

# PREVENTION OR THERAPY AND THE POLITICS OF TRUST: INSPIRING A NEW HUMAN AGENDA\*

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*ABSTRACT This paper gives a brief overview of the developmental origins of human alienation, depression, violence and drug abuse. It provides a foundation for understanding how the politics of culture structure the human condition. The most critical early life experiences are formed in the mother-infant/child relationship. This affects all future relationships and the development of culture. The role of body pleasure in affectional bonding in the mother-infant/child relationship and in the human sexual relationship will be shown to be an important factor in the formation of non-violence in the individual and in human cultures. It will be shown that basic trust must occur before a politics of trust can be formed to effect changes at the individual and cultural levels and to transform violent individuals and cultures into peaceful individuals and cultures. The limitations of psychotherapy (which involves neocortical brain process) in effecting changes in the damaged emotional social sexual brain (which involves the subcortical brain) will be illustrated. Cultural conditions for the development of the neurointegrative brain, which mediates healthy behaviors, versus the development of the neurodissociative brain, which mediates dysfunctional behaviors, will be given. As culture shapes the developing brain, so the brain shapes culture. Copyright © 2005 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.*

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It is well established that early life experiences shape the developing brain and behavior and that all future human relationships are influenced by the early human life relationships that begin in the mother-infant/child relationship (Reich, 1933/1973; Bowlby, 1946, 1951/1953, 1969/1973; Harlow, 1958, 1964, 1971; Spitz, 1965; Lindsley and Riesen, 1968;

Coleman, 1971; Montagu, 1971; Prescott, 1971, 1975, 1977, 1979, 1980, 1996, 2001, 2004b; Russell, 1972; Berman, Berman and Prescott, 1974; DeMause, 1974, 1982; Heath, 1975; Liedloff, 1975; Mason and Berkson, 1975; Rohner, 1975; Riesen, Dickerson and Struble, 1977; Struble and Riesen, 1978; Floeter and Greenough, 1979; Bryan and Riesen, 1989; Cook,

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1996; DeMeo, 1998; Hrdy, 1999; Shonkoff and Phillips, 2000; Belsky, 2001 and others).

It is a thesis of this paper that a *politics of trust* cannot be developed in the absence of a foundation of *basic trust*, which is first established in the mother-infant relationship, and of *human trust*, which is established during the formative periods of infancy, childhood, and adolescence; and that therapies of the mind (the neocortical brain, which mediates cognitive values) have limited effectiveness in the modification of the biology of the emotional-social-subcortical brain – first formed in evolution and ontogenetic development – which mediates alienation, depression, anger/rage, hate and violence. Without the fire of anger, rage, hate and violence being affected, differences in cognitive values alone have little consequence for the survival of humanity. We will return to this subject later.

Erik H. Erikson (1950/1963), a Danish-born psychoanalyst, proposed in *Childhood and Society* that without the foundation of *basic trust*, which is formed during the early years of the life cycle, *basic mistrust* takes its place, which influences all future stages in the human life cycle. This *basic mistrust* is manifested in many ways in the adult, and in politics a *politics of betrayal* emerges as the dominant mode of political interaction. The life work of Erik H. Erikson on the polarization of *basic trust versus basic mistrust* can be summed up in his words:

It is now possible that only an equal, *well-polarized maturation* of all-human maternal and paternal care can save mankind . . . But this demands that a future involvement in motherhood and fatherhood must be based on the unifying polarity of a maternally shared earthly space and a paternal sense of a joint conservation and defense of such space. (Erikson, 1950/1963, pp. 10–11)

Bowlby (1951/1953) reported to the World Health Organization on the primary role of maternal care for the mental, emotional, and social health of the child, with these words in “Child Care and the Growth of Love” (Bowlby, 1953):

Among the most significant developments of psychiatry during the past quarter of a century has been the steady growth of evidence that the quality of the parental care which a child receives in his earliest years is of vital importance for his future mental health. (Bowlby, 1953, 11)

Deprived children, whether in their homes or out of them, are the source of social infection as real and serious as are carriers of diphtheria and typhoid. And, just as preventive measures have reduced these diseases to negligible proportions, so can determined actions greatly reduce the number of deprived children in our midst and the growth of adults liable to produce more of them. Yet, so far, no country has tackled this problem seriously. (p. 181)

The second factor still at work is a lack of conviction on the part of governments, social agencies, and the public that mother-love in infancy and childhood is as important for mental health as are vitamins and proteins for physical health. (p. 182)

*One must be beware of a vested interest in the institutional care of children!* (p. 182, emphasis added)

Let it be hoped, then, that all over the world men and women in public life will recognize the relation of mental health to maternal care, and will seize their opportunities for promoting courageous and far-reaching reforms. (p. 182)

The report of the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), National Institutes of Health, Study of Early Child Care (SECC) found that infants and very young children who spend more than 30 hours a week in child care ‘are far more demanding, more non-compliant, and they are more aggressive’ and ‘they scored higher on things like *gets*

*in lots of fights, cruelty, bullying, meanness* as well as talking too much, demands must be met immediately, according to Dr. Belsky, one of the principal investigators (Stolberg, 2001 *New York Times*, April 19, 2001) (emphasis mine) (NICHD, 1997). This NICHD research program is ongoing (<http://secc.rti.org/publications.cfm>; <http://www.nichd.nih.gov/>).

