain Bligh allowed his crew to fraternize with Tahitian natives for the five months they needed to prepare their cargo of breadfruit for transport to the Caribbean. In retrospect this seems to have been a mistake. The contrast between the easy life on Tahiti with the rigors of enforced celibacy on the return trip led to mutiny. The mutineers fled to Pitcarin Island but far from establishing a utopian paradise, their new society degenerated to chaos and murder. Bose does not dwell on the subsequent history of child sexual abuse among the mutineers’ descendants (Marks 2009).

On a larger scale Bose looks next at the sexual revolution engineered under Communism after the Russian Revolution. Lenin implemented a program of sexual liberation to supplant the bourgeois sexual mores of the Tsarist regime and the Orthodox Church. Communism removed distinctions between legitimate and illegitimate children, made marriage an exclusively civil institution, and liberalized divorce. Western intellectuals argued for socialized childcare to liberate parents of both sexes (de Beauvoir 1949, p. 568). Because child rearing had been theoretically socialized under Communism, many parents stopped providing for their offspring. The Communist regime also legalized abortion and homosexuality, seeing serial marriage flourish along with prostitution. By the 1930s Stalin recognized the failure of sexual liberation and reinstated traditional sexual and marriage legislation, though as Bose notes, abortion and divorce rates remained high for decades—once strict sexual morality is abandoned, it is difficult to reestablish.

Chapter 3, *History of Sexual Revolution in the U.S.: the Impact of Alfred Kinsey*, looks at the Kinsey Institute’s contribution to understanding—or misunderstanding—sexuality and how their scholarship contributed to policy and behavioral change. Unfortunately, Kinsey’s findings were almost entirely spurious, being based on biased samples disproportionately emphasizing convicts, mental patients, and prostitutes (Kinsey et al 1948, 1953). Biased sampling may have been driven by the limited availability of willing subjects, participants’ desire to please or impress investigators, or subjects’ proclivities to brag about their sexual experiences, but it seems difficult to avoid the conclusion that Kinsey’s personal eccentricities also contributed.

Kinsey reported that 95 percent of American men engaged in sexual activity that then constituted criminal offenses, and that fathers in particular were far more promiscuous than their traditional role would suggest. Widespread acceptance of this finding led to calls to liberalize penal codes to normalize behavior that according to Kinsey was already common and though shocking, seemed demonstrably benign. Over the sexual revolution, the burden of child rearing increasingly shifted from fathers to single mothers,

grandparents, unrelated boyfriends, and the state. Kinsey seemed to want to normalize aberrant practices, even reporting that women are not generally harmed by sexual assault (Kinsey 1953, p. 122) and that sex between children and adults should be viewed as normal (Kinsey 1953, p. 117). The Kinsey Institute facilitated numerous sexual assaults on child subjects to produce a sufficient volume of case studies (Reisman 2012). Kinsey Institute studies claimed to include data from 18,000 individuals, but 75% were excluded apparently because they were not sufficiently salacious.

Bose relates the impact the Kinsey reports had on the American Law Institute's 1950-1962 Model Penal Code project, which was largely enacted throughout the U.S. by 1970. Like the Uniform Commercial Code, the Model Penal Code attempts to codify and rationalize established common and statute law principles in a format to assist state legislatures in revising their criminal law. Since the Kinsey reports were so methodologically flawed, they should not have had the influence on policy they did, and many of the legal reforms they inspired have clearly turned out to be ill-considered.

Chapter 4, *Assessing Sexual Freedom across the 50 States: 1960 to 2010*, coauthored with Ari Kornelis, calls for and introduces a Sexual Freedom Index as a counterpart to the Fraser Institute's Economic Freedom of the World (Gwartney et al 2024) and the Heritage Foundation's (2024) Index of Economic Freedom. Bose analyzes two components in his index: exclusive protection of traditional, same-sex marriage, i.e., Pauline absolute monogamy, and penalties against sex outside of marriage. From this baseline, the stronger the two components, the lower is Bose's Sexual Freedom Index, which he constructs annually for each state from 1960-2010 and uses to compare individual states and track national trends.

Sexual freedom in the U.S. increased dramatically from 1970-1980 with the sexual revolution and held steady until 2010. Unfortunately the period examined does not include the widespread legalization of same-sex marriage due to the Obergefell decision in 2015 or the 2022 Dobbs decision which overturned *Roe v. Wade*. Given that so much has changed so rapidly since 2010, it would be interesting to see an updated index, though nothing in Bose's argument depends on what has transpired during the last two decades.

