



EMPATHIC PARENTING

Journal of the Canadian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

Volume 11

Issue 3

Summer 1988

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**It is the luxurious and
dissipated who set the fashions
which the herd so diligently follow.**

Thoreau
page 18

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A Haunting Refrain

the fact is that what happens in our earliest years has a radical (root) effect upon all that we experience thereafter... we love because we were first loved ... we fail to love because we ourselves were failed very early on... the way we were treated as small children is the way we will treat ourselves and others the rest of our lives: with tenderness and support, with neglect and cruelty, or with something in-between. . . few of us have a batting average of these hits out of ten when it comes to treating ourselves with tenderness and support. . . to have grown up in this industrialized society means that we are—each of us—wounded in ways that we do not yet comprehend.. .

the central wound of early childhood is abandonment... the context of life for the earliest years is the world of relationship, or the lack thereof. . mothering is not supported in this culture. . . mothering (nurturance, community, relationship) is dangerous because it reminds us of our dependence and the limitations of the ones upon whom we were dependent... if you needed love at a crucial moment in childhood and didn't get it, we can't go back and get it now.. .

mothering is a verb... it is thus a task for both men and women... the ultimate goal of "good enough mothering" is to call forth in the child confidence-at-the-core. . . for children, the medium is the message.. . and the medium of confidence-at-the-core is time. . . availability, countless repetitions of presence, time and time again... the vehicle of this task, on the part of the parents, is attentive presence: to be actively available when needed and passively available when not.. .

i repeat, the past haunts us in ways that we don't want to believe.. .

Kent Hoffman

EMPATHIC PARENTING:

Being willing and able to 'put yourself in your child's shoes' in order to correctly identify his/her feelings, and

Being willing and able to behave toward your child in ways which take those feelings into account.

Empathic parenting takes an enormous amount of time and energy and fully involves both parents in a co-operative, sharing way.

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EMPATHIC PARENTING

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Letters

Response to Correspondence on Effecting Social Change

Dear Dr. Barker

In reading the Spring 1988 issue, I was struck by the similarity between your correspondence with Erna Furman (Letters) and the article by Julie Lineberger ("Just Smile"). Both writers avoid the "hard sell"—Ms. Furman prefers the "indirect" approach to social change, while Ms. Lineberger appears to have given up all hope of creating social change except through individual efforts within her own family — beyond that, she seems content to focus on her own parenting.

While I, too, sympathize with the benefits of an indirect approach, I feel it can be taken too far. Silence or softness on an issue, however well-meaning, can be misconstrued and misunderstood. It can even have the opposite result from that intended! For example, although I had attended several La Leche League meetings, I decided to wean my son, then fourteen months, because he was needing frequent and lengthy nursing at that time and I was feeling exhausted. Fortunately, I mentioned my plans to my League leader, who recommended a book (*Mothering Your Nursing Toddler* by Norma Jane Bumgarner) which dissuaded me, and helped me in practical ways to handle that situation. I often wonder how much damage I might have done to my child (weaning at a time when he needed **more** nursing!) had I not happened to discuss my decision with someone more knowledgeable.

I wonder how much damage is inadvertently done simply because people are so afraid of the obvious pitfalls of the "hard sell" that they speak so

softly, they are not heard at all! The answer (as Aristotle would no doubt recommend) is probably somewhere in the middle between these two extremes, but I find myself more disturbed by those who "call a spade a spade". As John Holt stated (with reference to homeschooling issues):

... this is part of the larger question, how does one human being change the thinking of another. . . There's a kind of spectrum of possibilities and I think at one end, for many people, I just put a pebble in their shoe which they can't get out. I mean, the vast majority of people who hear me speak or read some of my stuff, whether they are parents or teachers, think "Well, that's utter rubbish," but they can't quite get back to where they were before they first heard it. There it is, it's in their shoe, they cannot altogether escape it. The world looks a little bit different from the way it looked before."

From a 1982 interview in England, quoted in **Growing Without Schooling**, April 1987, issue 56, page 23.

The danger is that we can be so afraid of our convictions (or of the response they may evoke) that we put across the wrong message. For this reason, I am particularly frustrated by Ms. Lineberger's approach. She has obviously done much soul-searching and has so much to offer, both to those who would listen and those who would not (but who might benefit from a few pebbles!).

I am very pleased that she has taken the time to write this article, which so clearly illustrates parenting at its best. I hope, however, that she will reconsider her approach to those who are not likely to read her articles. Social change must include everyone — not just those who

Letters

read journals. An “individual” approach such as hers can indeed have excellent and far-reaching effects on our society through the modelling of good parenting and the changes her own children may bring about, but why stop there? Ms. Lineberger has apparently learned many of her parenting beliefs from other cultures, from other people. I hope she will consider a more active approach to social change, so that others could now learn from her.

In the final paragraph, Ms. Lineberger states that her aim “is not to convert the world to her ideas.” Yet good ideas like hers are precisely what this world needs. If ideas cannot change the world, what can?

It may indeed be “uncomfortable” to do more than “just smile”, but social change is not always a comfortable process, and the price of our comfort may be some very real discomfort for the children of those toward whom we are silent.

Yours very truly,
Jan Hunt
Victoria, BC

P.S. I was distressed to see that a pacifier was used to illustrate the mother’s acceptance of the baby’s oral needs. Pacifiers are simply another consumer product designed to meet the needs of the parent, at great cost to the child. They can cause nipple confusion, interference with the good alignment of the jaw through breastfeeding, lend themselves to separation of mother and baby, and interfere with the mother-child relationship. This illustration is inconsistent with the article on child-led weaning in the same issue, and it seems entirely unnecessary to have included a pacifier at all.

I wonder what the writer’s response was to this illustration (was she thinking

of pacifiers when she mentioned the use of “a particular product or gadget”?) Had I written a similar article on meeting the needs of my child, having chosen a child-led late weaning without resort to mother substitutes, I would have been most unhappy with this drawing. Apparently the illustrator somehow missed one of the main points of Ms. Lineberger’s article.

Dear Dr. Barker:

I am glad that you published the exchange of letters with Erna Furman. A friend of mine and I spent quite a while discussing the letters. Our conclusion was two-fold:

- a. we need you there saying the things that you say, taking an uncompromising stand on advocating a societal course which is best for the child.
- b. in our frequent contact with other mothers/friends, we both take Furman’s softer approach. Having experienced the pain and disorientation that accompanies child-innoculation (investing the child) and found little or no support for this course of action, it is very difficult to condemn others for not making the 100% commitment. Our goal is to support other parents (women especially) in their efforts to establish healthy family groupings.

We both remarked Furman’s sentence “By contrast, when mothers can be helped to invest themselves and to their child(ren), they just know or sense that daycare or other separations are detrimental, **suffer themselves too much when they occur** and do not have to be told to avoid them.” Both of us had half believed friends/family who insisted our reluctance to leave infants/nursing toddlers was neurotic, but the separation just hurt too much.

Best wishes,
Gael Storey
Vancouver, BC

A baby speaks out

by Jan Hunt

I am eleven months old.

I can't talk yet, so when I am hungry, tired, wet, lonely, ill, or in pain, I cry. It is the only means I have to let my parents know that something is wrong. If I could sit down with them and talk quietly about my needs, I would do that. I've tried, but no words come out yet.

