



Bipolar Christianity: How Torturing “Sinful” Children Produced Holy Wars

*“Who would not shudder if he were given
the choice of eternal death or life again as a
child? Who would not choose to die?”*

—St. Augustine

THE SOURCE OF KILLER MOTHERHOOD IN CHRISTIAN MISOGYNY

That all human sin and misery came into the world through the first woman, Eve, is the founding belief of both Judaism and Christianity, and the origin of the most severely misogynistic cultures in history. When a girl was born, said early Hebrews, “the walls wept.” Girls were everywhere considered “not worth raising” since they would not carry on the family name, and so infanticide of girls by Killer Mothers by strangling, drowning, exposure and sending to wet-nurses was so common among Christians that high sex ratios (up to 400 boys to 100 girls and higher) were common even among the rich.¹ Coleman found boys outnumbering girls up to two to one in a 9th century French tax record, and concluded higher infanticide of girls was the cause.² Newborn girls, like Eve, “were considered as full of dangerous pollution...and were therefore more often killed, exposed, abandoned, malnourished, raped, and neglected than boys. Everyone agreed girls should be fed less than boys; as

¹ Lloyd deMause, *Foundations of Psychohistory*, New York: Creative Roots, 1982, pp. 117-123.

² Emily Coleman, “Infanticide in the Early Middle Ages.” In Susan Mosher Stuard, Ed., *Women in Medieval Society*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1976, pp. 47-70.

Jerome put it, 'Let her meals always leave her hungry.'"³ Of the 600 families in Delphic inscription records, just one percent reared two daughters.⁴ Children watched their parents kill their newborn siblings and learned the first rules of misogyny: females are murderous and baby girls worthless, so boys had better not seem "female" (weak) or they too might be killed by their mothers.

As Christian girls grew up, they were constantly told of their worthlessness and sinful lustfulness. Women, said Tertullian, were "irrational, more prone to lust than men, and at every turn waiting to seduce men," so husbands had to beat them all the time to keep them from sinning.⁵ "A good woman and a bad one equally require the stick" ran a Florentine saying, and medieval laws concluded: "Provided he neither kills nor maims her, it is legal for a man to beat his wife..."⁶ St. Paul said that women had to cover their heads in church because otherwise "lice-like demons would leap like sparks from female hair and poison the church."⁷ Plus, of course, women were liable to turn into witches at any time and remove a man's penis; as John Chrysostom maintained, "All witchcraft comes from carnal lust, which in women is insatiable."⁸ Parents in early Christian families routinely beat their little girls badly from early infancy in order to punish their lustfulness. The historical records contain hundreds of descriptions of beating girls "to discipline them, as with this father who punished a little girl for four hours: 'the little girl in the diapers would not receive her discipline. She cried and cried and he kept hitting her...He told me, you spank her till she breaks...But she didn't break and, after four hours, he couldn't continue.'"⁹ Teaching girls in schools was not allowed, Aelred said (1170), because the teacher might be tempted to show them affection. Teachers, he said, were "angry one minute and smiling the next, now threatening, now flattering, kissing

³ Lloyd deMause, *The Emotional Life of Nations*. New York: Other Press, 2002, p. 294.

⁴ Susan Scrimshaw, "Infanticide in Human Populations," in Glenn Hausfater and Sarah Hrdy, Eds., *Infanticide: Comparative and Evolutionary Perspectives*. New York: Aldine Transaction, p. 439.

⁵ Jennifer Carpenter and Sally-Beth MacLean, Eds., *Power of the Weak: Studies on Medieval Women*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995, pp. 10-11.

⁶ Frances and Joseph Gies, *Women in the Middle Ages*. New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 1978, p. 46.

⁷ Corinthians 11:10.

⁸ Wolfgang Lederer, *The Fear of Women*. New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1968, pp. 199-200.

⁹ Philip Greven, *Spare the Child: The Religious Roots of Punishment and the Psychological Impact of Physical Abuse*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1991, p. 37.

one child and smacking another. When she sees one of them crying after being smacked she calls her close, strokes her cheek, puts her arms around her neck and holds her tight,"¹⁰ producing a moment of forbidden closeness. Christian priests and nuns backed bloody beatings as necessary to punish the child's endless sins, since, as Augustine put it, "If the infant is left to do what he wants, there is no crime it will not plunge into."¹¹ "Better that you should beat a child within an inch of its life than that they would be cast into the Lake of Fire for all eternity."¹²

The constant sinfulness of all Christian children demands the maximum torture or even death as punishment. Moses told the Israelites that "If a man have a stubborn and rebellious son, which will not obey the voice of his father or the voice of his mother...all the men of his city shall stone him with stones, that he die."¹³ Little changed in the next 1600 years of Christianity, as John Calvin decreed: "Those children who violate parental authority are monsters. Therefore the Lord commands all those who are disobedient to their parents to be put to death."¹⁴ If a young woman should simply speak to someone who was not approved by her father, that was enough of a sin for Constantine, the first Christian emperor, to decree a penalty of "death by having molten lead poured down her throat."¹⁵ It was in fact sometimes a practice during the Middle Ages to "bury an un-baptized infant with a stake through its heart so that it would not arise and injure many," so full of sin it was at birth.¹⁶

Most of the murders, abandonments and tortures of Christian children were accomplished by deeply depressed mothers and wet-nurses, since fathers until early modern times had little to do with children during their early years. Jean Gerson felt he had to advise fathers as late as the 15th century: "Let us not be ashamed of speaking to children."¹⁷

¹⁰ Susanna Greer Fein, "Maternity in Aelred of Rievaulx's Letter to His Sister." In John Carmi Parsons and Bonnie Wheeler, Eds., *Medieval Mothering*. New York: Garland Publishing, 1996, p. 146.

¹¹ Elisabeth Badinter, *Mother Love: Myth and Reality*. New York: Macmillan Publishing, 1984, p. 30.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 38.

¹³ Deuteronomy 21: 18

¹⁴ Barbara Kay Greenleaf, *Children Through the Ages: A History of Childhood*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1978, p. 90.

¹⁵ Jack Holland, *Misogyny: The World's Oldest Prejudice*. Philadelphia, Running Press, 2006, p. 88.

¹⁶ Barbara A. Kellum, "Infanticide in England in the Later Middle Ages." *History of Childhood Quarterly: The Journal of Psychohistory* 1(1974): 379.

¹⁷ Daniele Alexandre-Bidon and Didier Lett, *Children in the Middle Ages: Fifth-Fifteenth Centuries*. Notre Dame: The University of Notre Dame Press, 2000, p. 45.

Marriage itself was sinful when spouses had sex for any reason other than to produce a child. Fathers who paid some attention to their young children only did so to express their ownership of them: "The father then lifted the baby in the air above his head and kissed it on the thigh, calling out 'My Cattle,' for that was what it represented to his imagination."¹⁸ Girls would not be around to take over their father's cattle, of course, since by the time they were 15-20 years old, the fathers would hand them over to an older man to marry.¹⁹ (Actually *to be raped*, since the girls would often not have even met their so-called "husbands," so what are called by historians "arranged Christian marriages" were actually "arranged rapes.") Girls were raped so often by neighbors or employers they were often forced into lives of prostitution if they should give birth. In addition, "throughout medieval Europe daughters were loaned to guests as an act of hospitality."²⁰ Medieval girls were sometimes told to carry knives as they walked down the street—to ward off rapists²¹—since the Christian men who might have protected them "seemed to regard their rape as a trivial issue."²² When psychoanalysts today work with women who have been raped as young girls, they often find they cannot live with their buried rage and humiliation, so they often *identify* with the rapist and abuse their own children (identification with the perpetrator), saying "I am a man, I get to have whatever I want."²³ Thus the sexual assaults on young girls fed their abusive assaults upon their children when they became mothers. So, too, the extraordinarily traumatic genital mutilation of little girls that was so common around the world for so long was passed on as severe abuse to generations of children.²⁴

You will not discover most of these horrible aspects about Christian misogyny from the hundreds of books written on medieval Christianity,

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 28.

¹⁹ Olwen Hufton, *The Prospect Before Her: A History of Women in Western Europe: Vol. One*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1996; David Herlihy, *Medieval Households*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985, pp. 104-107.

²⁰ Samuel X. Radbill, "Children in a World of Violence: A History of Child Abuse." In Ray E. Helfer and Ruth S. Kempe, *The Battered Child*. 4th Ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987, p. 9.

²¹ David Nicholas, *The Domestic Life of a Medieval City*, Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1985, p. 64.

²² Anna Clark, *Women's Silence, Men's Violence: Sexual Assault in England, 1770-1845*. London: Pandora Press, 1987, p. 44.

²³ Ellen F. Wilson, "The Internal Obstructive Object in the Analysis of a Woman Who Envis Her Rapist." *The Psychoanalytic Quarterly* 128(2009): 806.

²⁴ Patricia Raya, "Female Genital Mutilation and the Perpetuation of Multigenerational Trauma." *The Journal of Psychohistory* 37(2010): in press.

since most of the authors are both male and believing Christians, and idealize Christianity regularly. But the daily assaults upon Christian females along with the male expectation that their wives to work in the fields, sew, make all the meals and somehow also care for their babies after their horribly abusive upbringing is quite impossible for any woman to accomplish. Christian mothers were quite often post-partum depressed after giving birth. They were routinely described in historical documents as being very depressed and withdrawn after birth, showing no signs of wanting to nurse the child, so that newborn are often depicted as not eating for days or even weeks after birth. The paintings of the Madonna and Child



Illustration 9-1: Madonna and Child (13th century)

for more than the first thousand years of Christianity showed Mary as looking depressed, not looking at or smiling at her baby, and in fact often showed the baby Jesus as trying to cheer her up, wiping her tears away. The first paintings I could find of Mary actually looking or smiling at the baby Jesus in her lap date from the Renaissance, when Mary might be depicted as a “sometimes sad and often adoring mother since actually a child at this age was probably lying swaddled and immobile, and often miserable and starving, fed opiates to quiet them, at the mercy of a wet-nurse often miles away from its mother.”²⁵ When their children returned from the wet-nurse, mothers in the Renaissance followed the prescriptions of friars like Dominici to avoid “hugging and kissing them” so they won’t be “sensual,” and instead “scare them with a dozen bogies,” to make them more fearful.²⁶

Mothers in early Christian literature were described as not getting up from bed, not eating, not washing and not nursing their babies after giving birth because they felt “bewitched by night spirits,” a condition still

²⁵ James Bruce Ross, “The Middle-Class Child in Urban Italy, Fourteenth to Early Sixteenth Century.” In Lloyd deMause, Ed., *The History of Childhood*, p. 199.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 203

found in some Eastern European mothers.²⁷ The starving of the newborn infant is further contributed to by the widespread belief that mother's milk was made from her "poisonous" menstrual fluid, so infants might be "corrupted" by nursing from her breasts unless she gets a few weeks rest to transform her milk into a less poisonous fluid.²⁸ The conviction that mother's milk was really her menstrual blood was accepted by doctors, and was one of the reasons why families who could afford to hire wet-nurses did so for at least the first few months of the infant's life or, more often, for several years.²⁹ All these conditions plus the abusive developmental history of the mother's psyche—including regular beatings by her spouse—were enough to make her unable even with the best of intentions to care for her child, which made infanticide, wet-nursing, swaddling, beating and torture of children routine during the Christian period.

