



WINTER '83

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“We must be willing to face the hard reality that preventing child abuse and neglect is possible only when we are ready to attack its sources in the fabric of our society and culture, rather than merely provide social and medical services to its victims...”



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

Unwanted and Unloved Children

...But isn't it true that even if many children are unplanned and even unwanted, parents soon adjust to their coming and welcome the event after it has become a fact of life? Now I don't have any statistics or research to back me up, but I do have the experience of living for 41 years — 17 as a social worker — that tells me this just isn't so. In poor homes, in wealthy homes, in their own homes, in foster homes, in reform schools, and in treatment centres, there are thousands upon thousands of unwanted and unloved children in Canada. And I want to make it very clear that I'm not just talking about the thousands of children that come to the attention of Children's Aid Societies, Guidance Clinics, and Juvenile Courts of the country. I'm also talking about the thousands of unwanted and unloved children we don't pay much attention to because they don't rebel against our rule and our requirements of them. They internalize and suppress their feelings. Very often we think of them as model children, especially if they excel at school. Of course they're not lively and spontaneous children.

But whether they rebel or conform, unwanted and unloved children usually share the same emotions: they're well acquainted with what it is to be resentful, suspicious, and fearful; and sometimes the emotion they know best is hatred, hatred of themselves, hatred of others, hatred of the whole world...

David Critchley

see pages 12 - 19

The Canadian Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children

**“TO PREVENT THE PERMANENT EMOTIONAL DAMAGE
CAUSED BY INADEQUATE CHILD CARE”**

- The basic premise of the CSPCC is that the worst of all possible cruelties is to inflict permanent emotional damage on another human being.
- Given the evidence that such permanent emotional damage can be relatively easily inflicted during the very early years of life, our concern is with ignorance of, or indifference to, the emotional needs of very young children.
- By permanent emotional damage we do not mean only the psychological illnesses of adults which are recognized as having their roots in early childhood. More importantly we mean the (as yet) less recognizable and measurable deficient capacities for trust, empathy and affection.
- Better preparation for parenthood, greater concern for proper care during pregnancy, obstetrical practises which facilitate bonding, higher priority for the empathic care of infants, equality for women, and decreased emphasis on consumerism and materialism, are examples of such preventive measures.
- Increasing the number of members in the Society and the readership of the Journal are at present the principal means by which the CSPCC is working to unite those who share a concern for the importance of the Society's objectives.

Annual Associate Membership \$10.00
Annual Supporting Membership \$25.00
Annual Sustaining Membership \$100.00
Annual Endowing Membership \$250.00
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On receipt of your membership fee, your Membership Certificate, Official Receipt for income tax purposes and first copy of the Journal, beginning with the current issue, will be sent to you.

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Quotation on front cover is from testimony before the U.S. Senate Subcommittee on Children and Youth by David Gil, Professor of Social Policy, Brandeis University.

Letters

WANTEDNESS DEHUMANIZES?

Dear Dr. Barker:

I am writing to challenge certain points made by the Rev. Vernon Kimball in his letter to the Winter '81 Journal of the CSPCC.

I agree we are not living in an ideal world, but that must not become the excuse for abdicating responsibility for our fellow man. There will always be unplanned and unwanted pregnancies, indeed, unwanted people of all shapes and sizes. How are we, as caring members of the community going to deal with that? Are we going to be truly compassionate and lend our energies to supporting and caring for these distressed women and their babies? Or will we slip into a facile sentimentality that condones the killing of human beings as an expression of compassion. True compassion seeks to alleviate suffering. It does not introduce death as a solution. And it most certainly has nothing to do with the inherent violence of abortion.

The Rev. Kimball decries the abuse of the uncared for (though not necessarily the unwanted) child without addressing the culture of poverty that so often leads to this abuse. Abortion as a solution to social ills erodes our humanity, enabling us to deny our responsibility to each other and to action. It is feeling a collective responsibility for the unwanted and the weak among us that strengthens our humanity and fuels our need to help.

"As a Christian", he feels abortion would be wrong for his wife because he is willing to share in the responsibility of caring for the child. "As a Christian" I should think he would also be willing to share in the care of his fellow man. He need only look to Mother Teresa and her people for a model to begin.

Finally, Rev. Kimball places great emphasis on wanting the child. And yet, wanting the child has nothing to do with the intrinsic value of that child's life. Granting the child the right to life on the basis of his wantedness, objectifies and thus dehumanizes him. As an object, the child becomes property to be disposed of at will. It seems obvious that should the child be allowed to be born this mentality will prevail after birth. The child-as-object mentality is rampant within our society and is surely one reason for the establishment of the CSPCC. →

Special thanks to Louise Després Jones for contributing the illustrations on pages 20, 24, and 28; Julie Weatherstone, pages 5, 6, 7, 9, and 10.

Letters

It is all too easy to support abortion as a means of curing social ills. If it worked, if there were fewer and fewer abused and neglected children, then perhaps one might accept it. But it doesn't work. Abortion is just one more act of violence perpetrated against the innocent. It kills the unborn and it wounds the living.

I would very much like to become a member of the CSPCC. Your credo speaks to my deepest concerns about children in our society. But I must know your position on abortion. I feel confident you must condemn abortion for the violence it wages against children and society as a whole, for without this condemnation, the CSPCC has no credibility. I look forward to your reply and my membership in your organization.

Yours sincerely,
Nancy Hall Lang
Winnipeg, Man.

ABORTION - THE LESSER OF TWO EVILS *(Reprinted from Vol. 4 Iss. 1)*

Dear Editor:

...I am sure all would agree that in an ideal world and where conception occurs as the result of a loving desire to create and care for new life a miscarriage would be a great tragedy and an abortion would be an outrage. But we do not live in an ideal world.

Society today is a mixture of good and evil. Alongside those who wish to create and care for life, who see conception as a gift from God and who anticipate parenthood with joy although it may involve much effort and sacrifice there are many others who see pregnancy in a different light.

Women who already have several children may see pregnancy not as a gift from God but as a failure of imperfect birth control methods, a drain upon already inadequate resources and a burden that will have to be paid in part by children already born who will enjoy less of their mothers' limited time and resources. Single women may see pregnancy with shame, guilt and uncertainty and a burden which if it is born at all will be regarded as a punishment rather than a blessing from God. And it will be a punishment they will bear alone since male members of society are not involved in the process of child bearing. Some single women who bring children into the world may receive help from a strong and supportive family to help them through their difficulties. Most will not. Unless they immediately give up their children for adoption they will have a long, lonely and hard struggle ahead.

I have met many single mothers living with their children in small, impoverished apartments. They lived in conditions no parent would wish for a daughter and grandchild. Many of these mothers were inadequate for the responsibilities they had. The children grew up stunted physically, emotionally and spiritually. Some of them became wards of the state and were put in the hard to adopt category. In the care of the Children's Aid Society they reached adulthood without ever having known love or emotional security. There are thousands of such children in each province, a sad commentary on society's failure to face up to the facts of life. Invariably we learn that young people who crowd our courts and fill our costly prisons were the products of unwanted pregnancies in inadequate homes.

As a Christian I feel that an abortion would be wrong for my wife but then I am willing to share with her in the responsibility for caring for new life we create. But I think it would be wrong for me to try and force my views, religious or otherwise, on all women unless it can be shown that the practice of abortions is having an adverse effect on the majority of the population. Who am I as a man, and even as a leader in the Christian community, to say that a woman has no right to decide whether or not she will continue alone with a pregnancy or to deny her the right as a free and responsible person to decide what is the right thing to do with her body?

Until society is willing to provide homes for the many thousands of unwanted children who presently are wards of the state, until sexual behaviour becomes chiefly an expression of mature love and until all lives are treated as sacred then compassion will require abortion as the lesser of two evils...

Rev. Vernon Kimball
Buckingham, Quebec

ARE YOU IN FAVOUR OF KILLING OR MAIMING?

Dear Dr. Barker:

Many thanks for your letter.

Before thinking further about your proposals and requests, I would like to know where your organization stands on abortion.

I am convinced, and I think the evidence is in to show it is true, that since the liberalization of abortion, we have much more child-beating, spouse-beating, etc.

Please do explain to me, very clearly, what attitude your organization takes towards the killing of unborn children.

All good wishes.

Sincerely,
Rev. Paul Marx, O.S.B.
Washington, D.C.

