

# The Forgotten Sides of Daycare for Under 3's

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### **The Forgotten Sides of Daycare for Under 3's**

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**Front Cover:** Early Childcare - Infants and Nations at Risk

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*The Forgotten Sides of Daycare for Under 3's*

Section One

*What Infants and Toddlers  
Need...*

*Attachment  
Parenting*



Principle 6 of the 1959 U.N. Declaration of the Rights of the Child states that “The child, for the full and harmonious development of his personality, needs love and understanding. He shall, wherever possible, grow up in the care and under the responsibility of his parents, and in any case in an atmosphere of affection and moral and material security; **a child of tender years shall not save in exceptional circumstances, be separated from his mother**”.

By Resolution 1387 of the General Assembly local authorities and national governments are called upon to recognise these rights and “to strive for their observance by legislative and other measures”.

## EVERY CHILD'S BIRTHRIGHT: IN DEFENCE OF MOTHERING

*Selma Fraiberg*

“IN PSYCHOLOGY, as in any branch of knowledge, a time lag may exist between what is known, what is stored in the library, and the uses of that knowledge in the conduct of human affairs.

During the past three decades the study of human infancy by developmental psychologists has given us stunning insights into the origins of love and the formation of human bonds. The evidence from diverse studies and schools of psychology converges and has led to this consensus: the human capacity to love and to make enduring partnerships in love is formed in infancy, the embryonic period of development.

The child learns to love through his first human partners, his parents. We can look upon this miraculous occurrence as a “gift” of love to the baby. We should also regard it as a right, a birthright for every child.

“Mothering”, that old fashioned word, is the nurturing of the human potential of every baby to love, to trust, and to bind himself to human partnerships in a lifetime of love.

Under extraordinary circumstances, when a baby has been deprived of a mother or a mother substitute through adversity or disaster or the indifference of his society, we have found that the later capacity of that child to commit himself to love, to partners in love, and to the human community will be diminished or depleted.

Unfortunately, the number of such children is growing in our society. In less extraordinary circumstances we are seeing a devaluation of parental nurturing and commitment to babies in our society which may affect the quality and stability of the child's human attachments in ways that cannot yet be predicted...”

...the human capacity to love and to make enduring partnerships in love is formed in infancy...

## Lots of Love Good for Child's Brain

*Robert Lee Hotz*

In animal studies, "the presence of the mother ensures these stress hormones remain at a nice low level,"

...“It has been known for a long time that early experience is able to shape the brain and behaviour,” said Ron de Kloet, an expert on stress and the endocrine system at the University of Leiden in the Netherlands.

“Only recently have we been able to go into the brain and measure what is actually happening in early experience.”

It is the relationship between parental care, the neurobiology of touch and the chemistry of stress that lies at the heart of the new insights in how a newborn brain takes shape.

Researchers said that neglect can warp the brain's developing neural circuits so that they produce too much or too little of the hormones that control responses to stress, causing permanent changes in the way an organism behaves and responds to the world around it.

In infants, high levels of stress can impair growth and development of the brain

and the body.

In animal studies, “the presence of the mother ensures these stress hormones remain at a nice low level,” said Michael Meaney at the Douglas Hospital Research Centre in Montreal...

Harvard University researchers who studied Romanian infants raised in orphanages reported that when lacking the attention and stimulation typical of family life, the 2- to 3-year-old children developed abnormally high and lasting levels of the stress hormone, cortisol, which can have serious long-range effects on learning and memory.

Mary Carlson, the Harvard Medical School scientist who studied the children, also discovered that youngsters whose families kept them in poor-quality day-care centres on work days had abnormal levels of stress hormones on weekdays but not on the weekend when the children were home...

## Caregivers must be the same people all the time

*Penelope Leach*

Babies do not only need constant care, they also need consistent care.

Consistent care does not necessarily, or even optimally, mean from one single person all the time.

Only in Western industrialized societies is a baby ever assumed to be the responsibility of his mother alone; everywhere else he gets primary care from his mother and subsidiary care from a whole range of other people including older siblings, grandparents and neighbours.

But however many people care for a baby, they do need to be the same people all

the time.

Many babies start life with the special people who are usually their parents but then, when emotional attachment, feelings of effectiveness and communication have begun to develop, find themselves with strangers.

Depending on his age and maturity and his previous experiences, such a baby will have developed a wide range of more or less subtle cues and he will be beginning to have expectations about people's responses to them. Having those cues missed or misinterpreted, or receiving responses which are new to him or out of line with anything he knows, will shake his confidence. But he is still a survivor. If the strangers are part- or full-time substitute parents who, once on the scene, remain constantly part of his life, he will gradually adapt. If his mother is around to help him make the transition, to 'translate him' for the newcomers and to blend their 'style' with her own, he will adapt more quickly. The new people will be made 'special'. He will teach them to understand him and to respond to him just as he taught his mother.

**But if the newcomers to his life have no time to 'listen' to him, concentrate on him, feel their way with him, perhaps because he is now part of a group or perhaps because they are part of a stream of short-term caretakers, his development may truly suffer...**



## Babies need a whole caretaker all to themselves

*Penelope Leach*

Individual carers are better placed to meet babies needs.

They have only one child of any particular age and stage to cope with and this is vital.

When you cope with two or three at once, there is no way you can simultaneously respond to messages about milk, cuddles, and dropped toys.

**(ask anyone who has triplets.)**

That is not something our present society readily acknowledges, though.

After all, one-to-one care by someone outside the family offers no economies of scale. If it releases anyone to fill the skill-shortage it does so only by leaving babies with less-skilled - or at least less well paid adults, an uncomfortably colonialist thought.

So acknowledgment of babies needs for individual care would mean admitting that where a parent wanted to be at home with a child, s/he was the obvious caregiver and should be economically supported in that choice.

**...one-to-one care by someone outside the family  
offers no economies of scale.**

Penelope Leach gained her doctorate in Social Psychology for a study of the effects of different sorts of upbringing on children's developing moral judgements and social sense. She worked on juvenile delinquency for the Home Office and became a Research Fellow under the Medical Research Council, conducting a large scale study of the effects of babies on their parents. Her book *Babyhood* established her reputation as an authority on infant development. Her world bestseller *Baby and Child* put child development into the context of the realities of childcare. Its continuing sales in twenty-nine languages approach two million. Her book *The Parents' A to Z* is being used by the World Health Organization as the basis for its planned *World Encyclopedia of Childcare*.

The child's optimal development is most likely to take place if there is a secure bond or attachment between mother and child...

Without sensitive responsiveness between mother and child, the bond will be impaired and problems may develop... This capacity for mutuality includes all subsequent relationships...

When constantly stressed by separations, a child eventually learns not to rely upon his parents but to take comfort in whatever way he can – withdrawal as an infant, isolation at a latency age, peer-group-addiction as a teenager.

We want our children to be self-reliant, but too many stressful separations during infancy and they become overly self-sufficient and refuse to allow themselves to develop any emotionally interdependent relationships, and are at risk for physical diseases, mental breakdown, alcoholism.

Dr. H. Edhouse

From a presentation to the Australian Association for Infant Mental Health, SA Branch, Adelaide, 30<sup>th</sup> August, 1999 by Dr. H. Edhouse. Dr. Edhouse trained as both a child psychiatrist and psychologist and has held many university and hospital appointments during his 40 years of practice. More detailed information can be found on his website <http://www.humanfamily.net.au/psych/biography.html>

...No matter how difficult it may be for you to meet the emotional needs of your baby during the first year of life, it is indeed a worthwhile investment.

The more responsive you are to your baby's infantile needs, the sooner your baby will be able to give up these needs and move on to more mature stages in development.

In my clinical experience, I cannot tell you how many times I have seen children suffer from the disinterest of parents who were too busy to heed their children's emotional requirements. Ironically, in the long run, these same children force their parents to spend even more of their time to repair the damage caused by their earlier neglect.

The way human development works makes it impossible to give your baby later on in life what he should have gotten during those critical early months. Once the appropriate time has passed and your child's needs are not met, you absolutely cannot reverse time and undo the effects of his loss.

