

Why breastfeeding mothers are important

James W. Prescott, Ph.D.

James W. Prescott, PhD. is a developmental and cross-cultural psychologist. His work centres on the affectional bonding between mother and child (through breastfeeding and baby wearing) as the most effective way to prevent violence and addictions later in life. His research findings have the potential to change our culture.

The greatest terror a child can have is that he is not loved, and rejection is the hell he fears. I think everyone in the world, to a large or small extent, has felt rejection. And with rejection comes anger, and with anger some kind of crime in revenge for the rejection, and with the crime, guilt ~ and there is the story of mankind.

John Steinbeck, *East of Eden*, 1952

Breastfeeding bonding and baby-carrying bonding are the first events of life which the newborn/infant/child learns about love and non-violence. Love is first learned at the breast of mother and by being carried on her body ~ like *in utero*, where the first lessons of being connected with mother are learned. Baby-carrying is the external umbilical cord that assures that the baby is connected with mother, and breastfeeding bonding for 2.5 years, or longer, has been found to be essential to optimise brain-behavioural development for the prevention of depression and suicide, and makes peaceful, harmonious and egalitarian behaviours later in life possible. Baby-carrying bonding was found to predict with 80% accuracy the peaceful and violent behaviours ("killing, torturing, mutilation of enemy captured in warfare") in 49 tribal cultures distributed throughout the world. (<http://www.violence.de>)

How the developing brain of the infant/child and teen is encoded with pain or pleasure experiences will determine whether a life-path of peace, harmony and egalitarian relationships will be followed, or a life-path of its opposite, of depression, alienation, anger, rage and violence (homicidal and suicidal) will be followed. Culture shapes our brain biology for peace or violence, where pain and pleasure are the formative life experiences that shape our two cultural brains for either peace or violence. These relationships are illustrated in Figure 1, where the different dimensions of peaceful or violent cultures are illustrated as a consequence of pain or pleasure being the dominant experiences of the subcortical-emotional-sexual brain, or the later developing neocortical brain.

In many cultures throughout the world, the first painful experience imposed upon the infant/child (male and female) is genital mutilation, a practice that many organisations and individuals seek to abolish. See <http://www.montagunocircpetition.org> for one such effort.

The inflicting of pain on the child, as a form of punishment for wrongdoings, is legendary throughout human history. The punishment of children and teens for masturbation is a prime example of how pleasure is discouraged, and pain is emphasised, in the moral development of the child. Pain is moral and pleasure is immoral. Pain (physical and emotional) is the foundation for war and authoritarian relationships; pleasure is the foundation for peaceful and egalitarian relationships. These biological experiences influence not only the subcortical emotional-social-sexual brain, known as the limbic system, which is the first to form in evolution and development, but also the neocortical brain, which comes later in evolution and development, where values of what is good and evil are formed.



*Maira and Nina,
Scotland*



ATTACHMENT

John Bowlby



man be to man." (pp. 247-248)

"Women are the carriers of the true spirit of humanity ~ the love of the mother for her child. The preservation of that kind of love is the true function of women. And let me, at this point, endeavor to make it quite clear why I mean the love of a mother for her child and not the love of an equal for an equal or any other kind of love." (p.248).

"Woman knows what true love is; let her not be tempted from her knowledge by false ideas that man has created for her to worship. Woman must stand firm and be true to her own inner nature; to yield to the prevailing false conceptions of love, of unloving love, is to abdicate her great evolutionary mission to keep human beings true to themselves, to keep them from doing violence to their inner nature, to help them to realise their potentialities for being loving and cooperative. Were women to fail in this task, all hope for the future of humanity would depart from the world." (p.250)

"Human societies must be based on human relations first, and economic activities must be a function of human relations, not the other way round." (p.243).

How can human societies develop those cultural conditions that make the vision of Ashley Montagu possible ~ truly, a mission impossible? There are so many first steps to be taken it is difficult to know where to begin. What we do

The first brain (olfactory-limbic system), encoded with pain or pleasure and their associated neural networks, informs the second brain (the neocortical brain) and its associated neural networks, whether pain or pleasure becomes the dominant influence that structures behaviour. The neocortical brain, through a complex feedback system, informs the subcortical brain which sensory experiences of pain or pleasure are acceptable. Thus, the neurointegrative and neuro-dissociative brains are formed, which yield the cultures and behaviours (peaceful or violent) that are summarised in Table 1.

