



# EMPATHIC PARENTING

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

Volume 9

Issue 4

Autumn 1986

\$2.50

***“Left to deteriorate  
any longer, the  
mother-child  
separation and  
alienation which we  
suffer from may be  
irremediable.”***

*Beth Shaw  
page 25*

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## Learning to Love

Certain in-depth emotional patterns, I would suggest, are preconditions for another more complete pattern. For example, if you experience intimacy in the first four months, you then value human relationships, and then you have an opportunity to learn "cause and effect" in that human relationship. If you haven't connected to the human world, how are you going to learn emotional causality? You can't learn emotional causality relating to "If I love you I will be loved back" unless you have a loving partner. When you reach out, you have to have a valued human object who responds. Pulling a string to ring a bell will teach you about causality but not about the emotional causality relating to dependency, assertiveness or aggression.

This doesn't mean you can't learn to love at ten months. You can. But why play catch up? Certain in-depth emotional functions have a line of development where step one is a precondition for the next, even though it's not a guarantee that the next step is going to occur...

In our culture many children experience successive developmental failures at each stage of early development. We cannot afford to ignore the early months when the foundations for core personality functions relating to the capacities for closeness and warmth in relationships, emotional intentionality, and the control of impulses and behaviour are first learned.

Stanley Greenspan M.D.

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# EMPATHIC PARENTING

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# Letters

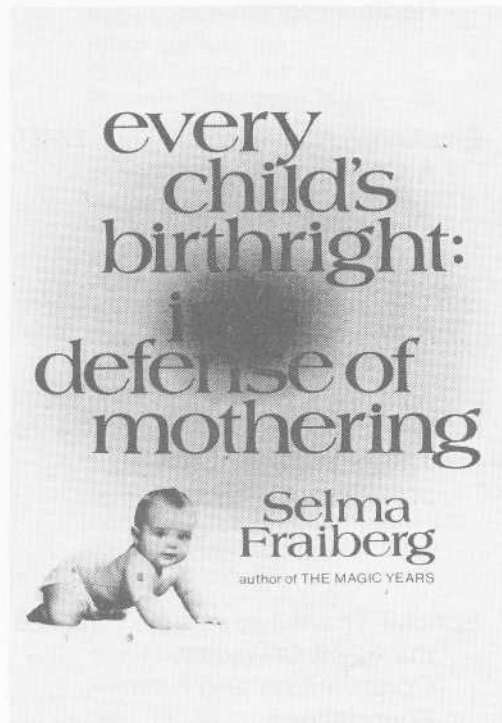
## THREE PRECIOUS YEARS

Dear Dr. Barker:

I have really enjoyed the journal over the past few years. Since reading Selma Fraiberg's *IN DEFENSE OF MOTHERING* two years ago, I have been convinced of how crucial it is to a child to have a full time mother or father. Consider me a convert. I used to believe that half time alternate care wouldn't necessarily harm a child, but it has been my experience that it certainly didn't help the child, and made the entire relationship more difficult. The first three years are so precious, and infants change so fast, that it seems ridiculous to let the time slip away.

Thanks for your support.

Patricia Hartman  
Penetanguishene, Ont.



## PAYING MOTHERS

Sir:

Several times your journal has published articles of mine expounding my conviction that Canada's basic family allowance payments must be raised to the same level as that of OAS pensions for each child, which would be \$291.71 a month now.

I wonder whether you know about the Child Poverty Action Group, which is advocating the payment of a Universal Child Income Credit (UCIC) of \$3,600 a year for the first child and \$3,000 for each subsequent child for all children by the Canadian government, for every child in the nation under the age of 18.

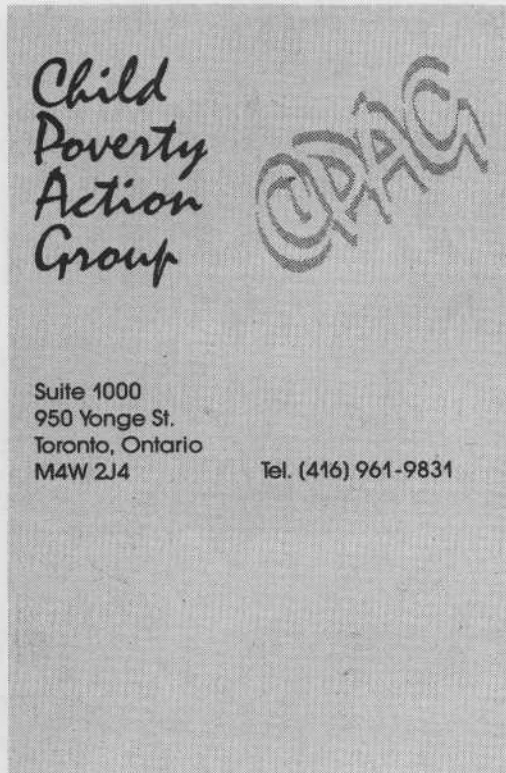
The Child Poverty Action Group also recommends the payment by the national government of a Parental Employment Income Guarantee of \$13,200 for mothers staying home to care for their children in the first two years of their childhood.

Women with children under their care must be given the choice as to whether they will work full-time at the demanding and important job of caring for their children, and turn this job over part-time to government day-nursery institutions. They must be free to work full-time caring for their children without suffering crippling economic liability for making this decision. I believe that day-nursery institutions are concentration camps for the young, and incubators of disease.

I include with this photocopies of an article of mine on the issue of publicly defraying the living costs of the young, as published by The Hamilton Spectator and The Kingston Whig-Standard.

Providing adequate fiscal support for women with children is an issue with great topicality. The national government is groping towards a "population policy" to prevent population decline and an aging population. Such fiscal support for women with children under their care will reduce the harsh financial forces deterring family formation. Under our present economic dispensation, women with children are harshly, even viciously, penalized.

Some unionists and politicians are can-



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vassing the idea of government's limiting the participation of workers in the labour force as a means of cutting unemployment.

These groups are proposing that the average work-week be cut to 32 hours or 35 hours, that early retirement be promoted, and the procedure of work-sharing be encouraged. Many of these proposals entail paying people for not working? It is infinitely more economically intelligent for the governments of Canada to pay remuneration to women with children under their care for the work they perform in caring for their children, and induce them to work full-time in the care of their children, than to pay people not to work through shorter work weeks etc.

The CPAG is a body which should have been formed at least 30 years ago to work for social justice for the young, and those many women charged with the care of the young. Pay women for caring for their children, and economic morality will be

achieved, the economy stimulated, and insofar as women work full-time at caring for their young, the pressure on the job supply relieved and unemployment reduced.

I do not know whether you have heard of the CPAG. If not, I hope you might see the merit of its proposals and lend it support.

Yours, with respect,  
Edward Carrigan  
Toronto, Ont.

## LOW INTEREST LOANS FOR MOTHERS

Dear Ms. Storey:

I read in *Empathic Parenting* that you are coordinating the efforts of CSPCC to get the government to look at the day care issue in a way which will be supportive of parenting. My husband and I are authors of a book on the day care dilemma. Perhaps you read about the book in *Empathic Parenting* or saw me when I was on a Canadian show called *The Journal*. **The Day Care Decision** is based, in part, on our own experiences and observations as directors of a non-profit preschool and day care centre.

I am sending you some of the arguments we used in our media appearances (this is not in the book) although of course the numbers will be different for Canada. Unless day care mothers and day care workers are much better paid in Canada, these arguments should be valid there too. I think a "bottom line" approach may be the only thing that will make legislators listen.

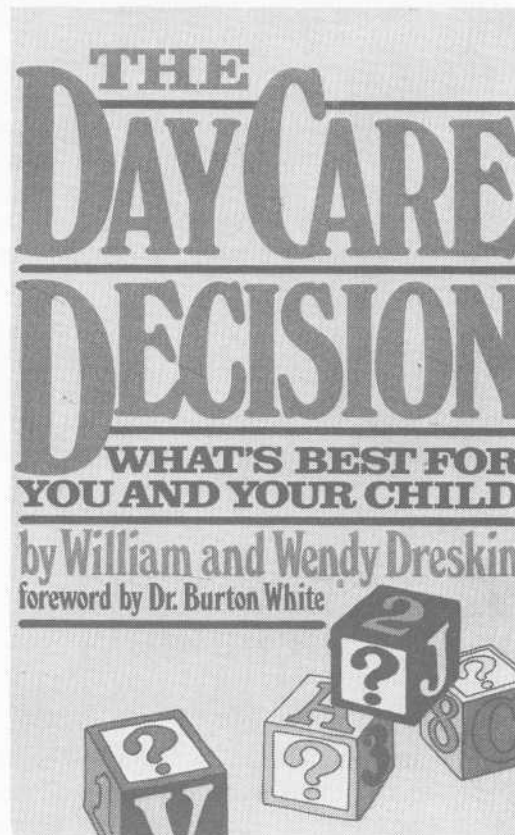
Our society needs a system which satisfies parents' economic and psychological needs to work, and children's developmental needs as well. Group day care is not the answer. Based on figures from the Department of Labour, Dept. of HEW, and other sources, the issue of "good" or "quality" day care, frequently raised by day care advocates, is, quite simply, illusory. The guidelines for child:adult ratios and for staff training, as recommended by Dr. Provenca in, **The Challenge of Day Care**, and as recom-

mended by a number of child development experts, would make group care unaffordable for most working parents and economically unfeasible for this country.