It sure can be frustrating and frightening to think that no one cares enough about me to meet my needs — to feed me, change me, cuddle me, or at least pick me up to find out what is wrong. In fact, when my cries are ignored, I begin to think that this world is a really bad place, and I worry that this will give me a negative and selfish outlook on life. But when my needs are met, I feel loved and secure enough to return that love to others, and eventually to my own children. (1) I do so want to become a loving, caring person, but how will I learn to be like that if I don't see examples of it? (2)

I get very lonely at night. For nine months my mother and I were inseparable, and I felt so much love inside her. She was all I knew when I arrived on this strange planet. It will require a certain amount of love and reassurance before I am ready to spend time alone either in the day or at night. The more secure I can feel now, the sooner that time will come. If I am forced to be alone before I am ready, it will take a lot longer; in fact, I may never reach the level of maturity that I hope to reach by the time I am an adult. (3)

If my crying is ignored for twenty minutes, all that happens is that my needs become greater — I get even hungrier, thirstier, lonelier, and more miserable. On top of that, I have to face the fact that apparently no one cares

about me. I'm sure my mommy would feel the same way if she were crying and Daddy ignored her. Believing that no one cares about you is a very devastating thought.

When my tears are ignored, I begin to believe that no matter how hard I cry and no matter what is wrong, no one will ever come. And if no one ever comes, I worry that I will die, because I cannot meet my own needs yet. You see, I have no concept of time, and twenty minutes is forever to me.

Sometimes I stop crying — but I am not learning patience, I am learning despair. When I stop crying, it means that I have lost all hope of ever being loved again, and all I feel is helplessness and despondency. I worry that I will never learn to communicate with words if I am not allowed to communicate with cries. And I worry that if I feel this frustration too many times, I will withdraw and stop feeling anything.

One reason that I like to sleep next to my mother is that her presence helps to regulate my heart rate, blood pressure, body temperature, and sleep cycles, and her breathing regulates my own breathing. (4-5) I sure don't want to worry about crib death on top of all these other worries! (6)

I have no desire to take unfair advantage of my parents; I love them very deeply. I am simply asking for the same care that was given to babies for thousands of years until recent history, the same responsiveness to the legitimate needs of all human babies. (7) If my needs are met, I will be free to demonstrate all the love and trust I was born with. All I want is a chance to express that love fully. □



Believing that no one cares about you is a very devastating thought.

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Mothers giving up executive jobs may affect U.S. family profoundly

By Brenda Lane Richardson
The New York Times

Caren Camp of Middleburg, Va., a 35-year-old cosmetics executive, was a highly motivated career woman when she left her job in 1986 to concentrate on rearing her infant son. Carolyn Brown, 38, was a high-ranking manager for AT&T in Washington when she quit in 1987 to devote more time to her two children.

Recently, on a rainy morning in Middleburg, Camp, Brown and a friend Brandon Berkeley, 34, who was a bank vice president in Baltimore before resigning to be with her two toddlers, met in Camp's 19th-century, three-storey stone house to discuss their new lives.

The three women, as well as others interviewed, are among the relatively small number of women leaving managerial and professional jobs to care full time for their children. The women, using the decision-making skills honed in their professions, narrowed their choices to pursuing a career or rearing their children, rather than trying to juggle the two.

"Quitting was the most difficult decision of my life," Camp said. "But I can always go back to work, I can't always raise my child."

Their decisions and those of other women leaving careers have reverberat-

ed beyond their immediate circles. And ultimately, insight into how society judges them and how they judge themselves may have a profound effect on the American family.

There have always been women who quit their jobs after having children, including professional women. But Brown, Camp and Berkeley are different from those homemakers of the past as egg beaters are from Cuisinart food processors. For their 1950's counterparts, there was widespread social acceptance. Women like Brown and Camp are of the generation that gave the word "housewife" negative connotations.

"I'd always felt that women who stayed home were weak, limited in their horizons," said Camp, who added that for several months after quitting, she avoided filling out forms, dreading having to identify herself as a housewife.

At a time when self-esteem and professional success seem joined at the hip, these women have left behind careers, not just jobs.

"It was like turning a light switch off in the only room I had known," said Brown, who had been with her company for 16 years.

She handled marketing accounts throughout the Northeast. With 75

Special thanks to Barbara Graham for drawing this article to the attention of the editor.

“Why bring a child into the world and be away 75 percent of the time?”

employees in nine offices, her job required at least 12 hours a day and frequent travel; she had to spend time away from her home in Great Falls, Va., near Washington, and from her husband Martin, 43, and their children.

Camp began her career in 1973 as an account representative for a clothing company. By 1986 she was a manager, supervising eight account representatives with 450 clients in eight states for Aramis.

In short, Berkeley said, “Caren was the most career-oriented woman I’ve ever known.”

Why did she choose to give that up? Because for Camp, as for the other mothers interviewed, the pull of wanting to be with her child became too much; in addition, she could afford to stay home. Camp began considering leaving her job while on a business trip to Pittsburgh, just after her son Webb’s first birthday in July 1986. She called home.

“The housekeeper said Webb had taken his first step,” recalled Camp, whose husband, John, 36, is an acquisitions specialist for the Jordan Co. “I realized that his first year had gone by so quickly, I had been like a visitor in his life.” She quit four months later.

While it is not known how many career women are making similar choices, it is clear that they are in the minority. Only a third of U.S. women from 25 to 44 with children under 18 are

not in labor market, according to the Labor Department.

Anne Mollegen Smith, editor in chief of *Working Woman* magazine, said she believes the mothers who give up careers are “perfectionist.” She said she worries that if these cases are viewed as a trend, corporate administrators will decide that women cannot be trusted in responsible positions.

Indeed, *the National Law Journal* reported that “an appreciable chunk of the female legal labor force,” including and increasing number of lawyers, has been lost because the women found it too difficult to balance family needs with full-time work. The journal did not cite figures, but the author, Patricia Mairs, said in an interview that the number of young women leaving law for the home is “in the thousands.”

A psychologist, Dr. Ellen Hock, a professor at Ohio State University, said that rather than asking whether mothers should be at home with their children, attention should be focused on what makes the mother happy. “For a long time, we’ve known that a woman’s mental health is critical to being a good mother,” she said.

Hock is conducting a study of 164 career-oriented middle-class mothers in central Ohio. She has found that the women who showed the most symptoms of stress and depression were at home but preferred to be employed outside the home. Hock suggested that

“I realized that his first year had gone by so quickly, I had been like a visitor in his life.”

At a time when self-esteem and professional success seem joined at the hip, these women have left behind careers, not just jobs.

the few executive women in her study who could afford to stay home but chose to keep working did not feel conflict because they could afford high-quality day care and felt fulfilled with their work.

Faith Popcorn, the chairman of Brainreserve, a New York concern specializing in trends, said this is part of the "homecoming" movement. "It's not antifeminist, she said. "It's a way of living life to the fullest. It's a move that protects their marriages. It gives the couple time to strategize, time to get things done and time for sex."

For Brown, Camp, and Berkeley, unlike many workers, quitting was an option because they have spouses who can support them. But they say their days of living without a budget are behind them.

There are few meals out, for instance, for Berkeley, her husband, Richard, an investment banker, and their daughters, Brandon, 3, and Stuart, 1. And the couple have postponed remodelling their home.

Although Camp retained her housekeeper, she spends much of her day with Webb, now 2½. They sled, visit museums, read by the fire and sing as he strums his guitar. "It's being there when he needs me," she said. "That can be at 10:30 in the morning when he's learning to tie his shoe."