The CSPCC has no official position on abortion. As President, and Editor of the Journal, I find the opinion expressed in the last paragraph of Rev. Kimball's letter fairly approximates my own. The choice is between two evils: fetal homicide and the high risk of condemning a new human being to a life of endless emotional torment. E.T.B.

CHRISTMAS FOR TOMORROW'S CHILDREN

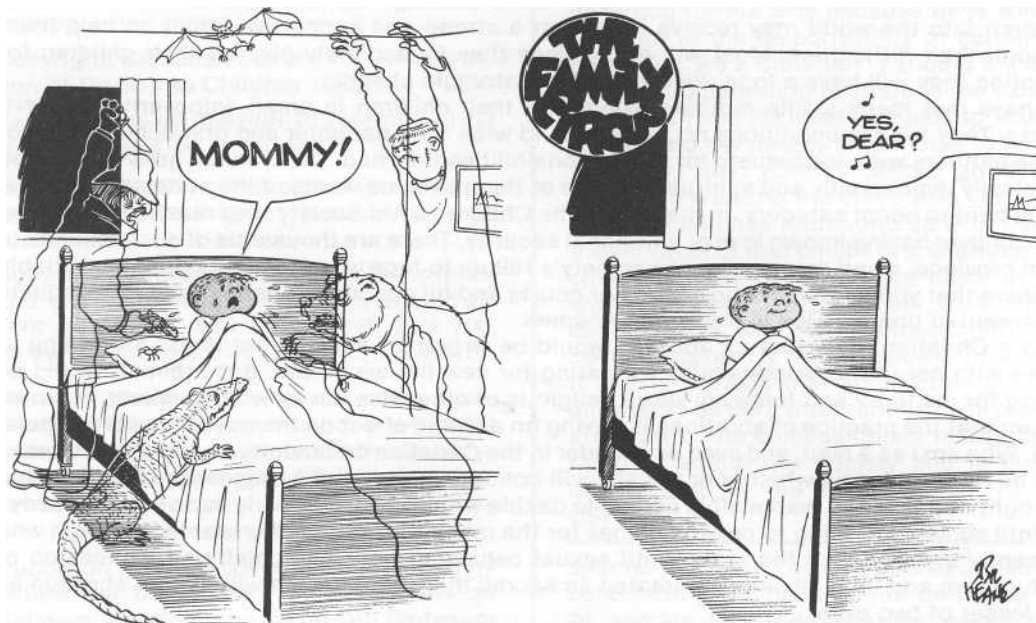
Dear CSPCC:

Best wishes to you all in this holiday season. I enclose a \$10.00 cheque and will try to send more early in the new year.

This year I decided, why send out Christmas cards with the price of postage today? Instead, I am giving you this small donation, and if any of my friends say "Where's my Christmas card?", I can tell them what I have done, and encourage them to do the same.

Keep up the good work. God bless you all.

Sincerely,
Sherry L. Douglas
Longford Mills, Ontario



The Family Circus, Reprinted courtesy of The Register and Tribune Syndicate, Inc.



THE GROWTH OF HUMAN BONDS

Interest in postpartum parental behaviour has been heightened by the discovery — over the past 40 years or so — that even unremembered infant experiences may have a dramatic effect on character growth, that infancy may be a “critical period” in personality development. The quality of early parenting has thus taken on new significance for those interested in the optimal development of children and the prevention of emotional disorder. And, since the quality of that parenting has appeared to be deeply rooted in the kind of relationship a baby and his

parents have, we have become observant about what parents and their babies do with each other from the beginning.

Only recently, however, have we begun to come to grips with how it is that babies and their parents get on together. If parental love of the newborn were the automatic, perhaps even hormonally inspired, overture from active parent to passive infant that we have always assumed it to be, then such early and extended contact would be unnecessary. Parental love would flow “naturally” to the baby, whenever baby happened to be around.

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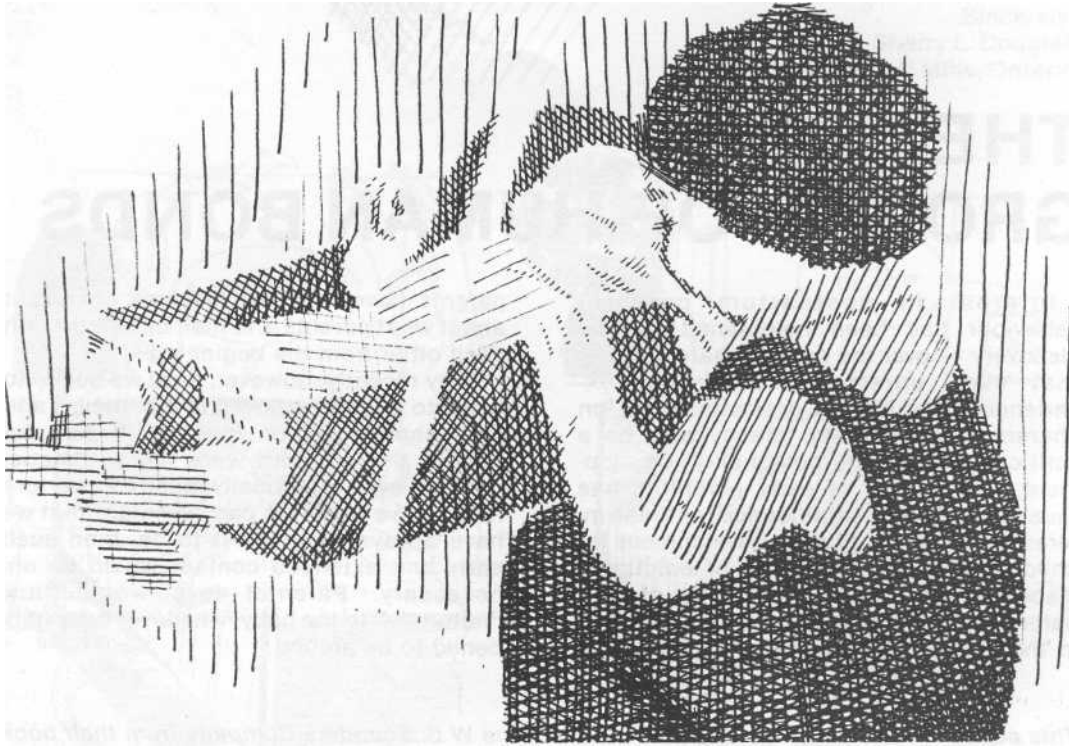
NORMAL DEVELOPMENT OF EARLY SOCIAL RELATIONS

The Process of Lovemaking

Observations of mothers and fathers with their newborns,^{1 2 3} and careful listening to the reports of new parents about their earliest experiences with their babies,^{4 5 6 7} reveal that the "falling in love" of latency and early adolescence may constitute a remarkably apt analogy to growth of attachments between parents and infants. It appears, in other words, as if we learn to love our babies, and our babies learn to love us. The process is as vulnerable, and as subject to disappointment, ambivalence, fear and regression, as any human growth process.

A couple of discoveries have been critical to the construction of this view of the development of social relations in infancy. Of extreme importance has been the research literature of the past 20 years, which has demonstrated the reflexive, visual, auditory and affective capabilities of the human neonate. Armed with these research data, one can begin to consider each particular infant (behaviour, cueing systems, irritability, responsiveness, reflexive precocity, attractiveness) as part of the equation in the caregiver-infant dyad.

Another discovery critical to this view of the growth of human love bonds is that not all parents and babies get on well together. These serious caregiver-infant relationship struggles were overlooked by health care professionals partly because we were not clinically sophisticated enough to know what it looked like when a baby and a parent were failing to attach to one another. Words such as "spoiled" and "colicky" were invented so we could talk at arms' length about babies who were struggling to communicate with us. We had made too many assumptions about the "innate" capabilities of parents to love their babies and were left wondering why parents were messing up so often, why they were failing to take our advice, and why our advice was so often failing to help when it was taken. We found ourselves outraged at the child abuse statistics, angry at parents who were finding excuses not to visit their sick newborns in the neonatal intensive care nursery, dismayed when mothers had obvious preferences for one twin over the other. And we did, finally, the most constructive and scientifically useful thing we had done in some time — we began to watch and to listen.



Children can teach us much about watching and listening.

Falling in love (human attachment) requires frequent and regular interaction between parents and their baby.