Dr Sarah Friedman, NICHD Scientific Project Officer was reported as saying 'We cannot and should not hide the findings but I don't want to create a mass hysteria when I don't know what explains these results' (Stolberg, 2001).

These NICHD findings confirm the early warnings of Erik H Erikson and John Bowlby on the harm inflicted on children by lack of maternal care. It has lifelong consequences that are still being ignored today. These have enormous implications for the future of human relationships and society.

Montagu (1971) has drawn our attention to the importance of touching in human development and relationships and Cook (1996) has documented how early childcare has placed infants and nations at risk. Spitz (1965) showed how hospitalized/institutionalized infants developed depression (marasmus – emotional wasting), which often led to death.

Belsky (2003), one of the senior coinvestigators of the NICHD collaborative study on the effects of infant and early child day care (loss of maternal care), stated that the 'dangers of day care' include the following:

Contrary to the expectations (and desires) of many in the field, the NICHD study shows that the more time children spend in day care arrangements before they are 4 1/2 years old the more aggression, disobedience and conflict with adults they manifest at 54 months of age and in kindergarten. These patterns remain even after taking into account multiple features of children's fami-

lies, as well as the quantity and type of day care that children experienced. Worse, spending a lot of time in care predicted not just more assertive or independent behavior, but more truly aggressive and disobedient behavior, as well . . .

What those who deny, dismiss or minimize the latest findings continually fail to appreciate is that they hold no monopoly on wisdom or caring, nor even necessarily speak in the best interests of many American children and families. Rather, they spin developmental science in support of their political views, failing to realize the disservice they do to children and families alike, to say nothing of the scientific enterprise itself.

Belsky (2001) reaffirmed his earlier findings: 'No longer is it tenable for developmental scholars and child-care advocates to deride the notion that early and extensive nonmaternal care of the kind available in most communities poses risks for young children and perhaps the larger society as well.'

Lewin (2005) reported on a recent study from the Yale Child Study Center that 'preschool children are three times as likely to be expelled as children in kindergarten through 12th grade' and that 'Expulsion rates were lowest in preschool classrooms in public schools and Head Start, and highest in faith-affiliated centers, for-profit child care and other community-based child-care settings.' Information on why the children were expelled was not gathered.

It has been known for well over half a century that separation of mother from child induces significant brain-behavioral abnormalities that include emotional-social-sexual aberrations, which are carried throughout life. Depression, social alienation, impulse dyscontrol, chronic stimulus-seeking behaviors, violence against oneself (self mutilation and suicide) and others (homicidal assaults), maternal violence and sexual dysfunctions are some of the behavioral consequences documented

in animals and humans consequent to mother-infant/child separation. Harry Harlow, a psychologist and Director of the Primate Center, University of Wisconsin, embarked upon a series of studies that documented these effects in the rhesus monkey primate. Harlow (1958) summarized these initial findings in an article on 'the nature of love' in the *American Psychologist* and in many subsequent publications but paradoxically did not embark upon any brain studies associated with these behavioral abnormalities.

Mason (1968) and Mason and Berkson (1975), in probably the most important primate mother-infant separation study, demonstrated that rearing single infant monkeys in cages by themselves in a colony room, where social relationships could be established with the visual, auditory and olfactory senses but not the somatosensory senses, were provided with a swinging mother surrogate which prevented virtually all of the behavioral pathologies that have been documented from mother-infant separation. These dramatic effects were presented in the *Time Life* documentary *Rock a Bye Baby*, premiered at the 1970 White House Conference on children, which can be seen at: <http://www.violence.de/tv/rockabye.html>. The Web site has a number of scientific papers that document the harmful brain-behavioral consequences of maternal-infant separation in the primate. This and other video documentaries can also be obtained at <http://www.tffuture.org/Prescott>.

In this documentary the preliminary and pioneering findings of Dr Robert Heath (1975), Chairman, Department of Psychiatry and Neurology, Tulane University Medical School, on brain electrical abnormalities in violent mother-deprived monkeys can be seen. These studies were

supported by the Developmental Behavioral Biology Program, NIHCD/NIH. A number of other studies documented a variety of brain deficits in structure, electrical and neurochemical functioning in violent mother-deprived monkeys. Several of these studies can be seen at: <http://www.violence.de>, thus confirming some of the biological foundations for the consequences of failed mother love associated with mother-infant separation with additional information at <http://www.tffuture.org/Prescott>.