Like many recent converts, Camp has strong opinions about her new life. "I say if you can afford to stay home, do it," she said. "Why bring a child into the world and be away 75 per cent of the time?"

Brown quit because it troubled her that her children's lives were revolving around her busy schedule.

None of the women interviewed would predict how soon they might return to work. Like many of these former professionals, they said they hope to turn their business savvy into entrepreneurial enterprises, not just "go home to wash windows," Popcorn observed. □

"Quitting was the most difficult decision of my life. But I can always go back to work. I can't always raise my child."

— Carolyn Brown
Former AT&T manager

Hunches on Childhood
or
Everything I Want to Say About World Peace in 1658 Words or Less
by Kent T. Hoffman

1. I am a psychotherapist. Which is to say, I am an archaeologist and midwife to the human soul. To paraphrase Alice Miller: "The unique role of the analyst, moving to the minutest detail of a person's history, gives a perspective and clarity to the direct cause and effect—the reactive nature of childhood experience on later adult behavior." I believe, after fifteen years of doing this work, that what I observe on a daily basis is fact—and the fact is that what happens in our earliest years has a radical (root) effect upon all that we experience hereafter.

2. We love because we were first loved.

3. We fail to love because we ourselves were failed very early on.

4. The way we were treated as small children is the way we will treat ourselves and others the rest of our lives: with tenderness and support, with neglect and cruelty, or with something in-between.

5. Few of us have a batting average of these hits out of ten when it comes to treating ourselves with tenderness and support.

6. We do have the possibility of choice over our behavior (we are, indeed, larger than our history). We do not have choice over our feelings. Unless we bring deep intention and committed awareness to our lives, feelings will continue to control behavior. (Freud was right, the unconscious calls more shots than it doesn't.)

7. Each person is infinitely precious, of infinite worth—that is, worthy of infinite tenderness and support. No place is this more obvious and apparent than in the life of a young child.

8. To have grown up in this industrialized society means that we are—each of us—wounded in ways that we do not yet comprehend. Unless these wounds are grieved, and thus released, they will be passed on to the next generation.

9. The central wound of early childhood is abandonment.

10. Children are exceptionally sensitive, that is fragile. Children (we) are also very resilient. And therein lies the problem. We do bounce back, early on, from woundings. And to the naked eye we appear to have gone . . . beyond the wound. And we have. We have also stayed right there. At the scene of the crime. And depending upon how deep

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the wound, we will make certain that we return again and again.

11. In spite of our wounding, there is at our core, a truth, that cannot be extinguished. It has wisdom and tenacity. It can be lost and forgotten, but never destroyed.

12. Our degree of openness to relationship (intimacy and negotiation) is established in the first four years of life (Mahler). Indeed, **the** context of life for the earliest years is the world of relationship, or the lack thereof. This is the world of the self as it comes into focus in **relationship** to mother.

13. Mothering is not supported in this culture. Mothering (nurturance, community, relationship) is dangerous because it reminds us of our dependence and the limitations of the ones upon whom we were dependent. The result is an active avoidance of the wound surrounding our lack of nurture (substance abuse, food abuse, sex abuse, child abuse, work/stress addiction, relational melodrama: personal, political, national/international, etc.). The result is also an active rejection of nurturing and of women. ("Traced to its root in the history of each individual, this fear of WOMAN turns out to be a fear of recognizing the fact of dependence." — D.W. Winnicott)

14. It is difficult to give what we didn't get. ("Unfortunately, all too many modern women have not been nurtured by the mother in the first place. Instead, they have grown up in the difficult home of abstract, collective authority—'cut off at the ankles from the earth'—as one woman put it—full of superego shoulds and oughts. Or they have identified with the father and their patriarchal

culture, thus alienating themselves from their own feminine ground and the personal mother, whom they have often seen as weak or irrelevant. Adrienne Rich speaks for many of us when she writes, "The woman I needed to call my mother was silenced before I was born."—Sylvia Brinton Perera)

15. The man I needed to call my father was silenced before I was born. ("There's a lot of grief around our missing fathers. We're in a bad spot. I can't fix that. If you needed love at a crucial moment in childhood and didn't get it, we can't go back and get it now. But I can tell you that the further a man goes into his grief, the more male he becomes. Every time you touch your pain, in grief or in rage, you'll get stronger." —Robert Bly) It is **this** strength that children need from their fathers.

16. Women have every right to express themselves in ways other than mothering. An aversion to mothering is, however, both common and significant. This isn't so much a comment on mothering as it is upon the isolation women feel from themselves—their deep struggle to know what it is to be uniquely woman. ("Basically as women we have no sense of what it means to be a woman. We know what we have been **told** women are, yet we have a sense that we can't possibly be that, that there is more to us. We don't know at all. We cannot even begin to imagine what this woman would be like, because first we are presently stripping down the negatives that have always been said about women and, second, we must undo the effort we make to imitate men in order to have a self or social power. These two are such enormously preoccupying labors that we haven't had the opportunity yet to dream up, create, or even fantasize this future woman." —Kim Chernin)

17. Mothering is a verb. It is thus a task for both men and women.
18. The ultimate goal of “good enough mothering” is to call forth in the child **confidence-at-the-core**. That is: “You are inherently good and lovable in your natural expression of who you are.”
19. For children, the medium is the message. And the medium of confidence-at-the-core is time. Availability, countless repetitions of presence, time and time again. “Quality time” in the place of “quantity time” does not easily translate as nurturance in the childhood unconscious.
20. Hovering, on the other hand, can translate as engulfment.
21. The fundamental need of the developing child is the capacity to be fully held and fully dependent. (“... At first we were absolutely dependent and that absolutely means absolutely.” —D.W. Winnicott) And then in the child’s time to initiate her/his own gradual independence. The vehicle of this task, on the part of the parents, is **attentive presence**: to be actively available when needed and passively available when not.
22. All parents fail.
23. To the degree that we neglect our anger and grief about our early childhood wounding, we do by default chose to induce others to help us recreate our woundings and to find others upon whom we can re-enact our wounding.
24. I repeat, the past haunts us in ways that we don’t want to believe.
25. The future of the planet is, in part, dependent upon establishing the healthy raising of children as **the** central priority.
26. Less violent cultures, (Hopi, Senoi, Kalahari) do appear to prioritize early childhood practices that encourage confidence-at-the-core.
27. The knot is bigger than we think. (“There is more to the human condition than psycho-enchantment.” — Christine Larsen)
28. It is hard to support children in a context that doesn’t support you: industrialized economy, financial anxieties, sexism, racism, meritocracy, cultural values, dysfunctional family patterns. . . not to mention genetics, acts of nature etc. All the these, as well as the painfully slow process of parents freeing themselves from the wounds of their past, interact and complicate the process of historical change.
29. Nevertheless, it is essential to establish priorities and there can be no more fundamental priority than the healthy raising of children.
30. Even including a concerted effort to support children in an ever widening frame, we cannot hope to see any frame, we cannot hope to see any significant change on the world scene for ten generations, maybe fifty (then again it could be four, it could be ninety-four). (“The most important lesson of the new peace: that peace must be allowed to grow from natural foundations, not imposed by force . . . a peace that can grow as a shade tree, not to be balanced by force as a pyramid stood on its peak.”— Steven Horowitz).
31. It may be too late for all of this. Our only hope is to live as though it is not.
32. The way we hold our children is the way we hold our future. □

Society's Enforced Separation: Interfering with the Natural Mother/Child Relationship

by Tamara B. Orr

No two people in the world belong together than a newborn and his mother. Millions of years of genetic programming have designed them for it. Yet, society works very hard and dedicates an enormous amount of time and money to separate mother and child from birth on. From the moment a baby emerges from the womb, the nurturing mother must fight valiantly and aggressively to stay with her child. She will almost inevitably face the opposition of the hospital, her doctor, her family and persuasive merchants out to make a profit on her motherhood. This is not an easy task, by any means, yet extensive separation between mother and child can result in delayed bonding and permanent damage to their intricate relationship.

