# *X21 – EXchanging Worldviews, 21:*
# *EXploring Prospects for Peace & Prosperity, 13:*
# *EXtricating Humanity from EXcruciating Problems by, 7:*
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# *EXorcising Child Abuse*

Dear: For reasons that I've tried to describe in the past many chapters, I'm confident that the best way to help kids break free from the vicious circle in which their parents indoctrinate them with the god meme (who then go on to indoctrinate their own kids) is to help kids develop their evaluative-thinking skills. Such indoctrination – of course promoted by all clerics (for their own benefit) – is a form of child abuse, which surely someday will be illegal. In reality, however, for the vast majority of children throughout the world and for improving the prospects of worldwide peace and prosperity, just as important as (or, in many cases, more important than) stopping the mental abuse of children is stopping their physical, sexual, and emotional abuses.

Such abuses are perpetrated and perpetuated in what is literally an even more "vicious circle" than that of mental abuse (indoctrinating kids in religion or patriotism or…), with abused kids becoming parents who then are prone to abuse their own kids. Further, whereas so many kids are physically, sexually, and emotionally abused (especially in Muslim countries, in other "backward" countries, and even in many poor, poorly educated, and fundamentalist religious groups in Western nations) and whereas when such kids become adults they are easily stimulated to become violent, then to increase prospects of reducing both violent crimes and war, I'm confident that a central task is to stop all child abuse: mental, physical, sexual, and emotional.

I'm also confident that the challenge of extinguishing all types of child abuse is, once again, fundamentally an educational problem. I'd even go so far as to say: educating people (starting when they are kids) to eliminate child abuse is the single most important problem facing humanity. Yet, although I'm certain that stopping all forms of child abuse is critical and that extinguishing physical, sexual, and emotional abuse of children can be even more important than eliminating their mental abuse, I don't plan to devote as much time and effort (and chapters) as I did to describing the need to develop kids' evaluative-thinking skills.

My "justification" (or maybe better, my "excuse") for such incongruity is not only my incompetence to tackle such an enormous task (and my limited, remaining time and energy) but also the emotional difficulty I have in writing about the problem. That is, when I was a child, I was subjected to child abuse (as, no doubt, were my mother and father), and in turn, I was more abusive as a father (and grandfather) than I wish I had been. Therefore, Dear, I plan to leave to you (and your generation) the major portion of the task of learning about child abuse and how to exorcise it. After all, what's the point of having grandchildren if they aren't better and don't accomplish more than their grandparents?!

My goal for this chapter, consequently, is "just" to introduce you to some aspects of the terrible problem of child abuse and its ramifications. I've entitled this chapter "EXorcising Child Abuse", using the word 'exorcise' as in the first definition in my dictionary: "to drive out (e.g., an evil spirit) from a person or place." In subsequent chapters, I'll suggest some ways to solve the problem of child abuse, especially recommending economic leverages and eliminating the god meme. And once again: my "justification" for the added emphasis on religion is that a certain troublesome grandchild asked me why I didn't believe in god, not how to solve all the problems in the world!

## THE HUGE & HORRIBLE PROBLEM OF CHILD ABUSE

To begin, let me acknowledge that there seems to be nothing simple about child abuse – save that it seems reasonable clear that its dominant cause is none other than child abuse.[1] Thereby, it's the most vicious of vicious circles, in which, when abused children become parents, they're more likely to abuse their own children – because, fundamentally, the most effective way to teach almost anybody almost anything is by example. Therefore, as I'll be trying to show you (especially in subsequent chapters), to extinguish child abuse, it's necessary also to promote the "liberation" of both men and women: liberation of women from dominating men ("patriarchs") and liberation of men from primitive "honor codes" and associated violence, all of which are promoted by clerics of essentially all organized religions.

[1] Actually, the same has recently been found for other animals (i.e., abused youngsters commonly become abusing adults), e.g., see the article in the 10 October 2011 issue of *The New York Times* by Nicholas Bakalar entitled "In Birds, a Possible Clue to the Cycle of Abuse", available at http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/11/science/11booby.html?src=rechp.

Even trying to define "child abuse" is complicated. For example, where's the "line to be drawn" between abuse and discipline? If you want to investigate some of these complexities, you might want to look at the report by the US National Academy of Sciences entitled *Understanding Child Abuse and Neglect*.[2]

In reality, there are multiple continua of adult-child interactions, ranging from hating to loving, from hurting to helping, from damaging to correcting, from using to assisting, from controlling to guiding, and so on. Exactly where on each continuum is to be labeled the start of "abuse" clearly depends on the culture, the child's age, and various other circumstances.

I'll not go into such complexities. Instead, I'll assume that you'll agree with the general concept that, if a competent, disinterested, "third party" judges that some adult-child interaction is primarily for the short-term benefit of the adult rather than the long-term benefit of the child, then it's child abuse. And of course I'd agree that problems with that "definition" include: 1) the judgment of even a competent, disinterested "third party" will depend on the third party's experiences, 2) it's difficult to determine what's in the "long-term best interests" of a child, and 3) unfortunately, many adults are too dumb (or under too much pressure or whatever) to carefully evaluate such complexities.

Another complicated aspect of child abuse is to determine its extent, even in relatively "open" Western societies. Nonetheless and recognizing the difficulty in obtaining reliable world-wide data, the 2006 UN Report on Child Abuse reported the following, to which I've added a few notes in brackets.[3]

> A variety of initiatives ranging from international statistical analyses to action research at local level provide a clearer picture of the magnitude and pervasive nature of the problem [of child abuse]. Data generated by these initiatives indicate that while some violence is unexpected and isolated, the majority of violent acts experienced by children is perpetrated by people who are part of their lives: parents, schoolmates, teachers, employers, boyfriends or girlfriends, spouses and partners. The following examples show the range of violence against children:

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[2] E.g., start reading at http://darwin.nap.edu/openbook.php?record_id=2117&page=57.

[3] The report is available at http://www.violencestudy.org/r25.

- WHO [The World Health Organization] has estimated, through the use of limited country-level data, that almost 53,000 children died worldwide in 2002 as a result of homicide.

- Studies from many countries in all regions of the world suggest that up to 80 to 98% of children suffer physical punishment in their homes, with a third or more experiencing severe physical punishment resulting from the use of implements.

- Reporting on a wide range of developing countries, the Global School-based Health Survey recently found that between 20 and 65% of school-aged children reported having been verbally or physically bullied in the past 30 days…

- WHO estimates that 150 million girls [~14%] and 73 million boys [~7%] under 18 experienced forced sexual intercourse or other forms of sexual violence during 2002 [i.e., during a single year].

- According to a WHO estimate, between 100 and 140 million girls and women in the world have undergone some form of female genital mutilation/cutting. Estimates from UNICEF published in 2005 suggest that in sub-Saharan Africa, Egypt, and the Sudan, 3 million girls and women are subjected to genital mutilation/cutting every year.

- Recent ILO [the International Labor Organization] estimates indicate that, in 2004, 218 million children [i.e., approximately 10% of all children] were involved in child labor, of whom 126 million were in hazardous work. Estimates from 2000 suggest that 5.7 million were in forced or bonded labor, 1.8 million in prostitution and pornography, and 1.2 million were victims of trafficking…

In his online book entitled *The Emotional Life of Nations* (which I encourage you to read – although, Dear, I should warn you that some of his book can be very upsetting), Lloyd deMause states the following, in which I've omitted his many references and added a few notes in brackets.[4]

> The incidence of trauma in childhood, past and present, will be a central focus of the rest of this book. Some idea, however, of the extent of childhood trauma would be useful in this chapter on social and political theory. My overall conclusions have not changed after three decades of additional research from what I wrote in *The History of Childhood:* "The history of childhood is a nightmare from which we have only recently begun to awaken. The further back in history one goes, the lower the level of child care, and the more likely children are to be killed, abandoned, beaten, terrorized, and sexually abused."

[4] This quotation is from Chapter 5 of deMause's book; the chapter is entitled "The Psychogenic Theory of History", which is available at http://www.psychohistory.com/htm/eln05_psychogenic.html.

Childhood is still massively traumatic for the majority of the children in the world. For instance, one of the most often-cited facts of American life is the exposure of children to violence in urban communities – one recent study showed 40% of children surveyed reported exposure to a shooting or stabbing in the past year, 36% reported being threatened with physical harm in the past year, and 74% reported feeling unsafe in their communities. Various studies of violence in the home reveal that over 90% of American parents regularly hit their children, mostly with hairbrushes, paddles or belts, 20% of them severely, with heavy instruments that endanger their lives. Rates of child thrashing in European countries are rarely much lower than this. And despite widespread denial by anthropologists of the high frequency of physical assault on children of other cultures, most children elsewhere around the world today are still beaten unmercifully by their caretakers. The most evolved country in the world today is Sweden, which passed a law in 1979 against hitting children, so that a new generation of parents now generally refrains from hitting their children. [Which makes me wonder, Dear, if that's one of the causes of the feeling I had when I spent a few weeks in Sweden during the 1980s. As I mentioned to my wonderful Swedish host: "Sweden seems like an island of tranquility in an ocean of insanity."]

