



“World ecology has to start with womb ecology. We cannot have peace and good people in the world without raising peaceful, good children. And that has to start at conception, not at birth, but at conception.”

– Thomas R. Verny, MD, FRCPC, co-founder of the Association for Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Health, **APPPAH**, www.birthpsychology.com



Film Discussion and Resource Guide

TABLE OF CONTENTS

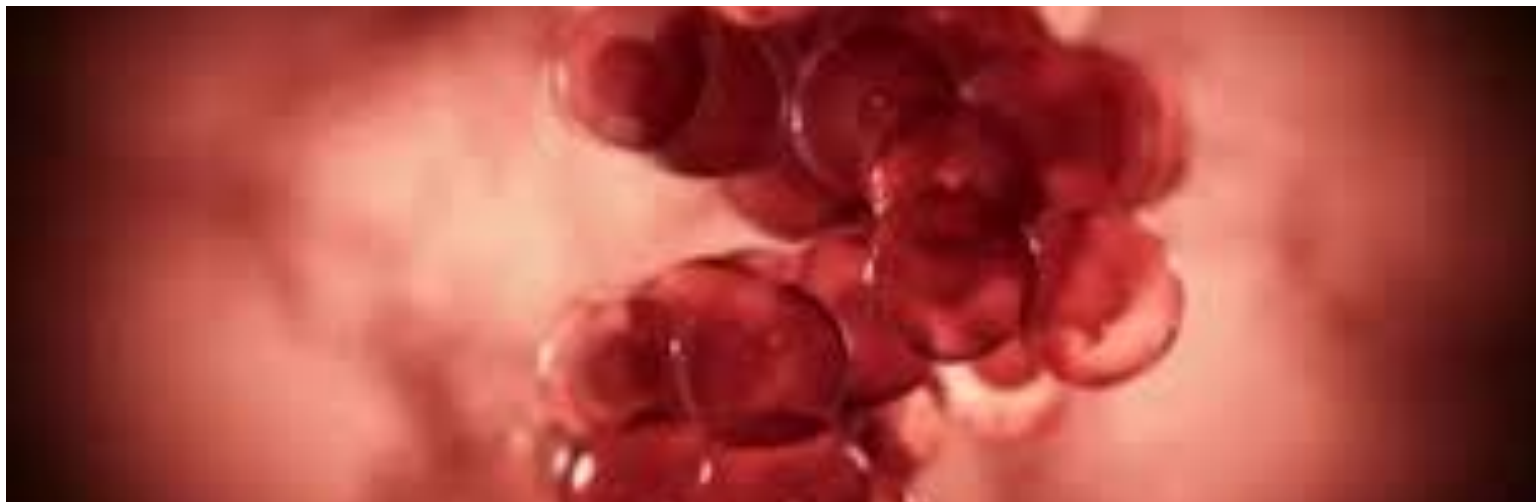
<i>How To Use This Guide...</i>	2
<i>About This Film...</i>	4
<i>The Director's Statement...</i>	5
<i>Outlining The Solution, Preparing For Discussion...</i>	6
<i>The Blueprint Beneath the Imprint...</i>	8
<i>Film Section Summaries, Discussion Ideas And Resources...</i>	9
<i>Birth Psychology Today Resources...</i>	14
<i>Books, Videos, Podcasts Resource Lists...</i>	15
<i>Who Is APPPAH? Letter From The President...</i>	17
<i>How APPPAH Meets The Need For Birth Psychology Education...</i>	18



APPPAH
Birth Psychology



This educational guide is the product of a nonprofit collaboration between the Association for Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Health, **APPPAH**, and **Kindred Media and Community** with the blessing of the In Utero filmmakers.



In Utero: How Did We Get Here? Who Are We Really?

Dear *In Utero* Viewer,

After a wildly successful year of international film festivals, awards and translation into ten languages, *In Utero* was released for on demand viewing in October 2016. Audiences quickly arranged home, university and clinic screenings, eager to discover and discuss the film's cinematic and epic journey through the revelation that "womb ecology becomes world ecology."

Over the past year, the ground breaking, intense film received a spectrum of reactions: from professionals who are grateful for the careful integration of multiple fields of science to some "triggered" audience members who walked out of public screenings.

Birth professionals and midwives were concerned about new parents or pregnant mothers viewing the film without guidance. The filmmakers themselves have cautioned audiences that this film's "dark message" was necessary to "outline the problem" and may not be suitable for some pregnant mothers.

Why Is A Film Guide Needed?

In Utero's mission is to present "a cinematic rumination on what will emerge as the most provocative subject of the 21st Century – life in the womb and its lasting impact on human development, human behavior, and the state of the world." As the filmmakers share in their [Kindred interview](#) from October 2016, *In Utero* "outlines the problem" facing humanity by presenting 50 years of diverse fields of science that, independent of one another, all arrive at one conclusion.