Within minutes of birth, babies are whisked away to be cleaned, tested, bundled and weighed. Usually they are then placed in a bassinet in the nursery instead of in the loving arms that should rightfully be cradling them. Some mothers will request rooming-in so they are not separate from their newborns and one would hope this natural togetherness would be supported in the hospitals, but unfortunately, it is often discouraged, since supposedly, "mother needs her rest." How can a mother and her newborn possibly rest when out of each other's sight? A newborn instinctually craves to be with his mother and his mother, if not overwhelmed by medication, will crave the same thing.

Being separated from each other, especially at these crucial hours after birth, result in worry, fear, tension and stress for both mother and child, so obviously, no one is "resting."

Soon bottles of glucose water and/or formula will be offered and free samples are often sent home in the hospital's new parent pack. These measures drastically interfere with a mother who plans to nurse by both introducing the baby to a bottle first and by encouraging the mother, by supplying free bottles and formula, to fall back on bottle feeding at the first sign of difficulty in breastfeeding.

Nature designed babies to suck on a warm nipple made of skin and smelling uniquely like mother, not a nipple made of rubber, unresponsive and cold. Mothers are often erroneously reassured, usually by non-breastfeeding mothers or clever formula manufacturers, that there is little difference between nursing and bottle feeding yet every study disputes this. Besides the vital differences in nutrition and health, nursing helps to bond mother and child together, and then, over the following months, sustain that intimate relationship.

Artificial feeding creates an immediate distancing between mother and child and not only interferes with a child's health, but also sets up a pattern for further, increasing distancing. Now **anyone** can feed the baby and mom can start using babysitters or go back to

*Tamara Orr is editor of **Priority Parenting**, Box 1793, Warsaw, Indiana 46580.*

*Society works very hard . . . to separate mother
and child from birth on.*

work. Times that were meant to be spent involved in a close, nursing relationship are instead often spent with a bottle, held by a variety of caretakers or even simply propped up in a crib.

Now the many merchants enter the picture, peddling wares designed to bring them a healthy income, at the expense of destroying the natural togetherness of mother and child. Ad after ad, commercial after commercial, enforce the notions, however indirectly, that baby doesn't need to be close to mom, for she can be easily replaced by these wonderful products.

Already the breast has been replaced by bottles. Now cribs become standard and traditional must for new families. Babies, designed through millions of years of programming to sleep with their mothers, are now placed in their own beds, often in another room. Immediately, another major link in nurturing is severed. Instead of a warm breast and a cuddle in bed, baby gets a cold bottle in a lonely crib. This is progress?

The separation continues to grow as products replace mother more and more. Instead of being gently rocked, baby gets an automatic swing. Instead of being played with, baby gets a playpen. Instead of being held in the arms or a front back pack, baby gets a stroller. Where, in all of this, does baby get mom? Why is our culture teaching parents to believe that bottles, cribs,

playpens and strollers are necessary equipment for raising a child? What happened to the **natural** equipment—nourishing breasts, warm beds, inviting laps and welcoming arms?

And where does this enforced, unnatural separation end? After a child turns one? two? three? No, it just keeps on growing. Where once children were sent to kindergarten at age 6, they are now enrolled in pre-school, nursery school and day care centers, at increasingly young ages. Years that were once spent at home with mom are now being spent in an institution with changing caretakers.

Our culture places a great deal of emphasis on independence and seems to be driven to push it on infants from the moment they are born. To encourage the rapid growth of independence, separations are placed between mother and child by family, friends, doctors and insidious merchants, from the second the infant emerges from the womb. What is being overlooked, however, is that independence is a **natural** stage of growth and will occur, in its proper time, to the normal individual. It cannot be forced upon a helpless baby. On the contrary, this constant pattern of separations will result, not in independence, but in **dependence**. The relationship between mother and child is the first and most important relationship in a person's entire life, setting the precedents and patterns for all future

Why is our culture teaching parents to believe that bottles, cribs, playpens and strollers are necessary equipment for raising a child?

The child is being set up to become attached to material objects instead of people...

relationships. And our society warps this crucial relationship from a natural state of togetherness to an artificial state of separation. By repeatedly removing the very center of an infant's security—mom—and replacing her with objects and things, the child is being set up to become attached to material objects instead of people and to constantly be searching, all through his adult life, for

something to meet the thwarted needs of his childhood.

For the sake of all the children, our persistent society must be ignored and all that try to interfere with it, overruled. The precious, essential and close relationship of a nurturing mother and her child must not be altered or else we risk irreparable, life long damage. □

I want to be a mother.
CHARLOTTE



To the Directors of
 Canadian Society for the Prevention
 of Cruelty to Children

AUDITORS' REPORT

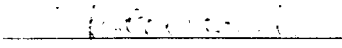
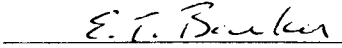
We have examined the balance sheet of the Canadian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children as at April 30, 1988 and the statement of financial activities for the year then ended. Our examination was made in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards and accordingly included such tests and other procedures as we considered necessary in the circumstances.

In our opinion, these financial statements present fairly the financial position of the Society as at April 30, 1988 and the results of its financial activities for the year then ended in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles as set out in Note 1 to the financial statements, applied on a basis consistent with that of the preceding year.

Midland, Ontario
 June 10, 1988


 Chartered Accountants

Balance Sheet
 as at April 30, 1988

	<u>1988</u>	<u>1987</u>
Assets		
Current assets		
Cash	\$ 25	\$ 25
Bank - current account	2,477	4,175
Bank - savings account (note 3(a))	5,142	6,835
Prepaid expenses	400	551
Inventory	-	180
	<u>8,044</u>	<u>11,766</u>
Fixed assets, at cost (note 1(c))	21,394	16,536
Less - accumulated depreciation	<u>9,767</u>	<u>6,860</u>
	<u>11,627</u>	<u>9,676</u>
	<u>\$ 19,671</u>	<u>\$ 21,442</u>
Liabilities and Equity		
Operating section		
Accounts payable and accruals	\$ 1,748	\$ 4,766
Surplus, operating section statement 2	<u>6,296</u>	<u>7,000</u>
	<u>8,044</u>	<u>11,766</u>
Equity in fixed assets (note 1(c))		
Balance, beginning of year	9,676	6,030
Add - additions charged to operations	<u>4,858</u>	<u>6,065</u>
	14,534	12,095
Less - depreciation	<u>2,907</u>	<u>2,419</u>
	<u>11,627</u>	<u>9,676</u>
Approved on behalf of the Board:	<u>\$ 19,671</u>	<u>\$ 21,442</u>
 Director		
 Director		