Let's take a careful look at what a real quality day care centre would cost. Let us assume a salary of \$8.11/hour. This is not extravagant. It is far less than an auto worker, garbage collector or bus driver makes. It is, however, reasonable as the median salary for preschool and kindergarten teachers. Let us assume a standard benefits package. In actuality most day care workers work with no paid vacation, no health coverage, no sick leave, and no retirement plan. But a quality centre would need to offer these benefits to attract and hold high calibre staff. The Department of Labour figures a standard package costs 30% of the salary. This brings the employers cost up to \$10.54/hour.

With the conservative HEW recommended ratio of 3:1 for babies this would mean a cost of nearly \$9,000/year/child simply to cover the salary. There are, of course other expenses. Rent of a good facility, insurance, equipment, support staff (janitor, bookkeeper), utilities and so on would bring the cost well over \$10,000/year. The median family income for female headed families and the average second pay cheque in two pay-cheque families are both **under** \$10,000/year. The total cost per year would be about \$75 billion. This sum would not provide day care for all children in the country; it simply would upgrade care for those already in day care. Whether government, corporations, or parents were to foot the bill, this "solution" obviously is far more costly than giving working parents the flexibility they need so they can care for their own children.

Most day care advocates and the vast majority of child development experts — including proponents of day care — would agree that the typical group care arrangement is inadequate and does not represent quality care. While HEW recommends no more than three babies under the age of two to one adult, some states allow as many as ten. The economic pressures are obvious. The more children one adult can



care for, the greater the profit. The disadvantages to the babies are also obvious. One adult, however well-intentioned, cannot keep ten babies fed and dry, let alone have any time left over for the holding, hugging and nurturing which child development experts have found is not a frill but an essential element in a baby's emotional, physical and educational development. But we have yet to see a realistic proposal for funding "quality care".

In the U.S. it is frequently said that in a majority of families both parents work because they need to. We question that this is true. With our system of incremental brackets, depending on her husband's earnings, a woman who earns \$12/hour often nets less than \$2/hour after taxes; commute costs, child care costs and other work related expenses. A mother earning \$5/hour will come out in the hole if she works. At the point a woman is not work-

At the point a woman is not working because she needs to but because she wants to there is no reason to subsidize her more than her stay-at-home counterpart.

ing because she needs to but because she wants to there is no reason to subsidize her more than her stay-at-home counterpart. Instead of subsidizing day care we should consider subsidizing mothers who want to stay home with their children. It would not be more costly and I think quite a few mothers would jump at the chance to care for their own children.

Let's take another idea. Currently we are all subsidizing day care with our taxes. The child care tax credit alone accounts for about one billion dollars. While single mothers need help, there is no reason why the parents who have chosen to tighten their belts in order to raise their own children at home should subsidize parents who choose to have a Mercedes and a condo in Maui. Suppose the government eliminated the credit (which benefits those in high tax brackets the most) and instead put a billion dollars in a special fund. The fund would offer a long term low interest loan to any working mother (single or married who wanted to stay home but could not afford to. The early years are the formative ones, the ones parents are most concerned about spending with their youngsters.

**Suppose we offered mothers a low interest long term loan of 50% of the salary they would have made.** (The average net after child care is less than 50%.) Repayments could start after the child turned five. Unlike welfare a mother would have her self respect, knowing she would repay the money when the child was school age. Such a fund would only require seed money from the government as payments would start coming back into the fund in only a few years.

These are only two suggestions. There are, no doubt, dozens of other solutions awaiting creative thinkers. The point is that we need to realize the economic unfeasibility of quality day care and turn in other directions.

Good luck. I hope Canada will have more sense on this issue than the U.S. has. If I can be of any further help please let me know.

Sincerely yours,  
Wendy Dreskin  
10 East Court  
San Anselmo, CA  
94960

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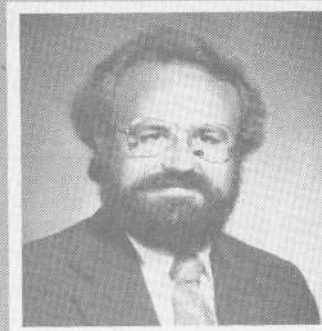


## "THE AWAKENING AND GROWTH OF THE HUMAN: STUDIES IN INFANT MENTAL HEALTH"

a videotape series for clinicians, parents & trainees

produced and narrated by:

michael trout, director  
the infant-parent institute  
501 south sixth street  
champaign, illinois 61820  
217/352-4060, 352-0582



### NEW SERIES OF VIDEOTAPES

Dear Dr. Barker:

It is with a special joy that I inform you that the new videotape series for parents and infant mental health practitioners - "The Awakening and Growth of the Human" - is now complete. Your role as a reviewer of the first pilot tape last fall aided me greatly in the creation of what I hope are sophisticated, but jargon-free, clinical discussions of how we fall in love with our babies - and why we sometimes do not.

As you know, I have been struggling (principally at the feet of the families with whom I have worked) to understand these issues for the past 13 years of my practice in Michigan, and now in Illinois. While these videotapes by no means represent any sort of "final word" about the emotional needs of babies and their families - both the babies and their families constantly force us to look again, to revise our theories - they do represent important new understandings about the nature of human attachments.

My all-too-infrequent but always exhilarating meetings with you at airports and other spots along the way testify to the loneliness of this work. But the growth of the CSPCC and this journal, and the award of the commission that led to my developing these tapes, suggest that a new era of interest in the family - and in the prevention of emotional disorders - may be at hand.

The enclosed paper, which was presented at the Ninth Annual Conference of the Michigan Association for Infant Mental Health (Ann Arbor, Spring 1984) is a bit audacious in its pointing to the challenges

and worries facing those anxious to protect the needs of infants and their families, as we move into the 21st Century. If it is of interest, you may feel free to excerpt without further review by me.

Please accept my admiration for the work of the CSPCC, and my best wishes for further impact on the world regarding the early years of life.

Sincerely,  
Michael Trout, Director  
The Infant-Parent Institute  
501 South 6th St.  
Champaign, Illinois  
61820

#### Editor's Note

*Michael Trout, in my opinion, is one of the living giants in the field of Infant Mental Health. He is well trained (by Selma Fraiberg), articulate, compassionate, energetic and humble. All of these qualities come through in this series of films which, thank God, will allow his wisdom and understanding to be passed to a wider group than those privileged to attend his teaching seminars.*

*If every prospective parent were to see and understand these ten half-hour television programs, tomorrow's world would be different - a very much safer and more loving place.*

E.T.B.

Thanks to a special arrangement with The Infant-Parent Institute, these tapes are available on 1/2" VHS in Canada through the CSPCC for \$175 Canadian per Unit (two 1/2 hr. programs) or \$675 Canadian for all 5 Units (ten 1/2 hr. programs). When ordered directly from the U.S., currency exchange, duty and tax result in a Unit price of \$262.47 Canadian and a series price of \$1,049.92 Canadian.



# **“The Awakening and Growth of the Human: Studies in Infant Mental Health”**

**Unit 1: “THE NATURE OF HUMAN ATTACHMENTS IN INFANCY”**

An historical overview of infant mental health, with current thoughts on the process by which human infants and their primary caretakers develop a bond; what difference it makes to the infant's mental, motor, physical and emotional development, and how we may notice when such a bond is absent or conflicted. Suitable for use with “lay” groups (parents, educators, etc.) as well as for use as an introduction to more in-depth training of clinicians. The tape includes narrative and vignettes from both healthy and conflicted caregiver-infant dyads. Colour, ½ inch VHS, composed of two separate ½ hr. programs.

**Unit 2: THE PSYCHOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS OF PREGNANCY AND DELIVERY”**

A description of the intense but quite normal psychological work engaged in by a pregnant woman, how it changes her relationship with her mate, what difference this work makes for her future relationship with the baby, how it all comes together at labour and delivery to the benefit or detriment of the mother-infant bond, and how the father finds a place in this process and prepares for the newborn's arrival. This tape includes tape clips of mothers and fathers discussing their pregnancies. As an educational tool, the tape is appropriate for childbirth preparation instructors and physician inservices, as well as for the training of infant mental health clinicians. Colour, ½ inch VHS, composed of two separate ½ hr. programs.

**Unit 3: “CONDUCTING AN INFANT MENTAL HEALTH FAMILY ASSESSMENT”**

A discussion of the methods used to elicit material from families regarding the nature of their relationship with the baby and the etiology of the breakdown in their bond with the baby. Vignettes of interviews with families are used to demonstrate how information is sometimes offered by way of parent-infant interaction, or by way of stories or behaviour that APPEARS unrelated to the questions at hand. Suggestions are offered about how to organize material for a report, and how to prepare for court. The tape is intended principally for use in professional training. Colour, ½” VHS, composed of two separate ½ hr. programs.