We began to observe that parents who were having trouble with their babies — who were ambivalent about taking baby home with them from the hospital, who were bringing baby back to the hospital with too frequent diarrhea and complaints of chronic feeding problems — were also not talking about their babies' smiles or their babies' visual discriminative capacity as parents were who had thriving relationships with their babies. When we watched the troubled families, we noticed that sometimes the babies really were different, they really failed to smile or to respond with the rhythmic body movement and affect that is recognized as typical. Sometimes these appropriate infant behaviours were present, at least for a while, but the parents seemed unable to notice or to be touched,

and the infant grew less responsive over time.

It is now apparent that parents are affected deeply by the particular qualities of their babies, by the circumstances of the pregnancy and delivery and the postnatal period, and by the elements of their own character brought to childbearing and rearing. Human attachments can now be seen as something parents accomplish cooperatively with their babies. The growth of love bonds between an infant and his primary caregiver is now viewed as a delicate and vulnerable interplay of elements that each have an impact on the nature of the relationship and, as a secondary effect, the chances for the baby's optimal development.

SPOILING ISN'T WHAT IT USED TO BE

Silvia Bell and Mary Ainsworth have conducted one of the most organized studies into maternal responsiveness to infant crying while doing longitudinal research with 26 mother-infant pairs.' They conclude: "Those infants who are conspicuous for fussing and crying after the first few months of life and who fit the stereotype of the 'spoiled child' are those whose mothers have ignored their cries or have delayed long in responding to them... Infants whose mothers have given them relatively much tender and affectionate holding in the earliest months of life are content with surprisingly little physical contact by the end of the first year; although they enjoy being held, when put down they are happy to move off into independent exploration. In contrast, those held for relatively brief periods during the early months tend to be ambivalent about contact by the end of the first year; they do not respond positively when held but yet protest when put down and do not turn readily to independent activity... In short, those infants in our sample who are fussy, demanding and difficult to control are those whose mothers have been unresponsive to signals and generally insensitive or interfering in their efforts to mold their babies to their routines, wishes and expectations."

Dynamics of Attachment

Human attachment is an emotional link created between two individuals when they invest emotional energy in each other. Among the most obvious and significant features of the growth of love bonds between a caregiver and a baby is the tendency for an attached caregiver to be both physically and socially available to the baby. Because the relationship is a reciprocal one, the caregiver's behaviour is oriented toward increasing the frequency of such experiences as feeling competent, being smiled at, being nuzzled, being "picked out" by the baby's differential response. This tendency toward increasing social availability and physical proximity behaviours in the caregiver has a number of ramifications for the caregiver-infant relationship.

First of all, there is a circular effect in being near to, and responsive to, the baby. For example, infant crying as a signal tends to decrease over the second quarter of the first year of life when the caregiver's response to early crying is consistently prompt. At the same time that the frequency and duration of crying episodes are decreasing, there is an increase in other

social signals that are thought of as less noxious, and that are finally replaced by direct communications focused specifically on the caregiver. Being responsive to the baby has the tendency, then, to reduce an infant behaviour (crying) that is often upsetting to a new parent and often difficult to understand, and to replace it with a more enjoyable and clearer set of communications. Even during the immediate postpartum period, the physical proximity and social availability of the mother made possible by rooming-in allows a more consistently prompt maternal response to infant crying and a concomitant decrease in such crying. Neonates have shown a tendency to stop crying in less than five seconds when the mother responds within 90 seconds of the commencement of a crying episode. An average of 50 seconds of maternal attention is required, however, to soothe a newborn left to cry more than 90 seconds.' An interesting side effect of this reduction in infant crying and the development of other social signals between baby and caregiver is the tendency for mothers who have experienced the phenomenon to report feeling more self-confident and to call for medical advice less frequently.⁵ Ear-

ly lovemaking behaviour between caregiver and infant, then, has a self-perpetuating nature: behaviour that has need-gratifying qualities is repeated by both parents, and they soon develop remarkably sophisticated and specific means for signalling their needs even though the kinds of needs that are met may change substantially over time.

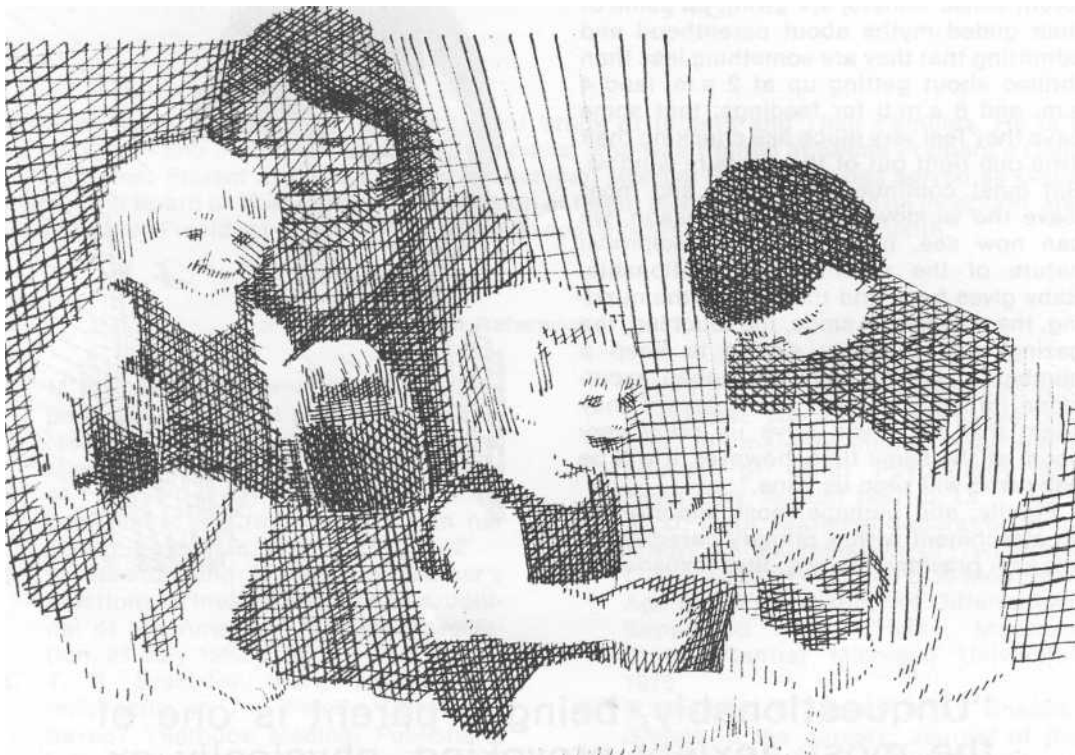
Physical proximity and social availability on the caregiver's part create more opportunities for gratification (of both caregiver and infant). However, proximal and responsive parental behaviours have other ramifications for early child development. An infant's capacity for self-regulation and his capacity to control or organize behaviour and to gain a mastery of events and of developmental challenges are deeply rooted in the predictability, stability and consistency of his early experience.

There appears to be a link between the acquisition of object constancy — a critical milestone in development and a preliminary to other achievements — and the infant's experience with response expectations and

with predictability in caregiving. Interestingly, the capacity of the child to conceive of the existence of things when he cannot see them (object constancy) is part and parcel of learning the concept of "other" and then the concern of "self". When the human infant is able to distinguish himself from people and things around him, he is able to slowly move away, with the assurance that the world will remain intact even when he does not keep an eye on it. Such a child is on his way to becoming independent and social, and that has become possible because of the intimate, responsive relationship he has had with a stable caregiver.