Statement of Financial Activities
Operating Section - General

	Year Ended	
	April 30	
	<u>1988</u>	<u>1987</u>
Support		
Membership fees and donations	\$ 53,600	\$ 65,950
Coin box project	2,450	1,583
Sale of publications and tapes	2,864	3,249
Rent and secretarial services	6,600	4,800
Interest and foreign exchange income	<u>755</u>	<u>730</u>
	<u>66,269</u>	<u>76,312</u>
Expenses		
Salaries and consulting fees	17,680	15,836
Publication costs - Journal (note 4)	14,444	24,828
Publication information - brochures, etc.	14,483	5,599
Postage	1,959	1,582
Office and general	2,922	3,055
Computer operating costs	2,029	1,046
Equipment purchases	4,858	6,065
Office rent and utilities	5,463	5,250
Telephone	2,385	1,937
Legal and audit	750	850
Corporate project (note 2)	<u>-</u>	<u>6,110</u>
	<u>66,973</u>	<u>72,158</u>
Net revenue (loss) for the year	(704)	4,154
Surplus, beginning of year	<u>7,000</u>	<u>2,846</u>
Surplus, end of year (note 3(a))	<u><u>\$ 6,296</u></u>	<u><u>\$ 7,000</u></u>

Notes to Financial Statements
April 30, 1988

1. Accounting policies:

The Society follows generally accepted accounting principles as applied to non-profit organizations which include the following:

- a) Membership fees and donations are taken into revenue in the fiscal year received.
- b) Inventory is recognized only on items purchased for resale and does not include supplies or reprints on hand.
- c) Fixed assets are charged to operations in the year acquired. However, to recognize the value of equipment on hand, the equipment is capitalized and depreciated on a 20% diminishing balance basis with an offset to "equity in fixed assets account".

2. Corporate project

During the latter part of April, 1986, \$6,000 was received in response to an appeal to Canadian Corporations for funds to reprint the four booklets to be supplied to secondary schools. The total cost of the project amounted to \$12,110 of which \$6,000 was expenses in 1986 and \$6,110 in 1987.

3. Public information:

- a) During 1987 fiscal year the Society received from the Muttart Foundation of Edmonton an \$8,000 grant to offset the cost of development of a video tape for "parenting education". To April 30, 1987, \$2,871 had been spent on the project with approximately \$5,000 to be spent in the next fiscal year.

Public Service Announcement

- b) A public service announcement has been completed at a net cost to the Society of \$3,000. Over \$45,000 of services are being donated by five companies to cover the total cost. It is expected that the Public Service announcement will be ready to air in July 1988.

Brochures

- c) New brochures were produced and printed at a cost of \$6,495 which are designed to interest new members. These brochures will be available for distribution commencing in May 1988.

4. Publication Costs Journal

Due to time constraints, the spring edition of "Empathic Parenting" was not issued until June 1988. It is the policy of the Canadian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children to print four issues per year and is the Directors' intention to correct the delay in the current year.

*We do not know,
From where we stand,
How far our shadows reach
That what we say
And what we do
Are lessons that we teach.*

Henry David Thoreau - 1854

This world is a place of business. What an infinite bustle! I am awaked almost every night by the panting of the locomotive. It interrupts my dreams. There is no sabbath. It would be glorious to see mankind at leisure for once. It is nothing but work, work, work. I cannot easily buy a blank-book to write thoughts in; they are commonly ruled for dollars and cents. An Irishman, seeing me making a minute in the fields, took it for granted that I was calculating my wages. If a man was tossed out of a window when an infant, and so made a cripple for life, or scared out of his wits by the Indians, it is regretted chiefly because he was thus incapacitated for—business! I think that there is nothing, not even crime, more opposed to poetry, to philosophy, ay, to life itself, than this incessant business.

There is a coarse and boisterous money-making fellow in the outskirts of our town, who is going to build a bank-wall under the hill along the edge of his meadow. The powers have put this into his head to keep him out of mischief, and he wishes me to spend three weeks digging there with him. The result will be that he will perhaps get some more money to hoard, and leave for his heirs to spend foolishly. If I do this, most will commend me as an industrious and hard-working man; but if I choose to devote myself to certain labors which yield more real profit, though but little money, they may be inclined to look on me as an idler. Nevertheless, as I do not need the police of meaningless labor to regulate me, and do not see anything absolutely praiseworthy in this fellow's

* A term used in surveying. Thoreau worked part-time as a surveyor.

*Excerpted from **Life Without Principle**, an essay included in the book **Walden and Other Writings**, by Henry David Thoreau, Bantam Classics 1981.*

*This essay, certainly the most important and the influential of Thoreau's shorter writings, delivered as a lecture as early as 1854 under the title **Getting a Living**. Later he repeated it several times as a lecture, sometimes under the title **What Shall It Profit**. During the last few months of his life he was preparing it for publication and it finally appeared in the **Atlantic Monthly** for October 1863, more than a year after his death.*

*Boxed quotes are from Thoreau's better known work **Walden**.*

undertaking any more than in many an enterprise of our own or foreign governments, however amusing it may be to him or them, I prefer to finish my education at a different school.

If a man walk in the woods for love of them half of each day, he is in danger of being regarded as a loafer; but if he spends his whole day as a speculator, shearing off those woods and making earth bald before her time, he is esteemed an industrious and enterprising citizen. As if a town had no interest in its forests but to cut them down!

Most men would feel insulted if it were proposed to employ them in throwing stones over a wall, and then in throwing them back, merely that they might earn their wages. But many are no more worthily employed now. For instance: just after sunrise, one summer morning, I noticed one of my neighbours walking beside his team, which was slowly drawing a heavy hewn stone swung under the axle, surrounded by an atmosphere of industry—his day's work begun, his brow commenced to sweat—a reproach to all sluggards and idlers—pausing abreast the shoulder of his oxen, and half turning around with a flourish of his merciful whip, while they gained their length on him. And I thought, such is the labor which the American Congress exists to protect—honest, manly toil—honest as the day is long—that makes his bread taste sweet, and keeps society sweet—which all men respect and have consecrated; one of the sacred band, doing the needful but irksome drudgery. Indeed, I felt a slight reproach, because I observed this from a window, and was not abroad and stirring about a similar business. The day

“Yet men have come to such a pass that they frequently starve, not for want of necessaries, but for want of luxuries. . .”

went by, and at evening I passed the yard of another neighbour, while he adds nothing to the common stock, and there I saw the stone of the morning lying beside a whimsical structure intended to adorn this Lord Timothy Dexter's premises, and the dignity forthwith departed from the teamster's labor, in my eyes. In my opinion, the sun was made to light worthier toil than this. I may add that his employer has since run off, in debt to a good part of the town, and, after passing through Chancery, has settled somewhere else, there to become once more a patron of the arts.

The ways by which you may get money almost without exception lead downward. To have done anything by which you earned money *merely* is to have been truly idle or worse. If the laborer gets no more than the wages which his employer pays him, he is cheated, he cheats himself. If you would get money as a writer or lecturer, you must be popular, which is to go down perpendicularly. Those services which the community will most readily pay for, it is most disagreeable to render. You are paid for being something less than a man. The state does not commonly reward a genius any more wisely. Even the poet laureate would rather not have to celebrate the accidents of royalty. He must be bribed with a pipe of wine; and perhaps another poet is called away from his muse to gauge that very pipe. As for my own business, even that kind of surveying

which I could do with most satisfaction my employers do not want. They would prefer that I should do my work coarsely and not too well, ay, not well enough. When I observe that there are different ways of surveying, my employer commonly asks which will give him the most land, not which is most correct. I once invented a rule for measuring cordwood, and tried to introduce it in Boston; but the measurer there told me that the sellers did not wish to have their wood measured correctly—that he was already too accurate for them, and therefore they commonly got their wood measured in Charlestown before crossing the bridge.