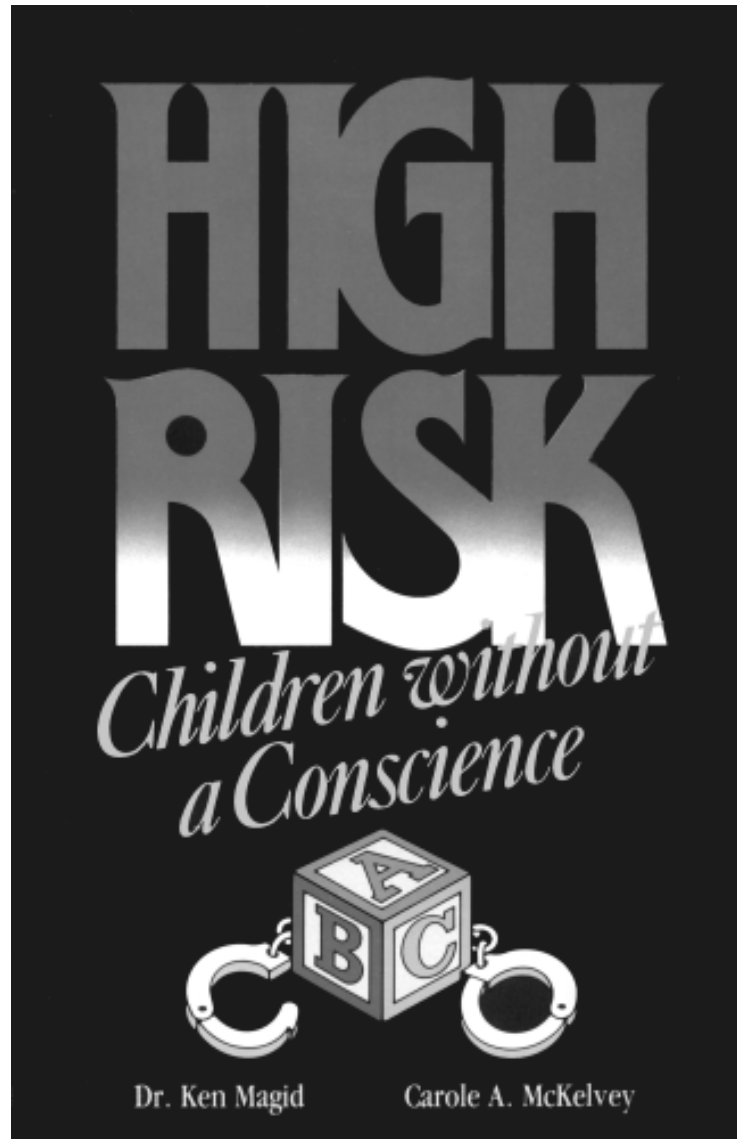
Dr. Lee Salk

Excerpted from **Preparing for Parenthood** by Dr. Lee Salk. A Fellow of the American Psychological Association (APA), Dr. Salk was one of the founders of the association's Division of Child, Youth and Family Services, serving as its president from 1979 to 1980. He also served as president of the APA's Clinical Child Psychology section. Dr. Salk was the recipient of the 1981 APA National Media Award, the first Distinguished Contributions Award from the Society of Pediatric Psychology and the APA's Distinguished Contributions Award in Clinical Child Psychology. Dr. Salk was also a consultant to NBC, appearing on the network's television news broadcasts and speaking on its "News and Information Service" broadcasts. For 20 years Dr. Salk wrote a family-oriented column for McCall's magazine.

*The Forgotten Sides of Daycare for Under 3's*

## Section Two

# *Daycare for Under 3's - The Problems...*



*“The problem starts at the beginning of life, when the scales are tipped toward a future of trust and love, or one of mistrust and deep-seated rage.”*

*“A demographic revolution is occurring which may result in future generations that have huge numbers of detached children.”*

## ...more time in care predicts ... more truly aggressive and disobedient behavior...

Published ... in perhaps the most prestigious journal devoted to the scientific study of child development are the most recent results of the most comprehensive investigation ever conducted of the effects of day care on child development.

This peer-reviewed scientific report based on the federally-funded National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) Study of Early Child Care addresses a long-standing controversy about whether lots of time spent in nonmaternal care beginning in the first year of life is related to elevated levels of aggressive and disobedient behavior.

Contrary to the expectations (and desires) of many in the field of child development, the NICHD Study shows:

- (1) that the more time children spend in any of a variety of nonmaternal care arrangements across the first 4.5 years of life, the more aggression, disobedience, and conflict with adults they manifest at 54 months of age and in kindergarten;
- (2) that these seemingly adverse effects remain even after taking into account multiple features of children's families, as well as the quality and type of nonmaternal care which children experienced; and
- (3) that more time in care predicts not just more assertive or independent behavior, but more truly aggressive and disobedient behavior, as well...

Excerpted from a paper by Jay Belsky who has been a collaborating investigator on the NICHD Study of Early Child Care since its inception in 1989. Professor Belsky is director of the Institute for the Study of Children, Families and Social Issues, Birkbeck University of London

NICHD studies also found that when children spent more time in childcare, their mothers displayed less sensitivity when interacting with them at 6, 15, 24, and 36 months of age.

Sensitive, responsive mothering through the early years was the best predictor of social competence at six years, which in turn predicts schooling success.

Dr. Peter S. Cook

“There’s something I started noticing in my practice over the last year or so and it really shook me up,”...

“It’s a phenomenon I’ve begun to be aware of among expectant mothers who know they’ll have to be going back to work up to three months after the baby is born.”

“There is a lack of passionate commitment to the pregnancy. They don’t have the dreams and fears and fantasies normal to most expectant mothers. It’s as if they are guarding themselves from the turmoil of attachment. As if they are grieving already for what might be lost...”

Dr. T. Barry Brazelton

## To replace a mother with an employee cannot be done

*Penelope Leach*

“To replace a mother with an employee cannot be done. This is partly of course because what is expected of mothers is far beyond what is expected of any employee. But allowing for any kind of time off, promotion, on the job training, vacations - anything of this kind - you cannot provide a child with a continuous or more or less continuous mother figure in an institutional setting.

“Now this is even before we start talking about how many infants economics demand that one person should care for. Once you add in that factor and say that this group of employees are to care for six or eight or ten babies, of course the whole thing becomes ludicrous, because you can't do it for multiple children. To meet the needs of even twins, any mother of twins will tell you, in the sensitive way we most of us reckon to meet the needs of a single baby is in itself impossible.

Staff in charge of some of the best resi-

dential and day nurseries in the country have lavished ingenuity, devotion and all the money they could get on trying to provide stability of care for the babies in their charge.

It cannot be done.

The institution does not only have babies to cope with, it also has staff. Their training, rotation-for-experience, promotion, holidays and sickness produce an ever-changing array of caretakers.

The baby will make no objection because he does not yet know one from another, but his learning of one from another may be delayed if there is no 'special' one who lasts. In extreme instances, babies who were cared for in institutions from very early on have grown into childhood still with the emotional promiscuity appropriate to only the first weeks of life. It is as if the lack of anyone 'special' had kept them at the stage of being interested in everyone but loving no one, indefinitely.

...allowing for any kind of time off, promotion, on the job training, vacations - anything of this kind - you cannot provide a child with a continuous or more or less continuous mother figure in an institutional setting.

## Why individuality and continuity in a baby's care?

*Penelope Leach*

A baby who does not have anybody special, but is cared for by many well-meaning strangers in turn, or one who is cared for sketchily and without concentration, sharing his caretaker with other needful small people, is like an adult who moves from country to country, knowing the language of none.

Baby and adult must each rely on the universal language of gross gesture and tolerate high levels of isolation and low levels of understanding. Neither can develop any subtlety of communication nor certainty as to whether or why things have been understood or have taken place. The adult returns home with relief. The baby had better stay there...

I do not think that it is possible to over-emphasize these twin factors of individuality and continuity in a baby's care. Except in extreme cases - as of physical cruelty, dangerous neglect or the total maternal withdrawal that sometimes comes with mental illness - they override every other feature distinguishing 'good' from 'bad'...

Ten years of academic research into many aspects of child development, followed by the births of her own children, made her conscious of the gulf between professionals and parents, theory and practice, adults and children, even men and women. Much of her work has been devoted to trying to bridge those gulfs from both sides, using every possible medium of communication. Accordingly, Penelope is a Fellow of the British Psychological Society, a Vice President of the Health Visitors' Association and President of the Child Development Society, in the UK, and sits on the professional board of the Institute for Child, Adolescent and Family Studies in the U.S. and on the advisory board of the child abuse prevention program of Kidspace in the United States.

