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Fathers: A Forgotten Natural Role*

Peter Crist, M.D.

Abstract

This article describes two neurotic types of parenting, authoritarian and anti-authoritarian. It documents the shift from the past authoritarian social structure and family to the contemporary, prevailing approach in society. Some of the disturbing effects of this shift are illustrated in popular culture, an informal survey, a clinical vignette and an interview with a high school guidance counselor. This article also identifies natural healthy childrearing as deeper than either neurotic type and proposes formulations to describe some of its features. Distinct, differentiated natural functions of fathers and mothers are also demonstrated by examples from cinema and animal studies.

Introduction

We have previously described general biosocial principles and an organomic understanding of families, their problems and their therapy (Crist 1993, 1996, 2006). The organomic literature has also discussed problems of childrearing in a permissive age (Crist 1999), as well as problems when fathers are absent from the home (Whitener 2003). In recent years, Konia in particular has addressed the shift in our culture from authoritarian to anti-authoritarian, a term introduced by him unique to the organomic literature. He has shown how this shift is evident in many aspects that affect our society as a whole (Konia 2008) and has also specifically considered how it affects the manifestations of emotional illness in children and the conduct of therapy (Konia 2010, 2013).

It is also manifest in parenting styles in families. There are two basic types of neurotic patterns or armored forms of parenting. They are authoritarian and anti-authoritarian. (Figure 1)

*Based in part on material presented at the ACO Social Organomy Presentation entitled "Fathers: A Forgotten Natural Role," June 2, 2012, Princeton, NJ.

Types of Neurotic Parenting

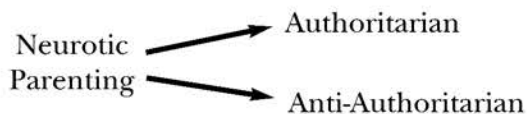


Figure 1

At a recent presentation on fathers, following a discussion about the differences between the two types of fathers, authoritarian and anti-authoritarian, an impromptu audience survey of the 53 audience members was conducted asking when they were born and what type of father they had. The results of this self-report survey supported the concept that during the period from 1960 to 1980 there has been a shift in our culture from authoritarian fathers to anti-authoritarian fathers. The results of this survey are shown in Table 1.

<u>Birth Decade</u>	<u>Authoritarian</u>	<u>Anti- Authoritarian</u>
1930s	1	1
1940s	10	3
1950s	14	4
1960s	7	2
1970s	2	2
1980s	2	5
Total	36	17

Audience Survey

Table 1

In Popular Culture

This shift in society has been reflected in our popular culture. This is particularly true in how fathers have been depicted—especially on TV sitcoms.

The 1950s sitcom, *Father Knows Best*, that ran on the radio (1949-1954) and then on TV (1954-1960), showed a benign authoritarian father. *Leave It To Beaver*, that ran from 1957 to 1963, followed the same mold of a middle class suburban family with an iconic father carrying the moral weight of the family. *The Brady Bunch* from 1969 to 1974 showed a blended family with a widowed father. In all of them, the father took on the role of benign authority.

Then from 1971 to 1979 we saw a different father, Archie Bunker, in the role of patriarch. He was someone who rarely knew best and reflected the transition to depicting fathers in sitcoms as ignorant dolts.

By 1989, a decade after Archie Bunker left the scene, the depiction of fathers on TV had degenerated to the point that he had become merely a gross, rude, infantile person lacking any genuine authority. Alternately indulging and being cruel to his bratty kids, this view of the degenerate father became cartoonish in *The Simpsons*. What does it say about our society that this show, which first aired in 1989, is still running today, is still very popular in a wide range of age groups, and is the longest running sitcom in TV history?

The 1990s saw a common theme with incompetent, childish fathers and mothers who were the rock and the smart one of the family. This was illustrated by both Tim Allen as the Toolman in *Home Improvement*, which ran from 1991 to 1998, and Ray Romano in *Everybody Loves Raymond*, running from 1996 to 2005.