The aim of the laborer should be, not to get his living, to get “a good job,” but to perform well a certain work; and, even in a pecuniary sense, it would be economy for a town to pay its laborers so well that they would not feel that they were working for low ends, as for a livelihood merely, but for scientific, or even moral ends. Do not hire a man who does your work for money, but him who does it for love of it.

It is remarkable that there are few men so well employed, so much to their minds, but that a little money or fame would commonly buy them off from their present pursuit. I see advertisements for *active* young men, as if activity were the whole of a young man's capital. Yet I have been surprised when one has with confidence proposed to me, a grown man, to embark in some

“. . . a man is rich in proportion to the number of things which he can afford to let alone.”

"It is not enough to tell me that you worked hard for your gold. So does the Devil work hard."

enterprise of his, as if I had absolutely nothing to do, my life having been a complete failure hitherto. What a doubtful compliment this to pay me! As if he had met me halfway across the ocean beating up against the wind, but bound nowhere, and proposed to me to go along with him! If I did, what do you think the underwriters would say? No, no! I am not without employment at this stage of the voyage. To tell the truth, I saw an advertisement for able-bodied seamen, when I was a boy, sauntering in my native port, and as soon as I came of age I embarked.

The community has no bribe that will tempt a wise man. You may raise money enough to tunnel a mountain, but you cannot raise money enough to hire a man who is minding *his own* business. An efficient and valuable man does what he can, whether the community pay him for it or not. The inefficient offer their inefficiency to the highest bidder, and are forever expecting to be put into office. One would suppose that they were rarely disappointed.

Perhaps I am more than usually jealous with respect to my freedom. I feel that my connection with and obligation to society are still very slight and transient. Those slight labors which afford me a livelihood, and by which it is allowed that I am to some extent serviceable to my contemporaries, are as yet commonly a pleasure to me, and I am not often reminded that they are a necessity. So far I am successful. But I

foresee that if my wants should be much increased, the labor required to supply them would become a drudgery. If I should sell both my forenoons and afternoons to society, as most appear to do, I am sure that for me there would be nothing left worth living for. I trust that I shall never thus sell my birthright for a mess of pottage. I wish to suggest that a man may be very industrious, and yet not spend his time well. There is no more fatal blunderer than he who consumes the greater part of his life getting his living. All great enterprises are self-supporting. The poet, for instance, must feed his boilers with the shavings it makes. You must get your living by loving. But as it is said of the merchants that ninety-seven in a hundred fail, so the life of men generally, tried by this standard, is a failure, and bankruptcy may be surely prophesied.

Merely to come into the world the heir of a fortune is not to born, but to be stillborn, rather. To be supported by the charity of friends, or a government pension—provided you continue to breathe—by whatever fine synonyms you describe these relations, is to go into the almshouse. On Sundays the poor debtor goes to church to take an account of stock, and finds, of course, that his outgoes have been greater than his income. In the Catholic Church, especially, they go into chancery, make a clean confession, give up all, and think to start again. Thus amen will lie on their backs, talking about the fall of man, and

"While civilization has been improving our houses, it has not equally improved the men who are to inhabit them. It has created palaces, but it was not so easy to create noblemen and kings."

“The finest qualities of our nature, like the bloom on fruits, can be preserved only by the most delicate handling. Yet we do not treat ourselves nor one another thus tenderly.”

never make an effort to get up.

As for the comparative demand which men make on life, it is an important difference between two, that the one is satisfied with a level success, that his marks can all be hit by point-blank shots, but the other, however low and unsuccessful his life may be, constantly elevates his aims, though at a very slight angle to the horizon. I should much rather be the last man, though, as the Orientals say, “Greatness doth not approach him who is forever looking down; and all those who are looking high are growing poor.”

It is remarkable that there is little or nothing to be remembered written on the subject of getting a living; how to make getting a living not merely honest and honorable, but altogether inviting

and glorious; for if *getting* a living is not so, then living is not. One would think, from looking at literature, that this question had never disturbed a solitary individual’s musings. Is it that men are too much disgusted with their experience to speak of it? The lesson of value which money teaches, which the Author of the Universe has taken so much pains to teach us, we are inclined to skip altogether. As for the means of living, it is wonderful how indifferent men of all classes are about it, even reformers, so called—whether they inherit, or earn, or steal it. I think that Society has done nothing for us in this respect, or at least has undone what she has done. Cold and hunger seem more friendly to my nature than those methods which men have adopted and advise to ward them off. . . □

Some very disturbing changes...

Childbirth Education Has Changed in the Past Twelve Years!

by Beverly Herman

The following are the observations of a childbirth educator and volunteer as she looks back over twelve years of involvement in the childbirth education movement.

The couples who attend class today —
Expect a fast, easy labor
Look forward to having a child rather than a “birth experience”
Anticipate having *no* pain
Exhibit less nurturing behaviors
Have more faith in technology and drugs than the physiological process of labor
Show more interest in the form of the body/breasts than function (giving birth/breastfeeding)
Seem disinterested in relaxation and breathing — in many classes, couples talk and laugh through relaxation period
Want to spend less time in labor
Want to spend less time in labor rehearsals; they simply *will not* participate
Register late for classes — pediatrician T. Berry Brazelton has observed that women do not have time to “bond” with their pregnancy.
Express a commitment that “this baby is not going to change our lives”
Exhibit behaviors of the “Superwoman Syndrome”
Have high expectations, especially among older (thirty-plus) professionals, for a “super baby”
Have made up their minds to have an epidural
Relegate birth to professionals (e.g. physicians)

Worship technology; with childbirth education status quo, fathers don't understand why women would do “that” (i.e. experience birth without medical or with minimal obstetrical intervention); men don't want the support/nurturing role — would rather delegate it
Could Odent be right in his observation that birth belongs to/with women?
Feel that a cesarean section is okay
Believe that flexibility in birthing represents “pushing natural childbirth” or “smacks of the seventies”
Are extremely conscious of media — teaching aids must be new and glossy regardless of the appropriateness for teaching
Appear to have a longer maturation period — prolonged schooling then career which leads to delayed marriage
Have not gone without, i.e. have not had parents who experienced World War II or the Great Depression; experienced the social turmoil/commitment of Viet Nam; activism in the seventies; experienced inflation/job loss six to seven years ago
Espouse the HMOs conservative approach: *I would let you , but if Dr. X delivers. . .*
See value in information only if it is paid for, i.e. “Parenting Classes” versus new

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mothers' groups; certified lactation consultants versus LaLeche League
Expect the professionalization of what was once mutually shared women's wisdom
Rely on "experts"
Express a backlash towards "natural" childbirth/childbirth reform/women's health movement
Reject the mothering role — the paid

professional role is more important
Are returning to work three to four weeks postpartum
Deny that anything was dehumanizing about a high tech birth experience — "the only way to have a baby is with an epidural"
Show a lack of willingness to share or invest themselves in other couples
Have an extreme distaste repugnance for the pregnant body. □

International Childbirth Education Association

Canadian Regional Director:

Lisa Klaehn, 61 Ashgrove Ave., Brantford Ontario N2R 6E3

ICEA unites individuals who support family-centered maternity care (FCMC) and believe in freedom of choice based on knowledge of alternatives in order to:

- emphasize education and preparation for childbearing and breastfeeding;
- increase public awareness of current findings related to childbearing;
- encourage individualized care with minimal medical intervention;
- promote development of safe, low-cost alternatives in childbirth which recognize rights and responsibilities of all involved.