### **BABY-CARRYING BONDING AND THE PREVENTION OF HOMICIDAL BEHAVIORS**

In a series of cross-cultural studies on tribal cultures this writer found that high bonding in the mother-infant relationship, as measured by the infant being carried on the body of the mother throughout the day, could predict the peaceful or homicidal violent behaviors of 80% of the 49 cultures studied. This confirmed the findings of Mason and Berkson on the significance of body movement (vestibular-cerebellar stimulation) for bonding in the mother-infant relationship. The exceptions (20%) could all be accounted for by whether youth sexual expression was permitted or punished (Prescott, 1975, 1977, 1979, 1996, 1997, 2001).

In summary, high affectional bonding in the maternal-infant relationship and adolescent sexual relationships (youthful sexual behavior being supported and not punished) could predict with 100% accuracy the peaceful or violent nature of these 49 tribal cultures.

This 49-culture study used all the available information in the 400-culture sample of Textor (1967) where information on both baby-carrying bonding and violence ('torture, mutilation and killing of enemy captured in warfare') was available on

these 49 tribal cultures.

The baby-carrying bonding variable (Textor Code 317) was constructed by Barry, Bacon and Child (1967). The measure on 'torture, mutilation and killing of enemy captured in warfare' was constructed by Slater (1965) (Textor Code 421); on premarital sexuality by Westbrook (1967) from the Ethnographic Atlas (Textor Codes 389–392); and on extramarital sexuality by Ford and Beach (1951) (Textor Code 393).

Table 1 presents the statistically significant social-behavioral characteristics of cultures with high mother-infant affectional bonding. They are ranked from highest to lowest associations (% correct classification of cultures in the statistical relationship). These cultures are characterized as highly nurturing where overall indulgence of the infant is high (80%); weaning age is

2.5 years or greater in 63% of the cultures studied; meeting infant needs is high (74%); needs of infant are immediately met (in 68% of the cultures); infliction of infant pain is low (in 65%); low violence (in 73%) and theft (in 72%); and religious activity (in 81% of the cultures studied) and belief in reincarnation (in 76%) are low or absent. Subsequent corrections to errors of classification raised the predictive relationship between baby-carrying bonding and peace or violence to 80%. The strongest behavioral linkage to high infant nurturance is 'low religious activity' (81%), to which we will return later.

### SEXUAL PURITANISM, REPRESSION, 'HIGH GODS' AND VIOLENCE

Table 2 presents the statistically significant

<b>Table 1.</b> Social and behavioral characteristics of cultures that have high infant physical affection – carrying of infant on body of mother (% communality of cultures)				
	<i>Percentage correct classification</i>	<i>Sample size # cultures</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Social-behavioral characteristics</i>
<b>1.</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>0.003</b>	<b>Religious activity is low</b>
<b>2.</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>Overall infant indulgence is high</b>
3.	78	18	0.03	Dissociation of sexes at adolescence is high
4.	76	17	0.05	Witchcraft is low or absent
5.	76	17	0.05	Belief in reincarnation absent
6.	74	65	0.000	Degree of reducing infant needs is high
<b>7.</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>0.004</b>	<b>Torture, mutilation and killing of enemy captured in warfare is absent/negligible</b>
8.	72	36	0.02	Incidence of theft is low
9.	71	38	0.007	Fear of human beings is high
10.	68	65	0.004	Low Child anxiety over responsible behavior
11.	68	59	0.02	Immediacy of reducing infant needs is high
12.	68*	22	0.07	Superordinate justice is absent
13.	66*	41	0.06	Asceticism in mourning is low
14.	66*	50	0.06	Invidious display of wealth is low
15.	65	63	0.03	Low Child anxiety over obedient behavior
<b>16.</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>0.03</b>	<b>Infant physical pain is low</b>
<b>17.</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>0.05</b>	<b>Weaning age is 2.5 years or longer</b>

From: Textor (1967) and Prescott (1977, 1979, 1996).

**Table 2.** Social and behavioral characteristics of cultures that punish adolescent premarital sexuality (% communality of cultures)

	<i>% Correct classification</i>	<i>Sample size # cultures</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Social-behavioral characteristics</i>
<b>1.</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>0.000</b>	<b>Intensity of sex anxiety is high</b>
2.	87	15	0.01	Societal complexity is high
<b>3.</b>	<b>83</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>0.004</b>	<b>Sex disability is present</b>
<b>4.</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>0.01</b>	<b>High god in human morality</b>
5.	73	80	0.000	Community size is larger
<b>6.</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>58</b>	<b>0.005</b>	<b>Extramarital sex is punished</b>
<b>7.</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>0.05</b>	<b>Personal crime is high</b>
8.	71*	24	0.09	Female income is low
9.	70	62	0.008	Extended family is small
<b>10.</b>	<b>69*</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>0.07</b>	<b>Torture, mutilation and killing of enemy captured in warfare is high</b>
<b>11.</b>	<b>68</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>0.04</b>	<b>Bellicosity is extreme</b>
<b>12.</b>	<b>68*</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>0.07</b>	<b>Incidence of theft is high</b>
13.	66	38	0.04	Narcissism is high
14.	65	66	0.04	Exhibitionistic dancing is emphasized
15.	65	37	0.009	Castration anxiety is high
16.	62	50	0.03	Postpartum sex taboo is longer
<b>17.</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>0.04</b>	<b>Kin group exclusively patrilineal</b>
18.	60	111	0.01	Class stratification is present
<b>19.</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>0.005</b>	<b>Slavery is present</b>
<b>20.</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>0.02</b>	<b>Wives are purchased</b>