## Infant Daycare

*Burton L. White*

The people that I know who have studied the development of children over the years number in the hundreds because I've been around for a long time. I don't know two of them that applaud the notion of a transfer of the primary responsibility of child rearing over to any substitute.

Most of the people I know do not like it. **Very few of the people I know are willing to speak out in public the way I do...**

The people who create substitute care facilities are not doing it primarily because they're looking for better ways of raising babies. They're doing it for legitimate needs or perceived needs of adults.

**This is not an institution that's been designed because parents can't raise babies well enough, in most cases.**

Now my concern as somebody who has studied children over the years, is singular. I want to introduce into all discussions, policy discussions and family decisions, the factor of the likely impact on the child. I see that as my professional responsibility and I'm going to keep saying it, whether it aggravates guilt feelings, or whether it's misused or not...

Dr. White founded the Harvard Preschool Project and served as its director for the thirteen years of its existence. He was also the first director of the Brookline Early Education Project and the Senior Consultant to Missouri's New Parents as Teachers project. He has taught at Harvard University, Brandeis University and Tufts University. He is author of **The First Three Years of Life, Educating the Infant and Toddler** as well as four major textbooks and numerous scholarly articles. He was also host of a television series, *The First Three Years*.

## Talk With Selma Fraiberg

*by Robert Coles*

I have to speak out against the way thousands and thousands of children are treated - handed from one virtual stranger to another in the name of 'day care'.

Even licensed day-care centres or preschool nurseries often fail to meet the child's need for a sustained, close involvement with a caring person.

Young children who get to know such a person, then lose that person, show anxiety, agitation, tearfulness.

When those children keep meeting someone, then losing someone, meeting someone, then losing someone, and so on and so on; or when (and it isn't rare at all) they don't for hours each day really know anyone well enough to feel close, to feel trust - well, there are going to be emotional consequences: lack of confidence in the future, a degree of withdrawal from the future, a degree of withdrawal from the world.

...when (and it isn't rare at all) they don't for hours each day really know anyone well enough to feel close, to feel trust...

Robert Coles is a child psychiatrist, professor at Harvard University, and author of more than fifty books. He is best known for his explorations of children's lives and books that explore their moral, political, and spiritual sensibilities. In addition, he has written literary criticism, numerous biographies, reviews, poetry, social commentary, several children's books, and regular columns for the *New Republic*, *New Oxford Review*, and *American Poetry Review*.

## Emotional Neglect

Bruce D. Perry, M.D., Ph.D.

The part of his brain which would have allowed him to feel connected to other human beings — empathy — simply did not develop. He has affective blindness.

A fifteen year old boy sees some fancy sneakers he wants. Another child is wearing them — so he pulls out a gun and demands them. The younger child, at gunpoint, takes off his shoes and surrenders them. The fifteen year old puts the gun to the child's head, smiles and pulls the trigger. When he is arrested, the officers are chilled by his apparent lack of remorse. Asked later whether, if he could turn back the clock, would he do anything differently, he thinks and replies, "I would have cleaned my shoes." 'His' bloody shoes led to his arrest. He exhibits regret for being caught, an intellectual, cognitive response. But remorse — an affect — is absent. He feels no connection to the pain of his victim. Neglected and humiliated by his primary caretakers when he was young, this fifteen year old murderer is, literally, emotionally retarded. The part of his brain which would have allowed him to feel connected to other human beings — empathy — simply did not develop. He has affective blindness. Just as the retarded child lacks the capacity to understand abstract cognitive concepts, this young murderer lacks the capacity to

be connected to other human beings in a healthy way. Experience, or rather lack of critical experiences, resulted in this affective blindness — this emotional retardation.

Very narrow windows - critical periods - exist during which specific sensory experience is required for optimal organization and development of any brain area (e.g., Singer, 1995; Thoenen, 1995). Absent such experience and development, dysfunction is inevitable (e.g., Carlson et al., 1989). When critical periods have been examined in great detail in non-human animals for the primary sensory modalities, similar use-dependent differentiation in development of the brain occurs for the rest of the central nervous system (Diamond et al., 1964; Altman et al., 1964; Cragg, 1967; Cragg, 1969; Cummins et al., 1979). Abnormal micro-environmental cues and atypical patterns of neural activity during critical and sensitive periods can result in malorganization and compromised function in other brain-mediated functions such as empathy, attachment and affect

Excerpted from **Aggression and Violence: The Neurobiology of Experience** by Bruce D. Perry, M.D., Ph.D. From CIVITAS Child Trauma Programs A Partnership of CIVITAS Initiative, Baylor College of Medicine and Texas Children's Hospital \*This is an Academy version of an article originally published in The AACAP Developmentor. Official citation: Perry, BD. Aggression and Violence: The Neurobiology of Experience. The AACAP Developmentor Spring, 1996. See also <http://www.brainwave.org.nz/>



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regulation (e.g., Green et al., 1981). Some of the most powerful clinical examples of this are related to lack of 'attachment' experiences early in life. The child who has been emotionally neglected or abandoned early in life will exhibit attachment problems which are persistently resistant to any 'replacement' experiences including therapy (Carlson et al., 1989; Ebinger, 1974). Examples of this include feral children, Spitz's orphans (Spitz et al., 1946), the Romanian orphans (Chisholm et al., 1995) and, sadly, the remorseless, violent child (Ressler et al., 1988; Myers et al., 1995; Mones, 1991; Hickey, 1991; Greenberg et al., 1993).

Lack of appropriate affective experience early in life and the resulting malorganization of attachment capabilities plays a major role in the current epidemic of senseless violence in the United States today (Lewis et al., 1989). So often, these acts are inhuman — throwing a six year old boy out of a window because he refused to steal candy for you — planning, stalking, kidnapping and torturing someone who 'disrespected' you — hunting any homeless man to set on fire. Senseless — or are they senseless acts? The ability to feel remorse, to be empathetic, to be sympathetic — are all expe-

rience-based capabilities. If a child feels no emotional attachment to any human being, then one cannot expect any more remorse from him after killing a human than one would expect from someone who ran over a squirrel. These behaviors are not senseless, they are not beyond our understanding. They arise from children

reflecting the world in which they have been raised (Taylor et al., 1992; Perry, Pollard, Blakley, Baker, & Vigilante, in press).

It is important to emphasize that the majority of individuals who are emotionally neglected in childhood do not grow into violent individuals. These victims carry their scars in other ways, usually in a profound emptiness, or in emotionally destruc-

tive relationships, moving through life disconnected from others and robbed of some of their humanity. The effects of emotional neglect in childhood predispose to violence by decreasing the strength of the sub-cortical and cortical impulse-modulating capacity and by decreasing the value of other humans due to an incapacity to empathize or sympathize with them. This decreased value of humans means that there is a much lower threshold for the unattached person to act in an antisocial fashion to gratify their impulses.

These victims carry their scars in other ways, usually in a profound emptiness, or in emotionally destructive relationships, moving through life disconnected from others and robbed of some of their humanity.



*Daycare for Under 3's - The Problems...*

# How to Succeed in the Business of Creating Psychopaths Without Even Trying

*E.T. Barker M.D., D. Psych., FRCP(C)*

Paul Steinhauer, a very well respected Canadian psychiatrist wrote a paper entitled “How to Succeed in the Business of Creating Psychopaths Without Even Trying. It was included in a training manual for Children’s Aid Societies. He was simply pointing out the known consequences of moving a very young child through a series of foster homes.

Institutional daycare adds changing and shared caregivers to lengthy daily separations, and hopes for no ill effect.

**But why are we experimenting with diluted forms of a known formula for creating psychopaths? Do we really think that just a little bit of psychopathy might be OK?**

**What scares me is that institutional daycare under age three takes the same fool-proof psychopathy producing recipe, adds two problematic ingredients and dilutes it.**

For those unfamiliar with the features of psychopathy, a few descriptive comments by various authors follow Cleckley’s 16 point checklist.

