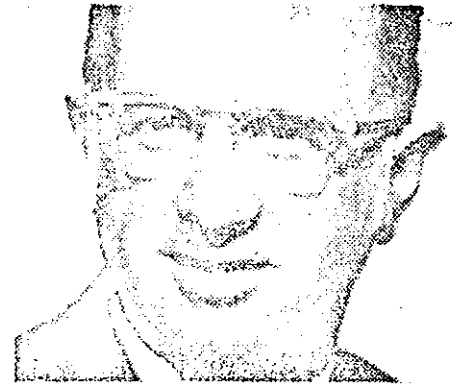


# In praise of the family-

## a doctor's view



**Dr. Mendelsohn**

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By Dr. Robert S. Mendelsohn

Modern American society is out to kill the family. What was once a pioneer society of strong, closely knit extended families has turned into a series of fragmented units, with little contact or interchange between the generations.

In days not so very long ago, a family unit that lived under one roof consisted of more than just parents and children. A new mother could count on at least one other set of willing hands at home — her own mother, possibly a maiden aunt, perhaps an older sister. The new mother had time and patience to breast-feed her baby because someone else was around to help cook the meals, care for other children and do the household tasks. Meanwhile, the new man spent his days at work secure in the knowledge that, if something went wrong at home, there'd be someone around to help. When the child grew older, there was work

for him to do so that he, too, fulfilled a function within the family.

TODAY, THINGS ARE different indeed. Our present-day "nuclear family," which consists only of parents and children, comes equipped with self-destructive mechanisms deadly enough to destroy the hardiest among us. A new mother is left on her own with no other woman at her side to share her responsibilities. She often cannot wait to leave the confinement and loneliness of her home for a full-time job.

An enormous strain is placed on the marital relationship as husband and wife have only each other to look to as both the cause of and the solution to each other's problems. So divorce often ends the relationship, making the family ever more fragmented. Since they know they are considered as economic liabilities rather than assets, the children can barely wait to flee from the ever-shrinking nest, too.

What has brought about this monumental change? Why have we become so radically different from what we once were? I see the following as three of the strongest reasons for the destruction of the American family:

- The advice of helping professionals — the so-called "experts" in the child-care field — is given far more credence than the accumulated wisdom of fathers, mothers, grandparents, relatives and friends.
- The quest for "self-fulfillment" has relegat-

ed the family to second-class status and has given us a skyrocketing divorce rate, a national abortion total of 615,800 in 1973 and a work force of millions of women who think that society doesn't value them unless they are gainfully employed.

- The contempt for old age has consigned our elderly to poverty and farmed them out to retirement communities, nursing homes — any place where we can avoid seeking them and trying to deal with their problems.

WHY DO I LIST the helping professional first, thus making him the greatest demon? In my opinion, we've lost much confidence in the inherent rightness of our own decisions by being brainwashed to believe that only the professionals have the answers. We've learned

Turn to Page 16, Column 1

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*This is the first of four articles in which pediatrician Robert S. Mendelsohn tells how parents can regain control of their family units from the professionals he believes have helped to fragment America's families.*

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# A doctor's praise

## of the family



Continued from first page. — K. M. S.

to cast aside the accumulated wisdom preceding generations had acquired by "doing," and have accepted in its stead the diploma, the certificate, the aura of the professional.

Where was it ever written that the male pediatrician — who may never have fathered a child (and who certainly never mothered one) — would be a better source of information about the needs of a crying baby than the baby's own grandmother? Who decided that the marriage counselor, perhaps two years out of school, would be a better listening post for a troubled wife than the happily married neighbor next door? By what magical rite did a 24-year-old social worker develop the ability to deal with the household needs of a 75-year-old woman better than her corporate executive son?

It would be well to keep these questions in mind as we examine what I perceive to be society's blueprint for the reconstruction of the American family.

**LET'S BEGIN WITH** a young couple, both employed, who fall in love and get married. The wife becomes pregnant and most probably has to give up her job. Unlike the case in some European countries, there is little likelihood that her salary will be continued or that the same job will be ready for her when she is ready to return to the labor market.