ROUTINE INFANTICIDE BY CHRISTIAN MOTHERS

Medieval scholars of marriage regularly conclude from widespread evidence that during the pre-modern period "conjugal love between husband and wife was considered ridiculous and impossible."³⁰ Husbands rarely visited the women's quarters. Duby's book on *Love and Marriage in the Middle Ages* stated the main reason why: "Men were afraid of women, especially their own wives."³¹ Shorter found men were excluded from the kitchen and the nursery, and "No man would dare approach the laundry, so feared is this group of women."³² Diane Ackerman's survey *A Natural History of Love* found no evidence of lasting intimate love, only temporary sexual excitement, in pre-modern marriages.³³ According to Church fathers, Christian men were only rarely supposed to have sexual inter-

²⁷ Alenka Puhar, "Childhood in Nineteenth-Century Slovenia." *The Journal of Psychohistory* 12(1985):293.

²⁸ William F. MacLehose, "Nurturing Danger: High Medieval Medicine and the Problem(s) of the Child." In John Carmi Parsons, and Bonnie Wheeler, Eds., *Medieval Mothering*, p. 3; William F. MacLehose, "A Tender Age": *Cultural Anxieties Over the Child in the Twelfth and Thirteenth Centuries*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2008, p. 9.

²⁹ Dan Dervin, "The Milk-Blood Equation's Historical Impact on Childcare." *The Journal of Psychohistory* 37(2009), this issue.

³⁰ Charles Lindholm, "Love as an Experience of Transcendence." In William Jankowiak, Ed. *Romantic Passion: A Universal Experience?* New York: Columbia University Press, 1995, p. 63.

³¹ Georges Duby, *Love and Marriage in the Middle Ages*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994, p. 96.

³² Edward Shorter, *A History of Women's Bodies*. New York: Basic Books, 1983, p. 292.

³³ Diane Ackerman, *A Natural History of Love*. New York: Vintage Books, 1994.

course with their wives, in order to produce children for the Church to rule over. "A man must not use his wife as if she were a whore, and a woman must not behave with her husband as with a lover."³⁴ Men more often had sex with prostitutes, concubines, servants or slaves. (Even supposedly celibate priests regularly had sex with concubines and nuns until the 12th century.)³⁵ Any arrangement was good if it confirmed Christian misogyny. Officially, Christianity was against family love; Jesus himself warned that "He who loves his father or mother more than me is not worthy of me."³⁶ Real Christian masculinity was defined as domination of sinful women by loveless men, just as the fighting classes were expected to demonstrate their masculinity by their domination of the sinful toiling classes. Coontz characterizes patriarchal families before modern times as "loveless," demonstrating in her book, *Marriage, a History: From Obedience to Intimacy, or How Love Conquered Marriage*, that only "by the end of the 1700s personal choice of partners had replaced arranged marriages and individuals were encouraged to marry for love."³⁷

The absence of intimate married love plus the frequency of rape and of spousal beatings were the main causes of postpartum depression in Christian mothers. New mothers often hallucinated devils inside them that commanded them to kill the newborn. Jewish mothers would have delusions of child-killer Lilith goddesses attacking them during birth and would write "Out Lilith!" on the walls of the birth room to scare them away.³⁸ Mothers would "overlay" the infant or throw it into the latrine under the delusion that devils were helping them get rid of the child, confessing that "Children eat you up....You are sucked dry by them...all my vitality is gone."³⁹ Male children were hated more than female by Christian mothers; thus male martyrs castrated themselves for God/Mother in order to become more like girls so God might be more likely to love them in Heaven.

Scholars often depict Christianity as "opposing infanticide." Most do not mention that what they actually sometimes objected to was killing a child after it was part of the Church. Stein shows that "Jews only until re-

³⁴ Elisabeth Badinter, *Mother Love*, p. 23.

³⁵ Jo Ann McNamara, "The *Herrenfrage*: The Restructuring of the Gender System, 1050-1150." In Clare A. Lees, Ed., *Medieval Masculinities: Regarding Men in the Middle Ages*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1994, p. 8.

³⁶ Matt. 11.37.

³⁷ Stephanie Coontz, *Marriage, a History*. New York: Viking, 2005, p. 146.

³⁸ Raphael Patai, *The Hebrew Goddess*. New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1967, p. 227.

³⁹ Elisabeth Badinter, *Mother Love*, p. 314.



Illustration 9-2: Mother Commits Infanticide With Help of Her Devil Alter

cently regarded any child who dies within thirty days after birth, even by violence, as a miscarriage⁴⁰ so they are not considered infanticide. Philo described Jewish mothers regularly “throttling their infants or throwing them into a river.”⁴¹ Since political courts paid little attention to infanticide until the 18th century and since Church courts had no interest in the infant until baptized, infanticide was very common. The Church in the 9th century subjected mothers who kill their children at most to “exclusion from the church for forty days.”⁴² “Few cases of infanticide were tried in the king’s courts” even by the 18th century and these had minimal sentences, the courts being more interested in punishing “immoral” women who were accused of conceiving out of wedlock than in protecting infants.⁴³ The Christian Church punished disobedience to husbands as a worse sin than infanticide, which was a “venial” (minor) sin usually punished if at all by mild dietary restrictions or by performing some prayers.⁴⁴ Children were not considered fully human for many years by

⁴⁰ Howard F. Stein, “The Fear of Infanticide and Filicide in the Emotional Journey From Rosh Hashanah Through Yom Kippur.” *The Journal of Psychohistory* 36(2009): 80.

⁴¹ John Cooper, *The Child in Jewish History*. Northvale: Jason Aronson, 1996, p. 37.

⁴² Daniele Alexandre-Bidon and Didier Lett, *Children in the Middle Ages: Fifth–Fifteenth Centuries*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2000, p. 17.

⁴³ Peter C. Hoffer and N. E. H. Hull, *Murdering Mothers: Infanticide in England and New England 1558-1803*. New York: New York University Press, 1984, p. ix.

⁴⁴ R. H. Helmholz, “Infanticide in the Province of Canterbury During the Fifteenth Century.” *History of Childhood Quarterly: The Journal of Psychohistory* 2(1975):379-388.

the early Church, since priests believed “the majority of children become unprofitable, possessed by demons... performing useless and abominable deeds.”⁴⁵ God Himself, Gregory said, killed newborn infants “in order to prevent their full development of their evil passions.”⁴⁶ Even when infants were found dead in privies, they “might have fallen into it by accident or been placed there after stillbirth” so the mother was usually not thought guilty of anything.⁴⁷ Post-partum depressed mothers paid far more attention to Soranus’s instructions on

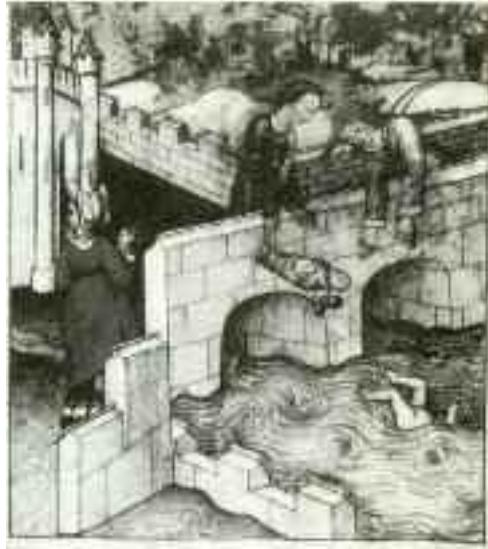


Illustration 9-3: Mothers Toss Unwanted Children Into Rivers

“How to Recognize the Newborn That Is Worth Rearing”⁴⁸ than to any Church opinion. Leopardi said he noticed that his mother, “when she saw the death of one of her infants approaching, experienced a deep happiness.”⁴⁹ Even by the 16th century, a priest admitted that “the latrines resound with the cries of children who have been plunged into them.”⁵⁰ Every morning mothers during most of the Christian period could be watched throwing their unwanted babies into rivers.

Un-baptized children were so full of sins that they were supposed to be buried below the roof-gutter of a church to have the holy water wash them of their sins.⁵¹ Poverty was hardly the only excuse for killing chil-

⁴⁵ *Acts of Thomas* I.12., in *New Testament Apocrypha*, Vol. 1, Kirsopp Lake, Ed. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1945, p. 331.

⁴⁶ Graham Gould, “Childhood in Eastern Patristic Thought.” In Diana Wood, Ed. *The Church and Childhood*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1994, p. 50.

⁴⁷ Peter C. Hoffer and N. E. H. Hull, *Murdering Mothers*, p. 10.

⁴⁸ Soranus, *Gynecology*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1956, p. 79.

⁴⁹ Lloyd deMause, *Foundations of Psychohistory*, p. 33.

⁵⁰ Larry Stephen Milner, *Hardness of Heart Hardness of Life: The Stain of Human Infanticide*. Lanham: University Press of America, 2000, p. 52.

⁵¹ Jean Delumeau, *Sin and Fear: The Emergence of a Western Guilt Culture 13th-18th Centuries*. New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1990, p. 275.

dren. I have shown that the wealthy in fact had higher infanticide rates than the peasantry as measured by boy/girl ratios.⁵² The following list of infanticide excuses, all calling the killing of newborn “unintentional,” adds up to at least half of all children born, even if each excuse is only responsible for a few percentage points of child deaths. Infants were claimed to have been (1) “overlaid,” (2) “killed before baptism,” (3) “miscarried,” (4) “born deformed,” (5) “female,” (6) “not husband’s child,” (7) “too weak to thrive,” (8) “greedy,” (9) “evil, changeling,” (10) “died at wet-nurse or foundling home or monastery.” It is not surprising that Tertullian concluded that “The laws forbid infanticide—but, of all the laws, there is not one eluded more easily or with more impunity” and that the Council of Toledo said there was a “very widespread practice of parents killing their children.”⁵³ Anglo-Saxons considered infanticide a virtue, not a crime, saying, “A child cries when he comes into the world, for he anticipates its wretchedness. It is well for him that he should die...He was placed on a slanting roof [and] if he laughed, he was reared, but if he was frightened and cried, he was thrust out to perish.”⁵⁴ The first laws against infanticide in the 16th century only applied to unwed mothers, not married women, for “How could one prove infanticide within the walls of the family home?”⁵⁵ An English statute against infanticide was passed in 1623, but only a handful of cases were actually prosecuted.⁵⁶ Since nearly every family practiced infanticide, tens of billions of children until recently had to grow up seeing their siblings being murdered by their mothers and wondering if they could be next⁵⁷—thus embedding the dissociated Killer Mother alter in their amygdalan networks to act out in social violence and war when they grew up.