From: Textor (1967) and Prescott (1977, 1979, 1990, 1996).

social-behavioral characteristics of cultures that punish premarital sexual behavior. These cultures are characterized as high in sex anxiety (89%) and sex disability (83%) with a high god in human morality (81%), high theft (71%), violence (69%), and narcissism (66%), extramarital sex is punished (71%), castration anxiety is high (65%), slavery is present (59%), wives are purchased (54%), postpartum sex taboo is longer (62%), there is low female income (71%); and cultures are patrilineal (64%).

By a high god is meant a spiritual being who is believed to have created all reality and/or to be its ultimate governor, even if his sole act was to create other spirits who, in turn, created or control the natural world (Textor, 1967, p. 163). (Spirits of ancestors

and of the natural world are not 'high gods').

An examination of the role of a high god was conducted in a study of 19 exclusively matrilineal cultures, which all supported premarital sexuality (Prescott, 1990). Information on whether there was a 'high god' was available for 16 cultures. Ten of these 16 cultures (63%) were found to have no high god. Three of the six cultures with a high god were rated as 'inactive' – not involved in human affairs – and the remaining three cultures with an active god were rated as not being involved with human morality. Nine of the 19 exclusive matrilineal cultures had coded information on extramarital sexuality and 7/9 (78%) of these cultures permitted extramarital coitus

(Prescott, 1975, 1977, 1979, 1990, 1996). The ethnographic codings of a high God were developed by Swanson (1960) and modified by the Ethnographic Atlas in *Ethnology* (Murdoch, 1962). Textor Code 426 defines cultures with or without a high god; Textor Code 427 identifies cultures with a high god who is or is not involved in human affairs; Textor Code 428 identifies cultures with a high god that supports or does not support human morality.

Crocker (1990) has provided a detailed ethnography of the Canela (Eastern Timbira), a Brazilian matrilineal, hunter-gathering tribal culture that lives at the mouth of the Amazon River. Crocker gives an in-depth description and analyses of the cultural matrix. There is high infant/child indulgence; no infant/child pain is inflicted and there is no circumcision; the culture is supportive of, and active in, multiple sexual relationships for both male and females, including premarital and extramarital relationships; intra-tribal aggression and violence are low or absent with little intertribal warfare. There is no 'high god' in this culture, although there is a rich belief system in the ghost and spirit world that connects them with their ancestors and past loved-ones. Some excerpts are illuminating:

Babies were not only fed on demand, but often were nursed for long periods . . . in earlier times, weaning occasionally took place as late as 3 to 4 years – but if any crying started, they were picked up and nursed immediately. (Crocker, 1990, 158–9).

Socialization largely prevents Canela individuals from being aggressive in tribal life . . . Aggression between women rarely occurs . . . Fighting between boys is simply not permitted. (p. 165)

The next most esteemed and expressed Canela attribute is the ability to feel and care for (*hape*) other people. (p.184)

Fighting between men (outside of warfare) was and is very much against the Canela cultural tradition. (p. 229)

. . . for couples with children, the possibility of divorce does not exist – or did not, before 1970 . . . Men pay to leave women; women do not pay to have men leave their house. (p. 228)

A Canela's sexuality is considered among her or his most valuable asset in interpersonal relations. (p. 106)

If at this time [breast formation] a girl loses her virginity, the Canela consider her married to the youth who took it, although the marriage may not last very long. The average age of first pregnancy in 1970 was about 15 3/4 years . . . Girls almost always have intercourse before they menstruate. (p.104).

Between the ages of 6 and 14, girls become 'girl associates' to a men's society in a festival to win their "*I?pre*" (maturity belt). The older associates learn about multiple extramarital sex . . . One purpose of being a girl associate is for a girl to learn to like group sex – to enjoy sexually receiving certain individuals (maybe 12) of a large male group in sequence . . . Women take the initiative and choose men for these quick sex encounters at least as often as men choose women . . . (pp. 105–6)

The implication of generosity that seems extreme to outsiders is that both women and men must be generous with sex. The socialization for sexual generosity is extreme. (p. 184). ("*I?pre*" is the Canela language word for "maturity belt" – a ritual rite of passage).