Sexual molestation of children is still so widespread that in my world-wide survey of the subject, "The Universality of Incest," I concluded that the sexual abuse of children was likely to have been a universal practice for most people in most places at most times in history, and that children who had not been sexually molested by their caretakers were a recent historical achievement, experienced by only a minority of children in a few places in the world. The most careful statistics of childhood seduction in America, using structured interview techniques that were able to acknowledge the resistances of the respondents and defining molestation as actual genital contact, found 38% (Russell) or 45% (Wyatt) of women and 30% of men (Landis) interviewed reported memories of sexual abuse during their childhood. Adjusting these figures for such elements as the bias introduced by the population interviewed that eliminates criminals, prostitutes, juveniles in shelters and psychotics – all of whom have much higher molestation rate – plus the large percentage of people who refused to be interviewed and were likely more victimized, I concluded that the true rate of childhood [sexual] molestation in America is about 60% for girls and 45% for boys. [Please, Dear, pause to think about that statistic: somewhere around 50% of all Americans were sexually molested when they were kids – which can be consistent with the UN data, quoted earlier (sexual abuse of ~14% of girls and ~7% of boys), because the UN data are for the world and for only a single year.]

A Gallup poll of Canadian childhood molestation reported about the same figures as in America. Though most European studies are decades behind those of the US, when a recent BBC "ChildWatch" program asked its female listeners if they could remember sexual molestation, 62% recalled actual intercourse… [A] recent *Institut für Kindheit* survey that interviewed Berlin schoolchildren in one neighborhood directly (direct interviews of children for any purpose are extremely rare) found 80% said they had been sexually molested. Though surveys of childhood abuse are unknown in the rest of the world, my evidence showed even higher rates were likely

> in the East and Middle East, where boys and girls are masturbated and raped by the men in the family and others, as a matter of course, and as both Indian and Chinese proverbs have it, "For a girl to be a virgin at ten years old, she must have neither brothers nor cousin nor father."
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> This molestation by the family is further extended by such sexual assaults as the estimated 100 million child prostitutes worldwide [which is substantially higher than the UN estimate, quoted above] and female genital mutilation, an extremely traumatic parental sexual assault, recently estimated at 74 million women in the circum-Mediterranean area. Once these beating and sexual abuse figures are added to fetal traumas (one in three pregnant women in America are hit or kicked by their mates), plus all the other abusive and accidental traumas that are commonly experienced by children, and then added to all the neglect, rejection, brutal domination, and other severe emotional tortures that are so common they aren't even measured, plus the horrible traumatic effects on children of wars, social violence, malnutrition, and other common mass traumatic conditions of children in this world, one must conclude that childhood continues to be a nightmare for most children in most areas of the world today.

## SOME CONSEQUENCES OF CHILD ABUSE

As for the ramifications of such "nightmares", that's another huge and complex subject – so huge that it's hard for a novice (such as I) to know even where to begin.

Yet, perhaps it would be useful for you to read the following ideas about some of the consequences of child abuse, written almost 100 years ago by the psychiatrist Boris Sidis.[5]

> As I have pointed out in my works on abnormal mental life, fear is the most fundamental of animal instincts; it is the companion of the most primitive impulse of self-preservation, and together they form the source of what is known as psychopathic maladies, or functional mental diseases, almost infinite in the variety of their manifestations, often extremely virulent in their mental disintegration. Once this fear instinct and its companion, self-preservation, are aroused, morbid mental life grows like an avalanche in its downward course. In later life this impulse of self-preservation and fear instinct become manifested in various ways, giving rise to the most distressing nervous and mental symptoms. In my medical practice, as specialist of nervous and mental diseases, I have again and again traced the worst forms of functional maladies to the impulse of self-preservation and fear instinct, aroused by education and unfortunate experiences in the early life of the patient…

[5] Available at http://www.nospank.net/sidis.htm, originally published in the *Journal of Abnormal Psychology 14*, 333-348, 1919.

> Training by fear, submission, and obedience inhibits the development of the rational controlling element of the mind, brings forth the lower reflex, automatic, subconscious side of mental life, heightens the suggestibility, opening wide the door to all kinds of nervous and mental germs, weakening the mental and moral constitution of man, tormenting him with the great array of obsessions, characteristic of psychopathic diseases in which the suffering of the patient is often greater than that experienced in many diseases of a purely organic nature. Man becomes unreasonable, capricious, driven as he is by the all-powerful impulse of self-preservation and by the furies of the fear instinct.
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> The centripetal force of self-preservation with its centrifugal fear-instinct make the victim resolve in the same recurring orbit of automatism round his own ego as a centre of attraction. Being pitilessly driven by the furies of his fears, he is always hiding and running from life, he is afraid to act openly, fairly and squarely. He always dodges the issues, always in a state of indecision, lacking self-confidence, independence, self-determination, and self-control. Double-dealing, deception, lying, hypocrisy, and an illimitable selfishness form the main traits of his character… *As long as the child will be trained not by love, but by fear, [then] so long will humanity live not by justice, but by force. As long as the child will be ruled by the educator's threat and by the father's rod, [then] so long will mankind be dominated by the policeman's club, by fear of jail, and by panic of invasion by armies and navies…*
> [Italics added]

Subsequently, many "official" assessments of ramifications of child abuse have been published. Let me show you a couple of examples. My first example[6] is entitled

> **Child Abuse: A fact sheet from the Department of Justice Canada**
> Child abuse has devastating consequences for victims. Depending on its form(s), duration, and severity, abuse may affect every aspect of a child's life; it may have consequences that are psychological, physical, behavioral, academic, sexual, interpersonal, self-perceptual, or spiritual. The effects of abuse may appear right away, or surface only in adolescence or adulthood. Further, the effects may differ according to the nature of the response to the abuse, and whether the abuse was disclosed or reported. In some cases, the consequences are fatal.
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> Girls and boys are affected differently by abuse. Compared to boys, girls are more likely to internalize their response to violence, and experience, for example, suicidal ideation, eating disorders, low self-esteem, and psychological disorders. Boys are more likely to externalize their response to violence, displaying, for example, increased aggression, delinquency, and spousal abuse. Boys who have been exposed to violence in their homes are more likely to be violent in their adolescent and adult relationships than boys not exposed to violence.

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6 Copied (with references omitted) from http://www.justice.gc.ca/en/ps/fm/childafs.html#consequences.

My second example[7] is entitled

**Long-term Consequences of Child Abuse and Neglect**
An estimated 872,000 [American] children were victims of child abuse or neglect in 2004… While physical injuries may or may not be immediately visible, abuse and neglect can have consequences for children, families, and society that last lifetimes, if not generations.

The impact of child abuse and neglect is often discussed in terms of physical, psychological, behavioral, and societal consequences. In reality, however, it is impossible to separate them completely. Physical consequences, such as damage to a child's growing brain, can have psychological implications, such as cognitive delays or emotional difficulties. Psychological problems often manifest as high-risk behaviors. Depression and anxiety, for example, may make a person more likely to smoke, abuse alcohol or illicit drugs, or overeat. High-risk behaviors, in turn, can lead to long-term physical health problems such as sexually transmitted diseases, cancer, and obesity.

This fact sheet provides an overview of some of the most common physical, psychological, behavioral, and societal consequences of child abuse and neglect, while acknowledging that much crossover among categories exists…

**Factors Affecting the Consequences of Child Abuse**
Not all abused and neglected children will experience long-term consequences. Outcomes of individual cases vary widely and are affected by a combination of factors, including:

- The child's age and developmental status when the abuse or neglect occurred,
- The type of abuse (physical abuse, neglect, sexual abuse, etc.),
- Frequency, duration, and severity of abuse, and
- The relationship between the victim and his or her abuser.

Researchers also have begun to explore why, given similar conditions, some children experience long-term consequences of abuse and neglect while others emerge relatively unscathed. The ability to cope, and even thrive, following a negative experience is sometimes referred to as "resilience." A number of protective factors may contribute to an abused or neglected child's resilience. These include individual characteristics, such as optimism, self-esteem, intelligence, creativity, humor, and independence. Protective factors can also include the family or social environment, such as a child's access to social support; in particular, a caring adult in the child's life can be an important protective factor. Community well-being, including neighborhood stability and access to health care, is also a protective factor.

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[7] Copied from http://www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/factsheets/long_term_consequences.cfm, again with references omitted; published in 2006 by the Child Welfare Information Gateway.