So right at the beginning, this couple's standard of living drops. Instead of having two salaries, they must manage with one. Since they've been conditioned to believe that they should be independent, when parental help is offered they refuse it. As their standard of living goes down, the mother-to-be, who sincerely wants this baby, begins to develop ambivalent feelings. In fact, both parents-to-be may experience feelings ranging from mild dissatisfaction to downright hostility.

The stage is set for the entrance of the first helping professional, the obstetrician. Almost always a male, the obstetrician fills a role historically reserved for women, that of the nurse or midwife. While in many countries the process of birth is still a family-related function, in the United States, we've managed to strip it of any vestige of its former role.

The obstetrician advises the woman to have her baby in the hospital, certainly not at home. He then sees to it that the husband is not present during the delivery, any more than he lets him be present during the examinations of his wife. One young friend of mine was told by her obstetrician that her husband couldn't be present during the delivery. "It's too personal," the doctor advised her. "If it's that personal, I'm not sure you should be there," replied that spunky young lady, who then changed doctors.

**MOST DOCTORS AND** hospitals dispose of other relatives with the same ease. If there are other children in the family, in most states they are barred from visiting until the magical age of 16, when all the germs that coat their under-age brothers and sisters vanish mysteriously.

The mother also is separated from her own parents or from other members of the family who might be living close by and might be available for discussion, but who might well give advice that would be in conflict with that given by the obstetrician.

I recently heard of a case where the new mother, permitted only one visitor, had to choose between her husband and her mother

who had come in from out of town for the birth of her first grandchild. If the patient's mother visited, hospital rules ordained that she be the only visitor for the duration of the hospital stay; the same held true for the husband. What an inhuman decision to be faced with!

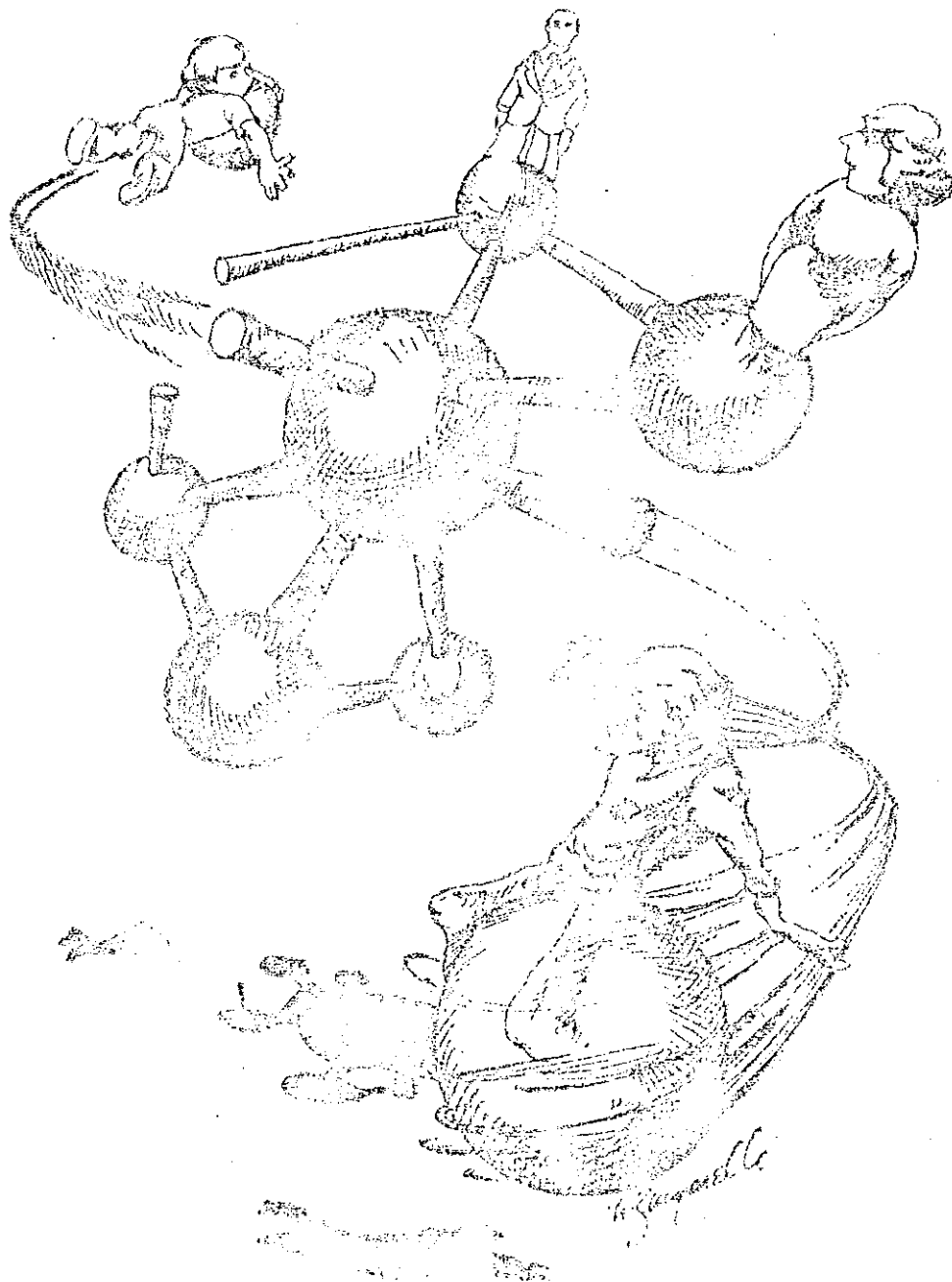
**SEPARATED FROM HER** family, our young woman is next separated from her own conscious self through the use of anesthesia or

