

Roderick T. Long, “Beyond Patriarchy”

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“**H**istorically, human families have often been oppressive and exploitative institutions, in a way that animal families do not seem to be. The purest example of this is the Roman family, in which the male head of household (the *paterfamilias*) was legally entitled to put his wife and children (even grown children) to death. This aspect of family relationships is called *patriarchy* (‘father-rule’), signifying the subordination of wives to husbands and of children to parents. Those who defend patriarchy as ‘natural’ often point to the animal kingdom as a model; but traditionally, parental authority and sexual inequality have been far more pronounced in human societies than in most animal societies. Recent political developments — springing in part from the libertarian urge to subordinate patriarchal authority to individual rights, and in part from the welfare-liberal urge to subordinate patriarchal authority to that of the state — have weakened the institution of patriarchy, but not eliminated it entirely. . . How might families in a truly free society develop beyond this patriarchal paradigm?”

“**T**he family is an institution of paramount value and importance, both in its own right and as a bulwark against the encroachments of the state. The family has often served as a sphere of oppression and exploitation, thanks to the tradition of *patriarchy*, in which women are unjustly subordinated to men, and children are unjustly subordinated to parents. The proper libertarian response to both concerns is to see how, consistent with our anti-interventionist principles, we can foster a family structure free of patriarchal influence. . . .”

The “Market Anarchy” zine series was created to republish & showcase articles that highlight our relation to the revolutionary left and explain Market Anarchist theory in general terms.

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MARKET ANARCHY

Beyond Patriarchy

A Libertarian Model of the Family

Roderick T. Long

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“Beyond Patriarchy” was originally published as an article in *Formulations*, a libertarian journal published by the Free Nation Foundation, in Spring 1997.

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