The anti-authoritarian depiction of the “doofus” dad became much more sophisticated in the popular and award-winning sitcom, *Modern Family*, playing from 2009 to the present. Here, the father often undermines his wife’s authority by trying to ingratiate himself with his children.

Modern Family also shows us that anyone at all can be a dad and appears to glorify the father role such that two fathers are better than one, and, in fact, there's no need for a mom in the family that has two homosexual parents.

Fathers are portrayed and frequently viewed as the butt of jokes, incompetent and lacking in any real authority about anything. But the problems created by the loss of any natural authority of the father (or either parent) in families are not just the stuff of comedy. They are real and affect real people and hurt real children who will not adequately learn how to manage their emotions rationally and function in real situations in life. The television show, *Super Nanny*, often demonstrates the chaos that results when there is no functional father in the home.

This problem has also played out in many ways with patients of mine, as illustrated by the following case.

Clinical Vignette

Sabrina is a young woman in her 20s whose divorced father talked to her about his dissatisfaction in his sexual relationship with her stepmother. This made her very uncomfortable and after struggling with it for a few weeks she finally decided to tell her father that she was not comfortable with him talking to her about his sex life. She said at that point he became very angry, saying, "I thought we were friends and we could talk about anything. If you don't want a relationship with me, it's over." She said he kicked her out of the house and even when she attempted to make contact with him things have never been the same, only superficial.

This is clearly not a natural role of a father. But that begs the question, what is the natural role of the father? And, more to the point, what is the natural *function* of the father?

The Natural Function of Parenting

A father's function is a specific aspect of parenting in general. So when we look at the natural healthy function of parenting we see that it is to

raise children who are emotionally and physically healthy. In the most general terms children need to grow up with their physical needs taken care of and emotionally to have the natural capacities to love and work and be curious about exploring the world still intact. They must become independent of the parents and find their own mate and develop the capacity to do productive work.

In the most basic terms these are all reflected in Wilhelm Reich's well-known quotation:

"Love, Work and Knowledge are the wellsprings of life. They should also govern it."

It is important to be clear that the natural role of parents is not a third but equal alternative to the two neurotic types of authoritarian and anti-authoritarian. A review of Figure 1 shows that the natural healthy function of parenting is not even in that equation. *The natural function of parenting is in another realm that is deeper and, in fact, underlies neurotic parenting and each of its two variations, authoritarian and anti-authoritarian.*

This suggests that we can identify what is healthy as well as what is unhealthy in each of the neurotic approaches. We will mention only a few here.

The *clarity of expectations is healthy* in authoritarian parenting to the extent that it supports development of the child's individual capacities and independence. But *it becomes unhealthy when it is done out of the parents' neurotic need for control without adequate emotional contact with the child and the child's needs.* This will most certainly inhibit any natural spontaneity of the child.

We see that the lack of this clarity with an anti-authoritarian father, where the child has to divine what is expected of him, can lead to more anxiety and inhibition than would be the case if things were made clearer.

The *desire for more contact* between the father and the child *is healthy* in anti-authoritarian parenting. This is in contrast to the authoritarian era's, "Children should be seen and not heard."

But *increased contact is unhealthy when it does not take into account the natural function of healthy contact between parent and child.* We can see this, for example, in the TV show, *Modern Family*, where the father is trying to be “a buddy” and be liked by his children. We also see this in the “helicopter parent” who is hovering so much that the child is not allowed to develop natural and healthy independence from the parent.

The Vital Role of the Father

There can be no doubt that the father has a vital role in the healthy development of children. This is demonstrated by the vast social experiment of recent decades: specifically the unintentional, increasing number of households that literally do not have a father present, either because the child was born to a single mother or because the mother and father are divorced and the mother has sole or primary physical custody. A significant body of research shows devastating, disturbing statistics related to such fatherless homes, as shown in Figure 2.