analgesia. The odds are that she'll next be separated from the very object of all this separation — the baby itself.

This last is accomplished by the second helping professional, the pediatrician. This expert now arranges for the baby to be washed, handled by nurses, weighed and usually placed in an incubator. Any and all nursery employes are considered competent to deal with this new

# When nobody's home to take care of Dick, Jane and Spot

By Dr. Robert S. Mendelsohn



life. Honored only in the breach is the custom of immediately putting the baby to the mother's breast, a practice that helps prevent intrauterine hemorrhage and aids expulsion of the placenta (afterbirth).

The whole idea of breast-feeding has been played down by the professionals. Reassured by obstetricians, pediatricians and nurses that bottle-feeding is just as healthy as breast-feeding, the rest of us are fast coming to believe that God must have made a mistake. And all the while, regardless of the nutritive value of breast-feeding, which I'm firmly convinced far outstrips that of any prepared formula, bottle-feeding separates the mother from the child. He's brought out to her once every four hours, often having cried himself into a state in which he's too tired to nurse from any kind of nipple, be it artificial or real.

WHEN THE MOTHER LEAVES the hospital, a whole new crop of experts await her, all endorsed by her pediatrician. Dr. Benjamin Spock. Dr. Lee Salk, Dr. Bruno Bettelheim — all stand ready to give varying opinions in their books and columns. The young mother, who already has rejected her mother's and grandmother's advice — old wives' tales (rather than old doctors' tales), finds herself totally confused. Barely a single decision — from spoon-feeding to toilet-training to the advisability of a nightlight — can be made without the advice of the pediatrician.

The young mother, left alone all day without parents or other relatives to make it easier for her to occasionally leave the house, is in eyeball-to-eyeball confrontation with her child. Sooner or later, unable to trust her own judgment or that of her family, she recognizes she is fast becoming totally neurotic. (A father in a similar situation would probably survive three weeks.)

A quick call to the pediatrician provides the solution: the mother will go to work, and the child will be enrolled in a day-care center. So the third expert — the childhood educator — takes over the child's early years, applying the veneer of "education" to the reality of the child's separation from the family.