ABANDONING INFANTS TO WETNURSES

Historians overlook the massive evidence that a large proportion of children before modern times were not brought up in their crucial early years

⁵² Lloyd deMause, *The Emotional Life of Nations*, p. 303.

⁵³ E. Semichon, *Histoire des enfants abandonnés depuis l'antiquité jusqu'à nos jours*. Paris, 1880, p. 292; Daniele Alexandre-Bidon and Didier Lett, *Children in the Middle Ages: Fifth-Fifteenth Centuries*, p. 16.

⁵⁴ John Thrupp, *The Anglo-Saxon Home: A History of the Domestic Institutions and Customs of England*. London: Longman, Green, 1862, p. 78.

⁵⁵ Richard C. Trexler, “Infanticide in Florence: New Sources and First Results.” *History of Childhood Quarterly: The Journal of Psychohistory* 1(1973):105.

⁵⁶ Larry Stephen Milner, *Hardness of Heart, Hardness of Life: The Stain of Human Infanticide*, p. 59.

⁵⁷ Lloyd deMause, *The Emotional Life of Nations*, p. 302.

by their parents. Most infants were shipped out to wet-nurses or, if the family could afford it, were nursed and cared for within the family by hired wet-nurses. Christianity taught that all pleasure was sinful, and one would not want mothers to get sinful pleasure from nursing. "Mothers damn their children when they suckle them voluptuously."⁵⁸ The underlying message for children was: "My Killer Mother chose to hand me over to another woman rather than killing me like she did my sibling, so I'd better be very obedient so I won't not only be abandoned but might actually soon be killed." This message was the basis for the Christian group-fantasy that God wanted his Son to be killed, and that in fact all children deserve being killed for their sins.

Children of the wealthy, as Tacitus put it, "as soon as they are born are abandoned to any old Greek servant" to be nursed. More children, however, were given over to neighboring mothers to wet-nurse, partly because "it was better for the wife to put her child out to nurse and keep herself available [for intercourse] to her husband."⁵⁹ Bernard de Gordon was more blunt, saying simply that "women nowadays are...haughty... they do not like the inconvenience."⁶⁰ Newborn infants in cities were bundled up in donkey carts and sent to distant hired poor women to nurse. Official statistics showed that less than 5 percent of the babies born in Paris from the 18th to the early 20th century were nursed by their mothers, rich or poor alike.⁶¹ Earlier censuses were comparable. Parents were said to have "seldom inquired about the survival of their infants and were often uninformed as to their whereabouts."⁶² Moralists who urged maternal nursing to no avail also "tried unsuccessfully to get parents to visit their babies, but there is little evidence of such visits. Indeed, parents seem to have been indifferent to their offspring's fate."⁶³ The children were total strangers when they were returned two to four years later. And since they then were likely soon to be re-shipped off to neighbors or relatives as servants and apprentices, it is no surprise that many of them reported that they had been brought up by anyone but

⁵⁸ Elisabeth Badinter, *Mother Love*, p. 33.

⁵⁹ Beatrice Gottlieb, *The Family in the Western World From the Black Death to the Industrial Age*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1993, p. 124.

⁶⁰ Luke Demaitre, "The Idea of Childhood and Child Care in Medical Writings of the Middle Ages." *The Journal of Psychohistory* 4(1977): 474.

⁶¹ George D. Sussman, *Selling Mothers' Milk: The Wet-Nursing Business in France, 1718-1914*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1982.

⁶² Elisabeth Badinter, *Mother Love: Myth and Reality*, p. x.

⁶³ Barbara Kay Greenleaf, *Children Through the Ages*, p. 42.

their mothers. Should children not be totally obedient, they were declared sinful by their parents and handed over to monasteries and convents as oblates for the rest of their lives. Thus “*puer*” was a word for both “child” and “slave.”

Since wet-nurses were often expected to get rid of their own babies that they had been nursing, usually by killing them, they too were generally terribly abusive toward the stranger in the house, sometimes even being openly called “Killing Nurses.” “If children were returned to their families alive, they often came back in a pitiable state: thin, tiny, deformed, consumed by fevers, prone to convulsions.”⁶⁴ A typical woman described her mother saying to the wet-nurse as she was returned, “My God! What have you brought me here! This goggle-eyed, splatter-faced, gabbart-mouthed wretch is not my child! Take her away!”⁶⁵ Most mothers, however, kept their returned children, vowing to beat them into obedience. One is praised by Locke because she was “forced to whip her little daughter at first coming home from Nurse, eight times successively...before she could master her *Stubbornness*.”⁶⁶ Children of course were hypersensitive to possible abandonment by their mothers when they were returned home: “Madame d’Epinay got her 20-month-old son back from the wet nurse and wrote about his fears in her diary: “My son is back with me...He cries when I leave him. He is already afraid of me....I am not sorry for it, for I do not want to spoil him.”⁶⁷ Many were never returned home—sale of children, often by auction, was fully legal in the Christian period, either for their labor or for sexual use or to pay off their parents’ debts or for mutilation as beggars.⁶⁸

Wet-nurses usually neglected and abused their charges even more than parents did. They were rarely washed and lived in their tight swaddling bands in their own feces and urine, and while the wet-nurse attended to her own duties the swaddled infants were often “suspended on a hook or slung from the rafters in an improvised hammock, their mouths crammed with rotting rags.”⁶⁹ The wet-nurse was Christian too, of

⁶⁴ Elisabeth Badinter, *Mother Love: Myth and Reality*, p. 163.

⁶⁵ George Anne Bellamy, *An Apology for the Life of George Anne Bellamy*. London: London Press, 1785, p. 26.

⁶⁶ Edmund Leites, *The Puritan Conscience and Modern Sexuality*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1986, p. 45.

⁶⁷ Louise Florence P. d’Epinay, *Memoirs of Madame d’Epinay*. Vol. I. Paris: Societes Bibliophiles, 1903, p. 106.

⁶⁸ John Boswell, *The Kindness of Strangers*, pp. 169, 205.

⁶⁹ Simon Schama, *Citizens: A Chronicle of the French Revolution*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989, p. 146.

course, and felt they had to torture the infants to overcome their sinfulness. Because they believed "infants are inclined in their hearts to adultery, fornication, impure desires...anger, strife, gluttony, hatred and more," it had to be tied to swaddling boards by yards of long bandages so it would not "tear its ears off, touch its genitals or go upon all four as most other animals do." "Since there is so much viciousness in all children [if you] pamper them the least little bit, at once they will rule their parents."⁷⁰ Children were described everywhere as being "kept ragged and bare, sickly and starved...in terror of their nurse, who handed out blows and vituperation freely."⁷¹ Wet-nurses were instructed to feed their infants "only small amounts, two or three times during the day,"⁷² so most babies were starving much of the time. Many wet-nurses did not breast-feed at all, but just gave the infants pap, "gruel," made of water or sour milk, often mixed with wine or flour, all of which had little nourishment and was so thick that "soon the whole belly is clogged, convulsions set in, and the little ones die."⁷³ It was not until 17th century English Puritans began to preach to mothers the astoundingly new message that "mothers are encouraged to love her children [and] the best way for a mother to do this was by letting it suck her own breasts"⁷⁴ that increasing numbers of Christian mothers actually began to nurse themselves.

The majority of children sent to wet-nurses died, giving lie to the claims by historians like the one who assured her readers that "sending the child off to wet-nurse was 'an act of love' by parents."⁷⁵ Those who were found abandoned by their parents on the side of the road were taken to foundling homes, where 90 percent died. It was no wonder that it was suggested that a motto be carved over the gate of one foundling home: "Here children are killed at public expense."⁷⁶ Yet priests only opposed abandonment of newborn because a father "might meet his own child later in a brothel and to have sexual relations with his offspring

⁷⁰ Lloyd deMause, *The Emotional Life of Nations*, p. 325.

⁷¹ Joan Sherwood, *Poverty in Eighteenth-Century Spain: The Women and Children of the Inclusa*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988, p. 81.

⁷² Steven Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled: Family Life in Reformation Europe*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985, p. 120.

⁷³ David Hunt, *Parents and Children in History*, New York: Basic Books, 1970, p. 115.

⁷⁴ R. V. Schnucker, "The English Puritans and Pregnancy, Delivery and Breast Feeding." *History of Childhood Quarterly* 1(1974): 645.

⁷⁵ Elisabeth Badinter, *Mother Love*, p. 193; Colin Heywood, *A History of Childhood: Children and Childhood in the West from Medieval to Modern Times*. Malden: Polity Press, 2001, p. 66.

⁷⁶ Lloyd deMause, *The Emotional Life of Nations*, p. 343.

would be a sin,"⁷⁷ not because of any empathy for the abandoned child. Children given to monasteries and nunneries were treated equally abusively, holding the legal status of slaves, endlessly whipped, stripped naked, starved in severe fasts, only allowed to sleep for five hours a night, and used sexually by the clerics.⁷⁸ Since slavery continued to exist during the Christian centuries, parents continued to sell their children into slavery, where they often were castrated.⁷⁹ Giraldus Cambrensis relates that the English sold great numbers of their children to the Irish as slaves as late as the 12th century.⁸⁰ All of these abuses were considered a carrying out God's will, since children were so full of sin that even a newborn infant crying for milk was considered as sinning by "lusting for the breast," a terrible sin for which all infants deserved terrible suffering in Hell, as Church Fathers believed.⁸¹ That Killer Mothers, and God, would only love her children if they endlessly suffered was the central masochistic solution of Christianity. The Bible says people should "serve the Lord in fear" because they must be "always afraid," a pure memory of everyone's childhood.⁸² It is not surprising that they therefore felt so bad inside they were continuously depressed and fearful of punishment. Producing their own suffering—borderline masochism—was their main emotional defense against their fears. Christian children saw murdered babies in every stream and field they played in.

When children returned from wet-nurse they still were often not cared for by their parents, but were often soon sent off to "fosterage," usually to other family members, and most children by the age of seven were sent out to be servants or apprentices (essentially child slavery) and not returned to their families until adolescence.⁸³ Mothers often expressed in their letters the casualness of their abandonment of their infants: "The baby shall be sent as soon as it is weaned; and, if anyone else would like one, would you kindly recollect that we have others."⁸⁴ Adults could

⁷⁷ Sander J. Breiner, *Slaughter of the Innocents: Child Abuse Through the Ages and Today*. New York: Plenum Press, 1990, p. 118.

⁷⁸ Lloyd deMause, *The Emotional Life of Nations*, p. 344.