**Unit 4: “THE NEWBORN, THE FAMILY AND THE DANCE”**

A discussion, with tape clips from both normal and troubled families - of the ways in which real or imagined characteristics of the newborn affect the way in which he is integrated into the family and the nature of his relationships with primary caretakers. The TWO-WAY character of infant-parent interactions and of the evolving relationship, and the problems of FIT, are highlighted. A live demonstration of the Brazelton (neonatal behavioural assessment) with two newborns is offered. The tape is useful with childbirth preparation classes, parent and preparent groups, and physician inservices, as well as with professional training curricula for infant mental health clinicians. Colour, ½ inch VHS, composed of two separate ½ hr. programs.

**Unit 5:**

**“THE BIRTH OF A SICK OR HANDICAPPED BABY: IMPACT ON THE FAMILY”**

An examination of the struggles engaged in by parents and siblings to integrate a handicapped or sick newborn into the family. Real families speak of their experiences, and the results of a two-year study are offered. Long-term consequences for the parents, for the siblings, and for the emotional and mental development of the living but handicapped child are discussed. This tape is appropriate for viewing by educators, physicians, parent groups, and clinical trainees (in psychiatry, obstetrics, nursing, psychology, social work and infant mental health). Colour, ½ inch VHS, composed of two separate ½ hr. programs.

Available from: The CSPCC, Box 700, Midland, Ontario, Canada L4R 4P4  
(705) 526-5647

Each Unit (composed of two separate ½ hr. programs) - \$175.00  
The Entire Series (5 Units, each composed of two separate ½ hr. programs) - \$675.00

## For the Love of Children

SENATOR PAULA HAWKINS: We now know that child abuse and neglect can be cyclical. The damage done by one generation is repeated by the next...not always, but often.

I'm Senator Paula Hawkins. This is CHILDREN AT RISK, and this program is about breaking the cycle of neglect and hurt...“For the Love of Children”.

ALICE MILLER: What can prevent child abuse is only to know that the child feels from the beginning of his or her life. This is the new discovery.

ANNOUNCER: Producer Wendy Blair explores the trauma of child abuse in a conversation with the Swiss psychoanalyst Alice Miller and in readings from her books.

MILLER: Children who are given the chance to grow up with respect for their feelings and needs will never be tempted to destroy others, or themselves.

WENDY BLAIR: Alice Miller decided a few years ago to give up private practice and her training work with analysts to write. She is now the acclaimed author of 3 books: two of them best sellers in Europe. In her second book, **For Your Own Good, subtitled Hidden Cruelty In Child-Rearing And The Roots Of Violence**, Dr. Miller traces the effects on children of traditional and still widely-used child-rearing practices. Here's an example.

READING: If parents are fortunate enough to drive out willfulness from the very beginning by means of scolding and the rod, they will have obedient docile and good children. Pedagogy correctly points out that even a baby in diapers has a will of its own and is to be treated accordingly.

GIRL: The earliest memory I can remember was, I was like two and a half or three, and I wet my pants and I remember my mother called up a neighbour. I really liked these neighbours, they were real good to me and they treated me very well. She said, “She's still wetting her pants at her age, and as a result I'm making her wear a diaper.” And I just remember feeling just so crushed. Just utterly humiliated that she would do that, because I felt bad that I had wet them.

MILLER: The child cannot explain himself. He can only feel. So we come in touch with a person who is only feeling. And it is new, because we have forgotten how it is to be feeling.

GIRL: My mother would want me to take naps a lot, and she would put the blanket over my head. And I remember not being able to breath very well. I just remember feeling like I didn't want to be a disruption, so I would just lie there in bed real good to just have my mother's affection. And I remember just really feeling like I just really needed her a lot. So, as a result I wouldn't budge from the bed. And I just hated being in that bed. I used to feel like I was suffocating, and I used to feel like someone was putting the life out of me or something. Just trying to stifle the life in me.

READING: In order to survive, a little child needs love, care, attention and tenderness from the adult...and will do anything in order to get them and keep them.

GIRL: I remember my mother was teaching me the alphabet and she would reward me with Kraft Caramels. But if I got a letter wrong, she would hit me with a little plastic thing on my hand. And I

“For the Love of Children”, aired on National Public Radio's “Horizons” series on March 6th, 1985. © 1985 National Public Radio. Reprinted with Permission.

Funding for the National Public Radio special series “Children at Risk,” was provided by The National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect, (Department of Health and Human Services), NPR Member Radio Stations, and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

This ½ hour cassette (Order Number HO:85-03-06) may be purchased from: National Public Radio, Customer Service, P.O. Box 55417, Madison, Wisconsin, U.S.A. 53705. The cost is \$9.95 U.S. plus \$3.00 U.S. for postage and handling.



In order to survive, a little child needs love, care, attention and tenderness from the adult...and will do anything in order to get them and keep them.

remember feeling just incredibly frustrated not being able to get the word right in the first place, and then having her hit me for it. It was just more than the physical pain. I remember just feeling kind of broken hearted that my mother was hitting me.

BLAIR: For a little child to acknowledge the fact that his mother or father is cruel or sadistic is not possible, says Alice Miller.

MILLER: He can lose everything. And to lose the love or the illusion of love of a mother, this means to lose the life. Because the love is the life for the child. And he cannot take this risk.

BLAIR: Dr. Miller says our earliest feelings are the most intense of our whole lives. But, she says, the hurt child has no alternative but to repress early feelings of hurt and pain. For to feel them would be to acknowledge the possibility of his own

destruction.

MILLER: It's quite impossible. A child would have to die with these feelings. Really. So if you have to repress such intensive feeling, you have to put much energy in what you do, in this repression. And it is what makes you ill. The more you have to repress the more you are not free to live your life.

GIRL: I just remember feeling very unloved. I think I always knew that I didn't have a regular life. And that's a thing that's very hard to deal with. It's just kind of going through the motions of life without feeling some of the joy, you know.

BLAIR: We forget our earliest painful experiences because we have to, says Dr. Miller. But —

MILLER: Repression is not a real solution. It is only a concealing. A Hiding. But

the hidden feeling is active in your unconscious.

**BLAIR:** To illustrate what she means, Dr. Miller cites the painful early life of the Austrian writer Franz Kafka, who, though he was an unusually gifted and sensitive little boy, was never understood or appreciated — only manipulated — by both his parents. Kafka suffered lifelong illness and anxiety because he repressed his earliest painful feelings, says Miller. But in his art he managed to tap them, so that in a brilliant story like “The Metamorphosis” we can recognize what we have all felt — and forgotten: the utter helplessness of the human baby.

**READING:** Gregor Samsa, a conscientious salesman whose work enables him to provide devotedly for his parents and sister, awakens one morning to find he has turned into a repulsive insect. He is aware of his mother’s and sister’s touching attempts to overcome their disgust. The unremitting isolation separating him from the world around him, and the disgrace he is bringing to his loved ones, who know no other way of responding to him than with fear, horror, guilt, murderous desires, shame in front of others, and hypocrisy arising from their anguish. He himself is unable to speak. He is tiny in comparison to the size of the furniture, weak, with no possibility of articulation, or of being understood, or taken seriously by the others.

**(MUSIC ENDS)**

**BLAIR:** Alice Miller gives examples of other kinds of suffering in early childhood, sometimes in the form of psychological abuse that is very hard for anyone to

remember as a grownup, because the abuse consists not so much of single events as a whole climate and atmosphere that stifle a child’s exuberance and vitality.

**READING:** Until he was four I taught little Konrad three lessons — to pay attention, to obey, and to be moderate in his desires. The first I accomplished by showing him the wonders of nature and by explaining pictures to him. The second by constantly making him, whenever in my presence, do things at my bidding. And the third, by often denying him something he asked for that he especially wanted. For example, I always arranged it so he was the last one served at meals. And when we had rice pudding, which he especially liked, he would embrace his mother and cry, “Pudding!” with great delight. “Yes,” I said, “And little Konrad shall have some too. But first the big people shall eat, and then the little people. Here grandmother, is some pudding for you. And for you grandfather. And here for mother and father. And this is for little Crystal. And this? Whom do you think this is for?” “Konrad,” he answered joyfully. He did not find this arrangement unjust.

**READING:** The little people sit quietly at the table and wait. This need not be demeaning. It all depends on the adult’s intention. And this adult shows unabashedly how much he enjoys his power and his bigness at the expense of the little ones.

**Abuse consists not so much of single events as a whole climate and atmosphere that stifle a child’s exuberance and vitality.**



MILLER: A child cannot say, "I hate you because you are so cruel with me." It's simply not possible. WHY NOT? Because the parents who are cruel silence the child.

GIRL: When I was in fourth grade my mother had bound my legs, bound my hands behind my back, put an entire wash cloth in my mouth, and I was a really small kid — I don't know how she got it in there. And she not only had the wash cloth in my mouth, but she tied it in with a tie that wrapped around my whole face. Oh God! I remember also what she did. She actually had a pillowcase over my head — I had forgotten that — so neighbours wouldn't hear me screaming and crying from her beating me.