ICEA promotes these goals by publishing the *International Journal of Childbirth Education*; sponsoring international conventions, province/state/national meetings and sharing days; publishing books and pamphlets concerning childbearing; providing a wide selection of books and other resource materials through the ICEA Book-centre; fostering resource committees which address a variety of topics related to childbearing; offering the ICEA Teacher Certification Program; developing position statements on critical childbearing issues; and working with other organizations to further FCMC.

Preparation for childbirth is provided by individual members and member groups of ICEA. It includes information about the importance of prenatal care and nutrition; physical and emotional changes which occur during pregnancy, labor, and postpartum; health care alternatives available to the childbearing family; medical and emotional advantages of prepared childbirth and breastfeeding; techniques which aid in making labor and birth more comfortable with as little intervention as possible; importance of participation and support by the father and other family members throughout the childbearing year; and guidelines for successful breastfeeding.

ICEA is a non-profit, primarily volunteer organization that has no financial ties to the health care delivery system. Since its formation in 1960, ICEA members have remained autonomous, establishing their own policies and creating their own programs. There are no membership requirements for individuals other than a commitment to family-centered maternity care and the philosophy of freedom of choice based on knowledge of alternatives. □

Medical birth and midwifery...

The practice of midwifery dates back to the beginning of human life. Its history parallels the history of the human race and its function antedates any record we have of medicine as an applied science. To deny its right to exist is to take issue with the eternal verities of life itself. (Charlotte Hanington, Chief Superintendent of the Victorian Order of Nurses, 1923)

The name 'midwife' for me carries a certain odium, because I never hear it when it doesn't call to my mind a picture of Sairey Gamp and Betsy Prig, untrained, unkempt, gin soaked harridans unfit for the work they were supposed to do, and a menace to the health of any woman whom they might attend. (William B. Hendry, M.D., Obstetrician, Chairman of the Maternal Mortality Committee of the Canadian Medical Association, 1931)

These two statements give an indication of how long the debate about midwifery has had a place in Canada and are an accurate reflection of how different the positions in the debate were from one another. Charlotte Hanington was speaking to a large assembly of influential women, the delegates to the 1923 annual meeting of the National Council of Women. William Hendry was speaking to an equally large assembly of influential doctors, most of whom were male, at

the 1931 annual meeting of the Canadian Medical Association. In these two settings, the views were almost perfectly polarized into their appropriate gender groups.

Of course the two massed polarities never actually met in one place to confront one another. And in some ways the view from outside is rather misleading: in real life, the sides were not so clearly defined. Throughout the history of the debate, midwives had a few loyal and persistent friends in the

Excerpted from A History of Midwifery in Canada, Appendix 1 of the Report of the Task Force on the Implementation of Midwifery in Ontario 1987.

This vision held that childbirth belonged to the community

ranks of Canadian doctors. Conversely, some of the most convinced and effective crusaders for medical childbirth were also members of the National Council of Women.

The story of midwifery in Ontario, and in Canada in general, is the story of a highly developed birth culture, surprisingly similar in both native and settler populations, that was gradually eclipsed by expanding medical control over childbirth. Modern obstetrics seems to have made very little accommodation with the popular birth culture. The guiding principle of obstetrics, as we shall see, was the clean sweep. In order to justify this sweeping motion, it was necessary to promote the view that traditional childbirth was dirty and potentially dangerous. Consequently, mortality figures have always played an important part in the midwifery debate. This appendix will examine the relevant mortality data of this century. There is a caution to the reader, however, not to take these figures too seriously—even the ones that seem to prove conclusively that midwifery was far safer than medical birth. . .

. . . One thing that is clear from many different mortality surveys, as we will see, is that the progression from the popular birth culture to modern obstetrics took place during a time when, for more than three decades, medical birth in hospital was statistically more dangerous than birth accomplished at home in the traditional manner.

The popular notion that midwives yielded to modern obstetrics because it was shown to be safer is therefore in error.

How was it possible for a relatively small number of people committed to medical hegemony over childbirth to erase a birth culture that, as Charlotte

Hanington asserted, had endured since the beginning of time—and which was still an intimate part of the fabric of community life in all parts of Canada at the turn of this century? It is sometimes asserted that it was the supposed illiteracy of midwives, as well as their political naivete, that led to their defeat. But this supposes that midwives were in fact a group who could be corralled and led away. This notion gives an inaccurate view of the birth culture. As we shall see, in most communities across Canada where birth was not handled by a doctor, women helped one another. In much of the country, birth was regarded as an event that was central to the life of the community, intimately a part of women's culture — and midwifery was thus rarely a trade or a profession in any sense that was parallel to the professional ambitions of doctors. To ask why the midwives were not able to form themselves into an enduring profession in Canada, then, is to ask the wrong question. It is not that midwives — those many neighbour women who helped one another in childbirth — lacked the imagination or the energy to build a profession that could challenge the doctors. It is that their imagination, and their culture, gave them a different vision. **This vision held that childbirth belonged to the community**, and was rarely a career. In the context of the traditional birth culture, an organized movement to shape childbirth into a medical event required working across a broad front, as we will see, to alter the vision with which whole communities saw childbirth.

This appendix examines the popular birth culture and the rather complex reasons for its disappearance. . . □

Birth 1980

by *RICHARD ALDRED*

we seem to place increasing weight on purely physical situations in disregard of the whole human context in which human affairs take place.

Our latest child was born at home, but the claim for home-birth was not won until after several months of discussion with the doctor. The medical view was that risk of bleeding argued for hospital birth, where physical well-being could be best guaranteed. Our point was that emotional and psychic factors were more important in the appraising of where the child should be born.

Fortunately matters resolved in our favour and so the new-born was able to be greeted by the family within minutes of birth. This moment was the climax of the nine months. Our visitor to earth was thus received into the home which would be her first residence on earth and welcomed by those who were to be her first intimate associates in her early years.

The issue raised by our experience is this. How far should considerations of physical safety be the overriding factor in a decision for or against home births? I raise the question because it seems to me to raise far bigger issues than it may first appear. In many fields, medical, educational and other social spheres, we seem to place increasing weight on purely physical situations in disregard of the whole human context in which human affairs take place. Thus in education, reading and writing at the earliest possible age are taken for granted as a 'good thing', without deeper regard to whether such activity is best suited to

those age groups. 'O' level at fifteen or sixteen years is regarded too often without question as desirable in itself, independent of its suitability. In medicine one feels that drugs are prescribed because we know they will work. But what else do they do? We live in times where a prevailing attitude of mind is to seek measurable data to answer all questions. The intangible world of human feeling, because unmeasurable, is too often ignored. In our efforts to secure our physical well-being we are losing our humanity, because a human is so much more than a physical body. This may be a commonplace remark. My point is that we know it, but ignore it in practice.

To return to our birth. The efforts over many years have removed the risk from childbirth; frequent check-ups, sophisticated measuring devices, universal availability of medical services offer every mother the security and peace of a "safe" birth. All praise to the toil of midwives and doctors; we are in their debt.

However, so over-riding is the safety factor that other considerations receive scant attention, and these I wish to write about.