Chapter 5, *The Paths to Prosperity: Contemporary Theories on Global Wealth Accumulation*, outlines current economic thinking on the sources of economic growth. It then relates these various factors and metrics to Unwin's sexual freedom thesis and evaluates how sexual and economic freedoms intersect in different societies, and what that implies for a society's success. Bose focuses on Douglas North's analysis of institutions whereby good cultural institutions facilitate economic growth by enhancing the predictability of commercial interactions. When agents can form dependable expectations about the behavior of potential exchange partners, transaction costs fall and it becomes easier to engage in trade.

Although the market forces of profit and loss remove inefficient firms and entrepreneurs, inefficient institutions are not subject to market discipline and can impose high costs on society for a protracted period precisely because they operate outside of narrow economic criteria (North 1981). Furthermore, effective institutional checks on state authority are necessary to ensure a predictable, slowly-evolving legal-regulatory environment which supports market decision-making and entrepreneurial planning (Rizzo 1985, La Porta et al 1998). Bose draws a number of reasons from the literature to explain why the industrial revolution spread from Europe after originating there, including climate and demographic factors, the displacement of the feudal nobility by a more productive and entrepreneurial merchant class, the expansion of literacy promoted by the Reformation, etc.

Chapter 6, *Time Preference and Economic and Sexual Freedom*, develops Bose's interpretation relating sexual restraint to lower time preference, and notes further that lower time preference leads to longer planning horizons, greater saving, greater investment, and faster economic growth. Bose's discussion of time preference, which can be characterized as patience or willingness to delay gratification, is nuanced and informed by recent findings in behavioral economics that time preference varies over time for each individual, and that it is generally higher for small and immediate rewards, or in other words agents may employ hyperbolic discounting (Frederick et al 2002, pp. 360-361).

Religion often promotes a widespread belief in an afterlife which helps lower time preference and lengthens planning horizons across a society, contributing to saving, investment, and faster economic

growth. Western society created institutions like joint-stock companies which emulated the indefinite life span of religious corporations. Sexual restraint is closely linked to low time preference—people with high time preference and short planning horizons are impatient for immediate gratification and also less sexually restrained.

Homosexuality receives special criticism as a high-time-preference behavior because it does not produce offspring, but this view ignores potential benefits suggested by evolutionary biologists—it may act as a safety valve triggered by high population density or severe food shortages, which then lowers fertility and population growth. Homosexuals may also contribute to raising close relatives and propagating their family's genetic lineage (Wilson 1979, p. 275). Homosexuality may also be a byproduct of higher female fertility in the same family—the human hypergyny hypothesis (Barthes, Godelle, and Raymond 2013). However, these proposed reasons for homosexuality are all speculative.

Bose also notes that societies where the median voter has higher time preference will tend to favor public policy that institutionalizes, or at least tolerates, sexual permissiveness and promiscuity. Legislation can lower time preference by providing more secure and predictable property rights, and people who observe social norms that reward and emphasize sober and restrained sexual conduct will tend to adopt similar norms. Similarly, a society force-fed an unrelenting stream of pornography will likely see licentiousness as relatively normal. Nevertheless, everyone knows enough to admire Samuel Richardson's (1748) *Clarissa Harlowe* for her integrity and virtue and instinctively recognize the physically attractive and charming Captain Lovelace for the despicable villain he is. Literary Darwinism (Carroll 2004; Gottschall and Carroll 2005) points to the evolutionary benefit of relating narrative scenarios and morally evaluating the choices made by fictional characters. Literature opens us up to a world of fictional experience and personalities we may never witness firsthand without exposing us to the attendant risk of the real world, but modern literature increasingly focuses on problematic sexual encounters—e.g., Flaubert (*Madame Bovary*), Tolstoy (*Anna Karenina*), D. H. Lawrence (*Sons and Lovers*, *Women in Love*, and *Lady Chatterley's Lover*), Proust (*À la recherche du temps perdu*), Henry Miller (*Tropic of Capricorn*), Nabokov (*Lolita*), etc.

Bose and Van Duyn (2020) have suggested that left and right parties differ chiefly in their appeal to groups with different time preferences. Right-conservative parties emphasize economic over sexual freedom and appeal to lower time preference constituencies while left-progressive parties emphasize sexual over economic freedom and appeal to less patient voters with higher time preference. In other words, the attempt by different factions to appeal to and capture segments of society with different time preferences helps explain why in the U.S. the Democratic party spends so much time and effort channeling the Comintern, while the Republican party before Trump divided its efforts roughly equally between channeling Adam Smith—rather poorly—and the Spanish Inquisition. High time preference societies neglect future generations—and what other explanation can there be for the U.S. amassing a \$30 trillion national debt with virtually nothing to show for it? Although the Republican party purportedly appeals to lower time-preference median voters, paradoxically Bill Clinton has been the most fiscally conservative president since Grover Cleveland—both Democrats!