This discussion would be incomplete without a reminder that physical proximity — even parental "doting" behaviour — is not equivalent to parental responsiveness and predictability. The physical availability of a socially unavailable mother is a recurrent and devastating experience for some children and frequently accompanies the object-avoiding syndromes of infancy.⁸

In addition to the ramifications of parent-



"...a child is on his way to becoming independent and sociable, and that has become possible because of the intimate, responsive relationship he has had with a stable caregiver."

infant attachment, and the accompanying behavioural manifestations of touch, smiling, looking and responsiveness already discussed, we must consider the greater tendency on the part of a well-attached parent to protect the baby from harm. Not only does this set of parental behaviour result in the obvious increase in the likelihood of the infant surviving, but parental protective behaviour gives important messages to the baby. Infants grow up protecting themselves as a direct extension of the value they place on their own protection — a value learned by being cared for again and again, by being restrained from danger, by seeing adult concern for the comfort and integrity of the infants' bodies.⁹

Among the more interesting features of families in which reciprocal love bonds with the infant are growing and flourishing is the apparent protection of parental sanity, and encouragement of the parental role, afforded by the loving parent-infant relationship. Unquestionably, being a parent is one of the most anxiety-provoking, physically exhausting and emotionally draining series of events imaginable. Mothers (and in a different sense fathers) are giving up some of their gilded myths about parenthood and admitting that they are something less than thrilled about getting up at 2 a.m. (and 4 a.m. and 6 a.m.!) for feedings; that some days they feel very much like chucking their little one right out of the upstairs window. But most continue getting up, and most leave the window closed. The reason, we can now see, may lie in the reciprocal nature of the parent-infant relationship. Baby gives back and that giving (the nuzzling, the differential smile, the touching, the gazing) has probably served to keep a number of babies from unplanned excursions into the sky. On some days it may seem that baby will drive us crazy very soon; at the same time, however, it will be baby who will keep us sane.*

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, an attachment with a primary caregiver in infancy provides baby's first experience

with the pleasures (entirely narcissistic and self-centered at first, of course) of human social contact. Through the earliest relationships a child has the opportunity to learn trust as he sees that his caregiver reliably takes care of him, responds to him and protects him. In the strictest behavioural sense, he learns to participate in social relationships in a manner that will later be seen as "loving". He will control himself, gratify others and engage in socially attractive behaviours at first because those behaviours encourage the incoming of narcissistic supplies. The links between giving and getting eventually become blurred, however, as the child begins to enjoy pleasing others, making affectionate overtures to them and responding warmly to them, because those behaviours have gained inherently pleasing qualities for him.



"Unquestionably, being a parent is one of the most anxiety provoking, physically exhausting, and emotionally draining series of events imaginable."

Baby and caregiver have conspired to create a child who understands how to signal adults about his needs and who feels reasonably assured that most of those needs will be met; a child who enjoys human social contact and who guides his behaviour in such a way as to maximize the frequency and pleasure of such contact; a

child who trusts and can be trusted; a child who values himself and who will slowly take charge of (and pride in) mastering his body. Out of the framework of this social experience he will begin to make choices about his own behaviour and will demonstrate the development of conscience and self-control... ■

*This is, of course, an important lesson for the infant mental health intervener. As therapists, we haven't a prayer in convincing parents that they should be better parents, that they must be more responsive, that they really ought to stop hitting. Our only hope is in attracting parents to their own babies, in "hooking" them to the remarkable capabilities of, and the possibilities for a relationship with, their babies.

Michael Trout is Director of the Centre for Study of Infants and Their Families. He is a Psychologist and Infant Mental Health Specialist who was trained at Selma Fraiberg's Child Development Project at the University of Michigan Medical School. He has served as Chairman of the Board of The Michigan Association of Infant Mental Health since its inception, and was the first President of the International Association for Infant Mental Health.

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CHILDLESS BY CHOICE

by David Critchley

“...many more people than presently do should deliberately choose to remain single, and many more couples should, not just limit the size of their families, but forgo having children altogether.”

During the next few weeks I'll be venturing into No Man's Land because I'll be explaining why I think the time has come for us to stop looking upon marriage and having children as the end all and be all of life and as the only normal, natural, and desirable state of affairs. Furthermore, I'll be suggesting that many more people than presently do should deliberately choose to remain single and many more couples should, not just limit the size of their families, but forego having children altogether.

Now in view of the lowly status we give to bachelors, spinsters, and childless couples and the central and for many people sacred position that marriage, parenthood, and family life occupy in our society, I know I've got my work cut out for me. Indeed I suspect it would be easier to plead the cause of French Canada in Mount Royal or Victoria. But as a congenital rebel with many causes for better or worse, here goes.

As a beginning and as a foundation for what I'll be saying in future weeks, I think we should recognize that some of the most compelling reasons for marriage and having children have either decreased in importance or no longer exist. For example, it's no longer necessary to the survival of the human species that we pay as much attention to the age-old commandment: be fruit-

ful and multiply. Indeed the goddess of fertility is rapidly falling from grace in a world where man is multiplying himself by alarming leaps and bounds. We're a far cry from the days when it was a sin to spill one's seed upon the ground and to be barren was a disgrace. Now the talk is of standing-room only and fertility has become a threat instead of a means to existence and survival. One very definite sign of the times is that even ideological barriers to family planning and birth control are beginning to give way in the face of the spectre of a world that's no longer able to nurture its inhabitants.

The fact that we're fast becoming a nation of city slickers is also removing what not too long ago was a very important reason for having children. Perish the thought that anyone would have a child for any reason other than the sheer delight of changing diapers and getting out of bed for two o'clock feedings, but the fact is that children were once very important for the work they did in the fields, chicken coops, and barns of the nation and it was quite a handy thing to have eight, ten or twelve of the little darlin's around the farm-yards. But in the city children are displaced persons and parents are forever looking for ways to get them out from underfoot. And even with Family Allowances and income tax deduc-

Our thanks to a CSPCC member in Winnipeg for sending this transcript of a 1966 series of CBC radio talks by David Critchley.

tions, it costs money to raise a child, as salesmen of insurance policies for children are so quick to point out in solemn tones usually reserved for funeral parlours. Yes, when school begins and size 6X in clothes is left behind, the life expectancy of a twenty dollar bill is very short. And it is becoming increasingly common to hear parents of one or two children say that they just can't afford to have any more; and parents of three and four children often bemoan the fact that they didn't pause to count the cost.

Any discussion of why people have children would be flying in the face of the sexual facts of life if it didn't recognize that one of the most important explanations for the existence of many children is that until the Pill came along they were practically unavoidable. It really didn't much matter whether or not they were wanted or planned, children had a habit of coming along anyway — often in spite of rather elaborate precautionary measures. Certainly I've

learned that life — aided I suspect by a determined and treacherous wife — has a way of asserting itself. I entered marriage prepared to be host to one, with persuasion perhaps two children; and although I wouldn't exchange my four children for all the charge accounts in the world, it would be a very loose use of the term to claim that I have a planned family.

But the Pill has changed all that; and except where there are health or ideological obstacles to their use, it looks as though birth control pills now make it possible virtually to guarantee that children only appear by invitation. This means that the cause and effect relationship that has always existed between sexual intercourse and children has now been broken. And I can't see how it can fail but make many people think twice about not only having children, but getting married in the first place. And as far as I'm concerned there's much to be said for both ways of life. But more of this next week.

THE PILL CAN GUARANTEE WANTED CHILDREN ONLY

Last week I said that the birth control pill has made it possible to guarantee that children only appear on the scene by invitation. Now I think the most important implication of the pill has been overlooked. The pill is usually seen as a weapon against overpopulation and as the most effective means yet developed for couples — especially poor couples — to limit their families to a size they can afford. But I think the family planners are too preoccupied with number and economics. I can understand why this should be so, because after all birth control is controversial enough as it is. However, in my opinion the most important implication of the pill is that it's now possible for people to guarantee that children are wanted; and as far as I'm concerned, in this day and age no child should be conceived unless he is well and truly wanted by his parents.

Now you'd think that this is self-evident. But I've found that when I ask parents why they had children they're often hard put to find an answer. Indeed a typical first reaction is: "You tell me." Now of course this reply is usually accompanied by a wry

smile, but I think it's worth paying attention to. Many a truth has a smile or laugh wrapped around it. Certainly I'm convinced that many of us parents have no particular reason for having children. It's not even that they're wanted or unwanted: I think often they just appear. They just happen along.

Now I know most of us don't believe in happenings. We look for religious, scientific, or psychological reasons for actions. After all, man is a rational animal. People don't just do things: there must be a reason, we're fond of telling ourselves and our children. But although this is undoubtedly a comforting thought, I suspect it just isn't so. Certainly as far as children are concerned, I'm sure many see the light of day without any thought having been given to the matter one way or another. As one mother of six said to me recently: "You mean it takes thought to have children. My husband and I got married and kids were the farthest things from our minds and then the next thing I knew it was 'Oops, I'm pregnant.'"

I asked her, if children weren't on her mind, what was. And she went on to say:

"...in this day and age no child should be conceived unless he is well and truly wanted by his parents."

“...there are thousands upon thousands of unwanted and unloved children in Canada. And I want to make it very clear that I am not just talking about the thousands of children that come to the attention of Children’s Aid Societies, Guidance Clinics, and Juvenile Courts of the country.”