The ultimate value of breastfeeding bonding during the first three years of life is the sculpting of the developing brain for peaceful and egalitarian relationships where pleasure is the central experience, which is mediated by the complex biochemical nutrients of breast milk not found in infant formula milk, and the rich sensory experiences of touch, smell and body movement of mother involved in breastfeeding. Infant formula feeding robs the developing brain of those essential biochemical nutrients, particularly the essential amino acids tryptophan and tyrosine, that are necessary for the normal development of the brain neurotransmitters serotonin and dopamine, which mediate the emotional behaviours of peace or violence, of happiness or depression and suicide. These are only two of the many brain neurotransmitters involved in the development of our emotional behaviours.

Infant formula feeding also robs the developing brain of the rich sensory experiences that can only be realised through the intimacy of breastfeeding, which also translates into the coding of the developing brain for peaceful and egalitarian behaviours. Imagine this process of breastfeeding for the first three years of life and the rich sensory stimulation that continues to bathe the developing brain with pleasure ~ the glue of affectional bonding.

For these reasons, I have stated that it would be a rare event to find any murderer, rapist or drug addict in any of our prisons who has been breastfed for two years of age and beyond, a time period recommended by WHO/UNICEF (1990), a viewpoint shared by Ashley Montagu. In *The Natural Superiority of Women* (1952/1974) he stated:

"Women are the bearers, the nurturers of life; men have more often tended to be the curtailers, the destroyers of life." (p.241).

"Women must be granted complete equality with men, for only when this has been done will they fully be able to realise themselves." (p.242).

"Women are the mothers of humanity; do not let us ever forget that or under-emphasise its importance. What mothers are to their children, so will

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know is that the primary affectional bond between mother and infant/child must be developed and maintained where pleasure, and not pain, is the primary life experience of the infant/child. This is dramatised by the cover image from John Bowlby's book on attachment. It is perhaps surprising that the two most outspoken leaders of the 20th Century supporting mothers and children were two Englishmen ~ John Bowlby and Ashley Montagu, who were born at the turn of the 20th century.

The first step is accomplished by breastfeeding bonding for 2.5 years or greater (data obtained from tribal cultures), and by baby-carrying throughout the day during the first year of life; no intentional infliction of pain on the infant/child; and freedom to naturally explore one's own developing sexuality where no harm or injury is inflicted upon others. We have learned that pleasure is not only moral but morally necessary if we are to become moral persons.

Aristotle (384-322 BC) observed "Therefore, the highest good is some sort of pleasure, despite the fact that most pleasures are bad, and, if you like, bad in the unqualified sense of the word." (*Nichomachean Ethics*, Book 7)

These peaceful cultures are readily accomplished in matrilineal/matrifocal tribal cultures, but not in patrilineal/patrifocal tribal cultures, where the wisdom of the ancient African proverb prevailed: "It takes an entire village to raise a child". Unfortunately, the cultural evolution of *Homo sapiens* has resulted in the domination of the patrilineal cultures, with the accompanying extinction of the wisdom of the matrilineal cultures. As a result, America and the modern human culture have unfortunately lost the tribal village and the kinship relationships that made these child-rearing practices possible.

In the United States, *The Third National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey, 1989-94*, gives the following estimates for duration of breastfeeding. For all children, 6.8% were breastfed at 12 months; 2.7% were breastfed for 24 months or more; and 1% breastfed for 30 months or more. The Center for Disease and Control (CDC) National Vital Statistics Report does not include the weaning age of every child born in the United States, like the reports on infant and child mortality rates. This is a glaring deficiency in the keeping of health records in the U.S., particularly given the vital importance of breastfeeding bonding for the mother's and child's physical, emotional, social and sexual health. No modern state, unfortunately, keeps a record of the weaning age of every child born in their country, which should be a part of their immunological record, and reflects the indifference to and neglect of this most important measure of the mother-infant/child relationship and the future health of the child.

I have evaluated the suicidal behaviours of 26 tribal cultures with a weaning age of 2.5 years or longer, as given in Textor (1967), *A Cross-Cultural Summary*, and found that 77% (20/26) of these cultures were rated low or absent in suicides. Eighty-two percent of these cultures were rated low or absent in suicide when support of youth sexual activity was added to the predictive equation. Punishment of pre-marital sex was found to predict 69% of "killing, torturing, mutilation of enemy captured in warfare" in 35 of the tribal cultures studied.



Barry and Paxon (1971) provided the ranges of weaning age for 186 cultures, among a number of other behavioural codes on infancy and childhood, which I utilised to extend my studies on weaning age and lack of suicide.

The average weaning age of each culture was calculated from the range scores given that permitted the statistical studies on those cultures whose weaning age was 24 months or less v 30 months or more. These data were added to those reported by Textor (1967), which yielded 65 cultures where information was available on both weaning age and suicide. It was found that 64% (23/36) of cultures were rated low or absent in suicide with a weaning age of 30 months or greater; 62% (18/29) of cultures with high suicide rates had a weaning age of 24 months or less. This difference was statistically significant ($p < .05$).