⁷⁹ Daniele Alexandre-Bidon and Didier Lett, *Children in the Middle Ages: Fifteenth-Fifteenth Centuries*, pp. 56-57.

⁸⁰ P. W. Joyce, *A Social History of Ancient Ireland. Vol. I, 3rd Ed.* London: Longmans, Green & Co., 1920, p. 164.

⁸¹ Elisabeth Badinter, *Mother Love*, p. 31.

⁸² Carl A. Mounteer, "God the Father and Gregory the Great," *The Journal of Psychohistory* 25(1998): 440.

⁸³ Lloyd deMause, *The Emotional Life of Nations*, pp. 345-349.

⁸⁴ Augustus J. C. Hare, *The Story of My Life. Vol. 1.* London: G. Hare, 1896, p. 51.

treat their foster children, servants and apprentices even more abusively than if they had kept their own children with them—working them like slaves, beating them, torturing them, using them sexually. Parents would simply ask the uncles or grandparents or neighbors “if they needed a child” and shipped one off to them. Apprenticeship and service were the fate of virtually all children, rich or poor alike, and a master “may be a tiger in cruelty, he may beat, abuse, strip naked, starve or do what he will to the poor innocent lad, few people take much notice.”⁸⁵ If one sent one’s child to royalty and it was killed by abuse, one was expected to send another to replace them. It was widely accepted that “it is good to remove children from the sight of their father and mother so they do not become quarrelsome....Everyone, however rich he may be, sends away his children into the house of others, whilst he, in return, receives those of strangers into his own. And on inquiring their reason for this severity, they answered that they did it in order that their children might learn better manners.”⁸⁶ The historians’ claim that Christian children were “mainly loved and cared for” by their parents is simply untrue until quite recently; their evidence of maternal love is limited to a few instances of mothers crying when their children died.⁸⁷

TORTURING CHILDREN TO “BREAK THEIR WILL”

After half a century of primary source research into the history of childrearing, I and over a hundred other childhood historians have been unable to find a single mother who did not badly beat and torture their children prior to modern times. I have long offered a prize to anyone who could find actual evidence of just one mother prior to the 18th century who would not today be thrown into jail for badly abusing their children. The occasional reformers, like Saint Anselm, who sometimes questioned whether whipping children “day and night” was wise,⁸⁸ did not raise any children themselves because they were ascetic. Despite the fact that Jesus nowhere says children should be beaten, Christians taught that He wanted them to beat the sins out of them continuously, from birth. Actually, the main reference Jesus makes to children was “suffer little children to come unto me...and he laid his hands on them—that is, he exorcised the bad spirits out of them.”⁸⁹

⁸⁵ M. Dorothy George. *London Life in the Eighteenth Century*. New York: Harper, 1964, p. 227.

⁸⁶ Barbara Kay Greenleaf, *Children Through the Ages*, p. 36.

⁸⁷ Daniele Alexandre-Bidon, *Children in the Middle Ages*, pp. 54-55.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 40.

⁸⁹ Matthew 19:13-15.

The central rule of Christians toward children is simply never to give the child anything it wants. “Willfulness” was the cardinal sin, and the words “I want” were “impermissible” for which children were punished severely.⁹⁰ Even babies had to be taught the only thing that mattered was what the adults wanted; as John Wesley put it, “Never, on any account, give a child anything that it cries for...If you give a child what he cries for, you pay him for crying.”⁹¹ That beating and torturing “sinful” children usually “did not work” was acknowledged by all—as one mother wrote of her first battle with her four-month-old infant: “I whipped him until he was actually black and blue,



Illustration 9-4: Mother Whips Her Child “To Break His Will”

and until I *could not* whip him any more, and he never gave up one single inch.”⁹² If the parents’ regular beating of their children still did not result in obedience, the child should be “put to death [if they] curse or smite their father or mother,” according for instance to a 1646 Massachusetts law.⁹³ The only restriction sometimes mentioned by priests was that children should not be hit “about the face and head with fire shovels...hit him upon the sides with the rod, he shall not die thereof.”⁹⁴

Christian children shared every abuse of the “battered child syndrome,” making their anterior cingulates dysfunctional, so empathy was nearly impossible.⁹⁵ Since every sign of independence was considered disobedience and evidence of terrible sins needing Hellish tortures, parents considered themselves “disciples of God” as they beat and tortured their

⁹⁰ Elizabeth Wirth Marvick, “Nature Versus Nurture: Patterns and Trends in Seventeenth-Century French Child-Rearing.” In Lloyd deMause, Ed., *The History of Childhood*, London: Jason Aronson, 1995, p. 290.

⁹¹ C. John Sommerville, *The Rise and Fall of Childhood*. New York: Random House, 1982, p. 145.

⁹² Lloyd deMause, *Foundations of Psychohistory*, p. 48.

⁹³ Robert H. Bremner, *Children and Youth in America; A Documentary History*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1974, p. 38.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 49.

⁹⁵ Andrew Newberg and Mark Robert Waldman, *How God Changes Your Brain: Breakthrough Findings from a Leading Neuroscientist*. New York: Ballantine Books, 2009, pp. 124-127.

children. Children said they were “frequently whipped for looking blue on a frosty morning; and, whether I deserved it or not, I was sure of correction every day of my life.”⁹⁶ “My mother said that one mustn’t spoil children, and she whipped me every morning.”⁹⁷ Beatings began before birth, since fathers’ blows to the mothers’ abdomen badly harmed the fetus. If the mother could not spare the time to beat her children, she could hire a “professional flagellant” who advertised their child-beating services in newspaper ads, or she could hire a “garde-de-ville to whip her three children once a week, naughty or not.”⁹⁸ Parents were regularly described as being out of control, “fierce and eager upon the child, striking, flinging, kicking it, as the usual manner is.”⁹⁹ As long as children were not killed, no laws protected them. Brutal floggings filled the days of children, and near the kitchen shelves hung dog-whips, razor-straps and carpet-beaters for use by the mother at any time. Children were forced to ask to be beaten, and would often be made to kiss the beating instrument, or would simply be “cast on the ground and kicked like dogs.”¹⁰⁰ The children grew up with horribly damaged brains: their prefrontal cortexes and temporal lobes were unlike healthy children today, since their brains were “like black holes” from their swaddling¹⁰¹ and deteriorated and toxic from their beatings and tortures.

Parents were *proud* of being God’s agent in inflicting tortures. Fathers would brag about their being given the child to beat by the mother, saying, “The man who does not correct his children with whip or rod does not love them.”¹⁰² Mothers are not shown as protecting their children against the father’s blows: “She holds not his hand from due strokes, but bares their skins with delight to his fatherly stripes.”¹⁰³ Girls were battered as often as boys, often later reporting that their “head was broken in two or

⁹⁶ Letitia Pilkington, *Memoirs of Mrs. Letitia Pilkington*. New York, Dodd, Mead & Co., 1928, p. 331.

⁹⁷ Elisabeth Badinter, *Mother Love*, p. 240.

⁹⁸ Richard Heath, *Edgar Quinet: His Early Life and Writings*. London: Tribner & Co., 1881, p. 3.

⁹⁹ Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995, p. 208.

¹⁰⁰ Lloyd deMause, *The Emotional Life of Nations*, p. 337.

¹⁰¹ Chugani, H. et al, “Local brain functional activity following early deprivation: a study of post-institutionalised Romanian orphans.” *Neuroimage* 14(2001):1290-1301.

¹⁰² James Bruce Ross, “The Middle-Class Child in Urban Italy,” in Lloyd deMause, Ed., *The History of Childhood*, p. 215.

¹⁰³ Lawrence Stone, *The Family, Sex and Marriage: In England 1500-1800*. Abridged Ed., London, Penguin Books, 1979, p. 126.

three places.”¹⁰⁴ “Fathers and mothers slashed their daughters [and] as a result, the child perfectly loathed the sight of his parents.”¹⁰⁵ Parents that tolerated independence in their children are simply not to be found anywhere in the sources. Historians regularly ignore the hundreds of primary source instances of the endless beating of children, concluding without citing any evidence at all that “girls and boys were not maltreated” in medieval times.¹⁰⁶ The first parents who have been discovered by family historians who did not regularly batter their children, who “abjured whipping, caning, slapping, ear-pulling or hair-dragging,” were in 19th century America,¹⁰⁷ but even then the overwhelming majority of children were whipped or battered. Showing affection for children was deemed a Christian sin—parents were told their children should *not* be “petted, embraced or kissed by you until after their twenty-fifth year.”¹⁰⁸

Parents instructed teachers in schools and tutors at home that they were to whip their children routinely. Henri IV wrote to Madame de Montglat: “I have a complaint to make: you do not send word that you have whipped my son. I wish and command you to whip him every time that he is obstinate...when I was his age I was often whipped.”¹⁰⁹ The king would also whip Louis himself, sometimes instructing soldiers of the guard to hold him while being whipped, telling his son, “I am the master, and you are my valet.” Louis reported regular nightmares about his whippings. Children in school were tortured even more than at home. “Whoever taught the children to read would grab their shirts about the shoulders, then hold the book in one hand, the rod in the other, ready to flail away at the slightest oversight.”¹¹⁰ Teachers felt that “fear is good for putting the child in the mood to hear and to understand. A child cannot quickly forget what he has learned in fear.”¹¹¹ Augustine recalled the terrible beatings he received regularly at school and described the teacher’s use of “racks and hooks and other torments.”¹¹² The sexual sadism ram-

¹⁰⁴ Stephanie Coontz, *Marriage, A History*, p. 117.

¹⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 121.

¹⁰⁶ Daniele Alexandre-Bidon and Didier Lett, *Children in the Middle Ages*, p. 85.

¹⁰⁷ Elizabeth Pleck, *Domestic Tyranny: The Making of Social Policy Against Family Violence from Colonial Times to the Present*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987, p. 46.

¹⁰⁸ James Bruce Ross, “The Middle-Class Child in Urban Italy,” p. 203.

¹⁰⁹ David Hunt, *Parents and Children in History*, p. 135.

¹¹⁰ Edward Shorter, *The Making of the Modern Family*. New York: Basic Books, 1975, p. 191.

¹¹¹ James A. Schultz, *The Knowledge of Childhood in the German Middle Ages, 1100-1350*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995, p. 94.