MILLER: The normal reaction to being abused would be anger and pain. But you cannot experience the anger if you are forbidden to be angry. And you cannot experience the pain if you are alone.

READING: Theoretically, a child beaten by her mother or father could afterwards cry her heart out in the arms of a kind aunt, and tell her what happened. But such good fortune is rare, and the battered child is very unlikely to have the inner freedom to seek her out and make use of her.

MILLER: You cannot experience the feeling in a hostile environment when you are alone, as a child. And, an abusing environment is always, at the same time, a hostile environment. So you have to repress it in order to survive in this environment.

GIRL: To this day, when I listen to people who talk about being in the Nazi prison camps, I can identify with them. And it always makes me very sick.

MILLER: And you ask me why it is so dangerous? Why it is not okay that we can say, "Oh forget it. It was difficult, but now I am grownup." It's exactly this point because the grown up didn't really forget, he cannot forget what happened. The body has — didn't forget. As parent he will do the same thing to the children and he will argue that it is okay. And so the system of abusing the children and exploiting the children — for their own needs — from the needs of the parents — will continue.

READING: Parents' motives are the same today as they always were. In beating their children, they are struggling to regain the power they once lost to their own parents. In a tiny baby for the first time they see the vulnerability of their own earliest years, which they are unable to recall. Only now, with someone weaker than they, do they finally fight back, often quiet fiercely.

MILLER: This is the tragedy of abuse. That the abused people deny that they were abused, and they do it to the children. If somebody **doesn't** deny, he is less in danger to repeat it. You see, if you are trapped, you are looking for a door to come out from the trap. So the door is the children, because you are not allowed to be angry with your parents — to feel angry for what they have done. But, if you have a child, you have an open door. With the child it is allowed to do anything. You can beat the child and it is called education or upbringing.

READING: Although parents always mistreat their children for psychological reasons, that is to say because of their own needs, there is a basic assumption in our society that this treatment is good for children.

READING: The Bible says he who loves his son...chastises him often...that he may be his joy when he grows up. Thou shall beat him with a rod and shall deliver his soul from hell. With these words, Solomon reveals to us that true love can also be severe.

MILLER: For King Solomon it was normal to think like that. But for us it is cruel. And it is stupid.

GIRL: Both of my parents were beaten up and psychologically abused as children.

MILLER: It is not true that we can find child abusers who were not abused themselves in childhood. There will not be even one person of this kind. But it is true that many of them completely deny their past. And it is exactly this denial which forces them to repeat their childhood.

GIRL: My father was an escape artist. He went to all kinds of meetings, he did very well in his job. He went up the ladder very well in his job. He went to all kinds of chess meetings at night...courses at night...societies at night. And I remember just him being gone so much of the time, it was just devastating, because he was gone. I was getting abused. But he still can't acknowledge the fact that he was abused. He can't really acknowledge it. He can't really even deal with it.

MILLER: Because it is too painful. It's always the same story. It is too painful to be alone as a child and to know you are not loved. Because of things you cannot change. And you cannot understand that you are beaten because your grandmother was cruel with your mother. Can you understand it when you are two years old or five years old? So you think, and you are told that it is because you are wrong. And you believe it.

READING: The abused child is alone with his suffering...not only within the family, but also within himself. And because he cannot share his pain with anyone, he is also unable to create the place in his own soul where he could cry his heart out. Keep a stiff upper lip and be brave. Defenselessness and helplessness find no haven in the self of the child, who later identifying with the

aggressor, persecutes these qualities whenever they appear.

HENRY LEE LUCAS: I used to shoot dogs and cats and whatever come around the house. They wouldn't leave. So, I just shot them.

READING: Children who are lectured to, learn how to lecture. If they are threatened, they learn how to threaten. If ridiculed, they learn how to ridicule. If humiliated, they learn how to humiliate. If their psyche is killed, they will learn how to kill. The only question is who will be killed...one's self, others, or both.

SCOTT SIMON: How many people did you kill?

LUCAS: Well that's going to be over 360. The exact number I don't know really, but it's going to be over 360.

BLAIR: Henry Lee Lucas is in jail in Texas, serving three life sentences, and awaiting the death penalty. In an interview this year with NPR's Scott Simon, the most striking thing about this murderer, is his near complete lack of emotion as he describes his crimes, and the facts of his childhood.

MILLER: The facts...he can remember the facts, but they are disconnected from the feelings.

LUCAS: I don't blame my childhood for what I turned out to be.

SIMON: Your mother...

LUCAS: She was a prostitute. I grew up from about four years old, best I can remember, till about seven years old as a girl. I lived as a girl.

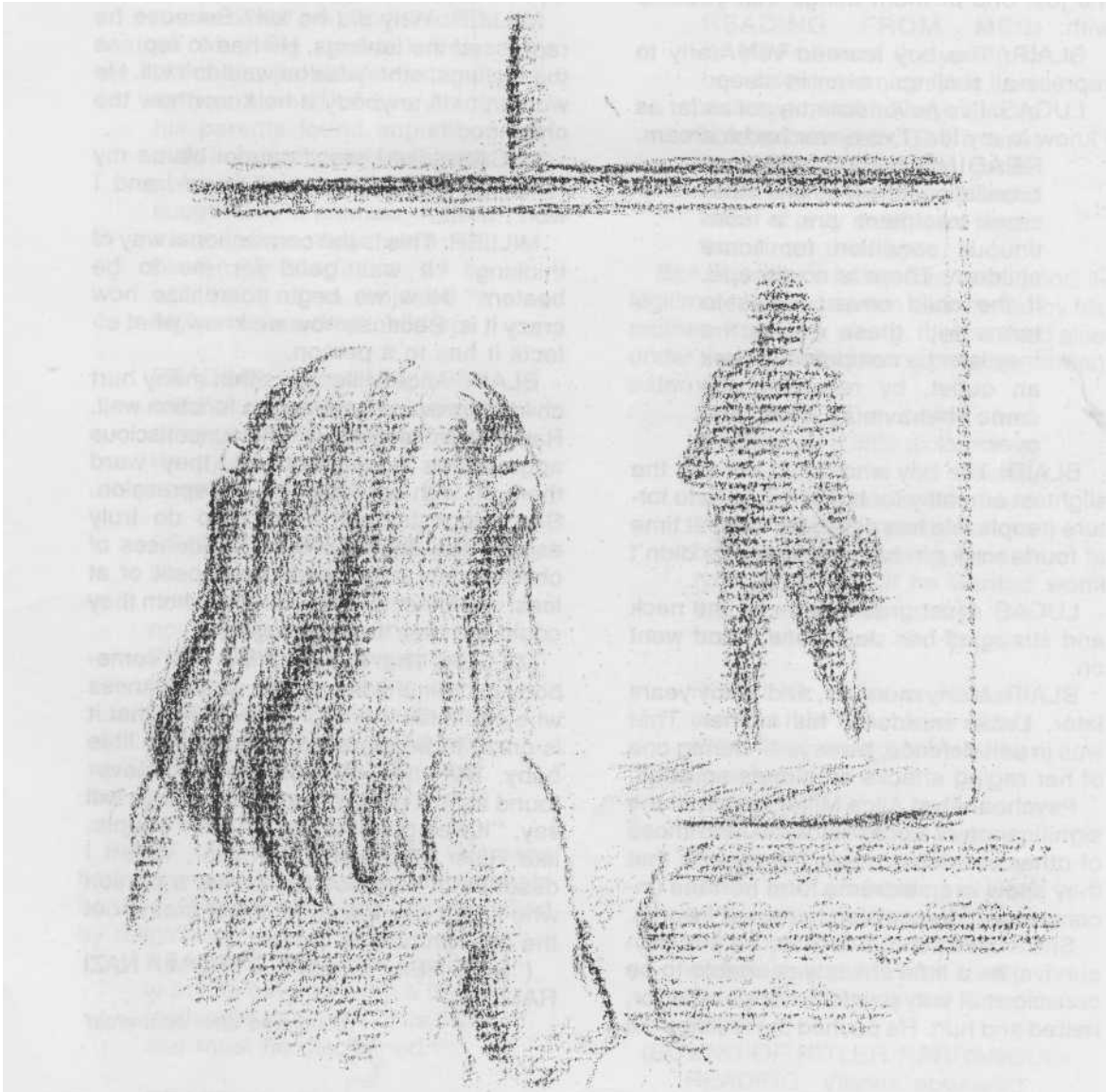
SIMON: What do you mean lived as a girl?

LUCAS: I was dressed as a girl. I had long hair like a girl. I wore girl's clothes. My first grade school teacher, which was the principal of the school, she took and cut my hair, and dressed me up as a boy. And my mother would like to beat her to death because of it.

SIMON: Your mother had boyfriends?

LUCAS: Plenty of them. Every day and every night. She didn't care what she did, as long as we stayed out of her way and did what she told us.