These findings suggest that a formative period of brain development exists between 2.0 years or less, and 2.5 years or greater that would account for these results. It should be noted that "no breastfeeding" does not exist in tribal cultures, for obvious reasons. The obvious comparison group is a "no breastfeeding group", available in modern human cultures, to compare with those who breastfeed for 2.5 years or greater. Despite repeated requests to the National Institutes of Health (NIH), these studies have yet to be conducted.

Modern MRI, fMRI and PET brain scan studies permit a level of sophistication in the measurement of brain development and function not previously available, and there is no excuse for such studies not being conducted. Similarly, for the evaluation of the perinatal trauma of circumcision, that would most certainly adversely affect the developing brain in structure and function. These studies have also yet to be conducted.

Unfortunately, the World Health Organization (WHO), the National Institute of Health (NIH) and the many international research organisations concerned with the health of mother and child, have not recognised the urgency of the issues raised by these data.

Mothers, by breastfeeding their children (male and female) for 2.5 years and beyond, can radically alter human societies, reduce depression and violence by over fifty percent, and pave the way for true human equality.

The elimination of intentional pain in the rearing of infants and children, and supporting youth sexual affectional expression, are critical factors in this developmental continuum for creating peaceful cultures and egalitarian relationships. The benefits of breastfeeding assume that mothers are well-nourished, an unrealistic assumption in this modern world of continual warfare and poverty. Gender equality in sexual expression is also a condition of the peaceful, egalitarian and harmonious culture, where sexual expression is too important to be made a prisoner of marriage, and marriage is too important to be a prisoner of sex.

Depression, suicide, homicide and rape are the leading emotional, social, sexual and mental health problems of the world, as the human atrocities against women and children escalate worldwide; and war, genocide and religious/

ethnic conflicts continue without end. In America, school violence goes unchecked, where the recent attack of Seung Hui Cho, who fatally shot 32 students at Virginia Tech on April 16, 2007, is a continuing reminder of the previous massacres at Columbine High School in Colorado (April 20, 1999), and the eleven female Amish students (October 6, 2006), where five children were killed and six children critically injured. All were murders followed by suicide. The sexual assault of these Amish children was the intent of the killer, where condoms and lubricant were found in his possession.

The social isolation, alienation and rejection by the social group, and the failure to establish social and intimate relationships by the killer ~ the "loner" syndrome ~ is well established. The roots of this social-sexual dysfunctional relationship can be traced back to parental and childhood life experiences.

An interesting event occurred after the Columbine Massacre. Parents thanked God for saving their children, and other parents asked why God did not save their children. A number of atheists were born on the fields of Columbine that day. The same question should be asked following the Virginia Tech massacre, and particularly for the Amish children. Where was God when he was needed the most?

The difficulty that mothers have in breastfeeding their children in public is legendary. Charges of indecent exposure and "why don't you breastfeed elsewhere" are commonplace. A number of US states have had to pass laws pro-

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tecting the right of mothers to breastfeed in public. Breastfeeding is a continuing struggle, when it should be the most natural event in the world, private or public.

School educators need to be educated. Maria Glod, in a story in *The Washington Post*, reported on a school policy of "NO PHYSICAL CONTACT!!!!" (June 18, 2007):

Fairfax County middle school student Hal Beaulieu hopped up from his lunch table one day a few months ago, sat next to his girlfriend, and slipped his arm around her shoulder. That landed him a trip to the school office. Among his crimes: hugging.

All touching, not only fighting or inappropriate touching, is against the rules at Kilmer Middle School, in Vienna. Hand holding, hand shakes and high-fives? Banned. The rule has been conveyed to students this way: "NO PHYSICAL CONTACT!!!!"

All mammals need physical contact ~ touching and body movement ~ from birth throughout adulthood, to assure normal emotional-social-sexual development. Species survival depends upon it. Our school systems should not be engaged in teaching and promoting those very life events that end in school violence, but teaching

life events that promote affectional bonding and peaceful behaviours.

Holding hands while walking with your boyfriend or girlfriend, carrying her books, a peck on the cheek, are all time-honoured customs in any civilised society. I have a suggestion to the Fairfax County School Board to promote affectionate relationships in children. Beginning with kindergarten, and with the beginning of each class, each child is greeted with a hug by another child. The next day a different child is given a hug. Eventually all children get a hug from every child in the class. Next year, it is kindergarten and first grade; next year kindergarten, first and second grade, and so on. By high school, all children will feel more or less comfortable with getting a hug. The hostility to such a program can be anticipated in our touch-deprived cultures.