1. Superficial charm and good intelligence
2. Absence of delusions and other signs of irrational thinking
3. Absence of “nervousness” or psychoneurotic manifestations
4. Unreliability
5. Untruthfulness and insincerity
6. Lack of remorse and shame
7. Inadequately motivated antisocial behaviour
8. Poor judgment and failure to learn by experience

9. Pathologic egocentricity and incapacity for love
10. General poverty in major affective reactions
11. Specific loss of insight
12. Unresponsiveness in general interpersonal relations
13. Fantastic and uninviting behaviour with drink
14. Suicide rarely carried out
15. Sex life impersonal, trivial, and poorly integrated
16. Failure to follow any life plan

*Hervey Cleckley* talks about psychopaths as those who:

“fail to know all those more serious and deeply moving affective states which make up the tragedy and triumph of ordinary life, of life at the level of important human experience”,

Or again, he says of a psychopath that:

his “objective experience is so bleached of deep emotion that he is invincibly ignorant of what life means to others”

“These are the diseases that are produced in the early years by the absence of human ties or the destruction of human ties. In the absence of human ties those mental qualities that we call human will fail to develop or will be grafted upon a personality that cannot nourish them, so that at best they will be imitations of virtues, personality facades.”

*Selma Fraiberg*

[the psychopath] “lacks those normal human sentiments without which life in common is impossible.”

*Gordon Allport*

“Extensive non-parental care in infancy is without long-term precedent in humans or any other mammals.

The major environmental changes involved in this massive social experiment should have some kind of “environmental impact assessment”.

The burden of proof that such changes in the early environment of infants are safe should be on those who advocate them, just as the purveyors of other environmental changes, like additives to food or water, must provide evidence that they are safe for human consumption.

As in medicine, the precautionary principle of *primum non nocere* – “first and foremost do no harm” – should apply. This principle is not being applied in policies which advocate more child care for infants and young children.”

Dr. Peter S. Cook

As one who has raised concerns in America about developmental risks associated with early day care as we know it and have it... I welcome Dr. Cook into the ranks of those few of us who seem willing to publicly raise concerns... Dr Cook brings to this work decades of thinking about early childhood, as well as years of work as a practicing child psychiatrist. Jay Belsky, Ph.D.

## Juvenile delinquents and psychopathic personalities are not a mystery

*Dr. Jack Raskin*

Of all the jobs we do, the most important is caring properly for our young children.

“...People are hyped up over adolescent drug abuse, pregnancies, suicide, and the cults children join. But the same roots underlie them all. The roots are depression and emotional deprivation. These are laid down in the personality in the early months of life. They grow out of poor attachments, inadequate affection and contact for the child in the first months...”

“...When the quality of the child’s bonds and sense of acceptance is poor in the early months and years, these deficiencies will especially show up in adolescence. Then there is a normal feeling of loss as the child attempts to free himself from his parents. If these new stresses stir up earlier hurts of not feeling accepted, of not feeling loved, the child’s ability to negotiate this period is poor...”

“Juvenile delinquents, psychopathic personalities are not a mystery. They are people without close ties to anyone. People mean nothing to them. They did not get

the essential ingredient to get along - an early strong attachment to some loved person...”

“...The danger is, when mother goes to work the child is thrust into the care of some strange person, disrupting the bonds established with the mother.

And just when he sends out some tender, new shoots of affection, he gets a new sitter.

The child can’t shout, “My God, every attempt I’m making to get the closeness I need is sabotaged. What the hell is being done here?”

But, you’ll perhaps see the results, five years later when he’s disruptive in school or 10 years later when he’s on drugs...”

“...Of all the jobs we do, the most important is caring properly for our young children. Doing it well is crucial for the child and can be immensely gratifying to the parents.”

## EARLY CHILD REARING: THE FABRIC OF SOCIETY

*Professor David Baum*

This Symposium is historically placed as part of the 400th Anniversary Celebration of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow...

Some 50 years ago, Bowlby defined the cycles of deprivation - today's emotionally deprived children becoming tomorrow's neglectful parents, who in turn produce another emotionally deprived generation. He believed in those optimistic post-war days that with concentrated social, economic and psychological effort we could break this cycle and, in his words, "enable all boys and girls to grow up to become men and women who, given health and security, are capable of providing a stable and happy life for their children".

Alas we have not broken this cycle: on the contrary the evidence of scholars like Sir Michael Rutter and Professor David Smith is that, in an era of economic growth and improving indices of physical health, there is an alarming rise in crime, suicide, depression and alcohol and drug abuse in young people, introducing a multiplier into transgenerational deprivation.

**...we have colluded with society and government policy in turning a blind eye on the importance of babies and**

**children having their parents with them at home.**

Babies and infants are, like other young mammals, nestlings who should be reared, nourished and nurtured by their mothers. **Extensive non-parental care in infancy is without precedent in humans or other animals and to continue to ignore this will historically be judged to have been a madness of neglect.**

There are those who maintain that there is insufficient evidence to draw such conclusions. Today we stand alongside Bowlby in declaring that infants and children need to be loved consistently and unconditionally. We must turn the tables and put the burden of proof on those who argue otherwise.

Universal mothering is the surest start that we can offer our children and I salute those who have brought today's Symposium together in Scotland.

We have a chance in Glasgow to kindle a beacon and define early child rearing as the key determinant of the very fabric of the society of the millennium generation. With the support of my Council, I can pledge that the Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health will follow Scottish lead and bring the importance of early child rearing to the political table.

Excerpted from the opening address for the symposium on EARLY CHILD REARING: THE FABRIC OF SOCIETY by Professor David Baum, President, Royal College of Paediatrics and Child Health. This Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Glasgow Symposium was held on Friday, 26th March, 1999.



Section Three

*Some Reasons for Believing  
Daycare is the Only Option...*



## The Dangers of Day Care

The Wall Street Journal, 16 July 2003

Jay Belsky

The results, after all, are not politically popular: many have made their careers representing good child care as a sort of social cure-all.

Published today in the scientific journal *Child Development* are the latest results of the most comprehensive investigation ever conducted of the effects of day care on child development. The report, peer-reviewed and based on the federally funded National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) Study of Early Childcare, addresses how time spent in nonmaternal care in the first years of life relates to aggressive and disobedient behavior later on.

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 families, as well as the quality 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.

Not that you'd know any of this from reading the NICHD's press release or listening to many of the commentators. The

results, after all, are not politically popular: many have made their careers representing good child care as a sort of social cure-all. Because child care is here to stay, the argument goes, only the improvement of its quality is important. Anyone highlighting disconcerting evidence is simply against child care. And a weatherman reporting rain is against sunshine.

One must wonder why, after the government invested tens of millions of dollars, so many are bending over backward to minimize the results. This is particularly astonishing in light of the fact that we are talking about early experience had by tens of thousands of children. It's practically the norm these days for American children to start nonmaternal care in the first year of life, often for more than 20-30 hours per week. They continue at similar levels until they enter school.

The recent results, however disconcerting, are consistent with others that have been reported over the years in the study. Published evidence has shown that more time in care, irrespective of its quality, predicts more problem behavior among two-year-olds, less sensitive maternal behavior when children are 6, 15, 24, and 36 months of age; and lower rates of secure attachment to mother when children

Professor Belsky is director of the Institute for the Study of Children, Families and Social Issues, Birkbeck University of London, and has been a collaborating investigator on the NICHD Study of Early Child Care since its inception in 1989.

*Some Reasons for Believing Daycare is the Only Solution...*

are 15 and 36 months of age if their mothers' parenting is relatively insensitive.

Those inclined to make light of the recent study will note that the adverse effects of lots of time spent in nonmaternal child care across the infant, toddler and preschool years are rather modest in magnitude. But the same holds true of "good-news" findings emanating from the NICHD Study showing that higher-quality child care is associated with somewhat enhanced cognitive-linguistic development. Critics will emphasize that better quality child care was associated with lower levels of problem behavior in the most recent report when, in fact, the evidence for this was extremely limited. But when it comes to experiences shared by so many children in the U.S. today, even small or modest effects may have larger consequences for schools, communities and the society at large.

To be sure, most children participating in the NICHD Study who experienced very high levels of nonmaternal care did not show levels of problem behavior suggesting a need for clinical treatment. Indeed, most of these children functioned "in the normal range." But the same holds for children who grow up in poverty or experience low-quality child care. Our children are resilient. But the critics of this study's findings are all too ready to remedy the other ills mentioned above on the basis of scientific evidence no stronger or weaker.

One only need to think about a first-grade teacher to appreciate the potential significance of the latest findings. Imagine being in charge of a classroom of 22 six-year-olds in which half of the children have averaged more than 30 hours per

week of nonmaternal care across their first five years of life. Now contrast this teacher's experience with that of another with only 20% of her pupils having such early and extensive child-care histories. It's conceivable that the former teacher will spend more time managing her class and less time teaching than the latter. In other words the collective consequences of modest increases in aggression and disobedience in the case of many children is something to be concerned about.

