

Cash Fears Put Many Northern Ireland Couples Off Tying Knot

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The report sums up the issue of marriage in Northern Ireland. People are becoming more reluctant to marry because they prefer cohabitation over marriage, due to which the divorce rate has also increased. In 1970, the marriage rate was 8.1 marriages per thousand, whereas in 2013, it had fallen to 4.4. The Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency (NISRA) show that just over 60% of upper professional workers are married compared to less than a third of unskilled workers. This means that marriage is highly dependent on a person's success. Eventually, the low-salary person can't afford to get married. Marriage itself is not an easy task to do nowadays. It requires a lot of money and social status. Arrangements of function not only require money, but the final arrangement should be good enough because it's a matter of respect. The one having high social status sets the standard high for all others. The poor ones can't afford to match these high standards, which in turn makes it difficult for the one dream of walking down the aisle to become a reality (McNeilly, 2018).

According to my observation, marriage has become difficult for everyone in this world because we have made it difficult. The rising costs of marriage and the arrangements required, along with rising housing costs and costs of living, are one factor. Then there is pressure to conform to social pressures, such as the wedding having expensive cards, bridal showers, excessive family traditions, good food, expensive designer dresses, and high-charging photographers. I still missed out on a lot of things, but let's focus on the main things right now which have restricted couples from getting married. Why I chose this topic? Because it is not an issue in Ireland, marriage has become an issue in the whole world. Let's set the trend to marry simply and decently without creating so much mess; we should set a standard of decent weddings so that marriage should be natural rather than cohabitation.

Rising Number Of Grandparents Going To Court

Some relations in this world are most important and genuine relations, and these are "Blood Relations," which none including parents, children, and grandparents, neither nature nor even science can break them because they are held in unbreakable bond. But unfortunately, sometimes, the disputes, break-ups, and norms of society can take them far away from you. The news item explains the urge and wish of grandparents to see their grandchildren, which leads them to court to file a lawsuit against parents who limit their children's get-togethers with grandparents. In 2014, the number of applications given by grandparents to see their grandchildren was 1,617, which had increased by 1,000 more applications by the year 2017. This means the divorce/separation rate has increased in society, which has led to an increase in the number of applications submitted by people.

Most of the time, when parents separate, they cut the entire connection with each other's families.

In this case scenario, the people who suffer the most are children and then grandparents because they are unable to meet each other. Meanwhile, the child needs the support of family when parents are getting divorced because they need someone by their side who can understand them and calm them down. To secure the future of the child, grandparents appeal for their right to meet with children, but this action is of no use to them because parents own the right to custody of children. They have every right to their child to whom they should meet or to whom they shouldn't do so without the involvement of either mother/father, grandparents can't get the right to see them, which is very sad and unacceptable for them. The reporter explains the cases where grandparents know they can't get the right to see their grandchild, but they still keep on giving money for the case just to maintain contact. But according to lawyers: "Going to court isn't necessarily the answer – it can be very expensive, and there's no guarantee of success." (Rudgard, 2018)

According to me, the rights should be reserved for grandparents and children to see each other. As every human has a level of relation with every other human being, no one can take a right and impose any restriction on him/her. If parents separate, that doesn't mean the family is separated too; they should keep this separation to themselves without indulging family or children in it. They should part ways happily and not let others face the consequences of their decisions. This topic was shocking to me because I had never heard or read that grandparents give applications to see their grandchildren. From when do they need a right to see their family member?

Interracial Couple Says Vandals Left Racist Messages

The report is about a newlywed interracial couple who was the target of racist attacks. Kelsey and Nick Brinson were new to the Sardis Woods neighbourhood in southeast Charlotte. Someone wrote ruthless comments on their fence. At first, the couple ignored it because they thought children would have done that (Lundberg, 2018). They tried to remove those comments from the white fence written with a black marker, which was not an easy thing to do, but it came off after a lot of struggle. After that 3rd time, someone wrote the offensive comment for them again, "F*** don't low my property value", which was very depressing. Then, they reported to the police and described the entire scenario. They told them they were thinking about opening a gym in society to connect with people, but after this incident, they became reluctant and feared by the people of Charlotte. Police still didn't catch the person, but they said they were active in this case and finding that person.