Gender equality is fundamental to achieving the goals of the natural family, as Ashley Montagu has emphasised. There is not a single millennial theistic religion on this planet that has recognised equality between the feminine and masculine. Fifty percent of the species, *Homo sapiens*, have been disenfranchised by just being born female. Women are morally and socially inferior to the male, the property of males and the source of moral evil. "Woman is the origin of sin, and it is through her that we all die." (*Ecclesiasticus* 25:24).

A partial political solution to this intractable human inequality is to demand gender equality in the legislative bodies of the world. This thesis was advanced in an OPINION essay in *The San Diego Union Tribune*, entitled "OPINION. The challenge: achieve gender equality."

Without this international voice of gender equality, the equality of the feminine with the masculine will remain the unfulfilled dreams of the poets and philosophers of the world, and breastfeeding bonding will become a relic for the future.

Women are defenceless against

the despotism of male-dominated legislatures, and they must reclaim their right to full human equality, if they are to assure their future and that of their children.

Know the masculine, but follow the feminine.

Lao Tzu

Tao Te Ching (c. 565 B.C.)

Book One, XXVIII

When you know the mother

Go on to know the child

After you have known the child

Go back to holding fast to the mother,

And to the end of your days you will not meet with danger

Lao Tzu

Tao Te Ching (c. 565 B.C.)

Book Two, LII

All mysteries are Tao, and Heaven is the mother: She is the gateway and the womb-door.

Lao Tzu

Tao Te Ching (c. 565 B.C.)

Book One, Chapter 1



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Photo by Ash Castree

**TABLE 1. TWO CULTURAL BRAINS
LIMBIC-SUBCORTICAL EMOTIONAL-SEXUAL BRAIN**

		<u>PAIN</u>	<u>PLEASURE</u>
N E O C O R T I C A L	P	Theistic Religions	
	A	Patrilineal	
	I	Gender Inequality	
	N	Sexual Puritanism	
		Addictive Synthetic Drugs	
		Authoritarian Control	
		Pain Is A Moral Good	
		Depression-Violence-War	
		NeuroDissociative Brain	
		Science of Pain-Depression	
B R A I N		BioMedical Health Model	
		Legislative Gender Inequality	
		Politics of Betrayal	
			Earth Religions
			Matrilineal
			Gender Equality
			Sexual Liberty
			Natural Botanical Drugs
			Egalitarian Freedom
			Pleasure Is A Moral Good
		Joy-Happiness-Peace	
		NeuroIntegrative Brain	
		Science of Pleasure-Happiness	
		BioBehavioural Health Model	
		Legislative Gender Equality	

James W. Prescott, Ph.D.
<http://www.violence.de/archive.shtml>



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CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to our regular feature writer, Richard House, on his recent wedding to Sylvie Hétu in July.

The beautiful ceremony took place at Emerson College in Forest Row, East Sussex.

And because Richard doesn't do anything by halves, another ceremony took place in Montreal, Canada, last month.

We wish you both all the exquisite joys and intimacy marriage can bring.



TM vaccine-awareness columnist, Joanna Karpasea-Jones, gave birth to her son, Yanny Anthony Malachi, on May 29th.



Postcard from Australia

CIRCUS, SCHOOL & SEA SHEPHERD
By Natti Lewis

I have always wanted to see a circus live, and so when Cirque de Soleil came to Melbourne, I went to see their show, Varekai.

It was amazing. One of my favourite parts was where they used some special swings which could swing in a full circle. The performers swung in twos and threes, and then one would jump off and land, balancing on another's hands.

At our request, mum did a lot of running around to try to get me and my sisters into school. The school offered us a place. Mum told us to sit down and write why we wanted to go to school, and what we could do there that we can't do at home. All we came up with was that you can see your friends every day, eat lunch with them and play with them at playtime and lunchtime. So in the end we decided not to go. After all that running round she did for us! Poor Mum.

The Home Education Conference and camp is coming up soon, and we will invite our friends over in the week more often.

Recently, we all went on a trip to a beach to be part of a human sign. The sign said "Halt Climate Change Now". We were at the top of the "T" in "HALT". It was photographed and filmed from the sky for newspapers and national television by two helicopters, an aeroplane, and a camera on a large helium weather balloon.

This week we are going on a trip to see a ship called the Robert Hunter. This is one of the Sea Shepherd Conservation Society ships. They save whales. One of the ways they do this is by throwing a rope around the propeller to stall the whaling ship, and throw butyric acid to contaminate the deck, so Japanese whaling people can not cut up the whale on the ship.

For more information on the Sea Shepherd visit their website at: www.sea.shepherd.org