**NEXT: Nobody's home**

# *When nobody's home to take care of them*

Continued from Page 17

65 (and often 60 or younger), Grandma and Grandpa have little economic value to their relatives or to society in general, which regards them as simply a burden. No more houses with mother-in-law apartment for our nuclear family. The airlines have even eliminated the family fares, which once made it economically feasible to fly down to Happy Acres for an occasional family visit. Grandpa and Grandma have been ruled dispensable.

While getting rid of Grandma and Grandpa as helping family members, we've also eliminated the possibility of older siblings to care for Dick and Jane. Hysterectomy, vasectomy, all kinds of birth control medications and devices whose long-term effects are unknown — we've accepted them all. Women used to be told not to bear children after age 40; then the "safe" age became 35, and 30. (Perhaps

women some day will be told to have children only when they're between the ages of 24 and 25.)

**JUST AS WE'VE DEBASED** life at the upper end of the spectrum — the elderly — we've debased it at the lower end — the fetus. The population control experts have made us feel guilty about producing anything that stands in the way of zero population growth, and they've done this on the basis of highly controversial statistics. With "abortion on demand," we've created an irreverence for life based on our swallowing whole the experts' hypothesis that large families are bad per se, and families of 2.2 children are good.

Yet we're beginning to find out that this is not necessarily true. For example, one California study has pointed out that some factors

associated with coronary heart disease, such as overweight, cholesterol and uric acid, seem to drop as family size increases. I don't know of a single good study that proves that members of small families find it easier to become successful than do members of large families.

Ironically, while our society frowns on sex for the pure use of procreation, it simultaneously glamorizes all forms of anti-family, non-procreative sexual activity such as homosexuality, pornography and masturbation and publicity about the sexual activities of the elderly. Truly anything goes — anything, that is, except the old-fashioned virtues of faithfulness and devotion to family.

**NEXT: Learning to leave the family**

In many day-care centers, the child begins his day with breakfast and continues through lunch and dinner in a setting away from his parents, brought up by strangers who may or may not have the same value system as those parents and who may or may not transfer to the child the same traditions and morality as that of his parents.

In no way is the day-care center to be confused with the old-fashioned nursery school, in which a child spent only a few hours. Meals are not served in a nursery school, and the child spends most of the day at home.

Unlike their European counterparts, American day-care centers are situated near the mother's home, from which she is absent all

new world where more women than ever before are heading families because of illegitimate births, widowhood and, most of all, divorce. In this last, a woman, stranded by a husband who has gone out to "find himself" by losing his family, may be forced to go to work, often for the first time in her life. Her children are forced out of the home into the hands of the early-child-care expert.

Since our society has never had to cope with so many divorced families, we have no way, on the basis of our own experience, of predicting what sort of families the children of divorce will rear. But without satisfactory role models within their own family, they'll

be forced to turn ever more to helping professionals when they reach adulthood.

OBVIOUSLY, THE WOMEN discussed above are not the only ones who work outside the home. Women have begun to question all aspects of their life-style, and many have decided that they can fulfill themselves only if they have a paying job outside the home. Not only must they work, but they are told that they must become "goal-oriented."

In other words, it's not enough for a woman to be working so that she can help pay for the children's college education or for a yearned-for-vacation. She's told that she must move

ever upward on the business ladder, never pausing to look down to survey the wreckage of the family she may have left behind.

As far as I'm concerned, this whole concept of fulfillment by "meaningful" work is largely a myth. Much work, including that done by many men, is not fulfilling. Most jobs are simply routine and often mechanized tasks, which serve only as a means to an end — a pay check. Very few jobs outside the home are as fulfilling as the task of shaping and molding a child.

The reality, then, is not of fulfillment, but rather of shortchanging the family that is left behind the mother. Already fragmented by

**"Very few jobs outside the home are as fulfilling as the task of shaping and molding a child."**

bringing away from family members, the family is further traumatized by the loss of the mother. As for society as a whole, the work force has been doubled, while the status of women not in the work force has been diminished. And the family has been dealt a staggering blow.

BEFORE WE GO ANY further, we had better examine just what is meant by the word "family." When I say "family," I am referring to blood relatives — mothers, fathers, grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins. It is interesting to see how far we've debased the word when we can refer with impunity to the "Manson family."