I am shocked that this racist act is still practised in our society. Everyone has the right to marry whomever they wish without thinking about colour, race or sect. People should give space to others and let them be free citizens. Everyone should be treated equally and given equal rights. If you can have all the rights, then blacks can also have all the rights to their land, too, as much as it is yours.

Ex-Cop Accused Of Not Telling Woman He Has HIV

In a court decision in Palm Beach country, a former police officer was found guilty of having sexual intercourse with multiple women, failing to mention to them that he had tested HIV positive since 2007. Evans Saintclair was a Greenacres City policeman who had tested positive even before he joined the police force (Freeman, 2018). Before joining the force, a jury allowed him on the pretext that it would not impact his work and he could contribute positively to society even with the disease. In many states, having uninformed sexual intercourse if one is HIV infected is a major first-degree felony that leads to a 30-year sentence. During this period, Officer Saintclair had sex multiple times with the woman he dated, according to the victim's testimony, and there had been three other cases where the suspect was guilty of being intimate with women without informing them of his condition. The victim who testified in the court reported that she had so far not tested positive for HIV. The defence tried to argue in his favour to demonstrate that Saintclair was unaware of his condition, but since he had already disclosed that to his ex-wife, the claim was not accepted, and due to being reported after a long number of years, the prosecutors could not bring charges.

It is known that HIV is a serious medical condition that is transferable by sexual contact. The particular news item was interesting to me because, over the years, I had been presented with a one-sided view of how HIV-positive people must be supported for them to lead normal lives ahead. But I think Saint Clair took the definition of normal too far. It is highly unethical to have unprotected sexual intercourse for one's gratification, knowing that it could cause a life-threatening condition for the other partner. If one truly loves his or her partner, it is understandable that one would try to hurt the partner with such a condition. In this regard, I highly agree with the jury's verdict and am of the opinion that this matter needs to be repeatedly brought up in the media as several women could become victims unknowingly. Society must, in the general sense, seek sexual relations within the confines of marriage to save themselves from acquiring such life-threatening STDs, and blood screening should be made mandatory before that. Consensual sex with a new dating partner complicates the matter, as it is not possible during that phase to identify any symptoms before consenting to be intimate. Prevention is better than cure.

The Family Of Slain Mother, Advocate Speak Out About Domestic Violence

Sharika Bowman had become a victim of family violence when she met Keitran Foots. Foots had shot his partner after she dropped the children off at school. The family of Sharika Bowman thought him to be a nice person and were shocked when they heard the details, although they could notice that Sharika became more distanced and closed herself off from people when earlier she was known to be outgoing, smart and artistic (WGCL, 2018). Sharika had five children, out of which two of them were from Foots, who she had met in 2016. She was a licensed practical nurse who moved to Michigan to seek better economic opportunities for her children and herself. Foots had a criminal history, but

there was no instance when the police were called to their home for an incident of domestic violence. The relationship was abusive, but Sharika could not get out of it as sometimes power and controlling tactics acted efficiently, leading the victim to contemplate whether leaving the relationship would invite more harm. 'The Georgia Commission on Family Violence' reported more than 1671 people who had become a victim of family violence in just a year. For victims of family violence, the centre stresses that they must share with someone what goes on and should keep emergency contacts on the phone for that purpose.

Family violence, according to my analysis of daily news, is becoming an epidemic in America. The statistics for one state, on average, are higher than many full countries combined. In my opinion, we as a society, the state and law enforcement must all contemplate where we went wrong and why our country is becoming an unsafe space for people, where people have to strive and struggle just to survive and live normal and peaceful lives. There must be a psychological or sociological problem we are collectively facing that is not being appropriately addressed. To see five children suffer as a result of the incident and the effects this crime could have on their future lives is heart-shattering. Moreover, it increases the likelihood of these children turning towards crime or delinquency or carrying a perpetual hatred for people or men in power because of it. It is essential to educate women on how to deal with incidents of family violence and to timely report it, despite the fact that it is not they but the abusers who should be held responsible. Furthermore, this is not a problem for law enforcement alone, as there are certain limits in laws and prosecution. This is a sociological and psychological problem that researchers must gather and ponder collectively.