Figure 2. Statistics Related to
Fatherless Households in the United States

- 63% of youth suicides are from fatherless homes. (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Bureau of the Census)
- 90% of all homeless and runaway children are from fatherless homes. (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Bureau of the Census)
- 85% of all children that exhibit behavioral disorders come from fatherless homes. (Centers for Disease Control)
- 80% of rapists motivated with displaced anger come from fatherless homes. (*Criminal Justice and Behavior*, Vol. 14 pages 403-426)

- 71% of all high school dropouts come from fatherless homes. (National Principals Association *Report on the State of High Schools*)
- 70% of juveniles in state-operated institutions come from fatherless homes. (U.S. Dept. of Justice, Special Report, September, 1988)
- 85% of all youth sitting in prisons grew up in a fatherless home. (Fulton County Georgia Jail Populations and Texas Dept. of Corrections, 1992)
- Nearly 2 of every 5 children in America do not live with their fathers. (*U.S. News and World Report*, February 27, 1995, page 39)

There are:

- 11,268,000 total custodial mothers (*Current Populations Reports*, U.S. Bureau of the Census, Series P-20, No. 458, 1991)
- 2,907,000 total custodial fathers (*Current Populations Reports*, U.S. Bureau of the Census, Series P-20, No. 458, 1991)

What does this mean?

Children from fatherless homes are:

- 4.6 times more likely to commit suicide,
 - 6.6 times more likely to become teenaged mothers (if they are girls, of course),
 - 24.3 times more likely to run away,
 - 15.3 times more likely to have behavioral disorders,
 - 6.3 times more likely to be in a state-operated institutions,
 - 10.8 times more likely to commit rape,
 - 6.6 times more likely to drop out of school,
 - 15.3 times more likely to end up in prison while a teenager.
- (*The calculation of the relative risks shown in the preceding list is based on 27% of children being in the care of single mothers.*)

And, compared to children who are in the care of two biological, married parents, children who are in the care of single mothers are:

- 33 times more likely to be seriously abused (so that they will require medical attention), and
- 73 times more likely to be killed.

Observations of a High School Guidance Counselor

A guidance counselor I recently interviewed at a local high school in New Jersey shared some observations that show the problems in the current anti-authoritarian social milieu of high school students.

Remarkably, frequently, the fathers of her students back away and let the mother take charge of everything with the result that boys, especially, give up and act as if they can't do anything either.

Increasingly, she sees that fathers are at home physically, but have checked out emotionally—so the mom takes over. Fathers easily abdicate their authority and take a back seat, which sets up a skewed dynamic for the children. It is also almost always the mother who comes alone without the father to meetings with her.

She feels that school systems set up boys for failure because starting at a very young age—the “gold standard” for good behavior is to sit still and hold your pencil—at age four! Young boys start to think, “I'm not good at this, this is not for me,” so they begin to have negative feelings about school, and feel inadequate.

She notes that a lot of young men are “thrown off” because they have no role model, no rudder. In contrast, she shared a story about her own son who came to her at age 12 and basically said he didn't need her in his life anymore. And she said, “No offense taken, but I want to make sure there's somebody driving the boat besides a 12-year-old boy. So if your father's ready to step in and really be a strong person in your life, then I'm good with that.” And his father did step in. She saw that her son was saying that he was a man now, and didn't need her. So he wasn't acting out and being rebellious—he was being direct with her, which was good.

She mentioned that she is responsible for 200 high school juniors, and that about a quarter of them function really well.

She talked about how the girls react when their dads are not present, either emotionally or physically. There are two paths that the girls take: either acting out in a sexually promiscuous way, which she doesn't see a lot of; or, and this is what she does see, girls who feel they have to excel at everything. This lends itself to self-cutting behavior and eating disorders to gain the acceptance and recognition that they are not getting at home.