Chapter 7, Long-Term Thinking in the Bible and its Impact on Economic Growth and Prosperity, focuses on St. Paul's requirement of strict male monogamy. If male monogamy contributes to economic growth, that would go a long way to explaining Christianity supplanting paganism across the Roman Empire, and the later growth of Christianity facilitated by the relative prosperity of the societies that embraced it. This chapter presents nine biblical examples as case studies to illustrate the longer planning horizon resulting from distinctively Christian principles as the Protestant work ethic (Weber 1905), social ethic (Arruñada 2010), bourgeois sensibility (McCloskey and Carden 2020), Pauline absolute monogamy (Unwin 1934, 1935), and the European marriage pattern (Hajnal 1935).

Bose's first three cases are drawn from Genesis. In the first, Adam and Eve commit the sin of impatience or high time preference by not waiting for permission to eat from the tree of knowledge, being punished with expulsion from Eden. The second case illustrates how Abraham wrestles with relative patience and impatience. When God promises him land in Canaan, he displays patience and low time preference

by bringing settlers from Ur and instructing them in religion. However, because Abraham and Sarah were impatient for the son God promised, they turned to Sarah's servant Hagar who bore Ishmael as a surrogate mother. Sarah bore Isaac only later. The third case contrasts the time preferences of Isaac's twin sons Esau and Jacob. Jacob had low time preference and planned patiently for the future. Esau was the older of the two twins and should have inherited Isaac's property but was disinherited when he impatiently traded his birthright for the immediate gratification of Isaac's food.

Case four jumps ahead from Genesis and contrasts Pauline absolute monogamy with the Roman marriage customs it largely supplanted. St. Paul's teachings on monogamy are presented in I Thessalonians, I Corinthians, and I Timothy and contrasted strongly with prevailing Roman customs, which permitted no-fault divorce instigated by either party for any reason. Except in Sparta, Greek and Roman law made women subservient (de Beauvoir 1949, pp. 96-103). Roman women were expected to remain chaste and faithful, but men were permitted a double standard, though liberal divorce laws may have helped restrain them. St. Paul insisted Christian men should strive for fidelity equal to women, and to the extent this was observed, Christian marriage supported stronger family life and better preserved intergenerational wealth. Even where the spirit was willing but the flesh was weak and Christian husbands did not successfully achieve this ideal of fidelity within marriage, it still provided social advantages and marked Christian men as more desirable spouses.

Bose notes that holding men and women to the same standards of marital fidelity was not just profoundly fair, it allowed for better marital harmony and synchronized time preferences within the family. Roman marriage enforced low time preference behavior on women but allowed men greater freedom and higher time preference. Roman men might opt to be faithful, which the most virtuous were, but as a group they were more free to stray, and presumably strayed farther and more often than Christian men. As a result Christian marriage likely produced fewer illegitimate children. Simone de Beauvoir largely ignored the higher place and equality of women in Christian, as opposed to Roman, marriage in *The Second Sex* (1949, pp. 104-106).

Case five looks at attitudes toward sexual abuse of children, which was widely tolerated in Roman society. Christian teaching remains unambiguous in condemning relations between adults and children. Apart from the moral virtue of protecting the weak and defenseless, protecting children from abuse is a forward-looking behavior emblematic of low-time-preference and a long planning horizon.

Case six examines St. Paul's teachings on self-control. In his Letter to Titus, St. Paul exhorts five groups in the Christian community to be forward-looking, patiently plan for the future, and restrain their passions—clearly emphasizing sexual passions, however he encourages Christians to restrain any appetites that are either selfish or short-sighted. Even slaves were encouraged to be responsible to the extent they were permitted autonomy. Although St. Paul offered no blanket condemnation of slavery as an institution, he encouraged slaveowners to treat their slaves humanely beyond the minimum required by Roman law. Roman law allowed owners to execute slaves without penalty and owners occasionally did this to instill discipline throughout the household or as a particularly barbaric display of conspicuous consumption, though manumission was recognized as more praiseworthy.

Case seven examines tithing to support the Christian community. Socializing a portion of individual wealth created a fund for future use when some members of the community might need it more urgently. Case eight examines Christian millennialism. People who believe the end of the world is imminent have high time preference and a short planning horizon. Thus postmillennial Christians, including Roman Catholics and mainline Protestants, have longer time horizons and lower time preference than premillennial Christians. Case nine looks at Christian teachings on wealth redistribution. Bose argues that state-enforced redistribution raises time preferences and contributes to keeping the poor impoverished by discouraging them from investing in wealth accumulation.