¹¹² Gerald Strauss, *Luther’s House of Learning*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978, p. 13.

pant among teachers and priests was evident in the many descriptions of how the children were “stripped in front of the whole community and beaten until they bled.”¹¹³ The students noticed their teachers had “a gloating glance of sensual cruelty” as they took “the most pretty and amorous boys into his lodgings and after a jerke or two [a blow with a rod or a whip] would meddle with their privities...”¹¹⁴

Teachers trained their pupils like farmers trained their horses, saying, “As a sharp spur makes a horse run, so a rod makes a child learn.”¹¹⁵ In monasteries, the masters would hold a whipping cane over each boy’s head as they woke up to remind them of the beatings of the day ahead.¹¹⁶ St. Ambrose praised teachers for being “unsparing with the whip.” Martial jokes about the complaints of neighbors living next to a schoolroom: the sounds of students being beaten awakens them annoyingly early in the morning. Mothers were constantly depicted as demanding their children be beaten by teachers. Children’s hands were often depicted as being “so swollen by the cane that they could barely hold their books.”¹¹⁷

Besides beating, there were many other extremely painful ways adults had to torture children that were regularly used by Christians for centuries “to break their will.” Tying them up in long swaddling bands, unable to move, trapped on the swaddling board in their feces and covered by lice, was the standard practice even into the 20th century, claiming that the babies otherwise would “scratch its eyes out or touch its genitals.”¹¹⁸ Sharp objects—knives, needles, forks, nails—were stuck into the swaddling bands “to protect against bad spirits” (incubi). Salt was often rubbed into the baby’s skin, irritating it; infants were made to drink their own urine, and parents would often spit on the baby saying, “Ugh, aren’t you ugly” to ward off “evil eye” spirits.¹¹⁹ One of the most often-mentioned ways to cure children possessed by “night spirits” was to hold them over the fire or to push them into a hot oven, practices still found in

¹¹³ William Russell, *An Autobiography of William Russell*. Baltimore: Gobreight, Thorne, 1852, p. 17.

¹¹⁴ Guildhall Library, London, document 11588/3/295.

¹¹⁵ M. J. Tucker, “The Child as Beginning and End: Fifteenth and Sixteenth Century English Childhood.” In Lloyd deMause, Ed., *The History of Childhood*, p. 246.

¹¹⁶ John Boswell, *The Kindness of Strangers: The Abandonment of Children in Western Europe From Late Antiquity to the Renaissance*. New York: Pantheon Books, 1988, p. 74.

¹¹⁷ Lloyd deMause, *The Emotional Life of Nations*, p. 337.

¹¹⁸ Ruth Benedict, “Child Rearing in Certain European Countries.” *American Journal of Orthopsychiatry* 19(1949): 345.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 327.

some 19th-century Eastern European nations.¹²⁰ Or, the evil spirits might be driven out and the child “hardened” by torturous ice-water bathing, washing babies and older children in ice-cold water and rolling them upon ice in winter, so that when “the little infant in cold water is in one continuous scream, the mother must cover her ears under the bed-clothes that she may not be distressed by its cries.”¹²¹ The infants, of course, often “developed convulsions and fever by the next day.”¹²²

Girls especially needed training to resist their supposed lusts, so were often “put to bed tied up by the hands, made to wear corsets with bone stays, iron bodices and steel collars, and forced to sit many hours a day in stocks, strapped to a backboard, supposedly to teach them restraint.”¹²³ Both boys and girls were frightened with ghost-like figures throughout history, with adults dressing up in terrifying devouring figures of Lamia, Lilith and Striga, and storming into the child’s room roaring and groaning, throwing the children into convulsions.¹²⁴ As useful in impressing children with the reality of their sins was the viewing of corpses, in which children are taken on visits to gibbets to inspect rotting corpses hanging there, while being told moral stories.¹²⁵ One boy “woke at night screaming after seeing hangings, and practiced hanging his own cat.”¹²⁶

Traditional historians reviewing the hundreds of articles and books on historical child abuse by psychohistorians have not disproved a single piece of our evidence on the overwhelming amount of beatings and torture of children, yet they continue to say that “practices that appear abusive today such as repeated whippings were motivated by love,” the conclusion of Colin Heywood in his book *A History of Childhood: Children and Childhood in the West from Medieval to Modern Times*.¹²⁷ Most simply agree with the abusing parents that the beatings were needed to civilize them, and that “parents at that period, just like parents today, loved their chil-

¹²⁰ Alenka Puhar, “Childhood In Nineteenth-Century Slovenia.” *The Journal of Psychohistory* 12(1985: 301, 305.

¹²¹ Scevole de St. Marthe, *Paedotrophica: or, The Art of Nursing and Rearing children*. London: John Nichols, 1797, p. 64.

¹²² Patrick P. Dunn, ““That Enemy Is the Baby”: Childhood in Imperial Russia.” In Lloyd deMause, *The History of Childhood*, P. 389

¹²³ Alice Morse Earle, *Two Centuries of Costume in America. Vol. I*. New York: Macmillan, 1903, p. 317.

¹²⁴ Lloyd deMause, *Foundations of Psychohistory*, p. 12.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

¹²⁷ Colin Heywood, *A History of Childhood: Children and Childhood in the West from Medieval to Modern Times*, p. 117.

dren and wanted the best for them,"¹²⁸ since "He that spareth his rod, hateth his son."¹²⁹ Therefore, the massive evidence that children were endlessly beaten and tortured only proves to these historians that "the great majority of child were surrounded with affection," because the beatings were "proof of their affection."¹³⁰ In fact, as Bakke puts it, the routine sexual abuse of children in early Christianity was "not sexual abuse if in that society the behavior was not proscribed."¹³¹ Historians cite as a "turning point in the study of the history of childhood" Linda Pollack's best-selling book *Forgotten Children: Parent-Child Relations from 1500 to 1900*, which is supposed to embody "rigorous research methodology" to show that there was "no significant change in parental care or affection given to an infant throughout the four centuries...[since in the past children were] happy, free from worry, and certainly not oppressed."¹³² Pollack's "rigorous methodology" involved examining 496 parents' diaries, and she found only 8% of them mention child abuse in any way. Therefore, she concludes, only 8% of parents in the past in fact abused their children, and the other 92% must have loved them and certainly did not mistreat them, since otherwise they would have written down their abuse in their diaries. As I said in my article reviewing Pollack's book, her "argument from silence" principle would measure the amount of crime in history by ignoring all police reports and instead would rely solely on what percentage of criminals happened to write up their crimes in their diaries.¹³³ Only one historian, Elizabeth Pleck—who examined the same diaries as Pollock—noticed her trick, and objected strongly to her concluding that "the absence of information reflects the absence of punishment" of children.¹³⁴

THE SEXUAL MOLESTATION OF CHRISTIAN CHILDREN

Despite the central Christian belief that all sexual pleasure is sinful, this is not an indication that there was no sexual molestation of children by

¹²⁸ O. M. Bakke, *When Children Became People: The Birth of Childhood in Early Christianity*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005, p. 44.

¹²⁹ *Proverbs* 13:24.

¹³⁰ Daniele Alexandre-Bidon, *Children in the Middle Ages*, p. 138.

¹³¹ O. M. Bakke, *When Children Became People*, p. 44.

¹³² John R. Gillis, *Journal of Interdisciplinary History* 16(1985):142; *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 22(1986): 259.

¹³³ Lloyd deMause, "On Writing Childhood History." *The Journal of Psychohistory* 16(1988):135-170.

¹³⁴ Elizabeth Fleck, *Domestic Tyranny: The Making of American Social Policy Against Family Violence From Colonial Times to the Present*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987, p. 205.

adults. In fact, just the opposite was the case. Such a strong conviction that children were lustful by an entire society can only be the *result* of massive sexual abuse during childhood. "The fact that there are almost no court records of [incest or rape of children] may merely mean that formal charges were rarely brought against the abusers....Children in the Middle Ages had no legal rights in canon law, and could not bear witness against their parents...There are records of some cases of monks accused of [sexually] abusing children in their charge...but I do not know of any evidence for court cases of sexual abuse of young children by parents [or other caretakers.]"¹³⁵ In fact, fathers often had sex with their young daughters "to teach them how" to have intercourse, mothers slept with their sons until they were past puberty and often masturbated them, children shared "family beds" with others in the household, wet-nurses also slept at night with their charges, and children who were sent out as servants and apprentices were regularly shown being used sexually.¹³⁶ Bernardino of Sienna said fathers regularly "pimped" their own sons for money, and mothers colluded in the sexual use of their boys, giving them a separate bedroom on the ground floor so rapists could more easily use him sexually.¹³⁷ Aries was correct in one conclusion: that in pre-modern times "the practice of playing with children's privy parts formed part of a widespread tradition."¹³⁸ He was wrong In concluding it was "only a harmless game," that had no effect on them.¹³⁹ Children usually slept naked in communal beds, "with people packed like sardines next to grandparents, parents, servants and visitors,"¹⁴⁰ so they regularly became a part of whatever sexual intercourse took place each night. Rapes of children were until recently rarely prosecuted, though the fathers would usually severely punish their daughters for being raped, since it was considered her fault. Roving gangs of youths were very common in the past,

¹³⁵ Elizabeth Archibald, "Incest Between Adults and Children in the Medieval World." In George Rousseau, Ed., *Children and Sexuality: From the Greeks to the Great War*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007, p. 95.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 96.

¹³⁷ Michael J. Rocke, "Sodomites in Fifteenth-Century Tuscany: The Views of Bernardino of Siena." In Kent Gerard and Gert Hekman, Eds., *The Pursuit of Sodomy: Male Homosexuality in Renaissance and Enlightenment Europe*. New York: Harrington Park Press, 1989, pp. 12, 15; Michael Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships: Homosexuality and Male Culture in Renaissance Florence*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996, p. 156.

¹³⁸ Philippe Aries, *Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life*. New York: Vintage Books, 1962, p. 103.

¹³⁹ Lloyd deMause, "On Writing Childhood History." *The Journal of Psychohistory* 16(1988): 140.

¹⁴⁰ William Manchester, *The World Lit Only By Fire: The Medieval Mind and the Renaissance*. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1992, p. 53.

gangs that practiced nightly collective raping attacks on women, "constituting a veritable rite of initiation for youth in the past. Neighbors did not intervene; the rapes were considered normal youthful sporting activities by officials."¹⁴¹ Christianity is what Susan Brownmiller calls "a rape culture [where] rape functions as a sufficient threat to keep all women in a constant state of intimidation."¹⁴² Nunneries "were often little more than whorehouses [providing] fornication between nuns and the gentlemen callers."¹⁴³ Masters frequently slept at night with both their boy and girl charges and raped them—many references to rape can be cited, like "my master came to my bed at 2 o'clock in the morning and violated my person." Parents who sent daughters to others to be servants might assure the new master that "[she] will match your cock."¹⁴⁴ It is not surprising that doctors reported that the hymens were always missing of the young girls they treated.¹⁴⁵ In fact, many doctors taught that having sexual intercourse with little girls was actually a good idea, "to familiarize girls of immature ages with carnal matters."¹⁴⁶ Brothers in the extended families (*zadruga*) of Eastern Europe often traded daughters with each other for sexual use well into modern times;¹⁴⁷ "The abuse of pre-pubertal children by close family members really does not seem to have been a concern for medieval writers."¹⁴⁸ When Karen Taylor studied 381 historical cases of venereal disease in children with the disease "on their genitals, anuses and mouths," she finds that almost all of them had fathers with the disease, fathers who obviously had had sex with their daughters.¹⁴⁹

Although the pederastic sexual use of boys decreased somewhat with Christianity, the constant condemnation by priests of the practice as "widespread" makes one reluctant to conclude it was not still common

¹⁴¹ Jacques Rossiaud, *Medieval Prostitution*. New York: Basil Blackwell, 1988, p. 39.