She mentioned a student who had been abused once by a relative when she was very young. Although her dad was present now, he was emotionally absent from the family. This seemed to reinforce a sense of shame in her, that she was not good enough, which led her to always strive to be perfect.

She also mentioned the social pressure that is set up these days in a school environment that has a reputation for being high-achieving. Kids experience great pressure to appear to be perfect. Even the posts on their Facebook page feed into the notion, "I have to have this polished perfection presence that I present to the world." She believes that dad's lack of recognition and positive reinforcement adds fuel to the fire for that kind of behavior.

She again mentioned talking to her son, now grown, about young people using psychiatric medications such as Prozac and other SSRI anti-depressants because to a large degree it helps them get rid of the bad feelings about not being perfect. It seems that these days, unlike in the past, kids don't talk about their problems and anxieties, and instead prefer to medicate normal human emotions away.

When the kids are small, she sees that fathers are more involved. But when children begin to grow up and things start becoming more complicated, with more emotions and emotional intensity involved, dads retreat. The message today is that mothers have the parenting skills. Fathers often feel like a failure and give up.

In fact, it's just *how* fathers do it that is different. Fathers are generally rough and tumble, that's how they make contact. That's also

the way kids can learn how to get excited and what the limits are—dads are good at modulating the excitement.

In closing, she mentioned one of her students who is “the epitome of what I would love all my boys to be.” He’s successful and strong within himself. He has an inner confidence that doesn’t come from academics or his work experience, or his sports. (He plays football, something she didn’t know until months after meeting him.) She sees that it’s from the way he’s been raised. He’s just a great, unassuming, humble but strong young man. And he has a good strong mother and father *together*. He’s really rare—someone who has the whole package. One out of 200. (Personal communication 2012)

Distinct Natural Functions for Mothers and Fathers

Feminist political correctness has made it almost taboo to discuss distinctions between male and female either between boys and girls, men and women, or between mothers and fathers. On the other hand, religious fundamentalists might say that of course there are distinct roles for mothers and fathers, but, because they are defined by biblical scripture, there is no need to study them.

It seems clear that the father has a crucial effect/function different from the function of the mother. Each are differentiated variations of the function of parenting (Figure 3).

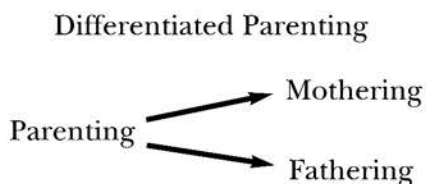


Figure 3

We will state a few descriptions that have been made about the different functions, some of which may be cultural and socially

determined, others may reflect basic differences in the nature of mothers and fathers.

The father's function is to support the child in taking risks. The mother's function is to insure the child's emotional and physical safety.

These differences can create conflict and tension between the two parents, their roles and functions. But a child needs both.

I recall when my daughter was a toddler she wanted to go on the highest slide in the park and I stood there by the slide as the unobtrusive safety net while she climbed up. Meanwhile, her mother was in the background saying, "Don't let her go up there. It's too high. She's going to fall." Safety and risk, both physical and emotional, are essential to the development of a secure, capable individual.

There is a tendency for the mother to be softer with the child than the father. There is a tendency for the father to be more adventurous and daring.

Warren Farrell (2001) has made an extensive review of the literature about fathering. He notes, "We often hear that mothers do the caring; fathers just do the playing. This is a false dichotomy—even a dangerous one... It is therefore more accurate to view dad's playing as his form of childcare, his contribution to child development." Farrell's book has a wealth of references on the need for fathers' involvement in their children's lives.

He described Howard Halpern, past president of the American Academy of Psychotherapists, as saying that among humans, the job of the father is two-fold: to help the mother and child separate; and to nurture "the little child within the mother" who may be threatened by this separation.

Someone humorously paraphrased that view by saying that the function of the father is to separate the child from the mother. Such humorous depictions of the differences are common. Robert Frost said, "The father is always a Republican toward his son, and his mother's always a Democrat."