***Physical Health Consequences***

The immediate physical effects of abuse or neglect can be relatively minor (bruises or cuts) or severe (broken bones, hemorrhage, or even death). In some cases the physical effects are temporary; however, the pain and suffering they cause a child should not be discounted. Meanwhile, the long-term impact of child abuse and neglect on physical health is just beginning to be explored. Below are some outcomes researchers have identified:

*Shaken baby syndrome.* The immediate effects of shaking a baby, which is a common form of child abuse in infants, can include vomiting, concussion, respiratory distress, seizures, and death. Long-term consequences can include blindness, learning disabilities, mental retardation, cerebral palsy, or paralysis.

*Impaired brain development.* Child abuse and neglect have been shown, in some cases, to cause important regions of the brain to fail to form properly, resulting in impaired physical, mental, and emotional development. In other cases, the stress of chronic abuse causes a "hyperarousal" response by certain areas of the brain, which may result in hyperactivity, sleep disturbances, and anxiety, as well as increased vulnerability to post-traumatic stress disorder, attention deficit/hyperactivity disorder, conduct disorder, and learning and memory difficulties.

*Poor physical health.* A study of 700 children who had been in foster care for 1 year found that more than one-quarter of the children had some kind of recurring physical or mental health problem. A study of 9,500 HMO participants showed a relationship between various forms of household dysfunction (including childhood abuse) and long-term health problems, such as sexually transmitted diseases, heart disease, cancer, chronic lung disease, skeletal fractures, and liver disease.

***Psychological Consequences***

The immediate emotional effects of abuse and neglect – isolation, fear, and an inability to trust – can translate into lifelong consequences, including low self-esteem, depression, and relationship difficulties. Researchers have identified links between child abuse and neglect and the following:

*Poor mental and emotional health.* In one long-term study, as many as 80 percent of young adults who had been abused met the diagnostic criteria for at least one psychiatric disorder at age 21. These young adults exhibited many problems, including depression, anxiety, eating disorders, and suicide attempts. Other psychological and emotional conditions associated with abuse and neglect include panic disorder, dissociative disorders, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder, and reactive attachment disorder.

*Cognitive difficulties.* The National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being found that children placed in out-of-home care due to abuse or neglect tended to score lower than the general population on measures of cognitive capacity, language development, and academic achievement.

*Social difficulties.* Children who are abused and neglected by caretakers often do not form secure attachments to them. These early attachment difficulties can lead to later difficulties in relationships with other adults as well as with peers.

***Behavioral Consequences***

Not all victims of child abuse and neglect will experience behavioral consequences; however, child abuse and neglect appear to make the following more likely:

*Difficulties during adolescence.* Studies have found abused and neglected children to be at least 25 percent more likely to experience problems such as delinquency, teen pregnancy, low academic achievement, drug use, and mental health problems.

*Juvenile delinquency and adult criminality.* A National Institute of Justice study indicated being abused or neglected as a child increased the likelihood of arrest as a juvenile by 59 percent. Abuse and neglect increased the likelihood of adult criminal behavior by 28 percent and violent crime by 30 percent.

*Alcohol and other drug abuse.* Research consistently reflects an increased likelihood that abused and neglected children will smoke cigarettes, abuse alcohol, or take illicit drugs. According to a report from the National Institute on Drug Abuse, as many as two-thirds of people in drug treatment programs reported being abused as children.

*Abusive behavior.* Abusive parents often have experienced abuse during their own childhoods. It is estimated approximately one-third of abused and neglected children will eventually victimize their own children.

***Societal Consequences***

While child abuse and neglect almost always occur within the family, the impact does not end there. Society as a whole pays a price for child abuse and neglect, in terms of both direct and indirect costs.

*Direct costs.* Direct costs include those associated with maintaining a child welfare system to investigate allegations of child abuse and neglect, as well as expenditures by the judicial, law enforcement, health, and mental health systems to respond to and treat abused children and their families. A 2001 report by Prevent Child Abuse America estimates these costs at $24 billion per year.

*Indirect costs.* Indirect costs represent the long-term economic consequences of child abuse and neglect. These include juvenile and adult criminal activity, mental illness, substance abuse, and domestic violence. They can also include loss of productivity due to unemployment and underemployment, the cost of special education services, and increased use of the health care system. Prevent Child Abuse America recently estimated these costs at more than $69 billion per year.

It's easy to argue, however, that in reality, the above "societal consequences" of child abuse are vastly underestimated. Stated differently, the societal cost of child abuse may be so large that it's meaningless to try to measure it: if child abuse had been eliminated, probably we'd be living in a different world; without child abuse, humanity would probably be thousands of years farther along the road of human cultural evolution.

To begin to try to show you what I mean, I plan to quote even more extensively from deMause's book, referenced above. In his book, he describes the critical role that child rearing has on cultural evolution. In his Chapter 7, entitled "Childhood and Cultural Evolution", he writes the following [in which I've again omitted his references and added a few notes in brackets].[8]

> Since nearly all of the cultural evolution of *Homo sapiens sapiens* has taken place during the past 100,000 years – only about 5,000 generations – and since this time span is too short to allow the human gene pool to mutate very much, [then] epigenetic [i.e., Dear, "resulting from external rather than genetic influence", from the Greek prefix *epi*, meaning, e.g., "in addition to (genetic)"] evolution of the psyche – the evolution of the architecture of the brain occurring during development in the womb and during early childhood – must be the central source of cultural change… Just as one can lift a newborn out of a contemporary cannibal culture and bring it up in one's own culture without noticing any personality difference, one could also, presumably, raise a Cro-Magnon baby in a modern family without noticing any differences. [Dear: please consider again deMause's central thesis (about which I think there is very little doubt): "the evolution of the architecture of the brain occurring during development in the womb and during early childhood… must be the central source of cultural change."]
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> After decades of sociobiologists' claims that "social structures and culture are but more elaborate vessels or survivor machines for ensuring that genes can maximize their fitness", there still is not a shred of evidence that any cultural change is due to natural selection of random variations affecting human gene pools during the past 100,000 years. The short stature of Pygmies may have been selected for during millions of years of biological evolution as an adaptation to the heat of the tropics, but even the most ardent sociobiologists have not claimed to show that beliefs in witches or divine leaders found in every environment have been selected for by any environmental condition, since these cultural traits are solutions to emotional, not environmental, problems. One recent study of approximately 100 major genetic human traits concluded that "no absolute differences between populations of primitive and civilized humans are known…"

[8] Available at http://www.psychohistory.com/htm/eln07_evolution.html.

Since neo-Darwinian [viz., "new-Darwinian] theory of differential genetic replication requires massive extinctions for the robust selection and retention of random mutations, the lack of evidence for many mass extinctions during the past 100,000 years means neo-Darwinian theory of differential reproductive rates has little value in explaining the relatively rapid evolution of the psyche and culture of *Homo sapiens sapiens*. In addition, the trillions of neural connections in the brain are simply far too numerous to be determined by the limited number of genes in the gamete, so most brain structure must be determined by epigenetic events. As Ernst Mayr puts it, "The brain of 100,000 years ago is the same brain that is now able to design computers… All the achievements of the human intellect were reached with brains not specifically selected for these tasks by the neo-Darwinian process." Since environmental selection of random genetic variations is not the central mechanism for evolution in modern human neural networks, the question is: what non-Darwinian processes have been responsible for the enormous evolution of brain networks and cultures in modern humans?

**THE FAILURE OF ENVIRONMENTAL DETERMINISM OF CULTURAL EVOLUTION**

That so many social scientists remain environmental determinists is puzzling. It certainly is not because the method has any empirical verification; environment is simply assumed causal in culture change because historical advances in human nature are so often *a priori* [i.e., before the fact] assumed impossible… Environments are also opportunities, not just straightjackets. As Kirch and Yen conclude, "men reach out to embrace and create their ecosystems, rather than the reverse proposition." It is when early childrearing experiences are impaired that children are forced to reduce their behavioral flexibility and are therefore as adults unable to improve their environments and experience cultural stagnation.

The psychogenic theory [i.e., "having a psychological origin or cause rather than a physical one"] sees environments as presenting both the constraints and the opportunities for cultural evolution, while the evolution of psychological development during the fetal and childhood period determines how these challenges are met. Since humans far more than other species construct their environments, their creative use to fulfill human needs is crucially determined by the degree of innovation that is allowed by the level of childhood evolution attained.

This of course does not mean that environment counts for nothing. Jared Diamond has convincingly shown how environmental differences have raised and lowered the steepness of the ladder of cultural evolution, demonstrating that the availability of a few good plant and animal domesticates crucially determines the rates of evolution of cultures in different parts of the world, with those areas which have domesticable grains and cattle being able to evolve faster than those that did not. But the evolutionary problem isn't only about the availability of environmental resources. Obviously one cannot develop much agriculture in the Arctic, and obviously tropical regions have too many insects and parasites and too severe floods and droughts that hinder their economic development.

But environment is only part of the answer to evolutionary differences. Environmental change cannot explain cultural evolution, since culture has often evolved while the ecology has devolved because of soil exhaustion. The point is that the degree of steepness of the environmental ladder doesn't determine whether people chose to climb it: you still must want to climb and you must be innovative enough to invent or adopt ways to conquer each rung, whether the base of the ladder is planted in the snow, in a rain forest, or in the milder climate of Western Europe.