BLAIR: But sometimes the small boy couldn't stay out of the way of his mother's murderous rages.



My father was an escape artist. He went to all kinds of meetings

## **Many hurt children grow up seeming to function well.**

LUCAS: I have got a scar in the back of my head about four inches long, where I got knocked in the head with a two-by-four. It's just one of them things that you live with.

BLAIR: The boy learned very early to repress all feelings, even in sleep.

LUCAS: I've never dreamt, not as far as I know in my life. I've never had a dream.

READING: Psychological humiliation, beatings and other cruel treatment are a continuous condition for some children. There is no escape.

If the child never comes to terms with these events, he may later be compelled to seek an outlet, by repeating the same behaviour...over and over.

BLAIR: The boy who could not feel the slightest empathy for himself, began to torture people. He murdered for the first time at fourteen, a girl his age whom he didn't know.

LUCAS: I just grabbed her by the neck and strangled her. Just done it and went on.

BLAIR: Many murders, and many years later, Lucas murdered his mother. That was in self-defence, he says — during one of her raging attacks on him as an adult.

Psychoanalyst Alice Miller says that the significance of Lucas' story — and those of other convicted mass killers — is that they show in an extreme form how the unconscious "compulsion to repeat" works.

She contends that Lucas, for his own survival as a little child, was unable to be conscious of very painful feelings of terror, hatred and hurt. He pushed the feelings out

of his awareness, but they did not go away. All his life, again and again, he acted those feelings out, in seemingly random, unmotivated, violent acts.

MILLER: Why did he kill? Because he repressed the feelings. He had to repress the feelings, otherwise he wouldn't kill. He wouldn't kill anybody if he knew how the childhood is.

LUCAS: Like I say, I cannot blame my family for what happened to me, and I won't do it.

MILLER: This is the conventional way of thinking: "It was good for me to be beaten." Now we begin to realize how crazy it is. Because now we know what effects it has to a person.

BLAIR: Alice Miller says that many hurt children grow up **seeming** to function well. Rather than "acting out" their unconscious aggressions against others, they ward them off with an addiction or depression. She suggests that those who do truly escape the destructive consequences of childhood hurt enjoyed the benefit of at least one other human being to whom they could tell their true feelings.

MILLER: That means there was somebody in their childhood who was a witness who could tell them, or show them, that it is crazy to beat a child, or to beat a little baby. But there are people who never found such a person and these people will say, "It was good for me." These people, like Hitler, Eichmann, Himmler, whom I describe in my book never met a person who could say the child is not crazy, but the environment is crazy.

("SIEG HEIL" CHANTED FROM A NAZI RALLY)

*continued after centrefold*

## **Rather than "acting out" their unconscious aggressions against others, they ward them off with an addiction or depression.**



**BLAIR:** In her book **FOR YOUR OWN GOOD** Alice Miller tests her thesis in a long chapter about Adolph Hitler. Someone the whole world acknowledges was a destructive monster. She calls the chapter "The Last Act of the Silent Drama" because in it she demonstrates that Hitler's adult acts of despotism and murder were the visible result of a long sequence of tragic but invisible earlier events: for Hitler, and for many of his followers as well.

**READING:** Rudolph Hess' first memories of his childhood are of washing compulsively, which was probably an attempt to free himself of everything his parents found impure or dirty in him. Since his parents showed him no affection, he sought this in animals. All the more, since they were not beaten by his father, as he was, and thus enjoyed a higher status than children.

**READING:** Empathizing with a child's unhappy beginnings does not imply exoneration of the cruel acts he later commits.

**READING:** Little Adolph could be certain of receiving constant beatings. He knew that nothing he did would prevent them. All he could do was deny the pain. In other words, deny himself and identify with the aggressor. No one could help him. Especially not his mother who was passive and herself beaten.

**BLAIR:** Most adults in Hitler's Germany had been raised according to precepts handed down for centuries and sanctified by religion.

**READING:** Pedagogy correctly points out that even a baby in diapers has a will of its own and must be disciplined.

**READING:** The men and women who carried out "The Final Solution" did not let their feelings stand in their way, for the simple reason that they had been raised from infancy not to have any feelings of their own, but to experience their

parents wishes as their own.  
(SOUND OF HITLER HARRANGUE)

**READING FROM MEIN KAMPF:** My pedagogy is hard. What is weak must be hammered away. In my fortresses of the teutonic order, a young generation will grow up before which the world will tremble.

**BLAIR:** One can glimpse Adolph Hitler's early childhood in these words from **MEIN KAMPF**.

**READING FROM MEIN KAMPF:** I want the young to be violent, domineering, undismayed, cruel. They must be able to bear pain. There must be nothing weak or gentle about them. The free splendid beast of prey must once again flash from their eyes.

**BLAIR:** Hitler's father had been poor, illegitimate, and had been abandoned by his mother when very young, and he lived also under the stigma of having possible Jewish paternity.

**READING:** The father had established a little dictatorship in his own home. He treated wife and children with a hard hand, Adolph, in particular, he had no understanding for. He tyrannized him. If he wanted the boy to come to him, he would whistle on two fingers.

**READING:** Hitler once commented that if the Jews didn't exist, they would have to be invented.

**READING:** A child whose father does not call him by name, but by whistling to him as though he were a dog has the same disenfranchised and nameless status in the family as did the Jew in the Third Reich.

(SOUND OF HITLER HARRANGUE)

**READING:** Vienna appeared to me in a different light. Wherever I went I began to see Jews. In addition to their physical uncleanliness, is there any form of filth or profligacy, particularly in cultural life, without at least one Jew involved in it? Gradually I began

to hate them.

(CROWD CHEERING HITLER)

READING: Forbidden long-avoided feelings could now be given free reign. Now there was no need to repress his hatred for his father, and Adolph could allow the dam to burst without being beaten for it.

BLAIR: Alice Miller says the case of Adolph Hitler is important because we can still learn from it about the origins of violence in ourselves.

MILLER: Hitler destroyed the world because he denied the pain of his childhood. He denied the hatred against his father. If you can feel, the feeling never kills.

(MUSIC STARTS)

READING: Paradoxical as it may sound, if the impotent hatred of early childhood can be experienced, destructive and self-destructive behaviour will come to an end.

MILLER: Now it has been scientifically proven in the last few years that the devastating results of the traumatization of children are thrown back on the society. But, we behave as if we didn't know. And the society will stay as it was, cruel and violent. And the increasing violence comes always from the same source. There is no other source.

READING: The stockpiling of

nuclear weapons is only a symbol of bottled up feelings of hatred. And our inability to perceive and articulate genuine human needs.

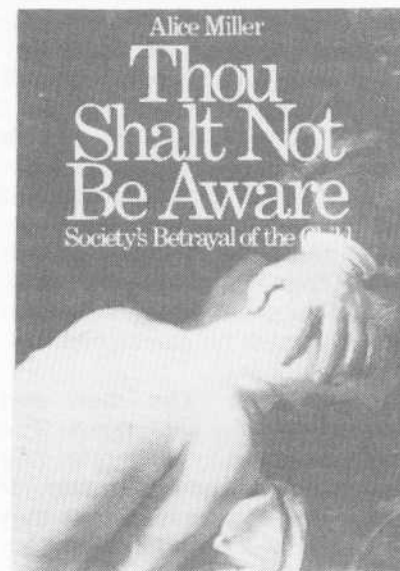
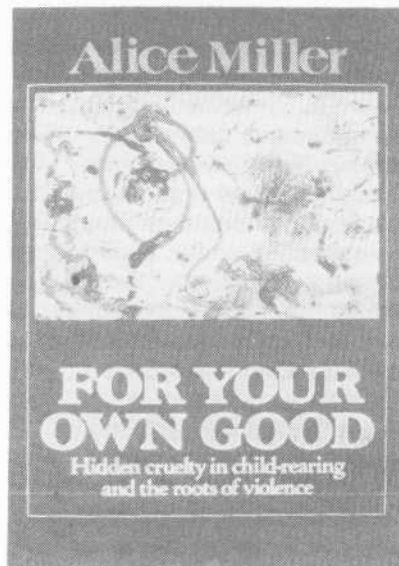
MILLER: Alice Miller's books are first **The Drama of the Gifted Child**, a Basic Books paperback in this country. The second, **For Your Own Good**, is just out in paperback from Farrar, Straus, & Giroux. And the third, by the same publisher, is called **Thou Shalt Not Be Aware: Society's Betrayal of the Child**.

MILLER: I want to make society aware of the problem because the **society** is sick. Our society is sick as long as it denies the connections between the childhood experiences and the later behaviour of the adult. Yes, it is so simple. Many things are much more simple than we think.

(MUSIC ENDS)

ANNOUNCER: "Children at Risk: For the Love of Children" was written, produced and narrated by Wendy Blair. The Readings were performed by Madeleine Lundberg, Robert Montiegel, and Alex van Oss. Engineering by Terry Knight. Executive Producer Frank Tavares.