The experts in the social sciences have given us the terms "nuclear" and "extended" family. To cover up what we've lost by no longer having extended families, the word "nuclear" is designed to conjure up positive images within our minds, the kinds of positive images associated with all the good that nuclear energy promises to offer.

But I see the nuclear family spinning off its individual members in the same way that atoms spin off its charged particles. My feeling is that the nuclear family is just as explosive and as unstable as its counterpart in the physical sciences.

THE CLASSIC QUINTET of Dick, Jane, Father, Mother and Spot, as described in the early primers, is not all that there should be to a family. For if Mother goes to work, who will care for Dick and Jane and Spot? Certainly not Grandmá and Grandpa, who are either living at Happy Acres Retirement Villas, at a nursing home, or at a public housing development far from Dick and Jane and Spot.

Since they're not allowed to work part-time, turn to Page 20, Column 4

## In praise of the family —a doctor's view

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day, rather than in factories or in office buildings, in which mothers work and in which they would be able to visit with their children. If a mother must work, this latter-day-care situation would certainly provide a greater feeling of closeness between mother and child.

JUST DON'T FAR WE'VE come from perceiving the reality of needs of children and parents was illustrated for me recently in a conversation with a young man who lives in New York City. He told me that his wife had gone back to work after he had lost his job. Although he was again employed, his wife was going to continue to work, this time as director of a coventary day-care center. Their 3-year-old was to attend the same center where his mother would work. I told the father that I thought this seemed like a good arrangement, and it would certainly be reassuring for the child to have his mother so close to him all day.

"Oh, no," gasped the father. "I wish he'd be less reassured. We want him to be independent. My wife has even mapped out a bus route that will put them on separate buses."

I can't help wondering what will happen if that father makes his 3-year-old as independent as he'd like him to be. Will the child go out and get a job? Get married? Raise his own family of independent 3-year-olds? Isn't being dependent the proper business of a 3-year-old? I wonder why we are unwilling to venture that independence.

THERE IS NO QUESTION that many women must work to make ends meet. Because they lack an extended family or caring friends or neighbors, the day-care center is often the only place for their children. But we're not just talking about the woman as economic creature.

We're talking about her in a struc-

# Do our schools help widen the family gap?

By Dr. Robert S. Mendelsohn

Having progressed beyond the clutches of the obstetrician, pediatric and early-child-care experts, while being bombarded peripherally by the self-fulfillment experts on population and geriatrics, the typical family is still not out of the woods. As soon as the children reach school age, it must then do battle with a new group: schoolteachers and administrators.

When a child enters school, the parent is quickly hustled into the PTA, where he is rapped into a variety of meaningless peripheral activities such as the bake sale or the purchase of curators for the teachers' lounge. At PTA meetings, the parent is cast in the role of passive observer, with no rights in the determination of curriculum, allocation of budget and recruitment and selection of teachers. All of these important functions are guarded zealously by the professional educators and administrators.

**SLOWLY, INSIDIOUSLY,** the parent's additional role as teacher is replaced by the professional. Subjects are taught in such a way that they vary from one generation to the next. Take as an example the "new math," which taught children arithmetic in such a way that their parents could not possibly help them. Then when the new system is discredited, the old system was reinstated.

The result, of course, is that the generation taught the new math will be unable to help a generation being taught the old math. Thus, three generations will experience unstimulated by verbiage, parents back by, the educators gleefully propound their theories and student achievement on the col- board exams slips lower year by year. e professionals have further co-opted the



## In praise of the family—a doctor's view

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family's role in the field of sex education. Here is an area so deeply intertwined with religious beliefs that the attempt to separate it into a secular subject with few moral judgments made can only serve to broaden the areas of conflict between parents and professionals.

**ASIDE FROM THE** question of just what is

taught in school, the length of the school day and the amount of years spent in school also separate parents from children. Children used to start school at the age of 6. Now, if we consider day-care centers as schools, some may begin before 1. The school day has lengthened; fewer and fewer children go home for lunch. Some schools now serve

breakfast, so less and less opportunity exists for parent-child contact.