MAINTAIN PEACE – The first and foremost principle for the Canela must always be keeping the peace . . . CONSENSUS.– The Canela genius lies in their ability to resolve interpersonal and interfamilial problems by compromise and arriving at a consensus–by overlooking what does not 'fit' (p. 231).

Besides ghosts, and various other applications of the word *karo*, the Canela cosmology has few active agents. There is no supreme being, nor a pantheon of gods. (p.313).

Paradoxically, the Canela have strong prohibitions against homosexuality and masturbation.

The Canela are also discussed in Crocker and Crocker (1994) and on a videotape documentary, *Mending Ways: The Canela Indians of Brazil*, coproduced by Films for The Humanities and Sciences and by the National Human Studies Film Center, Smithsonian Institution. Washington DC. The latter has been shown widely on several national television channels.

Table 3 lists the statistically significant social-behavioral characteristics of cultures that have a high god, which are rated as violent; where slavery is present, where a caste system is present, where wives are purchased, where there is high infant pain; and where male genital mutilation is present. Patrilineal cultures; and premarital sex is strongly punished in these cultures (Prescott, 1990, 1996).

These data are interpreted as supporting the hypothesis that highly physical affectional cultures in terms of both maternal-infant/child relationships and human sexual relationships (human sexual love) have no need for a high god that provides ‘divine

love’ (a disembodied love), and that the high god in patrilineal cultures is a violent/authoritarian god that suppresses and denies human physical affectional love and values pain, deprivations and warfare. In brief, these data support the conclusion that ‘god’ was made unto the image and likeness of man and culture. If the culture is violent its god, if present, is violent. If the culture is peaceful, a high god is either absent or, if present, is not involved in affairs of human morality. The behavioral matrixes of patrilineal and matrilineal tribal cultures reveal the remarkable similarity of the patristic tribal cultures with the patristic monotheistic cultures of ‘Western civilization’, which are also violent, sexually puritanical/exploitive and god centered (Prescott, 1975, 1977, 1989, 1990, 1996, 2001).

These findings are consonant with the observations of psychoanalyst Wilhelm Reich on the role of women and sexuality in a free and egalitarian society when he stated: ‘Sexually awakened women, affirmed and recognized as such, would mean the complete collapse of the authoritarian ideology’ (Reich, 1933/1973).

**Table 3.** Social-behavioral characteristics of cultures where a high god is present

<i>% correct classification</i>	<i>Sample size # cultures</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Social-behavioral characteristics</i>
71	45	0.01	High aggression socialization anxiety
69	29	0.06	Early independence training
68	167	0.0006	Patrilineal cultures
65	258	0.0015	Wives purchased
63	57	0.08	High infant pain by caretaker
60	251	0.0002	Slavery is present
59	149	0.05	Premarital sex strongly punished
54	257	0.0009	Male genital mutilation present
52	244	0.0004	Caste system present

From: Textor (1967) and Prescott (1990).



It is worth noting that the closest primate relative of *Homo sapiens* is the Bonobo chimpanzee (*Pan paniscus*), with which we share 99% of our DNA. The Bonobo is the most peaceful and non-violent primate on the planet whereas *Homo sapiens* is the most violent primate on the planet. Bonobos breastfeed their infants to about 4 years of age, carry their offspring on the body of mother to puberty and have multiple sexual relationships in the troop where no violence against the young or sexual violence against the female is known (Diamond, 1992; de Waal and Lanting, 1997; Prescott, 2001). The communality of the behavioral matrix between the Bonobo and the Canela is striking.

We have learned that body pleasure is the glue of the affectional bond that places the infant/child upon a life path of harmony, happiness and egalitarianism. In the absence of this integrated pleasure, which is formed between the subcortical and neocortical brains, the infant/child is placed upon a life path of dissociative behaviors: depression, anger/rage, drug addiction, authoritarianism, fascism and violence. It must be recognized that the anti-pleasure ethic of the theistic religions contributes substantially to the violence of the individual and that of culture, which perhaps is no more clearly evident than in the history of the Papal and Spanish Inquisitions (Cardew, 1933; Roth, 1964; Kramer and Sprenger, 1971).

Gibbon (1737–94) in *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* noted that *religious warfare* was unknown among the polytheistic cultures of antiquity but appeared with the rise of the monotheistic religions. Gibbon observed:

The policy of the emperors and the senate, as far as it concerned religion, was happily seconded by the reflections of the enlightened, and by the

habits of the superstitious, part of their subjects. The various modes of worship which prevailed in the Roman world were all considered by the people as equally true; by the philosopher as equally false; and by the magistrate as equally useful. And thus toleration produced not only mutual indulgence, but even religious concord . . . The elegant mythology of Homer gave a beautiful and almost a regular form to the polytheism of the ancient world. The philosophers of Greece deduced their morals from the nature of man rather than from that of God . . . (Gibbon, 1995, vol. 1, p. 22)

The unique violence of the patristic cultures and the monotheistic religions – not the polytheistic religions of antiquity – can best be understood from the substitution of a disembodied ‘divine love’ that subordinated woman to man for an embodied human love and that this loss of an embodied human love led to the development of neurodissociative brains that placed *Homo sapiens* on a life path of war with itself and between man and woman – ‘and there is the story of mankind’ (Prescott, 1975, 1989, 2001, 2004).