The distinct function of the father has been stated in diverse ways. Sigmund Freud, for example, said, “I cannot think of any need in childhood as strong as the need for a father’s protection.”

I propose a brief description that the function of the father is to have the child’s back (to protect them out in the world) while the function of the mother is to have the child’s front (to hug and see that they are safe in an embrace).

A Healthy Depiction of the Role of the Father

It is rare to see a relatively healthy depiction of fathers (or mothers for that matter) in the movies. The 2007 movie *Juno* was such a treat. Juno, played by Ellen Page, is a high school student who becomes pregnant but decides to have the baby and give it up for adoption. Her father, Mac, played by J.K. Simmons, who is dealing with a teenaged daughter overwhelmed by burgeoning sexuality (though she pretends she’s not), has been described by one reviewer as “spectacularly ordinary—in accomplishment, awareness, insight—yet his concern for his little ‘Junebug’ is unshakeable, even as he’s rattled by her pregnancy.”

In one very real and unsentimental scene we see her come home, sit down in the kitchen quite obviously pregnant and a conversation starts with her father:

Mac: You’re looking a little morose, honey. What’s eating you?

Juno: Uhn. (pause) I’m just like losing my faith with humanity.

Mac: Wow. Can you narrow that down for me?

Juno: I just wonder if like, if two people can stay together for good.

Mac: You mean like couples?

Juno: Yeah. Like people in love.

Mac: Are you having boy trouble? Cause I gotta be honest I don’t really much approve of you dating in your condition. That’s kind of messed up...

Juno: (interrupting): No dad. It’s not...

Mac: (over Juno): I mean that's pretty skanky. Isn't that what you girls call it. Skanky. Skeevey.

Juno: (laughs): Will you stop.

Mac: Tore up from the floor up.

Juno: (still chuckling): That's not what it's about. (pause and then hesitantly) I just... I need to know that it's possible that two people can stay happy together forever.

Mac: Well it's not easy that's for sure. And, ah, I don't have the best track record in the world I know but... I've been with your step-mother for ten years now and I'm proud to say we're very happy. (pause) Look, in my opinion the best thing you can do is find a person who loves *you* for exactly what you are. Good mood. Bad mood. Ugly, pretty. Handsome, what have you. The right person is still gonna think the sun shines out your ass.

Juno: (smile and small laugh)

Mac: That's the kind of person that's worth sticking with.

Juno: Yeah. (pause) Yeah. I think I've found that person.

Mac: Sure you have. Your dear old D-A-D.

Juno: (surprised ironic chuckle)

Mac: You know I'll always be there to love you and support you no matter what kind of pickle you're in. (Looks at her belly and says with some weariness and irony) Obviously.

Juno: (After long pause) Dad, I think I'm just going to chill out for a sec. but I won't be home late. (She gets up with difficulty.)

Mac: O.K. (Looks up and with sudden change of tone) You *were* talking about me. Right?

Juno: (lightly) Oh. Yeah.

Mac: (Smiles.) (*Juno* 2007)

This scene shows a father's love for his daughter that is simple, direct, unsentimental, non-moralistic and illustrates how the function of the father is to stand behind and support his child.

Culture or Biology

Certainly, both cultural and biological elements factor into the differences between mothers' and fathers' roles and functions.

The split screen videos by pediatrician Brazelton showing an infant interacting with her mother and then with her father show that even at only a few months of age she responds to each parent quite differently. The infant interacts with her mother in a way that regulates the intensity of emotional contact between them, finding ways to engage the mother as well as thrilling the mother with her bright smile. With the father she expects something very different. She expects to play with him and has an entirely different rhythm and body language that she saves for her interactions with him. (Brazelton 1991)

Often we can turn to animal studies to give us an idea of what a more natural approach might be. Jane Goodall did that with the chimpanzees in looking at what made a "good" mother versus a "bad" mother. But the chimps tell us nothing about fathering since chimp fathers have no role at all with their biological offspring. In the more than 600 pages of Goodall's research text on the patterns of behavior in the chimpanzees she studied there are hundreds of pages on mother-infant interactions but not a single reference about fathers.² In fact, among apes, gorillas are the only species to have a role in childrearing. Humans are quite different than most other primates, with the father having as much of a role in parenting as he does.