Ultimately, it is the tendency of all too many social scientists (and the public) to deny, dismiss or minimize findings they do not like while embracing, if not playing up, those they do like. That gives social science a bad name — as ideology masquerading as science. Would much of what is being said to devalue the daycare findings be spoken if they applied to time spent in poverty or low-quality child care? Even modest adverse effects would be decried in the name of healthy development for all children. Why, then, should the same analysis not apply to children spending 30, 40 and even 50 hours per week, in nonmaternal child-care arrangements in a society in which economic forces coerce all too many parents to make child-rearing decisions which they would rather not?

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.

...they spin developmental science in support of their political views, failing to realize the disservice they do to children and families alike...

Until recently children's needs have not formed a substantial part of the feminist platform; women have fought males at their traditional games but have scarcely sought to involve them in traditional female games.

There is a growing recognition of the dangers of sexism both ways round and this is a trend which must certainly be encouraged.

In the meantime, women, still principally responsible for young children, can do much to prepare for a different, a gentler and a more child orientated society.

Today's boy-babies are tomorrow's men.

Their education is critical to a future in which all human beings are people first and workers afterwards; a future in which new people take priority over any other product.

Penelope Leach

## Media Bias

*James Robertson*

...even women in the psychological and social science professions may push aside their knowledge of the importance of continuity of care for their young children in order to get on with their careers -

...There are many under-3's in shared care (day nurseries, child minders) either because the State will not subsidize the family or because (more difficult to bring to rational discussion) even women in the psychological and social science professions may push aside their knowledge of the importance of continuity of care for their young children in order to get on with their careers - putting their young children for substantial parts of the day in the care of others, then employing familiar rationalizations to show that what is convenient for them cannot be bad for their children.

I think this is one of the sources of ambivalence within the professions about making an absolute priority of providing for the emotional needs of infants and young children...

We believe from experience that considerable influence is exerted by professional women working in television and other media who wish to work and have therefore to share their children; and that even in progressive mental health and pro-child movements this often unconscious factor can lead to something short of total commitment to putting first the emotional needs of children when very young...

But of course all is not gloom. There are many, many young mothers who although with university degrees contentedly look after their young children - knowing this is not a lifetime chore, but for a few years only after which they will gradually return to work. And there are many such, quietly getting on with parenting in company with their husbands - but of course not hitting the headlines since they are not fighting for 'rights'...

- putting their young children for substantial parts of the day in the care of others, then employing familiar rationalizations to show that what is convenient for them cannot be bad for their children.

## Child Care: Wishful Revisionism

*Joan Beck*

Chicago Tribune: ...Mothers of young children are taking jobs in unprecedented numbers and they want to know that what they are doing is all right. Child care "experts" who tell them what they want to hear will sell their books and get paid for lectures. Those who still say babies and toddlers need full-time mothering are now often charged with being sexist, manipulative old fogies who want to keep women stuck at home.

So the revisionism spreads. Ethnological records are searched for primitive tribes where child care is shared and mothers work. Biological studies are probed for animal models which push their offspring off on their own early on. Historical data on child rearing are selectively resurrected. (Elizabeth Badinter's best selling book "Mother Love: Myth and Reality" debunking the idea of a mothering instinct is a case in point). Standard child care research is reinterpreted to give new results.

And contrary to the weight of child de-

velopment expertise in the last several decades, it's now possible to find considerable opinion telling mothers they can safely take a full time job away from home starting even weeks after a baby is born...

The new magazines for working mothers are filled with time-saving tips and career strategies and unsubstantiated rationalizations about "quality time not quantity of time" being important to a young child.

The fashionable new wisdom on child development holds that a baby is better off if a mother works away from him most of his waking hours than if she stays home and wishes she were getting on with her career. The only harm from her working can come from guilt about being away - never mind her fatigue, lack of time for her child or herself, or problems with substitute caretakers, or from her child's resentment, emotional

insecurity, or physical or psychological stress...

The new magazines for working mothers are filled with timesaving tips and career strategies and unsubstantiated rationalizations about "quality time not quantity of time" being important to a young child. But young children haven't necessarily changed because women have...

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## QUALITY" TIME

*Elena Hannah*

"...It is true that it is the quality and not necessarily the quantity of interaction that matters in the mother-child interaction.

The catch is in the meaning of the word "quality".

For a lot of adults it means a certain time slot in the day when they engage in various activities with their children: talking, touching, eating, etc. The fact that these interactions are massed within a short period of time rather than distributed throughout the day doesn't seem to give most adults any pause for thought.

Children, however, need the interactions distributed throughout the day. Not every 15 minutes, not every hour, not in any recognizable pattern but at random intervals depending on environmental circumstances (a stranger coming in, a storm blowing), incidental circumstances (a fall down the

stairs, a finger caught in the door, a tooth starting to come loose), and all other types of events, both negative and positive (coming down with a cold, a fight with a best friend, failing in "love" for the first time).

Some days go very smoothly and others don't. So some days they will need mother five minutes once or twice a day; other days much more often. Of course, this is after weaning. While a child is still nursing, he or she will need mother very frequently.

It is certainly painfully difficult for a mother to stop being active in a field she enjoys, or for a mother who needs it to do without the extra income. However, with widespread social support for mothering, it could be done... Until some solution is found to the present situation, the mother-child relationship will continue to suffer and we will have entire populations with unmet childhood needs.

Until some solution is found to the present situation, the mother-child relationship will continue to suffer and we will have entire populations with unmet childhood needs.

## From Here to Maternity: What the Feminists Ignore

*Janet Daley*

I once wrote an article expressing sympathy for a new breed of woman who seemed to be missing out on some of the greatest satisfactions that the female condition had to offer. Encouraged (or bullied) by the feminist lobby, they were so driven by the need to compete professionally that they were pushing their domestic lives -- and most important, their child-rearing -- to the margins of their existence. Pulled in so many directions by conflicting undertakings, they were deprived of the pleasures that any of their various roles might have offered.

That column brought my largest postbag ever. Almost all the letters expressed gratitude from women who felt that I had rehabilitated the concept of "home-making" as a dignified and worthwhile lifestyle. Because I began the piece by saying that these thoughts had arisen while I was carrying in some wonderfully fresh-smelling laundry from the garden, it is still referred to by the many women who remember it as "the laundry column".

Dr. Catherine Hakim of the London School of Economics seems to have reaped a rather more bitter harvest for saying something similar, even though her observations are based on sound research where mine were just subjective musings. When her carefully documented statisti-

cal analysis of women's employment -- and, more significantly, their *attitudes* toward employment -- first appeared in an academic journal, she was attacked by a legion of feminist social scientists. They were outraged by the suggestion that many -- if not most -- working women saw their jobs as secondary to their domestic roles and regarded their earnings as supplementing the household income. And further, these women deliberately chose the sort of jobs which would fit round family responsibilities, even if they were relatively low paid -- rather than being forced into such "stereotypical" occupations by sex discrimination.

Dr. Hakim, too, has had many letters from real women (as opposed to female spokespersons) who are delighted to hear that they are neither freaks nor renegades. But unlike newspaper columnists who need only be popular with readers to survive, Dr. Hakim must fight her corner in the illiberal, doctrinaire world of academic gender politics. Good luck to her.

Even among lay readers of quality newspapers, the idea that many women choose to give their families precedence over their careers has taken on the status of heresy. The women who wrote to me about "the laundry column" felt that I had said something that was becoming unsayable. As a



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middle-class working woman, I had dared to suggest that there was a conflict between wanting a vocation outside the home and the desire to be fully committed to a family. But contrary to feminist dogma, this problem did not seem to me purely a product of “patriarchal” attitudes or cultural conditioning: it was a natural (and probably inescapable) result of women’s own inclinations. And furthermore, those very inclinations which had been despised by sexual equality campaigners could be a source of gratification which was *uniquely* female. To trade in the richness of a many-dimensional life for the much more restricted and dehumanised one led by most men would be a bad bargain indeed.

What has caused such a storm to break over Dr. Hakim’s head is that she has pointed out divisions within the ranks. For feminists who see themselves as being involved in an ideological war, it is not helpful to reveal that half the troops are in sympathy with the other side. In her book published yesterday, *Key Issues in Women’s Work: Female Heterogeneity and the Polarisation of Women’s Employment* (a title which marks it as deeply unfrivolous), she presents evidence for a distinction between “careerist” women whose objectives are well-served by the feminist lobby and “home-centred” women whose preferences are ignored by it.

