

The Entertainment Craze

Elizabeth Taylor, an Icon

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One of the more notable events to occur this week in the United States was the death of Elizabeth Taylor at age 79. I personally only saw, as far as I know, three of her movies. The first one that I can recall is *National Velvet*. I believe that was about 1944. Then I saw *A Place in the Sun* with Montgomery Clift, which was, I believe, about 1950. Then came *Giant* with James Dean and Rock Hudson, and I had had it. Her name on a marquee never guaranteed that I would ever go see the movie because I did not appreciate what kind of life she was living. It may have been glamorous to some, but she was, to me, a low-life to the extreme, despite her facial beauty.

The same day that she died, an article honoring her appeared in the MSN news page. The entire article was written by a longtime and well-respected Hollywood entertainment reporter who had a great deal of contact with her, lasting for decades of time. At least 90% of the article (of somewhere close to 500 words) was about her sexuality. There was no mention of a father in her life, no mention of an early childhood family life, only that she was born in London. Her life was abnormal, to say the very least. Beginning with the *National Velvet* movie, the focus of her life—perhaps all of it was not her fault—was entirely on herself. Her personality was warped to an extreme.

Based on the article, I do not know how anyone would come to any other conclusion than that her life was driven by sexual conquests, both by her and by men off her. Her personality appears so unbalanced by this, I believe that it is entirely possible that she was demon possessed, and that this was driving her. She was admired by many, to be sure, but despite her legendary beauty, she could not hold a single man. She was married eight times, divorced seven. The only one who escaped had to do it by dying in an airplane crash. I believe that she could not hold on to a man because the problem was in her. And it's one of the reason that I believe that she was demon possessed. What a difference in terms of things that success are measured by between her and Shirley Temple.

Geraldine Ferraro died today. Compare her life with Elizabeth Taylor's. Elizabeth Taylor, I believe, rather epitomized this almost godless and certainly hedonistic age that we live in. Interestingly, the latter part of her life was not a happy one. It was quite painful, with much disease and long periods spent in hospitals, and she was confined to a wheelchair much of the time. Elizabeth Taylor was the shining jewel easily seen in this anything-goes philosophy that we've been living in this past 50 years. But we live in an age of sexploitation, violence, and the depths of homosexual and lesbian perversion, punctuated by a loose-living, drug-induced fervor.

She and others similar to her have been front and center of the materialistic goals and values that scream at us from radio and television, and that we see on virtually every flip of the page and magazine ads. Happiness is the unrelenting bombardment of "Buy this," "Live this way," "Everybody's doing it," "Indulge yourself," "You owe it to yourself," "Buy now; pay later." These have been the swan songs. Only those people with a very strong sense of solid values and history can see the sham for what it is. They can see the dangers of where it is headed, and these people are worried.

Why are they worried? Because they can see that it looks as though nothing is going to stop this headlong rush to destruction until the price is paid, and even they, making preparations as best they

can and minding their Ps and Qs, realize they are going to pay the price along with everybody else, because they are being swept up in the tsunami of this evil.

American historian William Stearns Davis wrote in his book, *The Influence of Wealth on Imperial Rome*, pages 314 and 317,

And so in this dream of the absolute fixity of the Roman system [Do you know what he's saying there? He's saying that the average Roman felt that what they were living in was never going to end], men went on studying, enjoying dissipating, getting, doing everything except to prepare for fighting until Alaric sacked the Eternal City, and so the barbarians at length destroyed a society that was more slowly destroying itself.

Edward Gibbon, the author of *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, made this comment on the pleasure-mad craze that gripped Rome:

From morning to evening, careless of the sun or the rain, the spectators, who sometimes amounted to 400,000 people, remained in eager attention, their eyes fixed on the horses and charioteers, their minds agitated with hope and fear for the success of the colors which they espoused. Happiness in Rome appeared to hang on the event of a race.

He continued: "Games lasting one day soon became games lasting seven, nine or 15 days, morning and evening, on and on and on. But the Roman people could never have too much."

They aren't much different from the crowds who now sleep overnight at the ticket office, waiting to buy World Series, Super Bowl, March Madness and concert tickets in the United States and Britain.

Well, an icon who epitomized this type of adulation died this week. But our progress toward Rome's depravity continues on, and I hope that you will check to see where you might stand in regard to this adulating fascination with a star.