The secret as to why England and not France or Germany spawned the Industrial Revolution first goes back to England's advanced childrearing in its smaller medieval households, not to any ecological advantage. English political freedom, religious tolerance, industry and innovation were all psychoclass achievements, dependent upon childrearing evolution. The most important unsolved question in cultural evolution is therefore to explain the rate of innovation and adoption of new techniques of exploiting what resources exist – factors that depend crucially upon the local rate of evolution of childrearing.

Despite their advocacy of unicausal environmental determinism, anthropologists have regularly demonstrated that similar environments have produced quite different psyches and cultures. Even though most follow Whiting's paradigm that environment determines childhood, personality, and culture, others take great delight in describing quite different personalities and cultures coming out of identical environments – one tribe that is gentle, loving, and peaceful and the other composed of fierce headhunting cannibals – but then leave the cause of their stark differences as unexplained, as if the two groups were dropped down on earth from two different planets.

Obversely, others describe quite similar cultures developing in wholly different environments. In Polynesia, for instance, Goldman concludes that "societies can be similar in basic culture whether they occupy atolls or high islands, relatively rich habitats, or barren islands; they cannot be regarded as having been molded by their different material environments." But then he is puzzled that he cannot explain how people in such different environments could have evolved such similar cultures. Deprived by their evidence of their theories of environmental determinism, anthropologists discover that the sources of cultural evolution are simply inexplicable.

Archeologists used to accept anthropologists' theories of environmental determinism, but now most admit that their best evidence has turned out to be solidly against it. Social complexity and inequality used to be thought caused by the invention or adoption of farming and herding; but the evidence turns out to show that complexity and inequality preceded agriculture rather than followed it: "Permanently settled communities of more complex hunter-gatherers appear to be the norm in many areas in the late Pleistocene…" Apparently, people first changed, then they managed to change their cultures and technologies.

Price asks: "what caused the adoption of agriculture?" His answer is the one [that] more and more archeologists are beginning to agree with: "questions about the transition to agriculture clearly have more to do with internal social relations than with external events involving climate and the growth of human population." The "driving force behind food production," Price says, is the appearance of new kinds of people, ones he calls "accumulators," who "emerge" and engage in competitive feasts that require more food production. Johnson and Earle agree, speaking of "a new attitude toward change" that appears in history, "though the reason for it remains obscure." Discovering what causes these new kinds of people and new attitudes toward change to mysteriously "emerge" throughout history (or, as often, not to "emerge") is therefore a central task of the psychogenic theory of evolution.

**DIFFERENCES BETWEEN HISTORICAL AND NEO-DARWINIAN EVOLUTION**

Problems of explaining evolution are central to all sciences, including the social sciences. Just as nothing in biology makes complete sense except in the light of [genetic] evolution, nothing in human history makes complete sense except in the light of epigenetic (psychogenic) evolution. Neo-Darwinian theory of biological evolution explains all behavioral change in animals as resulting from the accretion of random variations produced by mutation, recombination, and genetic drift selected as better adaptations to changing environments.

But what is usually overlooked is that genetic evolution only provides the capacity for adult behavioral variations assuming a specific developmental environment… What trait actually appears in the mature individual depends upon the actual course of epigentic development, beginning in the womb and continuing throughout childhood, an extraordinarily complex and variable journey for each individual. The most important environments are the mother's body and behavior, and the most important competition for survival, not in the sperm or ovum, but at the neural level, in the brain, with the mother acting as the "agent of natural selection."

What is little recognized is that recent revolutionary discoveries in molecular biology by Gottlieb, Lipton, and others have begun to show that *early environments actually change genetic structure*. [Italics added.][9] Maternal prenatal environment and even early parental care can actually be passed down to succeeding generations through the genes, contrary to traditional biological theory. Genes cannot turn themselves on or off, they need a signal from their environment, so genetic structure is wide open to environmental changes, rather than being wholly immune from environmental input as has been thought to date… *What has changed is the discovery that cells contain receptors that respond and adapt to environmental signals – the mother being the main controller of genetic accessing.* [Italics added.] In addition, it has been discovered that only 10% of nuclear genes are used to code human expression, while the remaining 90% – previously thought of as useless baggage and referred to as "junk DNA" – contains extra DNA that can rewrite genetic messages, create new gene expression and new behavior.

[9] Dear: On the internet, you can find additional and more recent evidence supporting that hypothesis.

Even maternal emotions can be passed to fetal genes and then to the next generation. Gottlieb has prenatally stressed mice, who are as adults found to be more aggressive, and then taken the male mice and mated them with other females and found that their grandsons were also more aggressive than non-stressed males – thus showing how environmental stress can be passed down genetically. Perry and others have shown dramatically how stressed children "change from being victims to being victimizers" because of imbalanced noradrenalin and serotonin levels, which then can be passed down through both genetic and epigenetic changes. Indeed, the ability of the genome to respond to its environment means evolutionary change takes place both by environmental selection of random variations and by epigenetic inheritance systems. *Thus a drought that starves mothers and their fetuses or an increase in wife-beating in a society can effect not only the first but succeeding generations' psyches and behavior through changes in genetic structure and gene accessing.* [Italics added.]

*The laws of historical evolution are quite different from the laws of neo-Darwinism. The central hypothesis of the psychogenic theory of historical evolution is that epigenetic neuronal variations originating in changing interpersonal relationships with caretakers rather than only through genetic variations originating through natural selections are the primary source of the evolution of the psyche and society.* [Italics added.] "The more evolved the species is… the greater the role of epigenetic mechanisms in the structure of the nervous system." The fundamental evolutionary direction in *Homo sapiens sapiens* is towards better interpersonal relationships, not just the satisfaction of biological instincts. *While adaptation to the natural environment is the key to genetic evolution, relationship to the human environment is the key to psychological evolution, to the evolution of "human nature."* [Italics added.] Psychogenesis is also the key to cultural evolution, since the range of evolution of childrearing in every society puts inevitable limits upon what it can accomplish – politically, economically, and socially.

Developmental changes in the three-pound, trillion-celled human brain have completely overwhelmed purely genetic changes as causes of psychological and cultural evolution in the past 100,000 years. The causal mechanisms for the evolution of human psyche and culture have more and more decoupled from the neo-Darwinian causal mechanisms that depend solely upon outbreeding success. The psychogenic theory of evolution is based, not upon Spencer and Darwin's "survival of the fittest" products of the most ruthless parents, but upon the "survival of the most innovative and cooperative" products of the most loving parents.

*The processes of historical evolution, based upon the very slow growth of love and cooperation, are therefore the exact opposite from those of neo-Darwinian natural selection, based overwhelmingly upon conflict and competition.* [Italics added.] They include:

1. The production of variations through psychogenesis is by creating, through more love, different early epigenetic environments – more advanced fetal and early childhood developmental paths – not through random genetic mutations and

recombinations; i.e., through variations in the structures of neuronal groups achieved during post-genetic development after inception, not through mutations in DNA prior to inception;

2. The vehicles of transmission include neuronal groups in the brains of individual parents and children, not solely genes in the sexual organs of parents;

3. The selection of variations is accomplished through changes in a very narrow part of the human environment – the family, the main organizer of emotional symbols, particularly the mother – rather than simply through changes in the ecology;

4. The preservation of emergent variations in some individuals is often prevented from being swamped by the less developed childrearing practices of the rest of the culture via the psychogenic pump effects of migration;

5. The limitations to emergent variations (psychogenic devolution) occurs either because of conditions adverse to childrearing – such as wars, plagues, or droughts – or because sudden increased social freedom for adults creates excessive growth panic, anxieties which are turned against children as poison containers, thereby producing devolution in childrearing in a portion of a given society;

6. The main locus of epigenetic variations is the slow evolution of the individual conscious self that looks forward to its future and creates its own extended present, a self that evolves mainly through the growth of love in the parent-child relationship;

7. The rate of innovation in cultural evolution is determined by the conditions for parental love and therefore increase in individual self-assertion in each society, all cultural evolutions being preceded by a childrearing evolution; and

8. The locus of psychogenic evolution has historically been affected far more by maternal than paternal influence – indeed, entirely maternal in the crucial first nine months of life – rather than males and females each contributing half of the genetic information as occurs in neo-Darwinian evolution.

This last point will only become fully evident in the next chapter [of deMause's book] where it will be documented that the task of "fathering" – of playing a real role in forming a child's psyche – is, in fact, a very late historical invention.

Most fathers among our closest ape relatives don't have much to do with their children, and a nurturing role during early childhood for the human father turns out to be a far more recent historical innovation than has heretofore been assumed. The major epigenetic changes in the structures of the brain, therefore, have mainly been evolved by females, not males. Fathers until recently have affected their children's psyches mainly through family provisioning and by establishing some of the conditions for mothering, but it has mainly been the mothers who have produced

epigenetic novelty; so to discover the laws of cultural evolution one must "follow the mothers" through history. This is why only the psychogenic theory posits that for most of history, women and children are the ultimate source of historical change.