“Oh, you know, the usual things: does he really love me, do I love him, having a good time, getting a new car, am I passionate enough for him — you know, all that sort of thing.” I wondered if she resented it when she found she was pregnant and she replied: “What’s to resent: it doesn’t change anything, so you might as well face facts.”

I wonder if her comments couldn’t have been made by many of us — sometimes I suspect, most of us. When we’re courting and after we walk down the aisle, aren’t we usually pretty preoccupied with ourselves and our partners, and don’t we usually think of them as husbands or wives rather than as mothers or fathers of our children? We’ve only to look around us if we want to see what boys and girls and men and women are all about as far as our society is concerned: on the billboards, TV, and movie screens, and in the books, magazines, and in our talk, it’s love, earning a living, and getting ahead that makes a marriage go around.

There’s precious little talk of marriage as a basis for family life and as a means to having children. Marriage is for lovers and loving. It’s Molly and me. Oh yes, I forgot: baby makes three. But all in good time. We’ll come to that hurdle when we get to it.

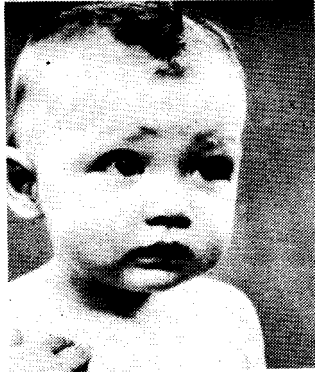
Now don’t misunderstand me. I’m all for love. It should be fundamental to any marriage, with or without children. Indeed, if love isn’t present, I’d say without any reservations that every effort should be made to prevent the conception of children, or, even better, to stay out of marriage altogether. But more of that later. Right now I’m suggesting that these days most of us marry for love and not for children.

But isn’t it true that even if many children are unplanned and even unwanted, parents soon adjust to their coming and welcome the event after it has become a fact of life? Now I don’t have any statistics or research to back me up, but I do have the experience of living for 41 years — 17 as a social worker — that tells me this just isn’t so. In poor homes, in wealthy homes, in their own homes, in foster homes, in reform schools, and in treatment centres, there are thousands upon thousands of unwanted and unloved children in Canada. And I want to make it very clear that I’m not just talking about the thousands of children that come to the attention of Children’s Aid Societies, Guidance Clinics, and Juvenile Courts of the country. I’m also talking about the thousands of unwanted and unloved children we don’t pay much attention to because they don’t rebel against our rule and our requirements of them. They internalize and suppress their feelings. Very often we think of them as model children, especially if they excel at school. Of course they’re not lively and spontaneous children.

But whether they rebel or conform, unwanted and unloved children usually share the same emotions: they’re well acquainted with what it is to be resentful, suspicious, and fearful; and sometimes the emotion they know best is hatred, hatred of themselves, hatred of others, hatred of the whole world.

I don’t think I have to belabour the fact that most unwanted and unloved children survive their childhoods and become adults: adults who sometimes climb up into a building in Dallas and spew their anger and resentment and hatred out of a mail order gun. But more often than not they

“I am also talking about the thousands of unwanted and unloved children we don’t pay much attention to because they don’t rebel against our rule and our requirements of them. Very often we think of them as model children...”



**THE
CANADIAN SOCIETY
FOR THE
PREVENTION OF CRUELTY
TO
CHILDREN**

CSPCC CREDO

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,

We Believe That:

I. 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.

II. 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.

III. 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:

I. Re-evaluate all our institutions, traditions and beliefs from this perspective.

II. Oppose and weaken all forces which undermine the desire or ability of parents to successfully carry out a task which ultimately affects us all.

III. 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.

“Some day, maybe there will exist a well considered and yet fervent public conviction that the most deadly of all possible sins is the mutilation of a child’s spirit . . .”

Erik H. Erikson

If Our Credo Makes Sense To You . . .

JOIN THE CSPCC TO: Strengthen an organization that is dedicated to a renewed emphasis on the values of Trust, Empathy and Affection.

JOIN THE CSPCC TO: Learn more about the Prevention of Emotional Damage. Better preparation for parenthood, greater concern for proper care during pregnancy, obstetrical practices which facilitate bonding, a higher priority for the empathic care of infants, higher status for homemakers, and stronger community support for parents with young children are examples of such preventive measures.

JOIN THE CSPCC TO: Keep in touch with others who share these concerns by receiving the CSPCC Journal regularly.

Child battering and other forms of bodily assault have this enormous advantage:

The attacker and the victim both know who is doing what to whom. The results are observable at the time the crime is committed, and the damage can therefore be treated.

In contrast to this kind of identifiability, the brutalizing of innocent minds often appears as *virtue* to the assaulter, as *care* to the victim, and as a strong sense of *duty* to any witnesses. No one sees a crime; the consequences appear years later as murder, rape, theft, alcoholism, chronic failure, or most often, plain and costly unhappiness.

A public bewildered by the social cost of these problems looks around for someone to blame, and can find only a victim who has long since forgotten how he was crippled.

Heart disease, alcoholism and smoking are now well known as social problems. Being known, and being visible, they are a small threat in comparison with the systematic mental crippling of children. Surely, also, the sum of human misery arising from disease can be no more than the frustration, self defeat and sadness passed on by one blinded generation of children to the next.

Morality has nothing to do with the urgent need to prevent psychological abuse. In a world menaced by its own need for self destruction, it is a matter of survival.

“You only have to know a few children who have been unloved - or who have felt they were unloved - to know how fundamental and essential love is to the well being of a child.”

become adults who marry and have children — often they have many children — and they thereby reproduce and multiply their misery.

Well, enough of that. I have to be careful not to be blinded and carried away by my experiences with the all too many unwanted and unloved children I've known. However, I hope I've made it clear why I consider being wanted and loved to be the

birth-right of every child. You only have to know a few children who have been unloved — or who have felt they were unloved — to know how fundamental and essential love is to the well being of a child. And although I know we like to think that mother and father love is an instinct that except in rare cases flowers with the appearance of a child, I'll be suggesting next week that this is far from the truth.

EVERY CHILD'S BIRTHRIGHT — TO BE WANTED AND LOVED

I concluded my talk last week by saying that it should be every child's birth-right to be wanted and loved by his parents. Now I know we all agree that love, like motherhood, is a good thing, but I'd still like to explain exactly why I think it's so important that a child be loved and what it is that love does for a child.

My experience with my own and other people's children has convinced me that a child's feelings about himself will largely determine his feelings about other people and the world round about him: it will also have a lot to do with the kind of adult he becomes. Furthermore, there is much that suggests that what a child feels about himself is largely determined by what adults, especially his parents, feel about him. Therefore, if a child feels that he is tru-

ly loved and wanted, then I think he has the necessary foundation for becoming a self-reliant, and self-respecting human being who's able to live a full, satisfying, and meaningful life according to his own particular talents and the opportunities and challenges that come his way. However, if a child does not feel wanted or loved, or if he feels that love is conditional on his behaving according to his parents standards of right and wrong, then there's a good chance he will spend much of his life on a soul-destroying treadmill of being at war with himself and other people.

Now I apologize for such a string of high-sounding words; but fortunately I came upon something recently that says what I'm trying to say. It goes as follows:

“...if a child does not feel wanted or loved, or if he feels that love is conditional upon his behaving according to his parents' standards of right and wrong, then there is a good chance he will spend much of his life on a soul destroying treadmill of being at war with himself and other people.”

If a child lives with criticism,
He learns to condemn.
If a child lives with hostility,
He learns to fight.
If a child lives with fear,
He learns to be apprehensive.
If a child lives with ridicule,
He learns to be shy.
If a child lives with shame,
He learns to feel guilty.
If a child lives with tolerance,
He learns to be patient.
If a child lives with encouragement,
He learns confidence.
If a child lives with praise,
He learns to be appreciative.
If a child lives with honesty,
He learns what truth is.
If a child lives with security,
He learns to have faith in himself.
If a child lives with approval,
He learns to like himself.
If a child lives with acceptance and friendship,
He learns to find love in the world.

Now I don't know who wrote those words, but they certainly ring true to me. As a matter of fact, I find them very painful; and I shudder when I think of all the years I spent trying to show, teach, manipulate, punish, and preach such things as co-operation, charity, unselfishness, fair play, responsibility, and all the other virtues we want our children to have by the time they're eight or nine, but which most of us are still trying to understand and master when we're thirty, forty or fifty.