As her critics rightly fear, this study could be fatal to sexual equality campaigning -- and not only because it divides the side into two antagonistic camps. What is more important is that it reveals the real danger in elevating the rights of the group above those of the individual. To fight on behalf of a group, it is necessary to

pretend that all its members have the same interests. The effectiveness of such a campaign is directly related to the size and unanimity of the faction that it represents. To say, as feminists do, that they are campaigning for “women” is rather more impressive than speaking for “some women”.

So, for feminist purposes, all women *must be* frustrated “careerists”. If they do not recognise themselves as such, they are simply deluded by patriarchal sentiment. The “consciousness-raising” groups of the seventies were designed specifically to provide re-education (as the Chinese used to say during the Cultural Revolution) for women who were confused on this point. To have all women speaking with one voice is critical to the credibility of a movement which sees itself as a coherent political force...

...many -- if not most -- working women saw their jobs as secondary to their domestic roles and regarded their earnings as supplementing the household income.

## Some Feminine Opinions

“Feminism’s war against the housewife has pitted the best educated, most sophisticated, most aggressive, and most masculinized portion of the female population against women who generally possess less education and less worldly experience, who are more likely to be docile than aggressive, feminine than masculine.

An average homemaker not only has had no forum in which to speak, but never imagined she would be called upon to defend her *raison d’etre*.”

It is the insidiousness of the women’s movement that, ‘while claiming - and being perceived by society - to speak for all women’ it has not represented those who want to be housewives and mothers.

Carolyn Graglia (*Domestic Tranquility*) in James Tooley (*The Miseducation of Women*).

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Harvard professor Carol Gilligan explains that male development has typically focused on separation, individuation, logic, and hierarchy. Female development, on the other hand, has emphasized attachment, relationship, connection, and communication.

Males grow up and take on a psychology that is legalistic and logic centered, while women grow up relationship oriented.

Carol Gilligan (*In A Different Voice*)

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The radical feminism of the idealist 70’s envisioned “gynocentric” societies, where the care of others would be our primary economic value. Such societies would be based on principles of nurturing, connectedness and altruism, rather than on “masculine” principles of aggression, individualism and competition.

Mothers and other home labourers would be fully waged.

Zelda Grimshaw (*Mothering: feminism’s unfinished business*)  
The Age (Australia) August 1 2002

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## Consumerism and Daycare

How can it be that in the United States, the richest society this planet has ever known, families cannot afford the division of labor of home and working life that is simply taken for granted in even the poorest societies?

Going back to the early 1970s ... official figures from the Household Expenditure Survey in Britain show ... average weekly household expenditure on the essentials — housing, fuel, food and clothing — was roughly the same as today (at constant prices ... \$ 92.50 then compared to \$ 100 now). Housing costs have risen, but the price of food and clothing has fallen.

What has changed is the extent of our spending on luxury goods, childcare, leisure and vacations abroad — expenditures on these categories have more than doubled during that period (from \$34.38 to \$73.13). And automobile expenses too have nearly doubled during the same period...

James Tooley (*The Miseducation of Women*)

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### **Proportion of Average Family Income Spent on Food, Shelter and Clothing**

LICO Level is for a family of four in 1993 dollars, urban centres of 500,000 plus

#### **1959**

Proportion - 50 percent

LICO Level - \$19,123

#### **1969**

Proportion - 42 percent

LICO Level - \$24,870

#### **1978**

Proportion - 38.5 percent

LICO Level - \$28,243

#### **1986**

Proportion - 36.2 percent

LICO Level - \$30,645

#### **1992**

Proportion - 34.7 percent

LICO Level - \$31,007

Source: Statistics Canada, *Income distributions by size in Canada*, (Cat. 13-207 various issues)

## The working mothers/childcare juggernaut

Peter S. Cook

...downplaying accumulating evidence of risks in their early childcare prescriptions.

Betty Friedan, in her 1963 “book of the century”, *The Feminine Mystique*, set women on paths to careers and equality, denigrating motherhood and domesticity. But her recantations in her 1981 sequel, *The Second Stage*, viz. “The equality we fought for isn’t liveable, isn’t workable, isn’t comfortable in the terms that structured our battle.” were ignored as equality feminists implemented her earlier prescriptions.

Likewise, Germaine Greer had a poignant rethink. In *The Whole Woman* (1999) she says: “In *The Female Eunuch* (1970) I argued that motherhood should not be treated as a substitute career: now I would argue that motherhood should be regarded as a genuine career option...”. She says the “immense rewardingness of children is the best kept secret in the western world”. Having inspired a generation of women not to want motherhood, she now “mourns for her unborn babies”, confessing “I still have pregnancy dreams, waiting with vast joy and confidence for something that will never happen.”

But once set in motion, the working mothers/childcare juggernaut - fuelled by rampant consumerism with its pervasive mes-

sage that more things will bring you happiness — developed a momentum of its own.

Thus, rather than urging social settings which support the healthy, more natural mothering of small children, many women gaining power in the social sciences and bureaucracies call for still more non-parental childcare, downplaying accumulating evidence of risks in their early childcare prescriptions.

In his editorial *The Dangers of Day Care* in *The Wall Street Journal* of July 16, 2003, Professor Jay Belsky described this as “ideology masquerading as science”. Summarising evidence from much research, including the multimillion dollar US study into the effects of childcare, he said that, regardless its quality and type, the more time children spend in (non-maternal) daycare before they are 4 1/2 years old, the more truly aggressive and disobedient they are, not just more assertive or independent.

Such developments have long-term significance for social well-being. It ill-behoves us to continue on with the misguided prescription for more daycare.

Adapted from **Feminism, childcare and family mental health: have women been mis-led by equality feminism?** Copyright © Peter S. Cook See <http://www.naturalchild.org/home/>

## Daycare's 'Hard Sell' is Nonsense

*Linda Burton*

There will never be a shortage of studies in this country telling the American public exactly what we want to hear. There will never be a lack of overnight experts eager to nod sagely and to confirm as alleged fact studies that fly blatantly in the face of the most transparent reality or the most obvious common sense...

Nobody wants to hear the truth about day care. Nobody wants to be the one to say it. So we keep skirting around the business of coming right out and telling parents that, "By golly, one of YOU needs to be there for those kids," by commissioning amorphous, multiauthored, scholarly and detached "studies" to purportedly advise us about the terribly complicated business of figuring what is best for the kids.

But we already know what is best for the kids. What the kids need is not profound. There is no baffling, convoluted mystery here. Kids need their parents. Kids need to be raised by someone who loves them and who puts them first, and not by someone who takes care of them because they are being paid to do it. These words are not what America wants to hear, how-

ever, so we continue to commission studies, hoping that eventually we will find one that convinces us our guilt is misplaced.

Day care studies, like the legendary phoenix, seem to rise rather regularly out of the ashes, so we have come to learn what to expect when another one is unleashed on the public.

All the same people will just go scurrying back to their same soapboxes on this issue. We know who's going to feel affirmed by this study and who's going to rail against it. However, after all the scholarly hubbub and jockeying for TV news-camera positions, after all the fury and emotional flapping around, absolutely nothing will have changed or improved for America's parents or for their children.

No matter where they work or what they do, most parents want very much to raise their own children. A veritable landslide of the people who have actually used the nation's day care, instead of merely written studies about it, will quickly agree that day care is not the optimum solution for raising children.

Slowly we slipped into believing we could buy  
Parenting along with our groceries.

Linda Burton of Champaign Illinois is a contributing columnist for The New York Times Syndicate. She writes this column for The Champaign News-Gazette.

## What is a feminist today?

*Patricia Stuart-Hagge*

What is a feminist today? Is it the need to pursue “self-actualization”, the right to work alongside men with equality and impunity, the right of control over our bodies and what is inflicted upon them, the opportunity to stand confident and strong as females who comprise more than half the world’s population responsible for the continuation of humankind, the right to gainful employment and productivity? It is indeed all this and more. Women today stand at a crossroads - bridging the gap between the tyranny and objugation of the past and the freedom that promises and embodies a better world for all.

But what of motherhood? Can a woman today proclaim herself a feminist and at the same time advocate the necessity and integrity of motherhood as a career? The answer should be and is a resounding “yes”.