**THE "HOPEFUL DAUGHTER" AND THE PSYCHOGENIC CUL-DE-SAC**

Since for most of history mothers raise boys who then go off and hunt, farm, build things, and fight wars, rather than directly contributing much new to the psyche of the next generation, [therefore] the course of evolution of the psyche has overwhelmingly been dependent upon the way mothers have treated their daughters, who become the next generation of mothers. Since early emotional relationships organize the entire range of human behavior, all cultural traits do not equally affect the evolution of the psyche – those that affect the daughter's psyche represent the main narrow bottleneck through which all other cultural traits must pass. The study of the evolution of the psyche depends more on developing a maternal ecology than on studying variations in the physical environment.

The evolution of the psyche and culture has been crucially dependent upon turning the weak bonds between mother and daughter of apes and early humans into genuine love for daughters (and sons). *This means that historical societies that create optimal conditions for improving the crucial mother-daughter relationship, by surrounding the mother with support and love, soon begin to show psychological innovation and cultural advances in the next generations – so that history begins to move in progressive new directions.* [Italics added.] In contrast, societies that cripple the mother-daughter emotional relationship experience psychogenic arrest and even psychogenic devolution. Only in modern times have fathers, too, begun to contribute to the evolutionary task of growing the young child's mind…

[T]he idea that the mother-daughter emotional relationship is the focal point of epigentic evolution and the main source of novelty in the psyche can be called the "hopeful daughter" concept. When mothers love and support particularly their daughters, a series of generations can develop new childrearing practices that grow completely new neural networks, hormonal systems, and behavioral traits. If hopeful daughters are instead emotionally crippled by a society, a psychogenic cul-de-sac is created, generations of mothers cannot innovate, epigenetic arrest is experienced, and meaningful cultural evolution ends…

For instance, in China before the tenth century CE, men began to footbind little girls' feet as a sexual perversion, making them into sexual fetishes, penis-substitutes which the men would suck on and masturbate against during sex play. Chinese literature reports the screaming cries of the five-year-old girl as she hobbles about the house for years to do her tasks while her feet are bound, because in order to make her foot tiny, her foot bones are broken and the flesh deteriorates. She loses several toes as they are bent under her foot, to emphasize the big toe as a female penis. This practice was added to the many brutal practices of what was perhaps the world's most anti-daughter culture, where over half the little girls were murdered at birth without remorse and special girl-drowning pools were legion, where beating little girls until bloody was a common parental practice, and where girl rape and sex slavery were

rampant. This vicious anti-daughter emotional atmosphere extreme even for a time that was generally cruel and unfeeling towards daughters was obviously not conducive to mothers producing innovations in childrearing when the little girls grew up. Therefore China, which was culturally ahead of the West in many ways at the time of the introduction of footbinding, became culturally and politically "frozen" until the twentieth century…

The same kind of epigenetic arrest can be seen in the damage caused by genital mutilation of girls among circum-Mediterranean peoples that began thousands of years ago and continues today. Since "hopeful daughters" do not thrive on the chopping off of their clitorises and labias, the present cultural and political problems of those groups who still mutilate their daughters' genitals are very much a direct result of this psychogenic arrest. Much of the remainder of this chapter [of deMause's book] will analyze the conditions for psychogenic arrest, when childrearing has failed to evolve and culture remains in a psychogenic cul-de-sac, static for millennia.

The historical evolution of the psyche is a process that mainly involves removing developmental distortions, so that each psyche can develop in its own way optimally. The evolution of childhood, as will be extensively documented, mainly consists of parents slowly giving up killing, abandoning, mutilating, battering, terrorizing, sexually abusing, and using their children for their own emotional needs and instead creating loving conditions for growth of the self. The evolution of the psyche is first of all accomplished by removing terrible abuses of children and their resulting developmental distortions, allowing the psyche to produce historical novelty and achieve its own inherent human growth path.

Civilization is not, as everyone including Freud has assumed, a historical "taming of the instincts." Nor does "the evolution of mankind proceed from bad to worse," as Roheim thought, with early societies being "indulgent" toward their children and modern societies more often abusive. It will be the burden of the remainder of this book to provide evidence that just the reverse is true, that culture evolves through the increase of love and freedom for children, so that when they grow up they can invent more adaptive and happier ways of living. Because we were all children before we were adults, childhood evolution must precede social evolution; psychogenesis must precede sociogenesis.

**LOVE AND FREEDOM – NOT COMPLEXITY –**
**THE MEASURE OF EVOLUTIONARY PROGRESS**

The measure of the evolution of psyche and culture is actually quite different from that assumed by most social theories. Social evolution is usually defined simply as the degree of complexity – as measured by population or social hierarchy or technology, with such elements as the increasing amounts of knowledge causing cultures to grow more complex. But there is no evidence that modern brains contain more knowledge than those of foragers of 100,000 years ago…

> Contemporary foragers, for instance, know an enormous amount of ecological information; the forager who knows hundreds of species of plants and animals and their characteristics probably has as many neurons in his cortex storing knowledge as most Westerners. Similarly, their cultural system cannot be said to be less complex, since it usually contains some of the most complicated kinship, belief systems, and languages extant. What is less evolved is their childhoods and the personality systems dependent upon this childrearing. Societies with poor childrearing produce historical personalities – psychoclasses – that have too much anxiety and conflict to maintain good object relations, so they tend to deny their real needs – for love, for freedom, for achievement – and their cultures oppose change and do not evolve.
>
> The psychogenic theory defines progress in evolution as increases in self-awareness, freedom, human potential, empathy, love, trust, self-control, and a preponderance of conscious decisions – rather than as an increase in technological, economic or political complexity. This means that some cultures on low technological levels could actually be further evolved in human terms than others that are more complex technologically and politically. Because the psychogenic theory makes the individual psyche both the source of variation and the unit of selection, it posits that childhood is the central focal point of social evolution. The amount of time and resources any society devotes to its children's needs is far more likely to be an accurate index of its level of civilization than any of the anthropological indices of complexity or energy utilization.
>
> The central direction of evolutionary progress, therefore, of *Homo sapiens sapiens* is from personal neediness to personal independence, from family enmeshment to family caregiving, from social dependency and violence to social dependability and empathy. Although this progress is extraordinarily uneven in different contemporary cultures and even in different family lines, the general progressive direction is evident. *It will be the task of the remainder of this book to document the hypothesis that the evolution of childhood has been from incest to love and from abuse to empathy, and that progress in childrearing has regularly preceded social, political, and technological progress. The main thrust of the psychogenic theory of cultural evolution is simple: the evolution of culture is ultimately determined by the amount of love, understanding, and freedom experienced by its children, because only love produces the individuation needed for cultural innovation*. [Italics added.] Every abandonment, every betrayal, every hateful act towards children returns tenfold a few decades later upon the historical stage, while every empathic act that helps a child become what he or she wants to become, every expression of love toward children heals society and moves it in unexpected, wondrous new directions.

DeMause reaches his conclusion, in part, from examining the history of child abuse (as best the fragmentary historical record permits) and then by incorporating his findings in what he calls "The Psychogenic Theory of History". He writes:[10]

[10] From his Chapter 5, at http://www.psychohistory.com/htm/eln05_psychogenic.html.

> The psychogenic theory of history is a scientific, empirical, falsifiable theory based upon a model that involves shared restagings of dissociated memories of early traumas, the content of which changes through the evolution of childhood. It is based upon the conclusion of experimental and clinical psychology that psychic content is organized by early emotional relationships, so that psychic structure must be passed from generation to generation through the narrow funnel of childhood. Thus a society's childrearing practices are not just one item in a list of cultural traits but are the very condition for the transmission and development of all cultural elements.
>
> Childrearing, therefore, is crucial, because it organizes the emotional structure that determines the transmission of all culture and places definite limits on what can be achieved by society. Specific childhoods sustain specific cultural traits, and once these early experiences no longer occur, the trait disappears or is modified. It is the first social theory that posits love as the central mechanism for historical change – not because I happen to value love as an exemplary trait, but because the clinical, experimental, and social sciences of the past century have shown that love produces the individuation needed for human innovation; that is, for cultural evolution.
>
> It is also the first theory that recognizes the values of methodological individualism – seeing properties of groups as a result of the actions of its individual members – yet that also recognizes group evolution, integrating the psychology of individuals and societies, and recognizing that social behavior also has emotional sources. I call the theory 'psychogenic', rather than 'economic' or 'political', because it views humans more as *homo relatens* than *homo economicus* or *homo politicus* – that is, as searching for relation, for love, more than just for money or power. The theory considers evolving psychoclasses – shared childrearing modes – as more central than economic classes or social classes for understanding history.
>
> This psychogenic theory is contrasted with the sociogenic theory of all other social scientists, which sees all individual change as merely a reflection of social change. It instead views adults as having developed new kinds of personalities due to new childrearing modes, and then as projecting onto the historical stage earlier traumas and feelings in such a manner that events appear to be happening to the group rather than being internal, creating shared dreams, group-fantasies, that are so intense and compelling that they take on a life of their own, a life that is imagined as happening in a dissociated sphere called 'society' – the group-fantasy sandbox of adults [of course including group delusions about gods and other supernatural fantasies].