Until the Reformation, Catholicism did not encourage either literacy or bible study among the common people. Even St. Jerome's Latin translation of the bible was only accessible to an educated elite. This changed as the Protestant churches produced vernacular translations and encouraged widespread litera-

cy. The Reformation instilled the norms of lower time preference to a broader audience. Although Islam has been the world's fastest growing religion for some time now, the Islamic world was unable to match Christendom's sustained economic progress in part because it allowed limited polygamy and placed less emphasis on male fidelity. Hayek's theory of cultural group selection (Hayek 1967, 1973, 1978; Steele 1987; Stone 2010) suggests that Catholicism successfully imitated the cultural reforms of the Reformation starting with the Counter-Reformation and culminating in the Vatican II reforms. The internecine conflict between European states that characterized the Counter-Reformation led ultimately to a productive international order based on religious toleration formalized in the 1598 Edict of Nantes. Bose closes the chapter by contrasting Unwin's emphasis on female sexual restraint as the key to building civilization with St. Paul's contrasting emphasis on male restraint.

Chapter 8, *Sexual Freedom, Guilt, Confession, and Its Impact on Economic Growth and Prosperity*, addresses how Christian teachings on guilt, repentance, and forgiveness contributed further to economic progress. Bose points out how secular intellectuals seek to normalize or celebrate vices they either practice themselves or observe to be widespread in society. The self-flagellation that in former times mortified the repentant flesh has given way to moral grandstanding that promotes restrictive government policies—the burdens of which are always to be borne by others—and ever exorbitant taxation. Both measures are especially attractive to the extent the cost can be shifted to third parties and other innocent bystanders, especially when these policies can be exploited to penalize purported Marxian class enemies.

Much like the Kinsey reports, Margaret Mead's (1928) flawed study of Samoan sexual practices contributed to a perception of normalized promiscuity, especially in this case of child promiscuity. In fact nothing in Samoan society or sexual practices justified Mead's conclusions, which derived from a combination of gullibility and projection. Bose turns next to John Maynard Keynes' celebrated disparagement of saving. Saving provides funds for investment and economic growth and results from responsible low-time preference behavior. In keeping with his own questionable sexual appetites, Keynes deplored low time preference savers and advocated for a socialized investment fund directed by a central planning authority of self-anointed bureaucrats and intellectuals like himself. This would have seemed superficially more scientific than market competition but offers a very poor approach to applying limited resources to satisfy diverse wants and preferences.

Kinsey's flawed research has already been discussed. Bose also looks at Freud's (1901) apparent obsession with ascribing mental illness to unrecognized or perhaps unfulfilled childhood sexuality. Scant evidence ever came to light to support Freud's theories—once applauded as revolutionary, they have become little more than bizarre and extravagant intellectual curiosities. Finally, John Money presented confused ideas that attempt to broaden gender ambiguity from a small number of very real but very limited special cases to a widespread and essential feature of human identity (Money and Tucker 1975; Money 1988). Bose suggests guilt drives people to rationalize and justify their own nonconformity or transgressions in an attempt to normalize their deviations from recognized norms.

In Chapter 9, the Afterword, Bose concludes by positing that rather than being complements, sexual and economic freedom are substitutes. People with low time preference choose economic freedom and the higher economic growth it makes possible. People with high time preference choose sexual freedom and indulgence at the expense of economic growth. The change in laws driven by the fraudulent Kinsey reports reflect the preferences of self-anointed elites rather than the median voter.

The Appendix coauthored with Brian Baugus of Regent University analyzes abortion access in terms of time preference. They suggest that the principal beneficiaries of abortion access have been, not the mothers who have abortions, but the fathers who are freed from any need to support either the mothers or children. This conclusion is especially noteworthy because it goes counter to most arguments in favor of abortion rights, that they are necessary to benefit the women.

Bose presents a masterful command of the relevant literature and draws on his own extensive empirical research (Bose 2013, 2015, 2021a, 2021b; Bose and Jacob 2018). However, the value of this book is not limited to its efforts to address current controversies, which are probably interminable. He goes beyond that

by reopening a nearly forgotten conversation that is as relevant today as it was when Unwin addressed it in the 1930s. Any consensus on sexual freedom may remain elusive, particularly in terms of what is permissible, what is optimal, etc., but the discussion needs to be addressed seriously for society to move forward. This book will always be an essential part of that conversation.

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