As the child grows up, he spends less and less time with his family. Extracurricular activities may keep him away from home at dinner time (a meal that often takes place at several stages to accommodate the arrival of various family members). Then in the evening, when the child is home, Mom may be rushing off to board meetings or discussion groups and PTA meetings about the 'Disturbed Children.'

**BY NOW, THOROUGHLY** confused and with absolutely no confidence in their ability to deal with the thorny problems of adolescence, parents rush themselves and/or their children off to the next expert — the psychiatrist, psychologist, social worker or behavior

This expert gives each family member what he or she needs: a vocabulary. Children are taught to define parents as immature, repressed, overprotective and rejecting. Parents are given the words with which to label their children—irresponsible, immature, hostile. Parents and children can now label each other over an ever-deepening chasm, say, "It's all your fault." It's certainly not the fault of the professionals!

Now that our adolescent has been equipped with a vocabulary with which to define his parents and to label his parents, he is sent him off to college. The school he attends is often so far away that any bonds with his family are severed. Some time when profound physical and emotional changes are taking place within the student, he is separated from the traditional influences of home and is exposed to peer groups and faculty.

We've become too "modern" to need such

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# Do our schools widen the family gap?

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things as "house parents," dormitory meals contracted for on a year-round basis, or fraternity- or sorority-house living in which parents maintain close supervision. Instead, dormitories are sexually integrated, lunches become snacks while breakfasts are abandoned, and parents become strangers.

**THE STUDENT IS THRUST** into a world where the links to the family are broken. He may well be faced with an entirely new value system. Small wonder that the first year of college is often marked by menstrual disturbances, emotional upheavals, infectious mon-

onucleosis, high suicide rates and a whole gamut of other physical and psychological illnesses.

Years ago, only the wealthy and the privileged few attended colleges out of their own staves. Today, one measure of status is the distance one's child travels to college. When major family events cannot be celebrated together, when important holidays such as Thanksgiving and Christmas are no longer shared, the family is weakened further.

**BUT THESE TROUBLES** didn't develop overnight. In my opinion, two major histori-

cal forces have shaped our society and are now violently in conflict. On the one side, I see the Judeo-Christian values of large families, of concern for family extending even to the most marginal member — the old person, the sick, the mentally retarded. On the other side, I see the ideal espoused by certain ancient Greek philosophers — small families, the raising of children by nurses, the destruction of feeble infants, the spying on families.

In his Republic, Plato commands that all children born to his wedded couples shall be immediately consigned to the care of public

nurses — the helping professionals of ancient times. Aristotle decrees that, if a married couple has had the number of children allowed by law and the wife again becomes pregnant, an abortion shall be procured before the commencement of life or sense in the fetus.

Both Plato and Aristotle agree that no child born crippled or deformed should be brought up.

The Romans went to greater extremes than the Greeks. Seneca wrote that it was just as reasonable to drown feeble newborn babies as to slay diseased cattle. Tacitus sneered at the Jews for not allowing any of their newborn babies to be put to death.

**WHAT THE OLD TESTAMENT** gave us was respect for the family, for all its members.

The Old Testament culture came to America with the Puritans and other early settlers who had very strong families. Instead of shaping the family for the greater good of the state, the United States developed originally as a land of strong families and weak institutions. In our first 150 years, there were few teachers, few doctors and practically no social workers or psychologists. No welfare workers came around to see if a mother was living in the home.

But then America began to change. The utilitarian ethics proclaimed by Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill preached the greatest good for the greatest number. Enchanted by this premise, we began to go the route of abortion, abandonment of old folks and more and more outside interference with the family.

**NEXT: How to save the family**



# How we can stop decline of the family



By Dr. Robert S. Mendelsohn

If I were writing a prescription for individual action to reverse the decline of the family, I'd first advise the individual to stay as close to his blood relatives as he can. Try to keep your elderly relatives close to you — both because they need you and because you need them. Visit your college-age children. Advise your high schoolers to attend college near their home.