His psychogenetic model also has a neurobiological basis. He writes the following in his Chapter 4 (form which I've again omitted his references).[11]

[11] Available at http://www.psychohistory.com/htm/eln04_trauma.html; Chapter 4 is entitled: "Restaging Early Traumas in War and Social Violence."

The neurobiological effects of trauma and neglect (both prenatal and during childhood) and the compulsion to restage early traumatic violence and inflict it upon others and upon one's self are becoming fairly well understood through recent advances in neuroscience. Inescapable dangers and intolerable stresses subject the brain to massive secretions and subsequent depletions of a variety of neurotransmitters, including norephinephrine, dopamine, and serotonin, which lead to hypervigilance, explosive anger, and excessive sensitivity to similar events in the future, which are experienced as though they were as dangerous as the earlier incident. In addition, the hormones that flood the brain to mobilize it in the face of threats, especially cortisol, have been found to be toxic to cells in the hippocampus, the part of the brain that, along with the thalamus, is the center of the neural system for consciousness, actually killing neurons and reducing the size of the hippocampus, making retrieval and therefore modification of early traumas nearly impossible. It is this process that constitutes "repression," which is really dissociation, an inability to retrieve memories rather than a forgetting. Thus, without the ability to remember and modify early traumas through new experiences, the brain continues to interpret ordinary stressors as recurrences of traumatic events long after the original trauma has ceased.

Paranoid results are particularly true of the earliest traumas of fetal and infantile life. This is so because the hippocampus is quite immature until the third or fourth year of life, and therefore the early trauma is encoded in the emotional memory system centering in the amygdala and extending particularly to the prefrontal cortex, the center of emotions, memories which have been described as being nearly "impervious to extinction." Early traumas, coded in this thalamo-amygdalan-cortical memory system, record fearful memories that remain powerful for life, long after the cognitive memories of the traumatic event itself are forgotten. Infants, for instance, who experience premature births or eating disorders at birth often fear all new arousals, as though they represented the same threat to life as birth once did…

It is… relevant to our hypothesis that early emotional traumas are intimately linked with social behavior to note that the amygdala – where these early trauma are recorded – is recognized as playing a central role in the social behavior of animals. For instance, removal of the amygdalae produces social isolates in most nonhuman primates, while having devastating consequences on their ability to mother, often resulting in death for their infants.

In addition, the continuing low serotonin levels and high noradrenalin levels produced by trauma decrease normal aggressive inhibitions (serotonin being the main soothing neurotransmitter and noradrenalin being the main stress hormone) to such an extent that low serotonin and high noradrenalin have been reliably shown to be central to social violence of both humans and other primates. Monkeys who have early traumas have low serotonin and high noradrenalin levels, and are "nasty, hostile, crazy," often killing their peers for no reason, while traumatized children with low serotonin have more disruptive behavior and compulsively restage their traumas in their play with peers, both in order to maintain some control over its timing anything to avoid re-

> experiencing their helplessness and also because they can thereby identify with the aggressor. Others repeat their original traumas by self-injury…
>
> The amount of maternal stress necessary for traumatizing the fetus and child is astonishingly little: "Monkeys born to mothers who listened to ten minutes of random noise each day during mid-and late pregnancy had higher noradrenalin levels than normal monkeys. The hyped-up monkeys were impulsive, overresponsive, and had fewer social skills as infants. When the prenatally stressed monkeys got to be the equivalent of preteens, their noradrenalin was still high and their behavior still abnormally hostile and aggressive…"
>
> Later traumas, abandonments and betrayals of childhood are then recorded in the same amygdalan early emotional memory system laid down by fetal traumas. Evidence for this fetal matrix for later trauma is everywhere to be found, only we have so far been unaware of its meaning and overlooked it. For instance, when a gunman came into Cleveland Elementary School in 1989 and fired wave after wave of bullets at children in the playground, killing many of them, the trauma was "seared into the children's memory… Whenever we hear an ambulance on its way to the rest home down the street, everything halts…" All danger appears to tap into our earliest fetal fears, even though most of our developmental history stems from events of childhood proper.
>
> Childhood itself, of course, particularly its earliest years, provides most of the content for the restagings in history. There is evidence that good childrearing can reverse the long-term effects of fetal stress. In a study of 698 infants born in Hawaii in 1955 with pre- or peri-natal complications, it was found that those who experienced both fetal trauma and childhood rejection were twice as likely to have received some form of mental health help before age ten due to learning or behavioral problems, including repeated delinquencies, while those who had a close bond with at least one caretaker responded by showing a decrease in the effects of the early trauma. So even though fetal trauma has long-lasting effects, and even though few historical events are without traces of fetal imagery, the main source of historical change is still the evolution of childhood.

I'll leave it to you, Dear, to evaluate deMause's hypothesis by yourself. As for me, I'm convinced that his hypothesis is sufficiently strong (based, as it seems to be, on so many disparate chains of evidence) that it should be subjected to more experimental tests.

## EXPERIMENTAL TESTS OF DEMAUSE'S HYPOTHESIS

Developing experimental tests of any psychological or social hypothesis (i.e., in the "soft sciences") is, of course, very much more difficult than in the case of the "hard sciences" (such as physics and chemistry) – suggesting that he words "hard" and "soft" are misnamed (but at least they're not called "hard" and "easy")! The difficulty of developing experimental tests in the "soft sciences" is that it's essentially impossible to control all relevant variables; as a result, it's almost always difficult to find the "signal" in the "noise", statistical analyses of the data are essential, and critics are usually readily available to remind people that "correlation doesn't mean causation." Nonetheless and in spite of such difficulties, there's no sensible option other than to perform experimental tests and interpret them as best one can.

In the case of deMause's hypothesis, an experimental test (of sorts) has been conducted in Sweden. In his Winnicott Memorial Lecture, entitled "What the British Can Do To End Child Abuse" and given at King College, London on 27 March 2006, he stated the following.[12]

> The results of outlawing the hitting of children are dramatic. In Sweden, the first country to abolish corporal punishment of children… [the law] not only has public support… [hitting children – even in its mildest forms – {has} been reduced from 53% to only 11%], but in addition, only 6% of younger Swedes today say they support corporal punishment. Practice in Sweden, as well as attitude, has changed… with only 3% of school children saying they had been slapped by their parents, and only one child in 25 years having been killed by their parent. The results of this dramatic decrease in hitting have been spectacular. The number of children needing social work care has decreased by 26%, the number of youth convicted of theft declined by 21%, the rates of alcohol and drug abuse by youths have declined dramatically, and the rate of youth suicide has also declined. What is most astonishing is that in Sweden and in other countries outlawing the hitting of children the populations actually began by being in favor of corporal punishment, but after their legislatures passed their anti-hitting law despite this pro-hitting mood, the general public gradually became more and more opposed to corporal punishment, without any dramatic intrusion by the state into family life.

And of course these results would be more compelling if the "experiment" had been "designed" with more controls (e.g., no other social changes during the past 25 years in Sweden!) and if comparative analyses were provided (to answer, for example, if rates of theft, drug abuse, suicide, etc., in Sweden, differed from those during the same time period in similar societies but in

[12] Copied (omitting his references) from http://www.nospank.net/demaus10.htm.

which child spanking continued, e.g., in the UK), but again, such is the typical nature of such "experiments".[13]

Another test (with it's own limitations from the scientific viewpoint) might become available if a few States in the US would pass similar bans on hitting children and if, a generation-or-so later, the consequences for children reared in such States were compared with those for children reared in States that continued to permit hitting children. Some "baseline data" for the US include "facts" such as the following:[14]

- 95% of child abusers were themselves abused as children (Groth),
- 80% of substance abusers were abused as children (Daytop),
- 80% of runaways cite child abuse as a factor (Denver Police Dept.),
- 78% of our prison population were abused as children (Groth),
- 95% of prostitutes were sexually abused as children (Conte).

For such "facts", however, since I had difficulty in finding the (poorly documented) references, since I doubt the general validity of the "data" from the "Denver Police Department", and since no confidence limits for the numbers are provided, then I think that the most that can be said about such "data" is that they are suggestive.