A home, not a hospital, is the right place for a human being to be received into earthly life. I use these words because a birth is more than a physical

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event and whether home is as safe or convenient or suitable as a hospital is beside the point. Just as the womb is the home of the unborn and the placenta its source of nourishment, so is the home the womb of the new-born and the mother its source of nourishment. To move a child from hospital to home is like a change of country. Without being sentimental, one can say the home is unique, the place in life where a person can be uniquely himself. Physical comparisons with hospital wards are irrelevant. The psychic factors make a home unique.

The Psychic Factor

Not only the baby, but parents and children, have a human need for togetherness at the birth time. The home is where our children live. Have they not the right to see their newborn brother or sister and to share in the excitement of the labour? I do not advocate their presence in the birth room — far from it — but the whole atmosphere of the home is special at this time, and they have their part to play. Why should their mother disappear to a hospital — where sick people go — and only return two days later with the new child? This moment of separation seems to me psychologically inhumane. Except in cases of necessity the family should remain unbroken.

Home is profoundly an adjunct or off-shoot of one's self. The familiar objects, people, habits, temperaments,

routines, sights and sounds set a person at ease beyond the level of any unfamiliar place, no matter how attractive. A prime condition for satisfactory birth is a relaxed state of mind. I understand that the apparatus of maternity hospitals disorientates as many mothers as it may reassure. For my wife the appearance of the hospital ward was a nightmare. For her the familiar bedside, a calm voice and sympathetic help were the only balms she needed.

Did not the fear of something going wrong affect her state of mind? No. Previous experience of midwives had been excellent. We had complete trust in their competency. My wife had prepared for her latest birth by attending the National Childbirth Trust's course for expectant mothers and, as the duty midwife was a teacher of such courses, we had the happy bonus of a mutual attitude towards childbirth. Thus there were no queries or arguments about the use of pethedine, which was not used nor wanted. Secondly, my wife trusted her own body or, if you like, had faith in nature. How many women do? Trust builds confidence which induces the relaxed frame of mind needed for successful birth.

The need for privacy is a psychic necessity at such times. The particular hospital could provide only a line of cubicles. The home, it seems to me, has unique capacity to offer the personal and intimate privacy so essential at this

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time. Home is where a person can be him or herself unrestrictedly. Unless home conditions are distressing, a hospital can at best only substitute for these conditions.

Let us turn our attention to the animal. Does not a cat seek out a secret place for its litter? How often do cows try to wander off to calve alone? Do not most human babies enter life in the quiet of the night? Birth is an individual affair. To assign it to a labour ward in a sort of mass production line violates our instincts of the human. In the crusade for physical safety the deeper human need for privacy can easily be obliterated. A birth is a secret of nature and needs respecting as such. When one puts a premium on physical conditions one is liable to lose contact with more profound human values.

An example from another field may illustrate this point. Arguments a few years ago about the relative advantages of breast or bottle feeding stressed the food value of constituted milk and the fact that you know by measure what the baby was receiving. But that is not the only consideration. Feeding baby is so much more than a physical event. The breast-fed baby is drinking his whole environment, milk, the mother's touch, her warmth, her emotional state and her love (or lack of it). A bottle and a cow are no substitutes for the human.

We live in an age which says, in effect, "that which cannot be measured does not exist." The physical body can be weighed and measured; the emotional states less easily, and psychic well-being hardly at all. But they do exist and their effects are in fact more penetrating and decisive often than any physical, measurable element can be. A doctor at

a new hospital in Germany, where new concepts of healing are integral to the approach to health, was asked, "Do you use sedatives for such and such an operation?" His reply was, "Relatively few. The quality of the particular nurses is such that the patient is put sufficiently at ease to cope without them." This illustrates the point I am making that we must see the human in a whole context of physical, emotional and 'psychic' or 'religious' or 'spiritual' levels. Over-emphasis on the physical aspects and neglect of the other violates our humanity. In fact, the ignoring of non-physical fact, makes work on the physical level more difficult, but in many fields their distortion of values seems to me the common sickness of the age.

As a post-script — the temptation is to say epitaph — on our modern emphasis on physical factors, one discovers that a significant number of new-born babies do not see their mothers for hours, days, or even weeks. "The mother needs rest," or "The baby is too ill" are two obvious arguments used for justifying physical separation of mother and child. But the child's future emotional stability depends as much on bodily contact with mother in those first hours of life, as its physical life depends on air and milk.

The time will come when to deprive the child of the mother's breast at birth will be seen as indefensible as starving the child of air or food. In the latter case the effects are quickly seen. In the former they are not, because we are losing an understanding of the subtle human factors which, though decisive, are immeasurable and therefore dismissed as absurd. "Not by bread alone . . . □"

PARENTS SENSIBLES

Journal de la Société Canadienne
pour la Prévention de la Cruauté envers les Enfants

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Un Refrain Qui Hante

ce qui nous arrive dans nos premières années a un effet radical (a la racine) sur toutes nos expériences ultérieures. . . nous aimons parce que nous avons été en première aimés. . . nous ne pouvons pas aimer parce qu'on ne nous a pas aimé, au début. . . comme on a agit envers nous lorsque nous étions petits enfants, ainsi nous agissons envers nous-mêmes et les autres pour le reste de notre vie; avec tendresse et soutien, négligence et cruauté, ou un entre-deux. . . peu d'entre nous ont une moyenne de frappe de trois sur dix lorsqu'il est question de se comporter avec tendresse et de soutien envers soi-même. . . ayant grandi dans cette société industrialisée signifie que chacun de nous est blessé de façon encore incomprise. . .

la blessure centrale de la jeune enfance est l'abandon. . . le contexte de la vie dans les premières années c'est le monde des relations ou de son absence. . . les soins maternels n'ont pas d'appui dans notre société. . . à qui'ils représentent (la "nurturing", la communauté, les liens,) représente un danger parce qu'ils nous rappellent notre dépendance et des limites de ceux de qui nous dépendons. . . si vous avez manqué d'amour sans pouvoir en obtenir, il n'est plus possible de retourner au passé pour en obtenir. . .

les soins maternels sont la responsabilité des hommes et des femmes. . . le but ultime "d'assez" de soins maternels est de faire ressortir de l'enfant la confiance-au-coeur. . . pour les enfants, le moyen est le message. . . et le moyen de produire la confiance-au-coeur c'est le temps. . . la disponibilité, la présence, infiniment répétée. . . le véhicule de cette tâche, de la part des parents, c'est la présence attentif d'être activement disponible quand le besoin est là, et passivement disponible autrement. . . je répète, le passé nous hante. . . de façon qu'on refuse de croire.

Kent T. Hoffman

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Recognizing that the capacity to give and receive trust, affection and empathy is fundamental to being human.

Knowing that all of us suffer the consequences when children are raised in a way that makes them affectionless and violent, and;

Realizing that for the first time in History we have definite knowledge that these qualities are determined by the way a child is cared for in the very early years.

CREDO



WE BELIEVE THAT:

- The necessity that every new human being develop the capacity for trust, affection and empathy dictates that potential parents re-order their priorities with this in mind.
- Most parents are willing and able to provide their children with the necessary loving empathic care, given support from others, appropriate understanding of the task and the conviction of its absolute importance.
- It is unutterably cruel to permanently maim a human being by failing to provide this quality of care during the first three years of life.

THERE IS AN URGENCY THEREFORE TO:

- Re-evaluate all our institutions, traditions and beliefs from this perspective.
- Oppose and weaken all forces which undermine the desire or ability of parents to successfully carry out a task which ultimately affects us all.
- Support and strengthen all aspects of family and community life which assist parents to meet their obligation to each new member of the human race.