During this season of Christmas, get together with friends, neighbors and relatives — especially those who live alone. Psychiatrists almost never take vacations at Christ-

### In praise of the family

#### —a doctor's view

Last of four articles

mastime because the season is accompanied for many of their patients by great periods of depression and a heightened suicide rate. It's a good time to take small steps to renew family contacts.

**HOW CAN YOU DEMONSTRATE your own expertise over that of the professional?** If you're just beginning your family, start by looking for a doctor who is qualified to deliver your baby at home. Telling that, insist that your husband stay with you throughout labor and delivery. Insist that your baby be left with you — it does belong to you and not to the hospital.

Even if a hospital promises rooming-in (having the baby in the same room with you instead of in a nursery), be aware that that option can be revoked. At one hospital with which I'm familiar, rooming-in disappears annually when the hospital's Filipino nurses go home for the summer.

Continue undaunted — job. La Leche League and learn how to breast-feed. Opt for family closeness at the very beginning by opposing bottle-feeding. Don't be afraid to pick up your baby when he cries. Invite grandparents, aunts, cousins to babysit.

Avoid separation whenever possible. Mothers and fathers should insist on staying with their children if the children are hospitalized. Make every attempt to bring a terminally ill relative home so that he can die in a familiar environment, surrounded by his family, rather than in a hospital or nursing home where he may die completely alone.

**IT MAY SEEM LIKE a small thing, but try serving a hot breakfast. It encourages all family members to get down to the table at the same time. It may also make them talk to each other. Try to make all meals a shared experience.**

If you as a mother feel that you must go to work, accept only volunteer or part-time work, and consider a job at home as far superior to full-time work outside the home. Instead of enrolling your children in a day-care center, try to set up a co-operative nursery school with friends and neighbors. Trade off baby-sitting with your neighbors' children so that you can have regular days off while your children remain in a home environment similar to theirs.

Seek out the advice of friends and relatives at times of crisis. Reject psychological jargon as being unhelpful and misleading. If produces tremendous scars, which are difficult to heal, and it helps to further tear asunder the fiber of family life.

Question the "rules" that separate family members from each other, not just in the hospital but on the job as well. Is nepotism really bad? Does society really suffer if related individuals work in the same governmental agency or department?

**DON'T PARTICIPATE IN organizations that meet in the evenings — they'll cut down your participation in family life. Question the validity of any group that purports to be meeting for the betterment of children during evening hours, the only time when families usually can be together.**

Above all, determine for yourself how many children you want to have. Don't accept the word of zero population growth advocates as gospel. . . . they're not telling you what kind of a society their kind of "family planning" will ultimately create.

And if you perform all these individual acts, will it help to restore the family? Well help a little. But public policy also must shift, and that shift will probably occur only after individuals begin to change.

**IF I ALSO COULD write a prescription for government and private enterprise, I'd start by sanctioning the licensing of qualified midwives to deliver babies. I'd pay mothers to stay at home instead of going to work elsewhere. That would put a stop to the phenomenon of the suburban woman going to work at an inner-city day-care center while the mother of one of the day-care-for children comes into the suburbs to take care of the suburban woman's children.**

For the elderly we could double, or triple the amount we pay in Social Security. Thus we might eliminate much of the bureaucratic structure of experts who supervise the elderly's income, housing, food supply, medical care and day-to-day life-styles. At times could reinstate family fares and student fares so that family members could afford to visit each other more frequently.

Museums could grant free admission to families who visit such facilities together, just as they now grant free admission to children who attend accompanied by their teachers.

And businesses could stop moving their executives so often that they and their families don't even know where home is.

**PERHAPS AS WE ENTER an era when our material goods are curtailed by shortage and our income cannot be counted on to go over upward, some of these things will happen. Some encouraging signs already have begun to appear: businesses are cutting down on their shifting of executives as the cost of starting to attend colleges closer to home a college costs climb ever higher.**

But most important of all, many of us are starting to question the advice of the experts. We don't need any special talent or qualification to do so; all we have to do is look at what the experts used to tell us. Just look at the words of L. E. Holt Sr. writing during the early 1920s in the then-standard pediatric text:

"The practice of playing with infants and exciting them by sighs, sounds and motion until they shriek with apparent delight is often harmful and should be condemned."