Among other animals we have to look much farther than primates to find significant father roles. One most instructive example are wolves. They are not the "lone wolf" of legend. They are actually very social animals. In his book, *The Emperor's Embrace: Reflections on Animal Families and Fatherhood*, Jeffrey Masson describes a wolf pack returning from a successful hunt. The large male walks straight up to the den where the alpha female is tending the six cubs he has fathered.

...[H]e is greeted by his mate with enthusiastic wagging of her tail and moans and groans of pleasure: She is happy to see him return.

But her pleasure is mild compared with that of the six cubs, who

²This does not mean that the contact between males of the species and the young is unimportant. In fact, Goodall's work showed that contact between young chimps and adult males can be quite important in chimp society. (Goodall 1984, 1986)

fling themselves upon their father, squealing with delight. They leap up to his face and kiss him wildly about the mouth, pawing, nuzzling, nipping his mouth and head. He backs up a few feet, then opens his mouth very wide and disgorges the feed he has brought for them, in several little piles, to make it easier for them to eat without competing. It is fresh food, stored in his stomach as if in a shopping bag, and it is meant for both the mother and her young, all of whom have been waiting with keen anticipation.

He goes on to say:

The father wolf often licks the young, cleaning them thoroughly, he guards the den and protects the cubs inside, and once they are able to follow him, he teaches them how to be wolves. Wolves go through a socialization process, much as humans do. They need to learn the rules, they need to learn about hierarchy within the pack, and discover where they fit into it. Most of this learning is facilitated by their father and mother working together... Even hunting, which many people would regard as the ultimate instinctive activity, must be learned." (Masson 1999)

In contrast, domesticated dog fathers have very little to do with their offspring.

Things seem clearer with wolves than with humans. In fact, as some human fathers have made a shift from being absent breadwinners to fathers who are more emotionally involved in the family, their role often becomes less clearly defined. When this occurs, greater closeness often results in a "stickiness" in the relationship between father and daughter. For example, out of the father's own neurotic need for contact he may cling to relating to his daughter as if she were still a child, rather than supporting her capacity and need for maturing self-sufficiency. The girl, in turn, may tend to avoid her own anxiety about developing more grown-up relationships with men and cling to her father in the role of "Daddy's little girl." In such a situation there may be a closeness of sorts between father and daughter. However, it is one that interferes with the natural function of the father to the extent that it undermines the daughter's ability to become independent and differentiated from her parents. This is

especially true when it gets in the way of the natural shift of her love interest from her father to another man.

We see this cultural change reflected in the opening monologue of the movie, *Father of the Bride*, in the 1950 original and the remake in 1991.

In 1950 Spencer Tracy as the father says:

You fathers will understand. You have a little girl. She looks up to you. You're her oracle. You're her hero. And then the day comes when she gets her first permanent wave and she goes to her first real party. And from that day on you are in a constant state of panic. If the boys swarm around, you are in a panic for fear she'll marry one of them. If they don't swarm around why, then, of course, you're in another kind of a panic and you wonder what's the matter with her. So you don't worry about it. You say to yourself, I've got plenty of time to worry about that. I'll just put off thinking about it. And then suddenly it is upon you. It was just three months ago. Exactly. Three months ago that the storm broke here... (*Father of the Bride* 1950)

Then in 1991 with Steve Martin:

You fathers will understand. You have a little girl. An adorable little girl who looks up to you and adores you in a way you could never have imagined. I remember how her little hand used to fit inside mine. How she used to love to sit on my lap and lean her head against my chest. She said I was her hero. And then the day comes when she wants to get her ears pierced and she wants you to drop her off the block before the movie theater. Next thing you know she's wearing eye shadow and high heels. From that moment on you are in a constant state of panic. You worry about her going out with the wrong kind of guys. The kind of guys who only want one thing. And you know exactly what that one thing is because it is the same thing you wanted when you were their age. Then she gets a little older and you quit worrying about her meeting the wrong guy. And you worry about her meeting the right guy. And that's the biggest fear of all. 'Cause then you lose her. And before you know it you're sitting all alone in a big empty house wearing rice on your tux wondering what happened to your life. It was just six months ago that it happened here. Six months ago that the storm broke... (*Father of the Bride* 1991)

The difference is subtle in some ways but striking in others. With Spencer Tracy in the 1950 version there is a much clearer sense that the father and daughter have distinct roles in their relationship, with separate but related lives. There is the common ambivalence about “letting go” of his daughter but at the same time the desire to see her independent and living her own life with someone who loves her besides himself.

With Steve Martin in the 1991 version, his greatest fear is of her leaving him. The whole monologue is more about the father’s narcissistic need for his daughter rather than her need for independence. There is an entanglement and confusion of roles. The father does not seem to have his own life independent of his daughter the way that Spencer Tracy as the father does.

This sticky, entangled, “Daddy’s little girl” attitude has become such a thing in our society that it is not only accepted but is regarded as a virtue. A recent ad for Subaru cars shows the father seeing his daughter as a little girl rather than the grown woman she has actually become. When an attitude shows up in an advertisement we know it has deeply infiltrated people’s thinking.

The Hope for the Future

We have seen and described major changes in parents’ roles in society. Some of these have creating new problems different from those of the old ways. The hope is that there are those who can find an approach to childrearing and parenting that is deeper than either of the neurotic types, authoritarian or anti-authoritarian, one that incorporates the underlying health inherent in both of them. The further hope is that each generation will have some people who are emotionally better off and healthier than the previous generation.

There are those who can learn from the sentiments of writer, Bartrand Hubbard, who said, “I’ve had a hard life, but my hardships are nothing against the hardships that my father went through in order to get me to where I started.”

Friedrich Nietzsche also evidenced an uncharacteristic, for him, hopeful view when he said, "When one has not had a good father, one must create one."

Conclusion

More broadly, the absence of the natural role of the father is a major characteristic and symptom of the breakdown and dysfunction of human society in its transformation from authoritarian to anti-authoritarian. In fact, I prefer to call it a transformation to an "anti-authority" society because frequently, in the process, any natural, healthy authority has also been thrown out the window.

A functional understanding of relationships and the natural role of the father can shine new light on a serious and basic social problem that is affecting not just the United States but also many parts of the world.

Reich, in his 1933 classic, *The Mass Psychology of Fascism* (1946), identified the essence of fascism as the simultaneous rebellion against authority and longing for it. This is the basis of every revolution that ends in a more repressive regime, whether it is within an individual family or on a mass scale as with the Nazis and the Communists. Most recently, the "Arab Spring" overthrew authoritarian regimes in the Middle East only to have "democratic" elections result in or threaten to bring about equally or even more repressive governments. The problem of armored neurotic people is that they are cut off from their biological core and as a result cannot follow healthy, decent impulses. Consequently, they long for a father to tell them what to do but at the same time hate the father for doing just that and not letting them be independent.

Anyone who wants to improve their functioning in life, in work, in relationships as a father, as a mother, must work on themselves. The best way to do that on the deepest level is to work in medical orgone therapy on improving one's capacity for deep emotional contact, to be able to distinguish the sick from the healthy emotions, impulses and needs in oneself and one's children. In this way there is a real

possibility for the individual parent to sense natural roles in the family based on genuine contact.

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