¹⁴² Susan Brownmiller, *Against Our Will: Men, Women and Rape*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1975, p. 209.

¹⁴³ Elizabeth Abbott, *A History of Celibacy*. Toronto: HarperCollins, 1999, p. 143.

¹⁴⁴ Francoise Barret-Ducroca, *Love in the Time of Victoria*. New York: Penguin Books, 1989, p. 48; Anthony Fletcher, *Gender, Sex and Subordination in England 1500-1800*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995, p. 160.

¹⁴⁵ Giulia Sissa, *Greek Virginity*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1990, p. 176.

¹⁴⁶ A Woman Physician and Surgeon, *Unmasked, or, The Science of Immorality*. Philadelphia: William H. Boyd, 1878, p. 91.

¹⁴⁷ Alenka Puhar, *Privatno besedilo zivljenja*. Zagreb: Globus, 1982.

¹⁴⁸ Elizabeth Archibald, "Incest Between Adults and Children in the Medieval World," p. 97.

¹⁴⁹ Karen J. Taylor, "Venereal Disease in Nineteenth-Century Children." *The Journal of Psychohistory* 12(1985): 441.

during the entire period. Peter Brown concluded that among early Christians “castration was a routine operation” for purposes of sexual renunciation and also to obtain eunuchs for sexual use.¹⁵⁰ Abelard was not the only Christian to be “blissfully castrated” in order to be closer to God.¹⁵¹ In Naples signs hung above stores: “Boys castrated here.”¹⁵² In the 15th century, Bernardino of Siena could still complain about fathers who “make pimps” of their own sons, saying boys were so likely to be raped in the streets that “a boy can’t even pass nearby without having a sodomite on his tail” and urging mothers to “send your girls out instead...This is less evil.”¹⁵³ A thorough analysis of court records in 15th century Florence shows “the majority of local males at least once during their lifetimes were incriminated for engaging in homosexual relations with boys.”¹⁵⁴ Every place where boys gathered, “from schools and monasteries to taverns and pastry shops, were ‘schools of sodomy’ where pederasts came to violate boys.”¹⁵⁵ The penitentials said when boys were raped by older men the boys were responsible for being too sexually attractive, so the boys were punished, but usually not the rapists.¹⁵⁶ Priests in monasteries “could not keep their hands off their oblates.”¹⁵⁷ Peter Damian said in the 11th century that sex with boys in monasteries usually “rages like a bloodthirsty beast,” yet only the boys and not the priests were punished.¹⁵⁸ Medieval guilds used to put on “mystery plays which show the course of evil in the world and display the wicked deeds of Satan,” during which children who were cup-bearers would be raped

¹⁵⁰ Peter Brown, *The Body and Society: Men, Women and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1988, p. 168.

¹⁵¹ Yves Ferroul, “Abelard’s Blissful Castration.” In Jeffrey J. Cohen, Ed. *Becoming Male in the Middle Ages*. New York: Garland Publishing, 2000, pp. 129-149.

¹⁵² Lloyd deMause, *The Emotional Life of Nations*, p. 311.

¹⁵³ Michael J. Rocke, “Sodomites in Fifteenth-Century Tuscany: The Views of Bernardino of Siena.” In Kent Gerard and Gert Hekman, Eds., *The Pursuit of Sodomy: Male Homosexuality in Renaissance and Enlightenment Europe*. New York: Harrington Park Press, 1989, pp. 9-15.,

¹⁵⁴ Michael Rocke, *Forbidden Friendships: Homosexuality and Male Culture in Renaissance Florence*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1996, p. 7.

¹⁵⁵ Guido Ruggiero, *The Boundaries of Eros: Sex Crime and Sexuality in Renaissance Venice*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1985, p. 138

¹⁵⁶ Allen J. Frantzen, “Where the Boys Are: Children and Sex in the Anglo-Saxon Penitentials.” In Jeffrey J. Cohen, *Becoming Male in the Middle Ages*, p. 55.

¹⁵⁷ Lloyd deMause, *The Emotional Life of Nations*, p. 376.

¹⁵⁸ Peter Damian, *Book of Gomorrah*. Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1988, p. 42.

by the drunken revelers.¹⁵⁹ Priests “impregnated girls who had been forced by parents into nunneries” where “drains ran free” of infanticided newborn.¹⁶⁰ The rape of boys in British public schools “with the full knowledge and collusion, even the approval, of their elders” continued to modern times, with older boys and teachers using younger boys sexually as their ‘bitches.’”¹⁶¹ The best statistics for the sexual abuse of children in England today show 59% of women and 27% of men report remembering having been sexually abused as children (America showed over 45% of girls and 30% of boys), figures that do not include sexual abuse memories that are repressed or denied, which, if included, make the actual abuse percentages much higher.¹⁶² Given these still very high figures today, and recalling that virtually all medieval girls were married off (raped) in their teens to an older man chosen by her parents,¹⁶³ it must be concluded that a majority of medieval children were used sexually at some point in their lives.

HOW MANIC-DEPRESSIVE PERSONALITIES CREATED BIPOLAR CHRISTIANITY

My overall conclusion that Christian personalities for centuries were essentially manic-depressive may seem exaggerated, given that only about ten percent of Americans today suffer from clinical manic-depressive symptoms.¹⁶⁴ Even more improbable is my ascribing the cause of the bipolarity to child abuse and neglect, since most psychiatrists in the past said they believed genes were the central cause of bipolarity, citing studies that show relatives of individuals with manic-depressive illnesses are eight times more likely to have the condition.¹⁶⁵ What they have overlooked, as usual, is that relatives also share abusive childrearing patterns.

Medieval clerics themselves said most Christians suffered from *acedia*, “a disgust of the heart, an enormous loathing of yourself, your soul is torn to

¹⁵⁹ Norman Simms, “Medieval Guilds, Passions and Abuse.” *The Journal of Psychohistory* 25(1998): 501.

¹⁶⁰ Steven Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled: Family Life in Reformation Europe*, p. 6.

¹⁶¹ Alisdare Hickson, *The Poisoned Bowl: Sex Repression and the Public School System*. London: Constable, 1995.

¹⁶² Lloyd deMause, “What the British Can Do To End Child Abuse.” *The Journal of Psychohistory* 34(2006): 4.

¹⁶³ David Herlihy, *Medieval Households*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1985, p. 19.

¹⁶⁴ N. Berne, Ed. *Depression*. Detroit: Greenhaven Press, 2007, p. 15.

¹⁶⁵ E. Fuller Torrey and Michael B. Knable, *Surviving Manic Depression*. New York: Basic Books, 2002, p. 118.

pieces, sad and embittered."¹⁶⁶ Doctors during the medieval period said that most of their emotionally ill patients were either "melancholic" or "manic."¹⁶⁷ Christianity is based upon severely depressive personality characteristics that are identical with bipolarity today : endlessly guilty, consumed by thoughts of death and suicide, full of paranoid persecutory delusions, having an inability to enjoy pleasures, hopeless, and hallucinating harmful spirits. As Oesterreich put it in his book *Possession and Exorcism*, "Christians made their appearance throughout the whole world as exorcists of demons...The whole world was peopled with devils."¹⁶⁸ Early Christians often felt persecuted by spirits of dead people. All these inner depressive spirits were actually alters, "self-destructive voices" that were dissociated during child abuse and embedded as nightmarish figures in the amygdalan network. The depression and addiction to suffering of Christians was also the result of the lack of serotonin and an excess of depressive norepinephrine that was the result of their severe early child abuse, and the self-punishment by masochistic martyrs was a way for them to generate more serotonin in order to feel they have conquered their depressive sinfulness.¹⁶⁹ Everyone punished themselves in order to *suffer* more—the clergy whipped and cut themselves to be martyrs, and the knights went to war to suffer, proudly boasting of how great their pains were, "even more than the suffering of priests," making them even more acceptable to God.¹⁷⁰

What is less obvious is that Christians also had myriad manic symptoms. They went into grandiose religious trances, believing they joined a gigantic being in the sky and arrogantly dividing the world into those who believed as they did and everyone else, who deserved killing. Persinger was the first to describe the neurobiological bases of these manic Christian beliefs, saying they were caused by "micro-seizures" that produce "the release of the brain's own opiates" that can result in "a burst in the temporal lobe" for a "narcotic high during God-merger experiences."¹⁷¹ These seizures produce not only a release from the usual

¹⁶⁶ Siegfried Wenzel, *The Sin of Sloth: Acedia in Medieval Thought and Literature*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1967, p. 33.

¹⁶⁷ N. Berne, Ed. *Depression*, p. 10.

¹⁶⁸ Traugott K. Oesterreich, *Possession and Exorcism*. New York: Causeway Books, 1974, p. 164.

¹⁶⁹ Sharon Klayman Farber, "Ecstatic Stigmatics and Holy Anorexics: Medieval and Contemporary." *The Journal of Psychohistory* 31(2003):188.

¹⁷⁰ Allen J. Frantzen, *Bloody Good: Chivalry, Sacrifice, and the Great War*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2004, pp. 94, 95.

¹⁷¹ Michael A. Persinger, *Neuropsychological Bases of God Beliefs*. New York: Praeger, 1987, p. 17.

bipolar's self-blame but also a conviction that they will never die. The manic religious seizures combined both the ecstasies and the pains of the manic-depressive states—as Saint Theresa said when she told how it felt to experience the Holy Spirit: “An angel pierced its spear several times though my heart...leaving me all aflame with an immense love for God. The pain was so great that I had to groan, but the sweetness that came with this violent pain was such that I could not wish to be free of it.”¹⁷² These Christian mystical trance experiences released the dopamine in the frontal cortex, which temporarily reduces fears and pains and produces extreme sensations of joy and euphoria.¹⁷³ These *God-fusion states* are therefore defenses against and repetitions of early childhood “insecure and avoidant” abusive attachments to the mother or wet-nurse.¹⁷⁴

Both the manic and depressive states are ways to control suffering by inflicting pains yourself, by “being in charge.” As Henry Suso put it: “Suffering quells my anger [and] makes me no part of the world.”¹⁷⁵ Just as Christian children imagined their suffering for their sins would make their mothers love them, Christianity posits that God and “Jesus-our-Mother” will love you if you suffer for your sins. Suso wore for years a hair shirt with leather strips with 150 nails eating into his flesh, and on his back wore a cross that was furnished with iron nails and sharp needles he said were “in memory of Mary’s sorrows” (his mother’s sorrows).¹⁷⁶ Suso also, like so many Christian clerics, regularly burned himself with hot wax, as a repetition of the common Christian practice of burning infants and putting them in the hot oven to cure them of their sins, the same hot oven that furnished the basis of the threat of parents that their children deserved being thrown into a burning Hell.

