

Endagered Species [Digest urth.v002.n022]

The Urth list — 1 messages, 1 voices, 22 Jul 1997

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John Bishop — 22 Jul 1997, 15:21

cephalothorax:

I think the abrogation spoken of is that which means we no longer must live in pairs/families, but can live alone.

I don't read that as meaning "drop sex", but as "drop need for a partner".

Think of the following stereotypical ideas, whose origin is past practice or past prejudice:

- o Only nuts and wierdos live alone; they are (mentally or emotionally) sick/devient or otherwise broken (e.g. widowed);

- o Men living without women are messy and can't take care of things (can't cook, don't clean);

- o Women living without men are prissy and can't take care of cars or jobs;

- o Everyone is either paired or looking to be paired;

Plus hosts of others about women working, etc. Most of these are still common enough that you can use them in comedy without objection.

I've read that the old Eskimo (Innuits) practice of wife-sharing was not primarily sexual; it was a recognition that a man alone needed the practical skills a woman had and he did not to survive. Refusing to let your wife chew a stranger's boots, etc. was life-threatening for him, much as refusing shelter or food would be.

Pre-modern life wasn't so much on the edge, but still pairs were assumed. I'm not so old (44), but I can remember when offices and stores were only open during "working hours" (and banks closed at 3pm!). I resented this very much, as I saw it came from the supposition

that "everyone" had a wife to do that stuff.

In those days, an employed person without a non-working partner had a hard time just doing normal business; I remember taking vacation time to do things like register or insure a car, and having to do all my purchasing on weekends. If I were much older, that would have been Saturday mornings only.

-John