Why are we such idiots, we parents, we adults? Why can't we see, or why do we take so long to learn that all this fussing, nagging worrying, suspecting, overseeing, and moralizing that we daily bombard our children with, instead of building character, individuality, self-confidence, and self-worth, attacks and undermines it?

THREE MAIN REASONS FOR INSENSITIVITY TO CHILDREN

I think there are three main reasons why so many of us are so insensitive to children and why we commit so many atrocities as parents. In the first place, more often than not children begin to arrive before we are able to provide an emotional environment that is conducive to their growth and development. Many of us, for example, spend the first ten or twelve years of our marriages getting ourselves and our marriages straightened out — getting what I call the residual, anti-life emotions and attitudes from our childhoods out of our systems. Emotions and attitudes like anger, resentment, self-hate and self-doubt, and puritanism — a whole grab-bag of conflict creating feelings and habits that are a hangover or residue from the paternalistic and highhanded child-rearing practices and attitudes that most of us have been subjected to in our homes where the parents are still trying to make their peace with each other and with life; and instead of being blessed events children often become additional irritants as well as scapegoats for their parents' problems.

I'm sure this is why so many first and second children have personality problems and are so often anxious, demanding, and perfectionistic or lacking in self-confidence. They are a reflection of the way their parents were during the first years of their marriages.

Well, I won't labour the point. I think most of us who are parents will be able to remember that our homes were often not such fit places for children during the early years of our marriages.

The second reason we are often insensitive to the needs of children is plain and simple and often frightening ignorance. We just don't know anything about children, although we often think that because we've all been children we know all there is to know. We're willing to learn how to drive, swim, or dance and we'll study and prepare ourselves to be a carpenter, teacher, mechanic, hairdresser, or doctor; and we'll set up unions and professional associations to keep out the unqualified. But, learn about children and about being a parent, not on your life. That comes naturally; it's a basic instinct. It's as easy as jumping into bed. And so we go right ahead and make life miserable or far more difficult than it need be while we learn at the expense of children how wrong we were.

The third and final explanation I would give for many difficulties between parents and children is that I think very often we have children for the wrong reasons, or the reasons we have are not accompanied by

the most important reason for having a child. Sometimes a child stands for an attempt by parents to make or patch up a marriage; some children are mainly valued as sons and heirs; many mothers and fathers I've known have seen children as proof of their femininity or masculinity; some parents have children to obtain the love and acceptance they've not been able to get from the adult world; sometimes children satisfy a need to dominate and control; and some children are weapons that one parent uses against another.

Now this hit or miss, guess and by golly, thoughtless approach to parenthood may have been all right in the good old days when life was largely a matter of learning to earn, and earning to live, and follow the leader. But it looks as though the increasing complexity as well as promise of life and human relationships is going to place a premium on creative, flexible, and rational human beings who are able to live in harmony with themselves and their fellow man. And such persons do not just happen. They require tender, loving care from parents who have the necessary qualifications and credentials — parents who know what they're doing and who are parents for the right reasons and because they want to be parents.

But surely — even if it's desirable — surely it's completely unrealistic to think that in the foreseeable future we parents are going to change our ways? Now I'm not so sure that such a prospect is as Utopian as we might think; but my main concern is not with what is practical, but rather with what is desirable. Because if we once grant that being a parent is not everyone's cup of tea and that people should be qualified to be parents, then I don't see how we can disagree with my concluding talk next week when among other things I'll be suggesting that it's about time we took the stigma out of being single as well as out of being childless.

Since the subject of my four talks is "Childless by Choice", it must seem as though I've been using it as a come on. But all appearances to the contrary, I'm really not guilty of misrepresentation. However, I have to admit I'm a coward because the fact of the matter is I've not been brave enough to come right out and talk about the delights and desirability of being childless by choice. I did try though; and if you can remember back that far I began my first talk with a stirring call to battle. But then my two typing fingers began to falter as I started to think about just how sacred a position we give to marriage, parenthood,

“Perhaps some (childless couples) have taken stock of their capabilities and are doing the responsible thing by not having children...”

and family life and how really lowdown the lowly status is that we give to bachelors, spinsters, and childless couples.

After all we do look upon getting married as such a natural, necessary, desirable, and almost inevitable state of affairs that once people have passed the age of 25 without marrying our speculations as to what's wrong with them mount with each passing year. First we idly begin to wonder what the trouble is. Then if 26 or 27 arrive and wedding bells haven't announced that they've joined the human race, we really begin to get suspicious. We start to toy with the possibility of illicit love or perhaps perversion: if neither of these seem to fit, we'll begin to speculate about frigidity.

Bachelors and spinsters who are rather plain usually begin by having our sympathy, but after a while this wears thin and we wonder why in heavens name they don't take whatever comes along — after all, anything's better than staying single.

But even when people marry we go on speculating. We wait with baited breath for nine months to see if they had any choice in the matter. Then if nine months passes without the appearance of a blessed event, we settle back for a year or two while we allow them to get a down payment on a house and perhaps even travel a little: but after three or four years we expect them to get down to business and start justifying their existence by having children. And if they don't, then as we do with bachelors and spinsters, we begin to wonder what the trouble is. Fairly early in the speculative game, we'll suspect infertility or sterility or perhaps incompatibility or even infidelity. If several years pass without children and the couple should be so bold as not to issue us by word of mouth and trips to the doctor that they're working hard at getting in a family way, or if they should show no interest in adopting a child, then we begin to

suspect they're guilty of marrying for love and not for children — or as the Archbishop of Canterbury was recently reported as saying, of marrying with the selfish intention of avoiding parenthood.

Well, with all due respect to all concerned, I think it's about time we began to take a close look at why it is we get so upset. It seems to me that perhaps we protest just a little too much. As I've said in my previous talks, we no longer have to worry about the survival of the race; and I hope we agree that parenthood isn't something that should be undertaken lightly. And if this is accepted, then surely we need to revise at least some of our thinking about the childless. Perhaps some of them have taken stock of their capabilities and are doing the responsible thing by not having children; and perhaps we should turn our attention from them to the all too many people who marry and have children and who just haven't got what it takes.

But surely most people would have the necessary qualifications for marriage and parenthood if our schools would pay a little more attention to preparing them for it. Note that I'm all for anything we can do to prepare people for marriage and parenthood — even though the best preparation is to live in a home where there is a sound marriage and to have parents who are right for the job. But if we can accept the idea that not everyone is qualified who wants to be a teacher, lawyer, doctor, farmer, or plumber, I really don't see why we can't accept the fact that not everyone is cut out to be or wants to be a parent.

But this is still a back-door, negative approach to the question of being childless by choice. And the fact of the matter is that a very good case can be made for people not having children even if they would make excellent parents. After all we only live once and there isn't time to enjoy all the delights

“...perhaps we should turn our attention from them to the all too many people who marry and have children and who just haven't got what it takes.”

“...surely most people would have the necessary qualifications for marriage and parenthood if our schools would pay a little more attention to preparing them for it.”

and wonders of the world — so we have to set our priorities and make our choices; and it may well be that some of us will decide that marrying or having children will interfere with or prevent the realization of some other ambition or consuming interest we may have.

Surely this is utter selfishness and irresponsibility? But is it any more selfish than the selfish reasons that many of us have for having children? We say we don't know what we'd do without our children. They're so cute and loveable and often they hold our marriages together. And it's so wonderful to watch them grow and we get such a feeling of accomplishment when they turn out all right.

Now if these aren't typical and selfish reasons for having children, I don't know what they are. Nor do I mean to imply that we shouldn't have children for the pleasure they bring. But the world offers many exciting opportunities for pleasure, and fulfillment. So many glories that may captivate us — even to the extent of causing us to forego marriage or having children.

But surely when all is said and done a man has not really fulfilled himself until he has become a father? And if it's true for a man, surely it's even more so for a woman? Maybe the childless or unmarried won't notice it when they are young, but when they are old and it's too late they'll see how empty their lives are.

Well, I know that's what we parents tell ourselves, but I think we're quite wrong. Marriage and having children are decreasing in popularity even in underpopulated Canada. Although we have one of the highest birth rates of the many nations of the world, it's been dropping since 1954; and in 1963 the marriage rate was the lowest it's been since the depression year

of 1934.