Today’s society and all too often, hopelessly, feminists locate a woman’s most significant activity outside the home, a mentality which questions and to some extent denies a woman the possibility of self-actualization through motherhood. Men, and especially women today, who consciously choose to have children and devote themselves lovingly to the care and nurturing of those children are insidiously shamed into believing that they have compromised their own advancing careers, their social aspirations, their expectations, and have capitulated to sexist and antiquated values...

An ardent feminist, Patricia Stuart-Hagge was asked to write about the Feminist-Motherhood issue. Excerpted from the complete article in the CSPCC Journal Autumn 1981.

## **CFIB responds to proposed two year maternity leave**

TORONTO, July 31 - In response to published reports that the federal government is considering extending parental leave from one year to two, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business (CFIB) registered its strong opposition to the proposal on behalf of their 103,000 small- and medium-sized business members across the country...

CFIB president Catherine Swift concluded, "When the 1999 changes were announced they came as a complete surprise to the small business community."

"There was no process of consultation..."

If the 900,000 infants and toddlers in Canada were consulted, what would they want?

As if there's any doubt.

## Mothering Matters

*Dr. Peter S. Cook*

The movement for women's "liberation", while advancing women in the workplace, devalued and undermined their role as mothers. This denied infants' needs for mothering, and mothers' needs to provide it.

Healthy mothering includes breastfeeding, holding, carrying, attachment bonds, and making infants feel loved. These basic needs of infants are hardly met in institutional childcare, especially when profits must be maximised in private centres. Professor Jay Belsky, a distinguished member of the NICHD Network, described a staff ratio of one carer to five infants under two (the New South Wales standard) as nobody's idea of quality, but rather a licence to neglect.

Childcare is now one of Australia's most profitable growth "industries" (*Business Review Weekly*, Rich 200, May 2002). It promotes circumstances that fuel its own expansion, as two-income couples bid up the price of homes, and two incomes are needed to raise a family. Mothering is

out. Childcare is in. We pay almost anyone to look after infants except their mothers. Mothering and fathering happen after work in "quality" time.

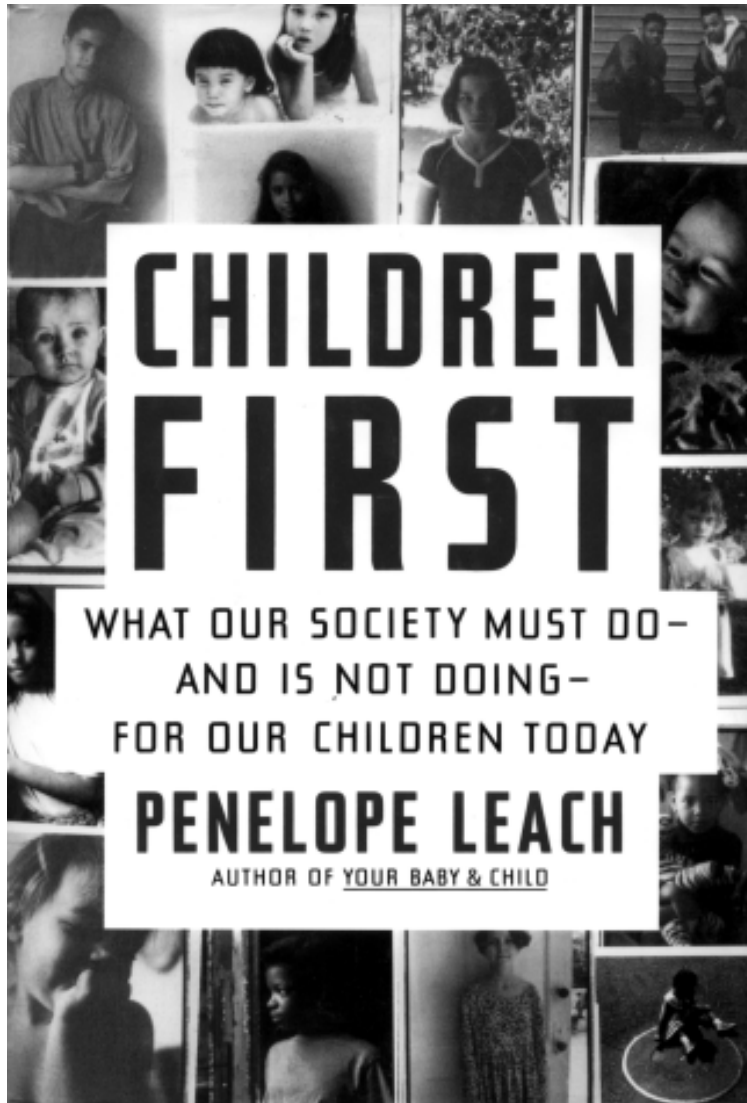
Yet Penelope Leach's (1997) large survey found that most child development professionals privately believe it's best for infants to be cared for mostly by their mothers. Like the NICHD studies, they don't support the view that parents are interchangeable, but that they complement each other.

We need to do whatever it takes to help women give their babies and young children the lifelong benefits of high quality mothering, and stop subsidising an ideology that promotes risky and inadequate substitutes.

We need to do whatever it takes to help women give their babies and young children the lifelong benefits of high quality mothering, and stop subsidising an ideology that promotes risky and inadequate substitutes.

Excerpted from **Mothering Matters** by Peter S. Cook [pcook@midcoast.com.au](mailto:pcook@midcoast.com.au) or 62 Greycliffe St, Queenscliff, NSW, 2096, Australia. Dr. Cook is a retired Sydney child and family psychiatrist, who writes on preventive child and family mental health. The complete article, references and related material may be viewed at [http://www.naturalchild.org/peter\\_cook/](http://www.naturalchild.org/peter_cook/)

Section Four  
*Other Options...*



...a sane, compelling brief for society's most vulnerable and dependent citizens... Publishers Weekly

"A Book Full of Wisdom and challenge, written by one of the world's leading nurturers of parents. Dr. Leach is deeply concerned about the inadequate support and parenting children are getting in our present market-place society. She challenges all of us to put families and children first, and she suggests innovative ways that not only society but individual parents can bring about change in our priorities. A wonderful book!"

— T. Berry Brazelton, M.D.

## We Could Make a Society in Which People Cared

Penelope Leach

There are no laws governing human decision-making. Within wide limits we can choose what kind of society we want to have and it is still open to us to make one which is for people to manage and enjoy.

...We could make a society in which people cared enough about people to realize the primacy of new people.

We could make that a society in which those who chose to produce new people knew what being parents must involve.

We could ensure that the job those self-selected parents did was recognized and rewarded with a place at the top of our status hierarchy and our priorities' list.

We could teach everyone to recognize that

inconvenience or unhappiness in the lives of parents reflects badly on their children who will be parents themselves next time

around, and we could train professionals to devote themselves to helping parents through, rather than out of, the early years of child-care.

We could recognize that while child-care is for parents, parent-care is for everyone.

It could all happen. As a society of self-determining, interlinked human beings, we have the power to make it happen. But it will only

happen if we believe that babies' and small children's development depends on their happiness and that their happiness depends on their 'special' adults. And if we believe that their development and happiness matters. And if we care.

...we could train professionals to devote themselves to helping parents through, rather than out of, the early years of child-care.

Why can't we, in one of the richest countries of the world, create a system that enables parents to nurture their children during the few years they need it most.

## Why could the same approach not be brought to child rearing?

*Penelope Leach*

...a chunk of adult life which was to be devoted to launching a young family could become as acceptable as a chunk devoted to university study and be financed in similar ways.

It is accepted that for three, four or five years these young adults [university students] contribute little to the capitalist world because an investment is being made in their future contribution.

Why could the same approach not be brought to child rearing?

The answer, of course, is that while we may believe in people's right to have children, just as strongly as we believe in their rights to all the education from which they are capable of benefiting, we do not believe that emotionally stable, independent children are as good an investment as graduates.

We should believe it. No "soft" humanitarian arguments are needed to prove the importance to society of adequately socialized children. A simple cost-benefit

analysis, feeding in the costs of emotional disturbance in terms of inability to profit from education; the costs of family disruption in terms of alternative childcare; the costs of inadequate socialization in terms of drug-dependency and all forms of delinquency and the costs of daycare provision for parents who would prefer, if things were different, to do their own parenting, makes the point.