Unlike early states ruled by actual Goddesses who kill their sons, Christianity called their God “Father,” reflecting the rule of fathers over mothers in Christian families. But since real fathers were mainly absent for young children, God was not depicted in drawings or statues and was

¹⁷² Holger Kalweit, *Dreamtime & Inner Space*. Boston: Shambhala, 1988, p. 94.

¹⁷³ Andrew B. Newberg, “Religious and Spiritual Practices: A Neurochemical Perspective.” In Patrick McNamara, Ed. *Where God and Science Meet: How Brain and Evolutionary Studies Alter Our Understanding of Religion*. Westport: Praeger Publishers, 2006, p. 17.

¹⁷⁴ Pehr Granqvist, “Religion as a By-Product of Evolved Psychology: The Case of attachment and Implications for Brain and Religion Research.” In Patrick McNamara, Ed., *Where God and Science Meet*, p. 125.

¹⁷⁵ Jean Delumeau, *Sin and Fear: The Emergence of a Western Guilt Culture 13th-18th Centuries*, p. 311.

¹⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 306.

not described in Church writings. At most, he was said to wear a long cloak and a veil, like women did.¹⁷⁷ When he spoke, "the Voice of God was the Holy Spirit," which was feminine, so the "inner alter voice" that was heard was maternal not paternal. During alter trances when "Heaven opened before their eyes," Christians saw not God but "Christ on His Throne," with the Blessed Virgin at his side,¹⁷⁸ and of course Christ during the Eucharist was seen to have breasts with milk coming out of them, which worshippers drank, like babies. Medieval Christians sometimes "saw God as a woman nursing the soul at her breasts, drying its tears, punishing its mischief-making, giving birth to it in agony...seeing Christ or God or the Holy Spirit as female."¹⁷⁹ Sheinorn has shown that Jesus was often described as a mother figure, and priests who identified with him were shown as having female features.¹⁸⁰ Although Mary is not shown for centuries as kissing the baby Jesus, she is regularly depicted as kissing the dead Christ at His crucifixion,¹⁸¹ reflecting the wish that the actual Killer Mother of the worshipper was really sorry she murdered her baby. The same wish of children for the mother to be a Loving Mother is shown by all the pictures of female angels receiving the soul of the worshipper into Heaven.

Christ Himself was of course also the Victim Child who was sent down by God to be murdered, asking the central question of all Christian children, "Why has thou forsaken me?" Worshippers would sometimes during Holy Communion see in the host "a very young boy, and when the priest began to break the host, they thought they saw an angel coming down out of the sky who cut the boy up with a knife."¹⁸² Christian ritual was full of actual childhood events. Believers repeated during Communion the drinking of wine and eating of bread that they had actually experienced as newborn infants when their mouths were stuffed with *zulp* and wine. Christ on the cross was obviously a baby tied to his swaddling board being killed by his mother (God), naked but for his baby

¹⁷⁷ Karen Armstrong, *A History of God*, New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994, p. 218.

¹⁷⁸ I. M. Lewis, *Ecstatic Religion: A Study of Shamanism and Spirit Possession*. 2nd Ed., London: Routledge, 1971, p. 37.

¹⁷⁹ Caroline Walker Bynum, *Jesus as Mother: Studies in the Spirituality of the High Middle Ages*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1982, p. 129.

¹⁸⁰ Pamela Sheingorn, "The Maternal Behavior of God: Divine Father As Fantasy Husband." In John Carmi Parsons and Bonnie Wheeler, Eds., *Medieval Mothering*, pp. 77-99.

¹⁸¹ Rudolph Binion, "Three Mourning Mothers: The Making and Unmaking of a Christian Figural Complex." *The Journal of Psychohistory* 25(1998):449-459.

¹⁸² Lloyd deMause, *The Emotional Life of Nations*, p. 416.

diaper, his head hurting from the board that was often pressed upon babies' foreheads (crown of thorns). Christ's going through God's infanticide for believers *undoes* the infanticide of mothers. Julian explains, "even though our earthly mother may suffer her child to perish, our heavenly mother Jesus may never suffer us that be his children to perish."¹⁸³ God is the giant Punishing Parent in the sky who can make you live forever if you confess your badness and worship Him/Her. Life, says St. Benedict, is "dread of Judgment, fearing Hell, and keeping the possibility of death ever before your eyes."¹⁸⁴ St. John Chrysostom tells believers to "constantly think on death, speak of it all the time, visit tombs and attend to dying people, because nothing is so edifying as watching impious people die."¹⁸⁵ Bipolar Christians arranged their lives in two emotional states: during weekdays, families spent many hours together in depressive praying sessions (admitting their sins and internal badness), and then spent the last part of the week switching into grandiose manic trance states in Church, reenacting the central emotions of their childhoods: "Admit you are full of sins and your Killer Mother will forgive you and let you live in Heaven." The central childhood wish of Christians is "God will forgive me and let me live if I constantly torture myself."¹⁸⁶

The desire for fusion with the Killer Mother is, as Chodorow says, "central to medieval Christian imagery."¹⁸⁷ Jesus is mentioned as an exorcist 65 times in the Gospels, expelling demons from Christians "by applying his spittle."¹⁸⁸ Hankoff correctly sees these demons as alternate personalities "resulting from a history of abuse in childhood."¹⁸⁹ The manic "high" of God experiences, caused by release of the brain's opiates to special receptors in the amygdala, makes people "addicted not only to the God experience but to the *God high*...whereby parental omnipotence is passed on to God expectations."¹⁹⁰ For Christian bipolars, there was no "middle ground." Christianity formed around the extreme need for catering to the dissociated alters of all sufferers, taking control through repeti-

¹⁸³ Andrew Sprung, "The Inverted Metaphor: Earthly Mothering..." In John Carmi Parsons and Bonnie Wheeler, Eds., *Medieval Mothering*, p. 196.

¹⁸⁴ Helen Ellerbe, *The Dark Side of Christian History*. New York: Morningstar, 1995, p. 161.

¹⁸⁵ Jean Delumeau, *Sin and Fear*, p. 351.

¹⁸⁶ Lloyd deMause, *The Emotional Life of Nations*, p. 413.

¹⁸⁷ Jean Delumeau, *Sin and Fear*, p. 185.

¹⁸⁸ L. D. Hankoff, "Religious Healing in First-Century Christianity." *The Journal of Psychohistory* 19(1992): 391.

¹⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 399.

¹⁹⁰ Michael A. Persinger, *Neuropsychological Bases of God Beliefs*, pp. 31, 66.

tion of the tortures of childhood during Church rituals that portray the suffering and death of Christ, suffering that martyrs repeat in their manic ecstatic trances, avoiding death with their self-inflicted depressive tortures.¹⁹¹ As Janov puts it: "Suicide is really an attempt at healing, an attempt to conquer death; one would rather be dead than feel it."¹⁹² It is not to be doubted that many Christians attempted and succeeded in actually committing suicide in response to their inner self-destructive states, at far higher rates than the ten percent of Americans today who attempt suicide.¹⁹³ But the main suicidal practice of the Christian period, like today, was war, Holy War for God, against whichever neighbor you could provoke into joining you in the mass slaughters of fifteen Christian centuries.

WOMEN TOUGHEN UP BOYS TO BECOME HOLY WARRIORS

Although boys and girls both until they reach puberty have the same testosterone levels, Christian boys by the time they are five years old are trained by their mothers or wet-nurses to be "tough," to form hierarchical violent male dominance groups, and to "win all fights" with their peers and not be "polluted girls."¹⁹⁴ The result was that medieval homicide rates were around fifty times higher than today's rates, a result of their high cortisol levels from their abusive childhoods.¹⁹⁵ Christian children were all beaten and tortured so badly they were "time bombs" for later infliction of violence. Neurobiologists have found *winning fights raises boys testosterone levels*, which in turn makes them want to fight more. Plus, their normally low serotonin levels rise with success in fighting, raising their terribly low feelings of self confidence.¹⁹⁶ Both parents throughout history warn their boys they must win fights, not be like girls, "weak

¹⁹¹ Judith Perkins, *The Suffering Self: Pain and Narrative Representation in the Early Christian Era*. London: Routledge, 1995, pp. 10-39.

¹⁹² <http://primal-page.cm/death.htm>

¹⁹³ Alexander Murray, *Suicide in the Middle Ages*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1998.

¹⁹⁴ Joshua S. Goldstein, *War and Gender: How Gender Shapes the War System and Vice Versa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001, pp. 156-208; Helen Nicholson, *Medieval Warfare: Theory and Practice of War in Europe 300-1500*. Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004, p. 29.

¹⁹⁵ T. R. Gurr, "Historical Trends in Violent Crime: A Critical Review of the Evidence." *Crime and Justice: An Annual Review of Research* 3(1981): 313.

¹⁹⁶ A. Mazur and T. A. Lamb, "Testosterone, status and mood in human males." *Hormones and Behavior* 1(1980): 236-46.

sissies,” and this is the theme of most of the boy battles fought by pages and young knights—“the warrior class devoted to full-time fighting sanctified through the feminization argument” that *losers are poisonous females*.¹⁹⁷ Knights were taught to respond to all insults by killing the other person. Christian mothers gave their children their first weapons and their suits of armor as early as four years old,¹⁹⁸ little boys endlessly enacted paranoid “righteous combats” against imagined enemies, young knights often chose courtly women as their sponsors in tournaments, knights chose courtly women to serve in combat, and “women commonly egged men on to war in Norse and German legends.”¹⁹⁹ Mothers are described as “instructing their sons in the art of magic, protecting them in battle with magical clothing or by stroking their bodies.”²⁰⁰ Even today, says Carol Gilligan, little boys sometimes over-internalize their mothers’ anxieties by saying to them “I am your knight.”²⁰¹ Mothers then as now regularly held the fantasy that their boys would be “masculine and tough enough” to save them from the beatings and abuses they as females had experienced. “The hated enemy [infidels] were seen as both inferior and feminine,”²⁰² like their mothers, they were created by God to be “weak” and “beaten” like their mothers were beaten by their fathers. Enemies were called “poisonous,” and Holy Wars were seen as “searches for masculinity”²⁰³ by God’s warriors, since God Himself promised Holy Warriors in the Bible: “I will cast into panic all the peoples among whom you pass, and will cause all thy enemies to flee before you.”²⁰⁴

PROVOKING AND FIGHTING BIPOLAR HOLY WARS

Since Christians were bipolar, they were either manic (violent warriors) or depressive (masochistic clerics, martyrs), but in either case they risked “dying for God” their whole lives: “For Your sake we have been killed all of the day.”²⁰⁵ Martyrs would sometimes castrate themselves “to demon-

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 306.