But statistics can be made to support practically any conviction and besides I don't really need them for my argument; nor do I need to speculate on the effect of the birth control pill on sexual habits and beliefs or the increasing number of books and magazines that are based on the proposition that the single life can be exciting and satisfying. I just have to look around about me and the fact is that I know childless couples and spinsters and bachelors, old and young, who are as happy and are living as full and meaningful lives as the many parents I know. Indeed, I still find it a pleasant surprise when I come upon a marriage that allows both partners to develop and express their full potential. And as far as parents are concerned — well, I think it's most fortunate that children are so resilient and don't bruise more easily than they do.

But I don't want to downgrade marriage and parenthood. It can be a wonderful way of life. But it's not the only way, and I think it's about time we upgraded childless couples and those who don't marry. Often we're their biggest problems. We're shocked when we see prejudice and bigotry in South Africa and Selma, but much of our thinking about marriage and parenthood and the childless betrays the same kind of intolerance and irrationality.

Times are changing. Surely in Canada of all places we can allow that there are many roads to self-realization. Being childless or single by choice is one that can offer an exciting and rewarding journey for those who choose to take it. And what's more, I think we'll find that more and more people will choose to do so as the 20th century bumps and grinds its way to the 21st. ■

“We're shocked when we see prejudice and bigotry in South Africa and Selma but much of our thinking about marriage and parenthood and the childless betrays the same kind of intolerance and irrationality.”



WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP — NOW?

1. Become Better Informed about PREVENTION:

- **Read important books:** For example, "Who Cares" by Penelope Leach, "Every Child's Birthright" by Selma Fraiberg, "A Baby in the Family" by James and Joyce Robertson, "The First Three Years of Life" by Burton L. White.
- **Preview the best films:** For example, "We Were Just Too Young", "John", "Emotional Development: Aggression", "Rock-a-bye Baby", "Amazing Newborn", "Victims", "Child's Play", "Child Abuse - Cradle of Violence", "A Chain to be Broken", "Newborn - Birthright".

2. Learn what already exists in your community to PREVENT child abuse:

- What parenting education is given in your schools?
- Is there a Family Planning Centre or Clinic in your community?
- What proportion of parents of all births in your community have been offered pre-natal classes?
- What birthing practices are followed in your hospital?
- Is there a La Leche League Leader or Group in your community to provide breast feeding information?
- Is there a Childbirth Education Association in your community?
- Are there Parent & Child Groups (See CSPCC Journal Sept. 82) available within walking distance of all pre-school children?
- What parenting materials — books and films does your public library have?

3. Volunteer your Services:

Ask if there are things that you can do as a volunteer to help your Public Health Nurses or Children's Aid Society with their Child Abuse Prevention programs. For example: distributing literature to doctors' offices, visiting shut-in mothers.

4. Some Activities:

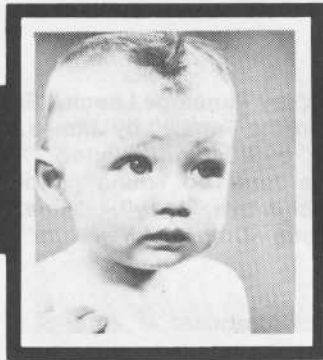
- Let your School Board know you support parenting education programs.
- Distribute books and literature to expecting parents.
- Organize the showing of some of the important films (above) in your community or on your cable T.V. or make them available to teachers who might like to use them.
- Initiate the development of Family Planning Information Centres, Pre-natal classes, and Parent and Child groups in your community if they do not exist.

5. Support the CSPCC:

- Let the secondary school teachers in your area who are responsible for parenting education know about the CSPCC Journal and the Student Reprints available free of charge from the CSPCC.
- Distribute the information pamphlet "About the CSPCC" in your community.
- Let your local television station know you appreciate their use of the CSPCC Public Service Announcement.
- Make the CSPCC-Rotary video tape "The Greatest Cruelty" available to your secondary school or public service groups.

NONE OF US CAN AFFORD THE LUXURY OF BEING UPSET ABOUT CHILD ABUSE AND DOING NOTHING TO PREVENT IT.

This page will be reprinted in succeeding issues of the Journal. Write CSPCC, Box 700, Midland, Ontario, L4R 4P4 with your ideas and experience.



STUDENT REPRINT #1

What kind of Adult Do you Want Your Child to Become	2
Priorities for Children	3
I am Worried	6
Bonding of Mothers and Infants	7
The Diseases of Non-Attachment	13
Fighting Over who Takes Care of the Egg	16
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"We must be willing to face the hard reality that preventing child abuse and neglect is possible only when we are ready to attack its sources in the fabric of our society and culture, rather than merely provide social and medical services to its victims..."



Thanks to Canadian Corporations...

Since our last public expression of thanks (CSPCC Journal March '82) to Canadian Corporations for their financial support of the work of the CSPCC, the following companies have either donated again or for the first time.

These corporate donations have enabled us to produce and distribute without charge copies of "Student Reprint #1" to secondary school teachers who request them for their students.

The response from teachers has been so positive that one gets the impression there is a great lack of such teaching aids. We hope to be able to do more to help.

Air Canada	Guildline Instruments
Alberta Distillers	Gulf Oil
Bank of Montreal	Halifax Insurance Company
Bata Retail	Harnischfeger Corporation
Beaver Foods	Hawker Siddeley Canada Inc.
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BP Canada	Kenting Limited
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Cabot Carbon of Canada	Levy Auto Parts
Canadian Tire Corporation	McGraw-Hill
Caravelle Foods	Metropolitan Life
Cardinal Coach Lines	Motor Wheel Corp. of Canada
Carling O'Keefe Breweries	Munich Reinsurance
Champs Properties	Parktown Knitting
Cheesbrough-Ponds	Phillips Electronics
Chevron	Phoenix of Canada
Club House Employee's Fund	Polysar Limited
Club House Foods	Prudential Assurance Co.
Commercial Life Assurance Co.	Prudential Insurance Co.
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Danbel Industries Inc.	Sulpetro Limited
Digital Equipment	Texaco Canada Inc.
Drug Trading Company	T Group Inc.
Ecodyne Limited	The Co-Operators
Eli Lilly Canada Inc.	The Great Lakes Reinsurance
Encyclopedia Britannica	The Toronto Sun
Four Seasons Motel	Thomson Newspaper
Gateway Building & Supply	Toyota Canada
Gerling Global	Union Gas Limited
Grace Meat Packers	Volvo Canada Ltd.
Gray Coach Lines	Walbar
Greenpark	W.G. Clark Company Ltd.
Gross Machinery & Supply	Xerox of Canada

Special thanks to Air Canada, Samuel & Saily Bronfman Foundation, Prudential Insurance Company, and Xerox Canada Inc. for their most generous support.



Coming Home

A professional woman looks back at her decision to become a full-time homemaker

by Trena T. Marsh

“...the turning point for me was my relationship with my family.”

More and more the economic status of most families requires two incomes. Although American families have become smaller, they are more costly to maintain than at any time before. Cutbacks and layoffs in the labour force are announced daily — and — I have come home.

Coming home wasn't a snap decision. It was four years in the making. Those years included a great deal of thought, observation and financial structuring.

While teaching in the Detroit Public School System I had numerous opportunities to observe the attitudes of children with working parents. While some created classroom problems because they knew there was no one at home to call, the majority functioned as responsible students. There are always those who will succeed in spite of their home situation or anything else.

So, while my students showed me one aspect of the working parent scene, the turning point for me was my relationship with my family.

Our mornings consisted of racing around the house preparing the children for school as we prepared for work. When there was no school they raced around preparing to go to the babysitter. After work and school there was no let up because they accompanied us on errands, shopping trips or to medical appointments.

On the rare occasions we were able to go home directly from work and school, we were too tired or had too many other things to spend quality time with the children on a regular basis. We were irritated when they asked questions about school work. After all, hadn't we been in school all day?

Although we had a good supply of groceries, we either ate out or stopped at a local drive-in, thereby eliminating any chance of an intimate family conversation.

Yes, I too, had read the stories of women who got up before dawn to prepare dinners in advance, have breakfast with their children, jog three miles with their husbands, see the family off to school and work; go to her own full-time, high-powered job; serve on two committees and be home in time to bake fresh bread and serve the family dinner.

There wasn't enough GERITOL in the world to enable me to keep a program like that.

I could only look to my own circumstance and I did not like what I saw. I did not like feeling tired all the time. I did not like feeling hostile toward my family. And, while I loved teaching and being with my students, I didn't like giving myself so totally to them that I had almost nothing left over to share with my own family.

Finally, there was the woman in me that was Trena. In juggling career, family, freelance writing, and all that goes with it — I had lost me.