Additional relevant "data" are available, dealing with prison inmates. Illustrative is the following graph, dealing with inmates in Alaskan prisons.[15]

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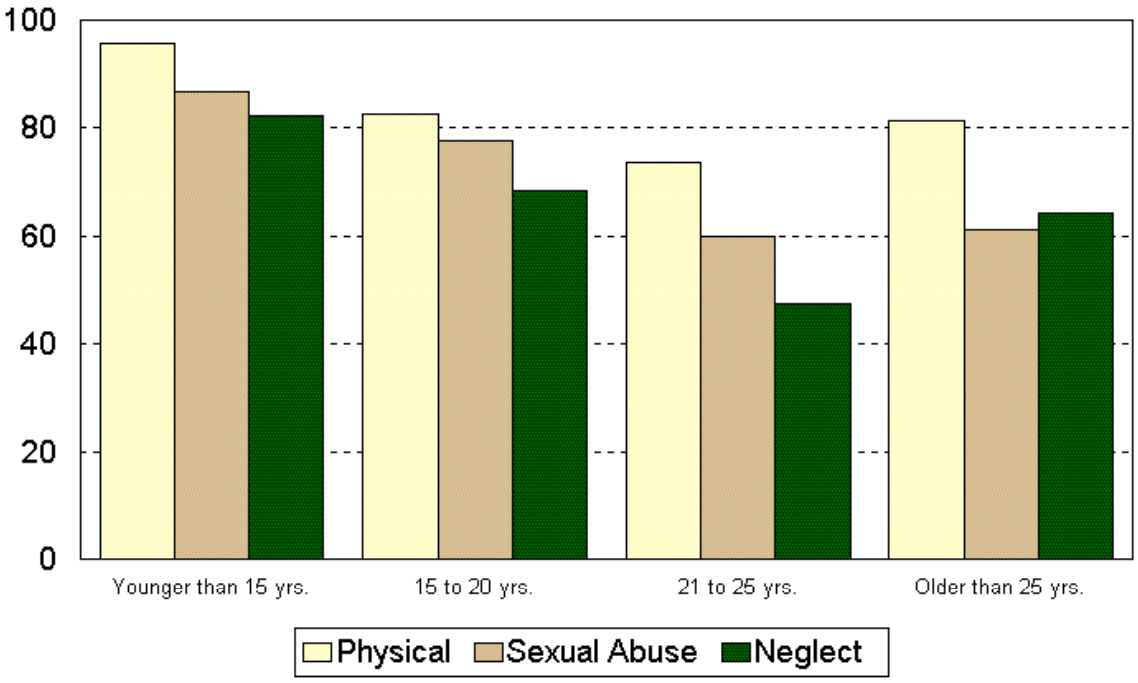
[13] Dear, if you'll look into the "Swedish experiment" in some detail, I expect you'll find that neither the data nor their interpretations are so clear as deMause suggests. You might want to start by reading the article entitled "Child Abuse in Sweden" (available at http://faculty.biola.edu/paulp/sweden2.html) by Robert E. Larzelere, then the "editorial" at http://bmj.bmjjournals.com/cgi/content/full/320/7248/1538/a, and then go from there!

[14] Copied from the webpage of the Coalition for Children, at http://www.safechild.org/abuse.htm.

[15] Copied from the report "Preliminary Results from the Long-Term Inmate Survey: Focus on Child Abuse Histories" by Robert H. Langworthy, Allan R. Barnes, and Richard W. Curtis of the Justice Center, University of Alaska, Anchorage (JC 9809.01, 21 April 1998. Available at http://justice.uaa.alaska.edu/research/1990/9809doc/9809prel.pdf.

Figure 8 Percent of Long-term Inmates Reporting Abuse as Children by Type of Abuse and Age at First Arrest




Actually, though, again the reliability of such "data" should be questioned, since their statistical significance isn't described and since the reliability of prisoner identification of "abuse" isn't known. Yet, certainly all the above "data" suggest that deMause's hypothesis is valid and certainly, therefore, any "sane society" would stridently endeavor to exorcise child abuse (and while doing so, monitor relevant cultural change).

Some people, however, continue to support and perpetuate "child abuse" – although they choose to label it as "appropriate discipline". Many people commonly misuse (!) the familiar line from Samuel Butler (1612–1680) "Spare the rod and spoil the child", which actually was used by Butler in his poem *Hudibras*[16] to have his heroine (a liberated woman if there ever was one!) state, basically, if you want my love ("the child"), then you'll need to earn it.[17]

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[16] Available at http://www.gutenberg.org/etext/4937.

[17] In his 2011 book *The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined,* Stephen Pinker states:

> The expression "Spare the rod and spoil the child" has been attributed to an advisor to the king of Assyria in the 7th Century BCE and may have been the source of Proverbs 13:24, "He that spareth the rod hateth his son: But he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes."

Many Christian clerics apparently prefer to quote the Bible's: "He that spareth the rod hateth his son" (*Proverbs 13,* 24) – of course neglecting to provide any reliable evidence supporting their claims. Some people add something similar to:

> Well, if it was good enough for my parents, it's good enough for me; I was disciplined harshly – and I'm better for it.

Evidence suggests, however, that He that spareth the rod loveth his son – and even more:

## HE WHO HURTS HIS CHILD HATES HIMSELF

Actually, though, Dear, I'm not sufficiently knowledgeable to provide you with adequate support for my claim: "He who hurts his child hates himself." If you want to investigate the matter, read relevant books, take relevant courses at university, and learn from those who've devoted their professional lives to trying to understand and to help their severely traumatized patients.

You can start by reading deMause's book, in which he provides some descriptions of multiple personalities and "alter [or alternative] egos", which he suggests is one way that the human brain apparently attempts to cope with trauma (such as from child abuse). In his Chapter 5, deMause states the following (from which I've again omitted his references).[18]

> When emotional memories are traumatic – either because the trauma was so early that the hippocampus was not yet functional or because it was so powerful that the hippocampal-prefrontal cortical system couldn't fully register it – they become permanent, dissociated fears of anything that might resemble the traumatic situation. Traumas that are inescapable because of helplessness can actually severely damage the hippocampus, killing neurons. Survivors of severe childhood abuse and veterans with post-traumatic stress syndrome are found to have smaller hippocampal volumes than other patients.
>
> This damage is caused by the release during traumatization of a cascade of cortisol, adrenaline, and other stress hormones that not only damage brain cells and impair memory but also set in motion a long-lasting disregulation of the brain's biochemistry. Animals that are traumatized when they are young grow up to be cowardly bullies, with less vasopressin, which regulates aggression, and serotonin, the calming neurotransmitter, which has been shown to be low in delinquents and in

[18] Again, it's available at http://www.psychohistory.com/htm/eln05_psychogenic.htm.

children who have been regularly beaten by their parents. Low serotonin is the most important marker for violence in animals and humans, and has been correlated with high rates of homicide, suicide, arson, antisocial disorders, self-mutilation, and other disorders of aggression. Early emotional abandonment by the mother or significant family members regularly lowers the serotonin level of children…

Consciousness, which Llinás believes is a 40-hertz oscillation in the entire brain network that binds together cortical and limbic systems, is present during wakefulness and dream (REM) sleep. Dreaming is a sort of "down-time" for current experience, when daily memories are evaluated against early amygdalan emotional memories, processed into long-term memory, and stored in the neocortex. But traumatic stress seriously interferes with the processing of these memories and their accessibility to consciousness. The fears, anxieties and hypervigilance of traumatic stress sets off a cascade of hormones and neurotransmitters that disrupts hippocampal functioning, leaving memories to be stored as dissociated affective states or body memories that are incapable of being retrieved through normal hippocampal indexing. Van der Kolk believes that often these memories are dissociated because they were never really stored in consciousness in the first place. Moreover, the "lack of secure attachments may produce the most devastating effects," he says, "because consistent external support appears to be a necessary condition in learning how to regulate internal affective states… Dissociation is a method of coping with inescapable stress {allowing} infants to enter into trance states and to ignore current sensory input…" As Eigen puts it in his book, *The Psychotic Core*, "The aggression perpetrated on the young in the name of upbringing is often tinged with or masks madness. Both parent and child live out this madness in a trancelike state akin to dreaming." It is these early trance states that are repeated in the social trances of history.

## THE PSYCHODYNAMICS OF RESTAGING

The massive secretion of norepinephrine and dopamine, serotonin, and endogenous opioids that follows inescapable trauma is followed by a subsequent depletion of hormones, presumably because utilization exceeds synthesis. Eventually receptors become hypersensitive, leading to excessive responsiveness to even the possibility of trauma in later life. It is this massive "false-alarm system" that leads to reenactments and then to restagings of trauma reenactments with new anxiety-reducing elements that is at the heart of social behavior in humans.

Depletion of neurotransmitters after traumatic flooding results in hyperalertness to any situations that seem to indicate they may lead to reexperiencing the trauma. This, of course, is true of all animals, and they later simply avoid the dangers in the future. But humans are unique in possessing a developed hippocampal-prefrontal, cortical-centered consciousness, whose task it is to inhibit action so as to avoid potentially traumatic situations. When trauma occurs – even very early trauma – humans are unique in believing they are responsible for the trauma. It is astonishing how early and consistently this is seen in clinical practice.