Indonesia Looks Set To Make Sex Outside Of Marriage Illegal

The Indonesian parliament is set to pass a bill that would criminalize all sexual relations before marriage, whether forced or consensual. Indonesia is a new democracy whose constitution guarantees equality and rights for all groups. Lawmakers from Islamic political parties are rallying together to have the bill passed not only against sex outside marriage but any form of homosexual relations since that corrupts the morality of the nation. In Indonesia, Islamic parties have been gaining strength gradually, and despite the fact that many secular parties hold a more significant vote bank, the ideas of the Islamic parties resonate with the public (Malm, 2018). Other conservative groups back the bill since young unmarried couples are on the rise in Indonesia, which harms family values and encourages immoral behaviour. The opponents of the bill see that it violates some privacy rights and human rights and marginalizes the gay community, which is already faced with arrests, frequent raids and hateful rhetoric from different sections of society and government. Fornication, homosexuality, and adultery are already banned and punishable in the Indonesian province of Aceh, where Shariah law is implemented. If the bill is passed, it could extend those laws to other parts of Indonesia as well, thereby criminalizing sexual relations between unmarried couples.

Searching through different news on extramarital sexuality, I found this news piece to be particularly interesting, and the apparent angle the news item took while reporting the developments in Indonesia. Despite the fact that in the United States, sexual promiscuity is leading to the many social or mental health problems we observe today, contributing towards a breakdown of the family system and a large number of children being born outside of marriage, and a significant amount of children being brought up by single mothers who are struggling to provide for them, the Western media seems to act as a judge when analyzing developments in other parts of the World. Having laws that promote family and criminalize promiscuity and immorality is understandable when the overall positive social effects they can have are known. The reporting seems to suggest that everything is fine and ideal at home, whereas everything wrong with the Eastern part of the world does not adopt Western notions of individual or social values enough. I agree with the move that the Indonesian parliament is contemplating, and I can objectively argue that similar laws in the US could solve a lot of problems we are faced with as a community.

Alaska 'Anti-Transgender Bathroom Bill'

In Anchorage, Alaska a bill was presented in the legislature that sought to bar transgenders from using the bathrooms or changing rooms belonging to the gender they identify with and be forced to use changing rooms or toilets that aligns with their listed sex at birth as mentioned on their birth certificates (Silva, 2018). The bill that was presented with the efforts and lobbying of a Christian policy advocacy group was only defeated by a low margin. Anchorage city has a non-discrimination ordinance that provides access to restrooms conforming to people's gender identity in the name of preserving equal rights for LGBTQ. Civil rights organizations termed the defeat of the bill as a victory, and transgender activists hailed the move as they see it a threat to their equal and fair treatment. The 47% of people who voted for the bill were termed as merchants of inequality who may try again. Non-discrimination laws that protect transgender rights are becoming another contention between conservative Christian groups and rights groups. The 'Bathroom Bill' was hailed as a victory for LGBTQ equality.

It was interesting to see that all the furore and media headlines were over which bathroom one person chooses to relieve himself or herself in. As I read the news in a popular magazine that covers a broad range of issues, I feel a bit appalled at their blatant bias and choice of words. After all, 47% of the votes supported the bill. Terming all these people as merchants of inequality who hate freedom and civil rights without giving the opposing view any space is reflective of how consent and views can be manufactured by the media in the garb of political correctness. Anyone can claim to be a transgender who is in favour of or opposed to gender reassignment. In a women's changing room at the pool, where mothers are bathing their little girls, the question is, should a naked man be allowed to enter the same space in front of the child, claiming to be a transgender woman? The misuse of these so-called equality laws could lead to wide-scale implications. If transgender truly believes in equality, they can be as equal when using the changing room of their birth sex and tolerate any uncomfortable feelings, just as they expect families to tolerate their misplaced notions of gender

identity.

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