Therefore, my choice, in the area of early retirement, was mine alone. I never even asked my husband to consider it. That gets into a whole psychological, work-ethic discussion. The point remained that something had to be done.

The moment of truth came one Saturday morning when I came downstairs to check the appointments for the day. I was surprised to find our then, very active five-year-old still in bed. I went to his room and sat beside him, on his bed, to ask if he felt all right.

My son informed me that he felt just fine, but that he had no intention of leaving his bed if it meant he was going to spend the entire day getting in and out of the car and going to places where he had to sit and be quiet and not touch things. He wanted to stay home with his friends (his stuffed

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“...being home, I am able to provide myself and my husband with a sense of stability in a very unstable world.”

animals), watch cartoons and eat popcorn.

I quietly left his room. I put the appointment book away, unplugged all the phones and went to the kitchen to prepare a traditional Saturday breakfast. My husband and daughter came into the kitchen, unable to believe their good fortune but not questioning it. They sat down and ate breakfast talking and making silly jokes that we hadn't made together in a long time.

My son was a bit more cautious. He entered, still in his pajamas (a sure sign of his intention to stay home), sat down to the kitchen table and ate with gusto.

We spent the entire day at home and, to the five-year-olds delight, we watched cartoons with him, his sister and their fuzzy friends munched popcorn. The children sat with us and talked with us all day, non-stop, as if they never hoped to have a day like this again.

That was two years ago.

On June 25, 1980, at the ripe old age of 28 — I retired from the teaching profession.

Now, the children are confident of relaxed family weekends. They are not hesitant to speak to us for fear of being rebuffed. Homework has become our special time together when the work is done with a full view to classroom reinforcement.

Today, being home, I am able to provide myself and my husband with a sense of stability in a very unstable world. Planned and prepared daily menus have proved not only healthful, but more economical.

The house is now on a schedule that allows all four of us to take an active part in the care and upkeep of our home. Sure, there have been adjustments. People consider the word retirement as meaning “having nothing to do” and they tried to treat my time as such. There were a number of things I wanted to do for my family and even more that I wanted to do for myself.

I had to make my intentions clear to a number of people, including my family members, who had trouble taking my retirement seriously.

Women who resented my early retirement asked, “How could you retire at a time when women are just gaining equal footing with men in the job arena?”

One of the major advantages of this era of ‘liberation’ is the freedom of personal choice. Not only is a woman free to leave home to pursue her personal choice of careers — she is free to return home as her own personal choice. Free of any stigma.

Today many questions still come from people I meet and who call to see if I am still “retired”.

Homemaker. Many people have trouble with that word. It is a position a woman of the 80's would never openly subscribe to for fear that others would perceive her as taking a step backwards.

A number of professional women have recently appeared on television extolling their new found joys of home and motherhood. They glibly quote a house person's worth at being somewhere between \$49,000 to \$52,000, in view of their responsibilities and services. It should be noted that many of these professional women previously viewed homemakers as beneath their contempt. This was never my problem. As a result I didn't have to come on as a “born-again homemaker”, quoting price worth and Washington Post trends to justify my decision or to take the sting out of the word homemaker.

Any role perceived as demeaning or worthless will always be a source of frustration and bitterness. And so, without regret and without embellishments, when asked I say simply that I am a homemaker.

The educational achievements and career goals I set for myself before 1980

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helped to fulfill the person I was then. People change. I changed from the “...I am woman, hear me roar...” to a woman not afraid to get in touch with her feelings and needs.

I had lost touch with the importance of being not an aggressive, professional person, but, a person. Working to prove myself capable of handling the “superwoman syndrome” proved to be unrealistic.

Time was a factor in my choice to come home. Even with my husband’s help, there are only so many hours in a day and only so much one person can accomplish in that day.

Stereotyping has no place in a personal choice, yet many submit to it, especially women. And they submit to it in extremes. Many either demean the work they do as being of little or no consequence, or they make it sound like a calling just beneath that of sainthood.

Homemakers (the term “housewife” is a misnomer) are neither noble nor sterling, shining examples of womanhood. As with any career, there are good homemakers and bad ones. There are happy homemakers and unhappy ones.

The difference between a happy or unhappy homemaker or a career person is their sense of worth and value. I have this precious sense of worth as it is shared family experience expressed by some word or show of affection everyday.

This positive stroking allows me to bring the same energy and creativity to our home that I brought to my classroom. Self-motivation is also an important factor. Without it, boredom can set in. A creative person can bring that sense of ingenuity to anything they put their hands to and find it exhilarating.

True, it’s hard to be creative when you are worried about how the bills will be paid.

That is why financial structuring figured so heavily in my move toward retirement. More and more families are becoming dependent on two incomes. When one family makes a conscious decision to live on one income, today, and is observed to maintain its standard of living, it can generate resentment or envy.

What many people don’t realize is that while two incomes sound like a lot of money, it isn’t. The cost of childcare or a housekeeper, gas, travel expenses, clothing, work-related equipment and income taxes bring a second income to an almost worthless state, financially.

Many women have fled the home, not necessarily because they were unhappy, but because books, magazines and talk shows kept reinforcing the idea that a woman without a career and a paycheque was worthless and the world would surely pass her by. By carrying this absurd concept to extremes many women found themselves in careers they didn’t want and out of marriages they really wanted to keep, but were afraid to admit to either circumstance.

Self-esteem is not now, nor can it ever be measured in terms of a paycheque. This sense of self-worth is a feeling that must come from within one’s self. You won’t get this sense of worth by reading *Essence* or *Cosmopolitan*; it must be cultivated and allowed to develop in an atmosphere of self-satisfaction and happiness, whether it be in a career or in your home.

Of course, if circumstances such as illness or layoffs prompted me to return to work, I would do so without hesitation.

So, while no home is completely trouble free, for the most part there is peace and joy in our home. When my daughter stands quietly beside me as I bake or brings me a cool drink as I write we grow a little more as

“I changed from the “...I am woman, hear me roar...” to a woman not afraid to get in touch with her feelings and needs.”

mother and daughter. My son expressed his feelings in this way: "Mom, it's so good to come home to you and good kitchen smells."

I have not sacrificed, I have gained. Not only is the family coming together, but pieces of me are starting to fall in place. I used to rant and rave about never having

enough time for myself. But now, that healing time of quiet is mine for the time that I need it.

This is good for me...for us. I am happy and my family is benefitting from that happiness. This is not the right choice for everyone, but it was the right choice for me. ■



About the author

*Trena T. Marsh-Joiner is a 1974 graduate of Central Michigan University, where she was a National Merit Scholar and the recipient of a Fellowship Award in speech. She also received a Fellowship Award in Journalism law from the Harvard University School of Law. An English instructor for the Detroit Public schools, she retired from the teaching profession in June of 1980 at age 28. Presently a free-lance writer, Trena has completed one volume of contemporary poems, *Life Readings and Other Vital Signs*.*

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LES ENFANTS PAS VOULUS ET PAS AIMES

N'est-ce pas vrai que bien que beaucoup d'enfants ne soient pas prévus et voulus, les parents s'adaptent très vite à leur arrivée et se rejouissent au moment de cette naissance? Je n'ai pas de chiffres pour m'appuyer, mais j'ai l'expérience de mes quarante et unes années-dix-sept comme sociologue-et elles me disent le contraire. Maisons pauvres, maisons riches, maisons à eux, maisons d'adoption, écoles de reformes et centres de traitement, contiennent des milliers et des milliers d'enfants pas voulus et pas aimés au Canada. Et je vous assure que je ne parle pas seulement des milliers d'enfants qui sont référés aux sociétés d'aide pour enfants, aux cliniques d'orientation et aux tribunaux juveniles du pays. Il ya aussi ce vaste groupe d'enfants qui ne sont pas des problèmes pour notre société qui sont donc ignorés par notre système. Ceux-a apprennent a supprimer leurs sentiments et nous les voyons comme des modèles à suivre, surtout s'ils réussissent a l'école. Mais ce ne sont pas des enfants joyeux et pleins de vie.

Quoi qu'ils se rebellent ou qu'ils se conforment, les enfants pas voulus et pas aimés se partagent les mêmes émotions, ils connaissent bien ce que c'est que d'être, rancuniers, soupçonnés, et craintifs, parfois l'émotion qu'ils connaissent le mieux c'est la haine, la haine de soi, la haine des autres, la haine de tout le monde!

traduis après
David Critchley

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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.