### **BREASTFEEDING BONDING AND THE PREVENTION OF DEPRESSION/SUICIDE**

Data in Textor (1967) on weaning age of 2.5 years or greater and suicide in 26 tribal cultures were evaluated. Depression and suicide were rated low or absent in 77% (20/26) of the 26 tribal cultures studied. The six exceptions (23%) could be accounted for by the infliction of pain upon the infant by the mother or nurturing agent (Textor Code 324). The confounding of pleasure (love) and pain (fear) with mother love in the mind of the infant can be viewed as establishing a psychobiological foundation for later alienation, depression, mistrust, sado-masochism and suicide. To the infant mind, pain and pleasure are equated

with mother love and pain continues to be confounded with love throughout human life. This is affirmed by the Crucifixion (an act of Divine filicide from an all-loving Father) and has strongly influenced the adult mind and culture – many fathers have emulated the act of filicide throughout human history (Prescott, 1975, 1976, 1989, 2001, 2004).

This dynamic is established early in life with the genital mutilation of males and females, where the genital organ-brain system designed for pleasure is traumatized with excruciating pain. These early genital pain experiences can only influence the later experience of pleasure associated with genital sexual activity, where pleasure is experienced upon a background of encoded neuronal pain that may well contribute to later sexual violence (Prescott, 1989, 1997, 1999).

Levy (1945) has described the depression, rage and homicidal/suicidal behaviors of a 6-year-old boy subjected to circumcision against his will. His homicidal rages were directed at his father and it is unknown to what extent genital mutilation contributes to later homicidal and suicidal behaviors in modern genital mutilating cultures.

The data from Textor (1967) were supplemented by the data on weaning age in an additional cultural sample by Barry and Paxon (1971) that was related to measures of suicide in these cultures. The combined culture samples from Textor (1967) and Barry and Paxon (1971) yielded 65 cultures that were also rated on suicide (Textor Code 473). It was found that 86% (31/36) of low-suicide cultures have a weaning age of 30 months or greater; 34% (10/29) of high-suicide cultures have a weaning age of 24 months or less and that a statistically significant difference exists between the low and high breastfeeding groups ( $\chi^2 =$

3.84;  $p = 0.05$ ;  $N = 65$ ) (Prescott, 2001). These data suggest that weaning age of 2.5 years or greater optimizes brain development for the prevention of depression and suicide.

It should be noted that breastfeeding for less than a year in 'primitive' tribal cultures, where no breastfeeding does not exist (until the advent of infant formula milk) is rare. Stronger statistical relationships could be expected between depression/suicide and low or absent breastfeeding. In the Barry and Paxon (1971) sample, there was one culture where average weaning age was less than 12 months (Prescott, 2001).

The breastfeeding relationship is a high-pleasure environment that forms the pleasure systems of the developing brain and it was not surprising to find that 82% (14/17) of these high weaning-age cultures were also rated as having little or no suicide and also supported premarital youth sexuality. A developmental continuum of strong somatic affectional relationships, from breastfeeding bonding to sexual affectional bonding, appears necessary as a strong prophylactic against depression, suicide and other forms of violence and emotional disorders. These relationships need to be validated on modern human cultures, however. Only 2.7% of American mothers breastfeed for 24 months or more and only 1% for 30 months or more (Prescott, 2001, 2002).

The recognition that infant-formula milk has significant deficiencies in tryptophan, an amino acid richly present in breast milk, which is necessary for the normal development of the brain serotonin neurotransmitter system that prevents depression and suicide, is a warning of possible compromised brain development for infant-formula-fed children. It is undoubtedly a factor in the epidemics of depression and suicide in many modern

human cultures (Prescott, 1996, 1997, 2001, 2002; <http://www.violence.de/prescott/ttf/article.html>).

### SUICIDAL STATISTICS

Alarming statistics in America have documented that suicide rates have doubled in the 5–14 year age group over this past generation (1979–1998), where suicide has remained the third leading cause of death in the 15–24 year age group for well over a generation. More children and youth have committed suicide in the past 10 years (an estimated 50 000) than all American *combat* lives lost in the 10-year Vietnam War (47 355) (Prescott, 2001).

