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Extended Male Adolescence — The British Version

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The Sunday Times [London] reports that young British men are turning into “eternal bachelors” and the nation is turning into a “bachelor nation.” In fact, men are marrying now marrying at a rate lower than at any time other than the most intense years of World War II. It’s not that they are not having sex—they are just not making commitments.

These young men are not even cohabitating — they are just living like irresponsible teenagers. As the newspaper reported, “While the fall in marriage is well documented, it has widely been thought this is because couples are moving in together instead. But the LSE [London School of Economics] study, designed to test this notion, found growing numbers of men are simply not forming serious relationships until later in life.”

In other words, they are not growing up. A civilization that fails to encourage its young men to accept adult roles and adult responsibilities—especially the responsibility of marriage—is sowing the seeds of its own destruction.

GROWN-UP LINKS: John Elliott, Men Behave Singularly Like Eternal Bachelors, The Sunday Times [London], Sunday, June 26, 2005. See also my essay, The Generation That Won’t Grow Up, published January 24, 2005. In addition, see Sophie Goodchild, Half of All ‘Twenty-Something’ Men Shun Relationships, The Independent [London], Sunday, June 26, 2005; and this press release from the London School of Economics.

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