



## THE CULTURE OF LIFE

Dr. Pia de Solenni

# When Sex becomes Schizophrenic

Recently, I was at a celebratory dinner for the male and female counterparts of a sports team from an elite U.S. graduate school. I knew the male team was not unused to extreme drinking games, etc. Still, I thought the presence of the women's team and significant others would keep things in check.

But the drinking came on full force and brought with it singing. The songs celebrated, among other things, masturbation, causing a woman to have a miscarriage, giving her an abortion, and mocking Jesus Christ.

My husband and I walked out.

I was stunned not only by the crude behavior, but by the women who stayed and listened, even trying to compete. Here's the thing—women, no matter how hard we try, will never have an equal playing field if we try to match men in their vulgarity. Granted, some will give it a good try; but ultimately we cannot compete because women have an inherent vulnerability. Part of it is sex and the ability to become pregnant. I'm not sure yet how to articulate the other part of it.

To be fair, these women are no different from their classmates, women and men alike. Their elite graduate school is not unlike other elite graduate schools.

They share a culture of excessive drinking and sexual practices that help to explain why there are so many related lawsuits in professional environs.

And yet, there's no reason to be surprised, at least in light of the teaching of the Catholic Church and Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Humanae Vitae*.

Most of the debate surrounding the encyclical focuses on the subject of contraception; but there's a broader question, namely the effects on a society when sex becomes schizophrenic. In reality, sex has only one "personality." It is an expression of committed love between a man and a woman and it is open to life. Anything else will contain some aspect of the real thing;

but it's deception. And when we build our lives on a lie, things eventually crumble.

Paul VI warned that contraception might cause man to "finally lose respect for the woman." He foresaw that woman would become a "mere instrument of selfish enjoyment, and no longer [seen] as his respected and beloved companion."

Contraception made it easier for women to be like men. We can enjoy sex without the physical vulnerability we once had. We can also behave like men behaving badly because even if things go "too far," we don't have the fear of getting pregnant. Never mind that contraceptives are not always effective, that they don't protect against STDs or that they can't protect the human heart. They lend to the illusion of equality. There's no behavior that's off limits, even when we are present.

The fact that women would stay to drink and laugh while men sing about giving them miscarriages suggests the gains of feminism are superficial at best. The surrounding culture seems to be doing its best to eliminate women, which makes sense since the sex that these men desire doesn't require a human person.

Paradoxically, true equality requires an acceptance of the differences between men and women.

Women should be the first to realize this since imitation equality uniquely disadvantages us.

That's where leadership comes in. If we have no moral authority, if we are not to be respected simply as women, then we cannot lead anyone, not even ourselves. Nor will anyone cherish us as we desire.

In fact, we'll make it quite unlikely for men capable of respecting and loving us to even exist.

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