For the 5–14 year-old age group, suicide rates, as a percent of homicide rates, have steadily increased from 1979–2000: 1979: **35%**; 1994: **60%**; 1998: **73%**; 2000: **89%**. These data reflect the threat that depression and suicide pose for the children and youth of America and for the future of American society. Why are American children and youth in such despair that they prefer death to living in their own families and in America – presumed to be the ‘land of the free and home of the brave’? No memorial has been erected for the children of suicidal death as has been erected for the Vietnam war dead. The massive psychiatric medication of children and youth in America is another alarming indicator of a society in disintegration. Such medications suppress an even higher expected suicide rate (CDC, 1979, 1994, 1998, 2000; Prescott, 1980, 1989, 2001; Zito et al., 2000, 2003).

Herbert Marcuse (1966) in *Eros and Civilisation* has reminded us of the mark of failure of civilization: ‘Not those who die, but those who die before they must and want to die, those who die in agony and pain are the great indictments against civilization.’

The developmental origins of these epidemics of depression and suicide among our children and youth, with their companions of drug abuse/addiction and psychiatric medication, eludes the biomedical professions who seek to solve these problems through ‘drug therapy’ when the solution lies elsewhere. On more than one occasion this writer has stated that it would be rare to find any homicidal or suicidal person, or drug addict or rapist, who has been breast fed for 2.5 years or longer as recommended by WHO/UNICEF (1990).

Without high physical affectional bonding between mother and infant/child, the foundation for the emotional-social and mental health of the child and society are seriously impaired, as Bowlby (1953), Erikson (1953/1963), Prescott (1975, 1979, 1996, 2004a, b), Cook (1996) and Belsky (2001, 2003) have affirmed. And without this foundation, the foundation for the sexual health of the individual and society is rarely possible (Reich, 1933/1973, 1945; Prescott, 1975, 1977, 1990, 1996).

### PAST IS PROLOGUE

In the middle of the twentieth century John Steinbeck (1952), in *East of Eden*, recognized the fault line in humanity that the loss of human love creates when he stated:

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 that crime guilt, and there is the story of mankind.

It is transparent that the failure of modern human cultures to support mothers and families or to help them to be nurturing mothers and families prevents the forming of the brain-behavioral foundations necessary for the development of a *politics of trust*.

Without human trust world peace and harmony are not possible, as millennia of violence attest. This developmental reality should guide the 'Politics of Trust Network' of the John Vasconcellos Legacy Project, which can be seen at: <http://www.politicsoft-rust.net/>. Social-political programs of transformation of individuals and culture must target child development and not reconstructive therapy of adults. Senator John Vasconcellos has committed his political life in the California state legislature to promoting and developing a humanistic vision of a politics of trust to replace the politics of mistrust and betrayal, which are common to modern human societies.

It is proposed that *basic trust* provides the foundation that is necessary for the development of compassion and a 'higher' level of 'consciousness' – formed by experience and human relationships. This shapes the neurointegrative brain and precludes a life path of fear, alienation, depression, mistrust, anger and violence, conditions consequent to the neurodissociative brain and which prevent the development of creative alternatives that serve shared meaning and wellbeing. Early and sustained nurturing develops the foundations for these higher capacities of compassion and consciousness. Without these early foundations the neural networks necessary for the development of basic trust are impaired or absent. This precludes the higher level of 'consciousness' necessary for the development of a politics of trust.

Table 4 lists 10 principles of mother-infant bonding that culture must support if basic trust, human trust and a politics of trust are to be realized. It is the totality of the matrix of modern culture that must be changed, if mothers and families are to become nurturing mothers and families and if peaceful and trusting societies are to be realized.

These two human conditions of peace or violence rest upon the dominance of either the neurodissociative brain or the neurointegrative brain, where the latter is necessary for the development of a higher level of consciousness that permits the development of cultures of trust, without which, a politics of trust is not possible. Sensory stimulation leads to the neurointegrative brain; sensory deprivation leads to the neurodissociative brain. Body pleasure is the glue of bonding that produces the neurointegrative brain.

Table 5 presents an overview of the complexity of these two cultural brains, which determines the nature of culture and whether a politics of trust can exist. How pain and pleasure are encoded in these two cultural brains throughout development is the key to understanding how the crucible of humanity is formed and becomes a necessary focus for actions to build a politics of trust.

Aristotle provided insights into the formation of these two cultural brains, represented by body (somatic/emotional-social-sexual brain) and soul (neocortical/rational brain), where the former instructs the latter:

As the body is prior in order of generation to the soul, so the irrational is prior to the rational. The proof is that anger and wishing and desire are implanted in children from their very birth, but reason and understanding are developed, as they grow older. Wherefore, the care of the body ought to precede that of the soul, and the training of the appetitive part should follow; none the less our care of it must be for the sake of the reason, and our care of the body for the sake of the soul. (Aristotle, *Politica*, c. 350 BC)

Aristotle also informed us that pleasure is the highest good: '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