¹⁹⁸ Daniele Alexandre-Bidon, *Children in the Middle Ages*, pp. 43, 108.

¹⁹⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 347.

²⁰⁰ John Carmi Parsons and Bonnie Wheeler, *Medieval Mothering*, p. 214.

²⁰¹ Carol Gilligan, *The Birth of Pleasure: A New Map of Love*. New York: Vintage Books, 2003, p. 29.

²⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 356-357.

²⁰³ Mark Breitenberg, *Anxious Masculinity in Early Modern England*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

²⁰⁴ *Exodus* 23:27.

²⁰⁵ Daniel Boyarin, *Dying for God: Martyrdom and the Making of Christianity and Judaism*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1999, p. 122.

strate their potency and devotion to God.”²⁰⁶ In fact, clerics were said to have “become female” when they gave up fighting, because “the male must become female in order to escape the moral dangers of his masculine state.”²⁰⁷ In fact, Christianity can be seen as a way for males to become more like females—thus priests didn’t get married and wore female dresses—because young boys experienced their mothers as preferring her more passive daughters to her “rough, impudent” sons²⁰⁸.

The central activities that were mainly frowned upon by Christians were those that were “materialistic,” those that increased productivity. Investment of one’s savings for interest and profit was declared “sinful usury” by the Pope, so the productivity of Europe stayed nearly level for over a millennium, during which all kinds of simple inventions (like the stirrup and nailed horseshoes and non-choking horse collars) were long delayed.²⁰⁹ Economic progress could not be achieved because their horribly abusive childrearing didn’t establish the *trust* that was necessary for investing in innovative new projects. If at times other conditions produced enough social/economic pain, wars were less needed—as in the 14th century when the Black Death killed a quarter of European population—so Christian wars were not needed for a while for self-destruction.

The Christian warrior fused with his all-powerful Killer Mother God and kills “in order to rid the world of Evil,” but the evil they fight is their own “sins,” their own childhood needs, embedded in little boys as evil early on in their dissociated Victim Alters. The “enemies” who were imagined to embody this evil were often complete strangers to the Holy Warriors, as in the Crusades, and were attacked with no material motives in mind—the war suddenly had to be fought because they imagined “the Holy Sepulchre of our Lord is polluted by the filthiness of an unclean nation.”²¹⁰ Knights, like Christ, “embraced death” in order to conquer their constant fears of being murdered by their Killer Mother. They became heroic martyrs in order to go to haven and be embraced by God, who *liked* them to suffer—*wanted* them to choose death, as Christ did.²¹¹

²⁰⁶David Townsend, “Ironic Intertextuality and the Reader’s Resistance to Heroic Masculinity in the *Waltharius*.” In Jeffrey J. Cohen, Ed., *Becoming Male in the Middle Ages*, p. 83.

²⁰⁷ Daniel Boyarin, *Dying for God*, p. 79.

²⁰⁸ See Chapter 2.

²⁰⁹ Azar Gat, *War in Human Civilization*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006, p. 414. A. D. Lee, *War in Late Antiquity: A Social History*. Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2007, p. 120; Morris Bishop, *The Middle Ages*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1968, p. 38.

²¹⁰ Roland H. Bainton, *Christian Attitudes Toward War and Peace: A Historical Survey and Critical Re-Evaluation*. New York: Abingdon Press, 1960, p. 112.

²¹¹ Allen J. Frantzen, *Chivalry, Sacrifice, and the Great War*, p. 31.

"Salvation" was the goal; death led to *acceptance* by mommy, who had told you she wished you were dead. You were a "good boy," a "dead hero." Christian wars were simply massive martyrdoms, horrible genocides replaying childhood fears and violence "in order to be a man [and] to die for God." "Early medieval warfare was essentially raiding without any long-term aim of permanently acquiring territory."²¹² Battlefields were slaughter fields, resembling the fields children had played in that were filled with slaughtered children. As Fornari puts it, "War is deferred infanticide, the aim of which is the elimination of young men."²¹³ Even gentle Jesus is turned into a warrior containing "the fury of the wrath of God," as he is described in *Revelations*,²¹⁴ and Christian illustrations showed God tying a sword around Christ's waist.²¹⁵ Holy warriors wore His cross (or Mother Mary) on their shields, and Mary was said to "send Her warriors into battle and Herself killing them outright."²¹⁶

Unlike many others in antiquity who tolerated their neighbors when they worshipped a different God, Christians split the world into "holy" and "pagan" souls and gratuitously went to war against all neighbors who were imagined to be members of the out-group. Should anyone refuse to fight as a soldier, they were excommunicated and sent to Hell. By 900 A.D., the Church had its own army and navy, led by bishops. Most holy wars, like the Crusades, came because of "growth panic," when governmental reforms or attempts to curb endemic warfare made people search harder for foreign enemies.²¹⁷ As Pope Urban said when announcing the First Crusade: "Let those who once fought against brothers and relatives now fight against barbarians, as they ought,"²¹⁸ Christian Crusaders "impaling pagan children on spits and devouring them grilled."²¹⁹ Led by Peter the Hermit, the manic crowd of peasants, clerics and poor knights swarmed through Europe, leaderless, killing whomever they found, especially Jews.²²⁰ The advances in Protestant

²¹² Helen Nicholson, *Medieval Warfare*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004, p. 3.

²¹³ Franco Fornari, *The Psychoanalysis of War*. New York: Anchor Press, 1974, p. 7.

²¹⁴ *Revelations* 19:12.

²¹⁵ Allen J. Frantzen, *Bloody Good*, p. 34.

²¹⁶ Bissera V. Pentcheva, *Icons and Power: The Mother of God in Byzantium*. University Park: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2006, p. 64.

²¹⁷ John E. Bliese, "The Motives of the First Crusaders: A Social Psychological Analysis." *The Journal of Psychohistory* 17(1990): 393-395.

²¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 401.

²¹⁹ Reza Aslan, *How to Win a Cosmic War: God, Globalization, and the End of the War on Terror*. New York: Random House, 2009, p. 64.

²²⁰ William Weir, *Fatal Victories*. New York: Pegasus Books, 2006, p. 33.

worship in the 16th century were too much for the Christian psychoclasses and so provoked prodigiously bloody national and civil wars, beginning with the Thirty Years War, which most of Europe fought in—the most destructive war prior to the 19th century and the beginning of the hyper-violent nation-state system.²²¹ The bloody Protestant wars after the 16th century were fought as apocalyptic end-of-the-world slaughters, with the expectation that Jesus would return as a political Messiah and rule the earth.²²² Civilians were slaughtered in all holy wars as well as real enemies, by usually-drunken soldiers, children were murdered as well as adults, and women were both killed and raped by the millions, rape being considered “a proof of masculinity” by warriors.²²³

Killing the Victim Child alter was accomplished both by killing infidels and by the warrior dying himself for God. Wars were so constant that “no one gave much thought to the question of who was authorized to declare a war,”²²⁴ and any prince or other authority could keep wars going for decades. Christian holy wars were termed “noble suicides” and battles were openly apocalyptic and masochistic, “the warriors glorying in their wounds and rejoicing to display their flowing blood.”²²⁵ As they had learned in childhood, the only way to “get love” from Mommy, from Jesus, from God, was to suffer for your sinfulness. Thus it was necessary for all self-destructive Christian armies to constantly insult infidels, attack stronger neighbors, and install grandiose incompetent leaders of their own armies in order to increase the destructiveness of their enemies. The armor of knights was of little use in battles, since it was too heavy for fast horses to carry and archers could easily outmaneuver knights, as when English archers at Agincourt shattered French knights in a matter of minutes. A knight’s armor was actually a mask of masculinity behind which men could hide their fears of weakness, a defensive “second skin” that was said to symbolize what was termed “the

²²¹ Gwynne Dyer, *War: The Lethal Custom*. New York: Carroll & Graf Publishers, 2004, p. 217.

²²² Balcolm Bull, Ed., *Apocalypse Theory and the Ends of the World*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1995.

²²³ Corinne Saunders, “Sexual Violence in Warfare: The Middle Ages.” In Hans-Henning Kortum, Ed. *Transcultural Wars From the Middle Ages to the 21st Century*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag, 2006: 151-164; Elizabeth Robertson and Christine Rose, Eds., *Representing Rape in Medieval and Early Modern Literature*. New York: Palgrave, 2001, p. 29.

²²⁴ Doyme Dawson, *The Origins of Western Warfare. Militarism and Morality in the Ancient World*. New York: WestviewPress, 1996, p. 175.

²²⁵ Susan Brownmiller, *Against Our Will*, p. 35.

aloneness of the solitary hero" of Holy Wars.²²⁶ Beginning in the 11th century, grandiose castle strongholds were expanded, again on the model of the autistic shield fantasy of terrorized children.²²⁷ Even more dangerous was the practice of the Frank and Norse warriors who "left their chests bare and backs naked" or "fought completely nude," presenting themselves as naked infants like those who were infanticided by their mothers.²²⁸ The manic wild masochistic trances that warriors often switched into (often by becoming drunk) during battle were also not useful to winning battles, and many accounts picture how "berserkers" had to be "cooled down so that they would no longer be a threat to their own side."²²⁹ The aim of all the apocalyptic Christian wars was what the Bible said would happen to those who survived the Apocalypse in Heaven (*Revelation* 7:17): "God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes"—satisfying the wish that all Christian children retained from their mothers. Finally, like the Killer Mothers with whom they were fused, knights wore gaudy clothes and ribbons and long hair as if they were women, and often actually went into battle as their mothers and other women watched them from a nearby hill and shamed them if they abandoned the fight.²³⁰ Onlookers reported that "knights are repeatedly spurred on in battle by looking at their ladies."²³¹ The worst thing Christian mothers could accuse one of is looking out for yourself. What they really want is for you to "join your friends dead whose corpses lie before you...Is not this a great martyrdom?"²³² Because martyrdom is the aim of all Holy Wars: "Dying for God."

²²⁶ Leo Braudy, *From Chivalry to Terrorism*, p. 91

²²⁷ John Keegan, *A History of Warfare*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1994, p. 150.

²²⁸ Jennifer Laing, *Warriors of the Dark Ages*. London: Sutton Publishing, 2000, p. 119.

²²⁹ Leo Braudy, *From Chivalry to Terrorism: War and the Changing Nature of Masculinity*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2003, p. 43.

²³⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 194.

²³¹ Corinne Saunders, "Women and Warfare in Medieval English Writing." In Corinne Saunders et al, Eds. *Writing War: Medieval Literary Responses to Warfare*. Cambridge: D. S. Brewer, 2004, p. 198.

²³² John Barnie, *War in Medieval Society: Social Values and the Hundred Years War, 1337-99*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1974.