Lenore Terr tells of a girl playing with dolls and repeating her sexual molestation by pornographers that happened when she was 15 months old. She was dissociated from any conscious memories of the events, but accurately repeated being penetrated by an erect penis the same way she had been in the pornographic films, which had been retrieved by the police. The accuracy of her body memories is amazing enough, but what was most astonishing was what she said as she restaged the raping scene:

> Who is this? My doll. She's lying on the bed naked. I cover her up… I'm yelling at the doll. She was bad! I yell at my doll… "You! You bad thing! Get to bed, you"!

She felt guilty about her own rape! But children usually feel guilty about being traumatized.

> I must have been too noisy, because mommy left me was my sincere belief when my mother left my father. I also believed I deserved my father's strappings, because I wasn't obedient enough.

This is why children set up a separate, internal self as a "protector" to try to stop themselves from ever being noisy, pushy, sexual, demanding, in fact, to stop them from growing and thus reexperiencing trauma. At first, these internal "protectors" are friendly; sometimes they are represented as imaginary playmates or even as protective alters [or "alter egos"] if the traumas are severe or repetitive. Later, particularly when adolescence brings on opportunities for greater exploration and especially dating, these protective selves become persecutory selves that "have had it" with the host self and actually try to harm it. The persecutory self says, "It's not happening to me, it's happening to her, and she deserves it!" Rather than take a chance that the early trauma will once again catch one unaware and helpless, one might restage the trauma upon oneself or others, or both, at least controlling the timing and intensity of the trauma oneself.

Before adolescence, one will often restage traumas by identifying with the persecutor and triumphing rather than being the helpless one. Thus, the 8-year-old girl who had been hit by a truck when she was 18 months old would repeatedly charge into classmates, knocking them over as she restaged her accident. Or a 7-year-old girl whose father strangled her mother would force her friends to play the "mommy game" where they played dead and she picked them up. But after adolescence, the restaging more often includes self-persecution, bringing about the dreaded event oneself either through hypervigilant action or actual self-harm – as in the self-cutting or self-injury of those who were physically abused as children, the fights and anti-social activities of delinquents who were neglected as infants or the sexual promiscuity of young girls who had been seduced.

It is important to keep in mind that it is not "stress" or even "trauma" alone that causes restaging of early events. If the traumas are not dissociated, if they can be remembered by the conscious mind, they are not split off so they need not be repeated. For instance, 732 Jewish children, who survived concentration camps after having gone through literal hell for three years, formed a club in England after their rescue. No greater amount of childhood trauma can be imagined that what they went

through; yet, as they wrote in their newsletter later, "our greatest achievement and tremendous source of pride is that we can boast of having no delinquents, criminals, revenge-seekers and above all, none of us is consumed with hatred and venom." Because Jews didn't blame themselves for their persecution, they could remember and didn't dissociate. So they didn't need to either revictimize themselves nor make others victims.

Revictimization is actually the central cause of anti-social behavior, and addiction to trauma is at its core. It is not surprising that prison psychiatrists find violent criminals invariably repeat in their crime the emotional traumas, abuse and humiliation of their childhood, or that women who have been sexually abused in childhood are more than twice as likely as others to be raped when they become adults. As one prostitute who had been sexually victimized as a child said, "When I do it, I'm in control. I can control them through sex." What Freud was puzzled by when he coined the term "the repetition compulsion", puzzled because it violated the pleasure principle, is actually a self-protective device, protective against being helpless against the overwhelming anxiety of unexpected trauma. Traumas are therefore restaged as a defense, with the persecutory self as the stage director. *Restaging as a defense against dissociated trauma is the crucial flaw in the evolution of the human mind* [italics added] – understandable from the viewpoint of the individual as a way of maintaining sanity, but tragic in its effects upon society, since it means that early traumas will be magnified onto the historical stage into war, domination, and self-destructive social behavior. And because we also restage by inflicting our childhood terrors upon our children, generation after generation, our addiction to the slaughterbench of history has been relentless.

## FEARS OF INDIVIDUATION AND GROWTH PANIC

The crowning achievement of the human species – our self-consciousness, the awareness of oneself as a private person with a past history and future goals – has taken so long to evolve and has been so uneven that humanity is a species with extremely fragile selves. Chimpanzees barely have enough self-awareness to recognize themselves in a mirror, and early humans began to evolve self-consciousness through slowly improving parenting, resulting mainly from the mother's growing empathy toward her child. Eigen observes from the disintegrating selves of psychotics, "The way individuals are ripped apart by psychotic processes brings home the realization that the emergence of a viable sense of self and other must be counted as one of the most creative achievements of humankind", an achievement, I will show, it has taken millennia to accomplish.

As Modell points out, the emergent private self grows as the child explores its environment with the regular help of its caretakers. Therefore, children whose immature parents use them for their own emotional needs, and who reject them when the child's needs do not reflect their own, develop what Winnicott calls a "false self," or even multiple selves, which may conform to society but cannot improve upon it. It is because of this that social evolution depends upon the evolution of the viable self,

which in turn is achieved solely through the slow and uneven evolution of childrearing.

Traumas are defined as injuries to the private self, rather than just painful experiences, since non-painful injuries to the self such as parental genital manipulation or being told by a parent that they wished one would die are more traumatic to the self than, say, more painful accidents. Without a well-developed, enduring private self, people feel threatened by all progress, all freedom, all new challenges, and then experience annihilation anxiety, fears that the fragile self is disintegrating, since situations that call for self-assertion trigger memories of maternal abandonment. Masterson calls this by the umbrella term "abandonment depression," beneath which, he says, "ride the Six Horsemen of the Psychic Apocalypse: Depression, Panic, Rage, Guilt, Helplessness (hopelessness), and Emptiness (void) [that] wreak havoc across the psychic landscape leaving pain and terror in their wake."

Whether the early traumas or rejections were because the mothers were openly abandoning, over-controlling and abusive, clinging, or just threatened by the child's emerging individuation, the results are much the same – the child learns to fear parts of his or her potential self that threatens the disapproval or loss of the mother. As Socarides has observed, fears of growth, individuation and self assertion that carry threatening feelings of disintegration lead to desires to merge with the omnipotent mother literally to crawl back into the womb, desires which immediately turn into fears of maternal engulfment, since the merging would involve total loss of the self. When Socarides' patients make moves to individuate – like moving into their own apartment or getting a new job – they have dreams of being swallowed by whirlpools or devoured by monsters. The only salvation from these maternal engulfment wishes/fears is a "flight to external reality from internal reality," a flight in which social institutions play a central role, as we shall shortly discover.

Many people who have been in psychotherapy become conscious of this individuation panic and flight to external reality when they begin to grow, break free of old emotional patterns, and start to feel their freedom. These fears can be characterized as an all-pervasion growth panic that traumatized individuals (nearly everyone) constantly carry around during their daily lives. Masterson quotes one of his patients:

> I was walking down the street and suddenly I was engulfed in a feeling of absolute freedom. I could taste it. I knew I was capable of doing whatever I wanted. When I looked at other people, I really saw them without being concerned about how they were looking at me… I was just being myself and thought that I had uncovered the secret of life: being in touch with your own feelings and expressing them openly with others, not worrying so much about how others felt about you.

> Then just as suddenly as it came, it disappeared. I panicked and started thinking about the million things I had to do at the studio, of errands I needed to run after work. I began to feel nauseous and started sweating. I headed for my apartment, running most of the way. When I got in, I felt that I had been pursued. By what? Freedom, I guess.

> It is this manic flight to action a flight that is a defense against growth panic that is the emotional source of much of social behavior. Manic acting-out in social activity is a universal addiction, similar in its effects to the dopamine agonistic effects of cocaine. That's why leaders so often take manic drugs, like John F. Kennedy during the Gulf Crisis (amphetamines) and George Bush during the Gulf War (Halcion). Like drugs, grandiose manic social activities such as war and political domination produce a temporary elation and a dopamine surge, but not the lasting joy of self-discovery and love.

I'm sorry to quote so much of deMause's book, Dear, but I trust you see both how significant his ideas are and also, that there's "no way" that I could competently either "translate" or "interpret" them for you. If you'll read his book [but again: be careful; it can be quite upsetting – even for an "old codger", such as I, who has had a lot of quite awful experiences], then you'll find some valuable ideas about the consequences of child abuse, including violent crimes, terrorist acts, and wars. Thus, in Chapter 4 deMause states:[19]

> *It may seem simplistic to conclude that most of human destructiveness is the restaging of early traumas and that what we must do if we wish to put an end to war and social violence is teach adults how to stop abusing and neglecting and begin respecting and enjoying their children, but I believe this is precisely what our best scientific evidence shows*. [Italics added.]

I'll show you more of his ideas in later chapters, but that's enough for now. It's time, now, for you to get some eXercise!

[19] Again: it's available at http://www.psychohistory.com/htm/eln04_trauma.html.