If society believed that young children were important, believed that parents were almost always the best people to care for them in their first years and believed that doing that caring made parents into people with more to contribute later on, a chunk of adult life which was to be devoted to launching a young family could become as acceptable as a chunk devoted to university study and be financed in similar ways.

...we do not believe that emotionally stable, independent children are as good an investment as graduates. We should...

## The Early Years Study

*Margaret McCain & Fraser Mustard*

In 1999 a Report to the Government of Ontario - *The Early Years Study* by Margaret McCain and Professor J. Fraser Mustard documented the lifelong importance of healthy nurture in early childhood.

From conception to age six, and particularly in the first three years, the brain's billions of cells are making connections, wiring the brain's pathways to set the base for lifelong effects on learning, behaviour, and emotions. This also sets the relationships between the brain and the endocrine and immune systems, so affecting responses to stress and risks of disease throughout life.

Some economic consequences of poor early nurture were considered in *The Early Years Study*. The fact that its adverse effects can cover such a wide range as obesity, delinquency and unemployment suggests that policies which reduce early adverse influences may give multiple benefits, not only through the life of that child, but also for the next generation.

Improving prospects for the next generation in school performance, employment success, health and quality of life, can improve the future for all of us. A competent and well-educated population is necessary for a strong economy and a thriving democracy. So substantial long-term economic gains can be expected from appropriate investment in the early years.

## The Belief that Providing More “Quality Care” is Our Only Realistic Option

...most mothers believe they should have more choice than second choice.

Almost everyone agrees that day care of any kind is not the optimal way to raise a child. Yet, the full-time care of a loving parent - once thought to be every child's birthright - is now being derided as a Utopian dream. Day care may indeed be a “second choice” way to raise children, assert the “experts”, but we should nonetheless be prepared to face reality. Since so many work, and since most of them “must” work, child care has become something unavoidable - a necessary evil we must learn to live with, like root canals and taxes.

What experts do not take into account is,

that as far as rearing their children is concerned, most mothers believe they should have more choice than second choice. Why, they want to know, are we doggedly heading toward an uncontested, clear second best solution to the current child care crisis in a country that has always pledged that its children deserve the best? If most mothers truly regret their need to work, why do we insist on making it easier for them to do so? Why aren't we concentrating our efforts, our time, our funds on making it easier for them to do what they want to do instead - spend more time with their children at home?...

Why aren't we concentrating our efforts, our time, our funds on making it easier for them to do what they want to do instead - spend more time with their children at home?

## Other ways than providing separation facilities...

*James and Joyce Robertson*

Financial need could be eliminated at the stroke of a pen by adequate allowances to enable the mother who wishes to stay home with her child to do so...

Mothers who feel bored or isolated could be helped in other ways than providing separation facilities: mother-toddler clubs which meet in the park and in each other's homes for companionship and the sharing of experience, preschool play groups, and other devices can provide interest and support for mothers who left to themselves would find the stresses hard to bear; and with the easing of tension can come greater satisfaction and pleasure in being a mother. The intensity of the young child's needs, and the pressure on the mother, last for a few years only - not forever. They begin to lessen when the child reaches nursery school age...

There is a long tradition of impressing upon parents the importance of vitamins, diet, and preventive inoculation for their children when young. Community education through the media could now make known the parallel importance of mothering in the first years, so that a mother who contemplates putting her infant or young child into the care of others will make her decision with knowledge of the implications for her child's development and for their future relationship...

## Creating a Better World

I believe, however, that women will never be satisfied with a life that is an economic imitation of mens' lives.

Women must find a new way, a way of the spirit, and they must insist on an economic reality that acknowledges the concerns of the heart.

If women are only satisfied to find success as men have found it, in the traditional marketplace separate from home, we will never create a better world.

When women polarize over daycare and at-home mommies, they polarize over a male model of the separation of work and family that has not worked for men and is now not working for women. It doesn't work, not because we need more daycare centers, but because the current social reality we emulate has no heart.

Peggy O'Mara  
Editor  
Mothering Magazine

## Working moms all look for the perfect child care

*Linda Burton*

I hadn't intended to stay at home, I wasn't born for it.

Having children at the ages of 33 and 34 created an upheaval in my life unlike anything I had ever experienced. Before the birth of my children, I had been a full-time fund-raiser for a public-interest law firm. It was a harrowing job, sometimes, but it was fun and made good use of my energies. At the end of the day I used to look forward to meeting my husband and friends somewhere in town. We would relax, catch up on the day's events and generally enjoy each other.

After the birth of my first child, the end of the day found me less convivial than it had in five years. Walking the floor with this child, knowing that he was keeping me from doing much that I really wanted to do, made me angry.

I missed my job and my friends; I felt poverty-stricken and I looked awful. So, like many young women faced with the same predicament, I decided to go back to work.

I assumed I would simply give my children good "quality" time in the evenings and on weekends and, in the meantime, I would use all my energies to find an absolutely sterling person to care for them during the day.

I researched child care with a vengeance. Luckily, I did find someone to care for my children who seemed fine. She lasted a month. During that time at the office, I had made some remarkable discoveries.

I discovered that I had no "quality" time for my children in the evening. Indeed, I really wanted to have no time at all. I

was tired. I loved my children, and I knew that they needed attention from me, but somehow I was unable to give much of it after a day at the office.

I also discovered, to my surprise, that I missed my children when I was gone. I worried about how they were being dressed, fed, cared for. I worried that their bright inquisitiveness was being dulled by the housekeeper who, while a kind and decent person, lacked a certain intellectual vitality.

I was almost relieved when my housekeeper quit. I came back home to attend to my children and, again, searched for child care...diligently.

And I discovered that there were millions of mothers like me trying to hire the same sort of person I was.

All of a sudden, the notion occurred to me that perhaps the elusive, almost mystical "she" was not out there. After all, here we were, 17 million women trying to hire someone to replace ourselves.

We all wanted someone warm, wonderful, motherly and loving. All of a sudden common sense just told me that there simply weren't enough warm, wonderful, motherly, and loving people to go around.

Unqualified, insensitive women were approaching child-care agencies in droves.

Slowly, painfully, after really thinking about what I wanted for my children and rewriting advertisement after advertisement, I came to the stunning realization that the person I was looking for was right under my nose. I had been desperately trying to hire me.




## Some Additional Sources of Information

*Home-Along America: The Hidden Toll of Day Care, Behavioral Drugs, and Other Parent Substitutes* - Mary Eberstadt ©2004

*7 Myths of Working Mothers - Why Children and (Most) Careers just Don't Mix*, - Suzanne Venker ©2004

*Day Care Deception: what the child care establishment isn't telling us*,  
- Brian C. Robertson ©2003



<http://www.daycaresdontcare.org/>

“This website contains an extensive index of publications about daycare from well-known child development authorities, psychologists, psychiatrists, pediatricians, public policy analysts, sociologists, daycare providers, and others.

“Although this website's hundreds of pages of information about daycare is primarily organized by date, it can easily be searched by author, subject, title, etc.

“This collection of day care information seeks to counterbalance the relentless pressure placed upon parents to abandon their children to these impersonal institutions.”

## Home Truths Absent in Early Childcare Debate

*Dr. Peter S. Cook*

**We pay almost anyone to look after infants  
- except their mothers**

More subsidized, universally available, affordable, high quality, professional childcare is often advocated as a way of advancing the interests of women.

Yet early long daycare is not in the best interests of very young children and their families. Evidence increasingly suggests that this childcare agenda is misconceived, because it:

- \* is unrealistic, as it is often unaffordable and unachievable;
- \* overlooks accumulating evidence of risks of undesirable outcomes;
- \* is contrary to much expert opinion about what is likely to be best for very young children and is contrary to the desire of many working mothers to care for their own young children if they could afford to;
- \* relies partly on the now-discredited ideology of cultural determinism, which denied the relevance of biology to human behaviour, arguing that mothers can be largely replaced by trained carers;
- \* makes adequate breastfeeding difficult or impossible.

A rethink is needed.

Excerpted from *The Australian*, Wednesday March 24th, 1999. Dr Peter S. Cook is a retired consultant child psychiatrist. This article is partly based on his paper **Rethinking the early childcare agenda**, published in the *Medical Journal of Australia*, Vol 170:1, 29-31, Jan 4th, 1999, and the author's book **"Early Child Care - Infant and Nations at Risk"**, 1997, available from News Weekly Books, Melbourne and in Canada from the CSPCC.