SENATOR PAULA HAWKINS: This is Senator Paula Hawkins. CHILDREN AT RISK was made possible with funds from the National Center on Child Abuse and Neglect, Department of Health and Human Services. Additional funding from NPR Member Stations and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting. □



## **DAS ENGELEIN KOMMT**

### **(The Little Angel Cometh)**

by Gertrude Story

When my sister Elsa was a baby she was an angel and my father called her das Engelein. At our house people never spoke in German. My mother would not allow it. Only my father ever did, and we children could hardly understand him. It was the fury of his life having non-German children. One of the furies. He had several. The Brotherhood of Man was another. My father loved the Brotherhood of Man with an ardent vocal passion.

He loved his daughters, too, I suppose, but they never knew it. He loved his son, and his daughters knew it. He loved him like Isaac loved his Jacob or like Abraham his Isaac. My father never sacrificed his Floydie on any altar; never even tried to. But he killed his daughters a thousand times over, and this is to be the story of the last time he killed my sister Elsa in her snow-white Engelein gown, her wings spread and ready to soar at the church Christmas concert one year in the sandy, dry, hard farming district where we used to live.

It had to be in German. That whole church concert had to be in German. Some of the kids did O.K., they had mothers who hardly spoke English. In that community the fathers went out into the world and did the business and learned to speak the language of business. The mothers stayed home and plucked geese, and made quilts and perogies and babies, and crooned them to sleep with Komm' Herr Jesus, and sent them there with a few slaps to the ear if the child went unwilling.

So it was at our house, too. Except for the German and the Jesus. My mother didn't believe in either one. She had had

it different at home. Her father was just as German as anybody else in that settlement but his mind had a different order. His daughter was to go to Normal School and be a teacher but she chose Papa instead. No wonder, I suppose. Papa was tall and beautiful and imposing and he courted every woman in the district atop his large white stallion, taking them for rides into the hills to show them the wood violets.

I think the violets stopped when my mother agreed to come into his kitchen, but his passions did not. At least I knew we had violin and lots of talk and booming laughter when the neighbours came, but cold lips and steel blue eyes when they left again.

It was a hard life in a lot of ways, but this is not that story. I tell it to you this way, though, because it is very hard, at fifty, to keep it going well. To keep the order. I've had too many other voices inside my head for so long and Papa bellowing from his bed after Mama died and the third white stallion threw him, for tea and beef broth and a pen to write his newest order.

Papa was a difficult man. He lived for too many years. I looked after him for twenty-three of them. Mama, I think now sometimes, almost had it easy. She spoke back, you see, and the hate did not gather, black and hard and festering, around her heart as it did mine.

But I want to tell you about Elsa. I think that is what she means me to do when she comes now and stands by my side when I am writing away the blackness and drinking the coffee Papa forbade in this house because it repelled him. She has been dead forty-one years now, I counted it out today, and I suppose she has forgotten how

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to speak. On account of not knowing the sacred language, ha ha, I never believed it. Papa used to say it was all in German up there, a German pastor once told him.

For all those years I was careful not to care, but now I see that Elsa did not even go there. She couldn't have. The church says not, and they should be right on some things; it is too terrible otherwise to try to live.

But all those years I thought it was an accident and I'm sure Papa did, too. But I think Mama knew. I do not want to do the thinking sometimes, there is a danger in it, but I think now Mama knew because it raised a real uproar the way she went to bed and stayed there the day it happened and wouldn't even get up for the funeral.

But that's ahead of it again. I need the order. It is harder than to have it in your head and know it, this setting of it down. Once I wanted to be a writer and I read King Arthur over and over until I knew the order of telling things but now I cannot keep it straight.

It goes like this though. We always went to church. All but our mother. Papa said we had to go to church and learn the glory; it was not safe to live in this world otherwise. And the glory was only good if it came in German. It was the holy way. It was important because it had to do with Christ and the angels and your holy German soul. The words you spoke in the old tongue, he said, helped to get you the glory.

That pastor, I knew him, said so and Papa believed him but our mother didn't. She said it was a peasant's attitude and it was either all true in any language or it was not all true and maybe none of it true and so what, it didn't put bread on the table, but you sure couldn't break it up into German and English and French, it wasn't logical.

And Papa said what was logical was if she would allow his daughters to speak German at the supper table but the Schroeders seemed to be such English boot lickers it seemed to be more than a man could expect to have the old tongue spoken around his own fireside. And our mother said, seemed to her it was Schroeder money bought the coal to keep

the fire going in it. And Papa said Yes, yes, rub it in; and he took his box full of blue socialist tracts and saddled his white stallion with the red wild eyes and rode to Elmyra Bitner's to discuss the Brotherhood of Man.

And Mama would scrub hard at the fading red apples on the oilcloth on the kitchen table and make mouths at the way the corners were wearing through and she'd say, Come on girls, we'll make brown sugar fudge tonight.

And our mother made brown sugar fudge with butter and walnuts most nights he did that. And sometimes when my sister Elsa peered too long into the night from the kitchen window straining to see his white stallion coming back out of the dark night my mother would say, Don't be silly, girl, do you think a bear will get him or something, he's only gone to get educated, come on and we'll make ourselves some popcorn.

But Elsa wouldn't. She just turned her back on our mother and went and rearranged Papa's pipes neatly beside the family picture taken when there was only Papa and our mother and Elsa and me because our sister Laura already lived just at Grampa Schroeder's, she had to, Papa said she was not his child. I hope that is the order. It seems to fit here. Laura is important; she got lost in a different way. And while Elsa looked at herself being an Engelein in the family picture on the sideboard our mother and I would pop popcorn, shelling it first, plink-plank into a pan off the cob, and heating the heavy frying pan on the back of the stove while we did.

Not Floydie, though. Floydie was a boy and anyway he was young and fast asleep by that time of night. But Elsa would only pick away at her bowlful now and again and when Mama said, Come on, eat up, it's just the way you like it, Elsa would get that tight look around her eyes and say, No, I'm saving it for Floydie. And Mama would say, He's spoiled enough, and Elsa would say, you don't like anybody, do you? And she'd go back to the window and look some more for Papa and his stallion and she only left her place when Floydie cried and then she always ran to him before Mama could go.

He loved his daughters, too, I suppose, but they never knew it.

And yet Floydie was the reason, I don't care, why Elsa had to look out into the dark night for Papa with her pink barn-goose eyes that got teary from too much watching. And Floydie was the reason Grampa Schroeder got so mad he kept giving our mother money to buy us girls new dresses for the school picnic and the church concert. Floydie was Papa's Sunny Boy Cereal and Elsa used to be his Engelein, but now she was just a girl who had grown a long Schroeder neck and couldn't do arithmetic.

She couldn't learn her German piece, either. For the church Christmas concert you had to learn to speak a piece in German, no matter what. You had to or your folks were shamed for ever. Even my mother went to the church Christmas concert. It was called the Tannenbaum and nobody missed going. It was holy, and not even the littlest ones expected to see Santa.

It was as if to say the white light of Jesus shone those nights. The church was lit with candles. Not even the coal oil lamps were lit and certainly not the gas mantel lanterns with their piercing twin eyes. Only candles were holy.

And that year, that last year, Elsa said she wanted to be an angel. An angel in German yet, and with twenty-eight lines to speak. When Pastor asked who would take the part Elsa's hand shot up and it surprised me. Elsa was not that way. She would rather not speak, even in English, and to do anything in German killed her.

Especially speak to Papa. When you have been an Engelein and aren't any longer, to stand before Papa and say ihr Kinderlein kommet, zur Bethlehem Stall into his pale slough-ice eyes doesn't help to make the wings grow, and if you are one to have had the wings clipped you know this is the right order to say it.

Kinderlein, not Kidderlein, Papa told her. Bah-tlah-hem, not Bethlehem; what do you want to put a thuh in it for? The people will think you're not raised right. Now start the first verse again from the beginning and stand straight and speak it right. Twenty-eight lines only, a big girl like you, and you can't even learn it.

Hellslanzendem was the word that did it. Hellzadem, Elsa said. Who wouldn't? It's hard in German to get all the zeds and enns and urrs in, and lots of times the Germans don't even care when they talk it. But when it comes to their kids, watch out, they're supposed to all speak like preachers.

I talked German in my head all the time. Nobody knew it. One of the voices in my head was a German man and he told jokes sometimes in German on the pastor when church went on too long. Hier ist mir ein alter Fart, he'd say sometimes, and I would try not to smile; to smile was dangerous. And the voice would tell me to go look up Fart in Papa's German dictionary when we got home. But we never touched Papa's books, that was dangerous, too, and I would have if I'd wanted but I didn't want to care about it.

Elsa cared too much. It was dangerous. Day by day she sewed on her Engelein costume, looking quite often at the picture on the sideboard. She sewed in the parlour where you weren't supposed to use thread because it worked itself into the carpet. Mama told her she could sit there when she caught her sewing at four o'clock in the morning once by the kitchen lamp. Its flame flickered pale and yellow.

Silly goose, Mama told her, it's too hard on the eyes and I could do it on the machine in a minute. But Elsa only turned her back on Mama, pretending she was looking for the scissors, and said I want to do it. And she'd show Papa after supper

He loved his son, and his daughters knew it.