**Table 4.** Ten principles of mother-infant bonding: foundations for human trust, harmony and peace

- I. Every pregnancy is a wanted pregnancy. Every child is a wanted child.** Unwanted children are typically unloved, abused and neglected and they become the next generation of delinquents, violent offenders and alcohol/drug abusers and addicts.
- II. Every pregnancy has proper nutrition and prenatal care** – medical and psychological – and is free from alcohol, drugs, tobacco and other harmful agents of stress.
- III. Natural birthing** --avoid wherever possible obstetrical medications, forceps and induced labor with no episiotomy nor premature cutting of umbilical cord. Mother controls birthing position with *no separation of newborn from mother*. Newborn maintains intimate body contact with mother for breastfeeding and nurturance that promotes basic trust.
- IV. No circumcision** of newborn. The traumatic pain of newborn circumcision adversely affects normal brain development, impairs affectional bonding with mother and has long-lasting effects upon how pain and pleasure are experienced in life that shapes the development of human trust.
- V. Breastfeeding on demand** by newborn/infant/child and for ‘2 years or beyond’, as recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) and UNICEF. Failure to breastfeed results in positive harm to normal brain development and to the immunological health of the newborn, infant and child. Encoding the developing brain with the smell of mother’s body through breastfeeding is essential for the later development of intimate sexuality.
- VI. Intimate body contact** is maintained between mother and newborn/infant by being carried continuously on the body of the mother for the first year of life. Such continuous gentle body movement stimulation of the newborn/infant promotes optimal brain development and ‘Basic Trust’ for peaceful/happy behaviors. Mother-infant co-sleeping is encouraged for ‘two years or beyond’. Mother-infant/child body contact can also be optimized with daily infant/child massage. The Father must also learn to affectionately bond with his infant and child by being an additional source of physical affection and supporting mother as a nurturing mother.
- VII. Immediate Comforting** is given to infants and children who are crying. No infant/child should ever be permitted to cry itself to sleep, which impairs development of human trust.
- VIII. Infants and children are for hugging** and should never be physically hit for any reason. Merging childhood parental love with parental violent pain helps create adult violent ‘love’.
- IX. Infants and children are honored** and should never be humiliated nor emotionally abused for any reason. The emerging sexuality of every child is respected, which promotes human trust.
- X. Mothers must be honored** and not replaced by institutional day care, which emotionally harms children before three years of age. Mother-infant/child community development centers must replace Institutionalized day care.

**THE CHILD IS THE FATHER OF THE MAN  
THE CHILD IS THE MOTHER OF CULTURE  
THE CHILD IS THE FUTURE OF HUMANITY**

**Table 5.** Two cultural brains

LIMBIC-SUBCORTICAL EMOTIONAL BRAIN		
	PAIN	PLEASURE
N E O C O R T I C A L	P	<b>Theistic religions</b>
	A	<b>Patrilineal</b>
	I	
	N	Gender inequality
		Sexual purity
		Addictive synthetic drugs
		Authoritarian
		Pain is a moral good
		Depression-violence-war
		<b>NeuroDissociative brain</b>
B R A I N	P	<b>Earth religions</b>
	L	<b>Matrilineal</b>
	E	
	A	Gender equality
	S	Sexual liberty
	U	Natural botanical drugs
	R	Egalitarian
	E	Pleasure is a moral good
		Joy-happiness-peace
		<b>Neurointegrative brain</b>

word’ (Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*, Book 7, 384–322 BC).

**POLITICAL TRANSFORMATIONS FOR A POLITICS OF TRUST**

A major barrier to the realization of human trust and a politics of trust is the lack of gender equality in humanity that has characterized most of the evolutionary history of human cultures. Without true gender equality in human cultures, human trust and a politics of trust are not possible. Many institutions of culture, particularly the religious institutions, have substantial investments in maintaining gender inequality where the male dominates the female. It

will take centuries to reverse these deeply entrenched traditions of hostility to the feminine. However, some immediate political actions can be taken to further this process of cultural transformation.

It is proposed that the Politics of Trust Network initiate efforts to achieve gender equality of representation in the legislative bodies of the US – in the Congress and the State Legislatures. In the Senate this could easily be accomplished if one Senator representing each State was a male and the other Senator was a female. Each political party would nominate its male and female Senate candidate and all State citizens would vote for these candidates.

In the US House of Representatives, the

number of representatives would be doubled for each voting district, one being male and the other female. No redistricting would be required. The increase in the US population would justify this increase in representation. This same process would be extended to the state legislators.

Gender equality in the legislative bodies of the US and in nations throughout the world would fundamentally transform the political power structure of the nation state and that of the world, and a politics of trust and world peace would become possible.

The counsel of Lao Tzu (c 565 BC) in the *Tao Te Ching* serves well this journey of transformation:

Know the masculine but follow the feminine.  
(Book One, XXVIII)

Hence He Who Values His Body  
More than dominion over the Empire  
Can be trusted with the Empire.  
He who loves his body  
More than dominion over the Empire  
Can be given custody of the Empire.  
(Book One, XIII)

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