Perhaps some day we'll chuckle just as much at the advice of today's experts as we do at that expert of yesterday. Maybe all our families will chuckle in unison.

# Chicago Daily News

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☆

Wednesday, December 10, 1975

## Letters: The Mendelsohn debate, continued

I wish to respond to Dr. Mendelsohn's series of articles on the family. As a professional social worker and family therapist, I especially resent his presumption that there is one right structure for a family, that only in that structure can children grow up right, and that THE way is to re-establish the traditional family.

We can see how preposterous this is when we evaluate the quality of leadership in this country now; they emerged out of Mendelsohn's traditional family. The low level of creativity and absence of moral leadership is blatant, as the Church committee reports reveal daily.

Mendelsohn is not acknowledging the present reality that, for the majority of people, the possibility of the traditional multigenerational family where the women stay home is not viable. He also does not mention that there is no evidence to support his notion that this is the root of our present problem. That is why Mrs. Kallas in Letters can falsely conclude that the cause for the rise of juvenile delinquency is the working mother, when all evidence is that there is a lower incidence of delinquency in homes where the mother works. Delinquency is higher where the father is absent.

I believe that there is no one right structure for the family and that we are in the process of developing many possible choices for marital arrangements and family life. The immediate result is confusion even among professionals, including Mendelsohn. What can hopefully emerge in the future is that our kids can be free to determine what structure fits them instead of attempting to fit into one monolithic family structure.

Evanston

JAY S. KARANT

TO SHIRLEY GOULD (LETTERS), WHO decries Dr. Mendelsohn's good-sense approach to correcting the ills of our near-sick society, I have a word of advice.

She deplores the interference in child raising by parents of the child's parents, aunts, uncles and other relatives. Professionals have been foisted on us in the past 30 years like locusts, and every silly hypothesis has become instant "proven fact." The social worker, the psychiatric social worker and the psychologist have heaped upon us theories that have made stability obsolete. Love has been replaced by "where's mine;" devotion to one's family has been replaced by peer groups of users of dope, booze, uppers and downers as all too many young people grope helplessly and childishly act like adolescents at an age when they should have been mature years before.

In those families that wisely cling to the unstartling fact that the world didn't begin yesterday and in societies where familial ties and reverence for grandparents are an accepted way of life, you will find inner peace and contentment.

I would rather be smothered by uncollected but loving advice of relatives than seek out "professional busybodies" who may well steer me down horror land.

Oak Park

JOHN H. ADAMSON

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Tuesday, December 9, 1975

## Letters:

### *We need more Mendelsohn*

I wish to compliment you on the series by Dr. Robert Mendelsohn. I have been a reader of your paper for many years and this is the finest series I have ever read.

If more of today's young couples followed Mendelsohn's suggestions in the raising of their families, there would be fewer problems among children. Our home has been greatly blessed in that we have had a three-generation family living together for 34 years where love and respect has abounded.

Keep up the good work with more common-sense articles of this type.

Franklin Park

BETTY McCLEAN

YOUR RECENTLY CONCLUDED series by Dr. Robert Mendelsohn, regarding the family, was an extraordinary piece of iconoclastic perception, beautifully written and absolutely captivating.

From our own empirical data, we know that Mendelsohn's remarks are deservedly compelling. For those of us concerned with the direction of our present health-care delivery system, it is quite refreshing to read Mendelsohn's courageous and insightful remarks, at a time when so few of his colleagues are prepared to discuss the degeneration and abandonment of our family structure.

You would be wise to try to persuade Mendelsohn to write for you on a more regular basis and forget the other "doctors" whose often trite banalities you presently publish. Your readership, I am confident, would welcome with praise more of this refreshing commentary of this challenging new author.

RICHARD J. STEPHENSON  
Chairman of the Board  
Zion-Benton Hospital

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