## In our family we were never allowed...

how it was coming and he'd say yes, yes, but you're not gonna spend your life in a dress factory, how's the piece coming? and Elsa would stand there and speak, one angel wing drooping. Bei des Lichtleins hellzadem she'd get to and Papa would look up quick and say hellslanz-, hellslanz-, put the zed in it; how come you can't remember; people will think you aren't raised right.

And then he'd call Floydie to him for a game of clap-handies and Mama would say from the parlour door, Come work in the kitchen, the light's better. But Elsa would take her piece out of her apron pocket where she kept it to learn even in the toilet, I saw her once, and her mouth made the words but she did not say them out loud and she watched Papa and Floydie whenever they laughed until Papa said, You could likely learn better in the kitchen. And then she folded her piece up and put it in her pocket and went.

And on the Tannenbaum night she spoke it pretty well, so I don't know why Papa had to do it. The candles were lit in the church and you could almost smell the glory and people shook hands with everybody they could reach even after they got sitting down in the pews, the fat ones straining hard over their chests to shake with ones sitting behind them.

Grown-ups even shook with two-year-olds, and graced each other frohliche Weinachts whether they were mad at each other or not. And you could smell the Jap oranges from the brown paper bags, each one packed two man's hands full of peanuts and almonds and striped Christmas candy made into curlicues almost the size and shape of Floydie's new bow tie, and each one with two Jap oranges at the bottom so that you had to dig through all the other good stuff if you wanted to eat them first. One thing, Germans never were stingy when it was nuts and candy and they had the money.

Only we were never allowed to open our bags until we got home. In our family we were never allowed, that was Papa's way, you weren't supposed to look anxious, it meant you weren't raised right. But that night we girls were wearing our new

dresses Grampa Schroeder had given the money for and Floydie looked like a prince, true enough, like Papa said, in his royal blue breeches and snow white shirt with the ruffles. And Mama looked nice and came along to the concert and people graced her, too, and only a few made remarks like Well at least we see you at Christmas. So it was all good, very good, for once, and Elsa spoke up, spoke right up Ihr Kinderlein kommet only with not enough zeds and enns in it. But she spoke clear and good, her eyes shining and her hands folded and looking up into the candelabra so that her eyes got to be two candles, too. But the trouble was, her one wing drooped because she would not let Mama help her sew.

And Mrs. Elmyra Bitner said afterwards to Papa, Now Floydie, you tell that wife of yours I got time on my hands I could help her next Christmas with the kids' costumes if she wants. And Mama was standing right there, right there beside her, and Mrs. Elmyra Bitner turned to her next and graced her and maybe never even knew her, Mama hardly ever came to church, but Mama said later she did.

And Papa said it didn't matter; why worry about a little thing like that, the point was people thought his kids weren't raised right, how come she let the kid show up with a costume like that, it wasn't the first time, either. We were on the way home and the horses' hooves sounded crisp-crunch on the hard-packed snow of the road and the traces jingled like bells although Papa wasn't a one to put brass bells on the harness like a lot of men did, he said it was frippery. And I tried to think hard about the Jap oranges and how they'd be when we got home and Papa let us open our bags. I had to think hard about them; to think about Elsa's drooping wings was too dangerous.

But when we got home and Papa had carried Floydie inside, and us girls and Mama had our coats off, Elsa wouldn't even open her bag. And Mama was undressing Floydie fast asleep on the kitchen table, and Mama had one eye on Elsa sitting silent on a hard chair by the Quebec heater with her piece in her hand, and

Mama looked real nice, very nice, she hardly ever dressed up.

And Papa came up behind her, his fur coat and hat still on because he still had to go out and do the horses. And he laid his hand on Mama's shoulder and said, It's always better after church. And he showed his hard white even teeth under his silky smooth moustache, he was a very good looker always. And Mama just picked Floydie up and walked out from under his hand and said over her shoulder, Elmyra Bitner has lots of time on her hands I hear.

And Papa turned quick to the door and stepped on the paper bag with the costumes in it, I guess I should not have left it there. And he kicked at the bag and it split and the Engelein costume got tangled in his church overshoes and he grabbed it and threw it in the corner and didn't even bother putting on his barn boots because he knew he wasn't going to the barn, I guess. And he drove out the yard and the harness traces clanging no rhythm, no whatsoever rhythm, because the horses were going too hard, and it was cold for their lungs to go hard. Like Grampa Schroeder said, Papa was not much good on horses.

And Mama came out of the bedroom and picked up the Engelein costume and said, Never mind, Grampa said you looked real pretty. And Elsa grabbed the costume out of the hands and scrunched it all up tight and held it to her and went to the window to strain her eyes into the night to see Papa going.

And there was no moon.

And that night, before Papa got home from Elmyra Bitner's, Elsa took the key to the box stall and went in to the stallion. And Papa found her when he got home. And afterwards he would not even sell the stallion.

And when we moved to town a little later because Grampa Schroeder said so and even bought the house, he kept it at Elmyra Bitner's and went out from town Sundays to go to German church and ride his snow white stallion.

The words are said. The words of Elsa's dying are now said. They are in order I think and it does not seem too dangerous to have them down on paper. And Elsa does not speak yet, but I somehow think, now the words are all in order, if I just sit here and do not rearrange them, and think very hard on Papa, that she will nod and go. □

**Children who are lectured to, learn how to lecture. If they are threatened, they learn how to threaten. If ridiculed, they learn how to ridicule. If humiliated, they learn how to humiliate. If their psyche is killed, they will learn how to kill. The only question is who will be killed...one's self, others, or both.**

## **Is this Liberation?**

**by Anne Miles**

I would like to thank the Members of the Committee for allowing me to present my ideas today. My name is Anne Miles. I am a single mother of two children who feels that government subsidized daycare is not the answer to my needs.

The mother is a childcare provider worthy of recognition and remuneration. The feminist emphasis on free and universal daycare as the only road to liberation has bothered me for a number of years now. It does not meet the need some of us have to be close to our children, and our children's need to be close to us.

Many women in this society, however, claim to be bored, disenchanted and oppressed by the task of mothering. I feel that this alienation from their nurturing feelings is a sad consequence of having to mother within a patriarchal culture. Mothers have very good reasons for feeling this way.

Despite the sentimental lip service paid to motherhood by the most reactionary elements of society, in reality there is no status and no power in mothering as it is commonly practiced. Women are brain-washed to believe that predominantly male experts know more about parenting than they do; this despite the fact that the experts change their theories from year to year. I believe that many women see mothering as an arduous task only because they are trying to live up to unreasonable and constantly shifting standards of "good" mothering. It is my belief that a mother is better off following her own instincts, taking pride in her unique relationship with each child, allowing herself

just to relax in her role and truly enjoy her children, thus opening herself to the joys and delights of parenting. The reason this is not encouraged, it seems reasonable to assume, is that this anti-woman culture is terrified that mothers might profoundly influence their children, thus releasing humanizing female energy into a system that has long been weighted in favour of male values.

The wife in our society is seen as existing primarily to fill her husband's needs, not her children's or her own.

The experts employed by the status quo seem intent on separating us from our instincts. The weapon they use is guilt, and mothers are particularly vulnerable to it. We are made to feel that we are bad for our children and our children are bad for us. If we relax and allow them the freedom to grow, we are seen as being negligent. If we show that we care, we are accused of making our children overly dependent upon us. Many feminists, rather than encouraging us to be strong in our mothering, tell us that the way out of this no-win situation is to

**"Feminists have made a serious error in encouraging women to seek freedom by entering the dehumanizing male world..."**

work outside the home. This is supposedly a more healthy lifestyle for the mother. Given the lack of confidence in her mothering ability that the average woman has been left with, the idea of leaving her child in the care of trained, professional daycare workers and going back to the less complex, less frustrating world of the nine-to-five job, understandably has its appeal.

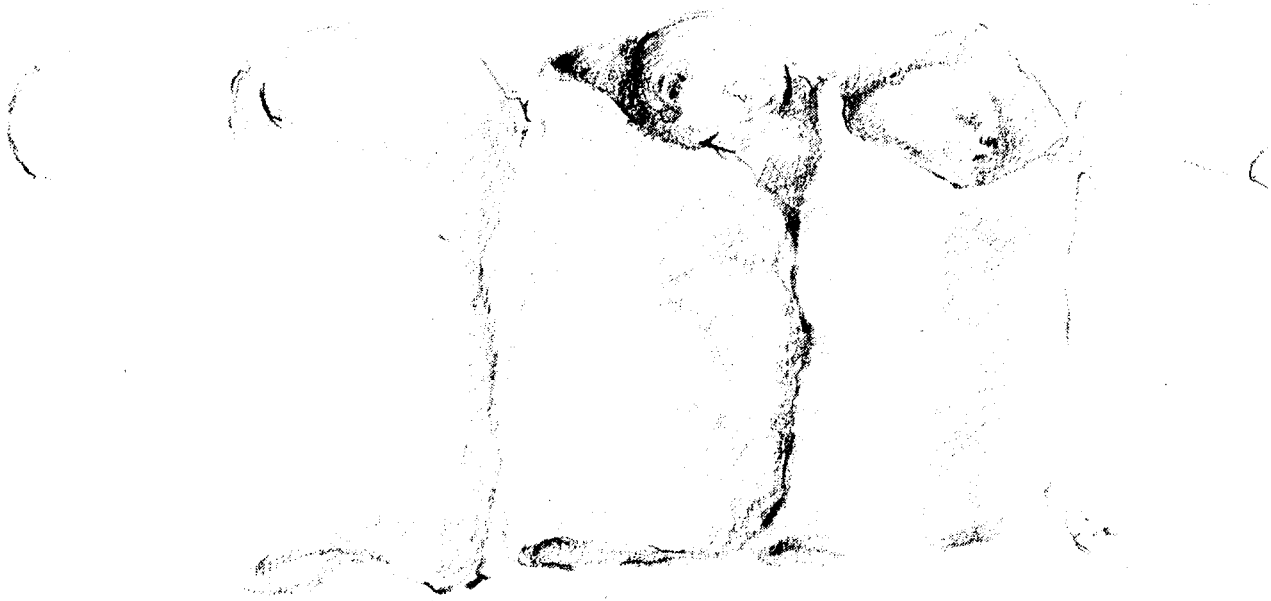


The wife in our society is seen as existing primarily to fill her husband's needs, not her children's or her own.

But is this liberation? I maintain that feminists have made a serious error in encouraging women to seek freedom by entering the dehumanizing male world, by cutting ourselves off (as men traditionally have) from our nurturing selves. A truly radical approach, it seems to me, would be to change the world to accommodate women and children, rather than having women adopt prevailing patriarchal values. It seems obvious that one way to do this is to value the traditionally unpaid labour of women. In the past, women have cared for the very young, the very old, and the very ill. Our rebellion against this slave labour has meant that the human beings

once in our care have been herded into institutions. But ours is a necessary and valuable work that has contributed for millennia to making society more humane. Why should it not be paid so that we may do it and still retain our autonomy? □

*Anne Miles, a former MHS Board member, is the mother of Laura, 7 and Tristan, 3, and a writer whose articles and letters on mothering, feminism and daycare have appeared in Kinesis, Mothering magazine and the MHNews. She lives in Gibsons, B.C.*



Our rebellion against this slave labour has meant that the human beings once in our care have been herded into institutions.

# **A Mother's Income**

**by Beth Shaw**

Good morning, Mrs. Martin and members of this Task Force. My name is Beth Shaw. I am married and have five daughters. Anne Miles and I have shared our thoughts on the concept of a Mothers' Income for several years now.

I am going to speak to this concept from a slightly different point of view. I don't think there can any longer be any doubt that the requirements of children for care can best be met by their natural mothers. Substitute mother-care providers, often childless themselves, are asking you, the federal government, for as much help as you can give in their unresolved quest to duplicate mother-care for children, but it cannot be done. Mother-care cannot be duplicated.

Nevertheless, it devolves upon us as a society to strive to provide adequate, substitute mother-care. There are many reasons and many situations which require non-parental care of children and they must be provided for. At the same time, it is essential that we strive to enhance the position of the full-time mother. It is a position which has been so badly denigrated that it is certainly not seen by many young women today as a viable career. One such young woman told me she grew up thinking that if she couldn't find anything better to do, she could always have children, as a kind of last resort.

The attention which our government, through this Parliamentary Task Force, and the media is giving to the provision of "substitute mother-care" leaves one to wonder what the status of real mother-care is.

What choices are available to mothers in Canada, today? I submit that mothers have but three choices for obtaining an income for themselves and their children.

## **First**

The first choice is to parent in partnership with a man who is employed and brings home an income to share with mother and children. The growing number of single mothers in this country provides evidence that this choice is no longer acceptable to large numbers of mothers (and fathers).

## **Second**

The second choice is to obtain a salaried job for oneself, necessitating that the care of one's children be provided by someone else. "Someone else" receives a salary to care for the same children whose mother could not afford to stay home and look after them.

## **Third**

The third choice is to apply for Welfare and stay home and care for your children yourself, receiving an income below the Canadian poverty level.

This brief outline of income choices for mothers provides a clear picture of the status of mothers in Canadian society, and it isn't very high-ranking.

Reprinted from Maternal Health News, Box 46563, Station G, Vancouver, B.C. V6R 4G8. (604) 438-5365.

I don't think there can any longer be any doubt that the requirements of children for care can best be met by their natural mothers.

It works all right for mothers with a decent income, but no mother receives a decent income for being a mother. We would like to see all mothers operating from a base of financial autonomy.

I don't think anyone would deny mothers' worth to society in that the next generation is totally dependent upon us for their existence; however, somewhere along the line — perhaps when the Industrial Revolution provided salaried jobs outside the home — our work was forgotten and its value was never equated with money.

## There is an answer

The love of children and the privilege of watching them grow up is a mother's reward, but it is not enough. In this consumer-oriented society where rewards are given in dollars and cents, motherwork is surely deserving of an independent income.

Right now motherwork is free labour and motherwork is free love, but our society is paying heavily for it — social problems in Canada are extreme.

There is an answer. Respect and reward motherhood for the primal and necessary force that it is and we should reap the

benefit of a healthy and happy population.

Left to deteriorate any longer, the mother-child separation and alienation which we suffer from may be irremediable.

Give mothers the consumer power they deserve.

We are speaking for Canadian mothers who do not wish to place their children in daycare and for the children who do not wish to be in daycare.

The suggestion that daycare be 100% federally funded by 1990 infers that in this country daycare is seen as the best possible childcare available. As mothers we must strongly disagree.

We ask instead that child care be federally funded and that the amount allocated per child be paid monthly to the child's mother as a Mother's Income. She would then be in a position to spend this money as she saw fit — perhaps on daycare, perhaps not. □

*Beth Shaw is the mother of five young girls. Her previous articles for MHNNews focused on homeschooling (vol. 7:2) and wages for mothers (vol. 4:5). Beth and her family live in Sechelt, on BC's "Sunshine Coast".*

Left to deteriorate any longer, the mother-child separation and alienation which we suffer from may be irremediable.

**ON FREE MONEY**

“...Generally when you approach a foundation they are friendly and half-receptive. They consider your project promising if a little naive, and they'd like you to write up a proposal on it. You spend a month learning how to write proposals and a month writing this one. They keep it six months. Your idea has died of dry rot. Then they request that you re-write the proposal to accommodate (whatever) and it might go through the next time the board meets. Do this three times and YOU have died of dry rot...”

“I don't know why government money is so often toxic to projects. Maybe because the process becomes so easily dishonest. Do me no favours, and I'll tell you no lies. Or is it the belief that there's such a thing as a free lunch that is the root lie?”

Stuart Brand  
Whole Earth Catalogue

The Foundation money we have received has been so “stringless” and so directly and rapidly given in response to the specific need we have asked to be filled that our experience is clearly an exception to that described in the comments above.

Our experience with Canadian Corporations has been that the people in them, often up to, or close to, the Chief Executive officer, have shown an interest in and encouragement for the work of the CSPCC to an extent that one would not ordinarily associate with the popular image of a Corporation.

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Tome 9

Numéro 4

Automne 1986

## APPRENDRE A AIMER

Je suggérerais que certains modèles émotionnels approfondis sont les précurseurs d'un autre modèle plus complet. Par exemple, si l'on subit l'intimité dans les premiers quatre mois de la vie, l'on arrive à estimer les relations humaines, et par conséquent on a l'occasion d'apprendre 'raison et effet' dans cette relation humaine. Si l'on ne s'attache pas à l'humanité, comment est-ce qu'on apprendra la réciprocité émotionnelle? Il n'est pas possible d'apprendre la réciprocité de "Si je t'aime tu m'aimeras de retour" à moins qu'on n'ait un partenaire aimant. Quand on étend les bras, il faut que quelque humain aimé vous réponde. Si l'on tire une ficelle pour faire sonner une cloche, on apprend 'raison et effet' mais on n'apprend pas la réciprocité émotionnelle qui a à faire avec la dépendance, l'autorité et l'agressivité.

Cela ne veut pas dire que l'on ne peut pas apprendre à aimer à l'âge de dix mois. On le peut bien. Mais pourquoi attendre? Certaines fonctions émotionnelles profondes se développent par étapes, de sorte que la première est une précondition de la suivante, même si la suivante n'arrive jamais.

Dans notre culture il y a beaucoup d'enfants qui subissent des échecs dans le développement à chaque étape. Il faut ne pas méconnaître les premiers mois de la vie pendant lesquels se forment les fondations de la personnalité qui ont à faire avec la capacité pour la chaleur dans les relations humaines, et pendant lesquels on apprend à contrôler les entraînements et se conduire.

Stanley Greenspan

*(French courtesy M.B. May,  
Erikson Institute, Advanced Study  
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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.