Through well-organized subsections, with titles like Breeding Hostility and Beyond the Blueprint, the film tackles the complex science of epigenetics, transgenerational trauma, and the human psyche's attempts to resolve birth trauma through mythology, especially fairy tales and pop culture movies like *Alice in Wonderland* and *The Matrix*. A dozen international experts – including Gabor Maté, MD, Rachel Yehuda, PhD, and Thomas Verny, MD -- weave a coherent tapestry of diverse scientific insights amid scenes of a fetus jolting at the sound of parents arguing, caged monkeys deprived of mothering attacking each other and aerial shots of industrial agriculture and other modern ecological hell holes.

The Gyllenhaals acknowledge in their Kindred interview that the film is "dark" because it is necessary to explore and "outline the problem" humanity is clearly facing in daily headlines, including the basic question, "How will we survive as a species with industrial values dominating human values?" (Download audio or read transcript [here](#).) While the filmmakers explore deeper insights and potential "solutions" in their [Huffington Post blog](#), are planning a television show, *Making Modern Babies*, and intend to film an *In Utero 2* to explore "the solutions" to the problem presented in the first *In Utero*, eager groups are gathering to study the film now and are asking for guidance.

Over the past year, we've listened carefully to your feedback and will continue to do so. Unlike any medium in our time, *In Utero* possesses the potential to open doors to especially welcome and needed discussions on "How did we get here?" Here is a sampling of what we've found so far, and, on page six, we will share with you how to approach and utilize this important work.

RESOURCES

Watch *In Utero* [here](#), and preview its trailer [here](#).

Read *In Utero*'s [Huffington Post blog](#) [here](#).

Listen to *In Utero* filmmakers talk about the intention of the film, why the film is "dark" because it "outlines the problem" and why "pregnant mothers may not want to watch the film." The filmmakers also explain why the film is not pro-life.

Download the audio or read the transcript [here](#).

Listen to Thomas Verny, MD, the founder of APPPAH featured in *In Utero*, talk about "Ducking Pies" For 34 Years Presenting Birth Psychology

Download the audio or read the transcript [here](#).

If you have printed out this guide, find these resources and more at www.KindredMedia.org.

Gathering Your Feedback And Stories About Viewing The Film

From the beginning, the Association for Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Health, [APPPAH](#), and its nonprofit media partner, [Kindred](#), championed the educational opportunity *In Utero* provided for the public, professionals and parents... or anyone who was born. In support of the film's message, APPPAH board members served as panelists at *In Utero's* world premier in June 2015 at the [Seattle International Film Festival](#), screened the film at APPPAH's [19th International Congress](#) in Berkeley, California, in December 2015 and again at [APPPAH's Regional Conference](#) in September 2016.

As an alternative media and nonprofit educational initiative, Kindred promoted the story behind the film with [interviews with the filmmakers](#), [film presenters](#), and [birth psychology pioneers](#). After digesting a year of reflections and feedback, APPPAH and Kindred collaborated to create an *In Utero Film Discussion and Resource Guide* with the blessings of the filmmakers.

Upon the film's release in October 2016, audiences quickly organized at home group screenings of the film. The reactions to the film and stories began to accumulate and soon we could see our way ahead, and the importance of a guide. (Please continue to send me your feedback at press@birthpsychology.com)

Who Should See The Film?

Should pregnant mothers see the film? In an interview with Kindred, filmmaker Kathleen Gyllenhaal said, "I really feel it is almost 50/50. Some women come up to me pregnant and just thrilled that this film is there. They understand that it is tough, but they are grateful to have this information. I myself, having been pregnant during the making of this film and being hyper aware that all of the stress studies and all of the stress that impacts the fetus in pregnant women and so I had to navigate through all of that and I was angry. I was frustrated. The irony was not lost on me. How do I get rid of this stress so I can be a wonderful vessel for my child? But, you know, learning what I learned helped me find some ways to reduce that stress and so I think it really depends on the woman, the mother, herself. I think it is up to her to decide."

Samsarah Morgan, executive director at the Oakland Better Birth Foundation, held an on demand screening for her childbirth class. Pregnant mothers, childbirth educator students and other parents watched the film and discussed its impact on them afterwards. "I sat in the corner out of the way to gauge their reactions so I would know how to lead the discussion," said Morgan. "I cried while watching a young mother realize 'this is my baby.' After the film she said she had an instinct that that was the case but other people were telling her that it wasn't true. I was crying watching her watch this movie. She was crying about what this meant for her and her baby."

At a home screening of the film to a group of birth psychology professionals in Charlottesville, Virginia, the discussion turned to the film's excellent presentation of "the problem," but its shortfall in presenting the existing resources and healing modalities available for anyone wishing to explore their birth imprints, and the blueprint for wholeness beneath it. Marti Glenn, PhD, Clinical Director of Quest Institute in Santa Barbara, California, pointed out, "The film is theoretical. It does not delve into the known and applied modalities for addressing and healing birth trauma." (You can read the full reactions from Morgan and Glenn in my feature in the *Somatic Psychotherapy Today's* winter 2017 issue [here](#).)

"We had a spirited discussion about it," said Glennie Feinsmith, a [Birth Integration](#) therapist, of an Oregon screening. "If people can put the dots together, perhaps they'll understand the inner rage that persists and is growing in our country, sourcing the chaos we are seeing politically right now."

How To Use This Guide

It is our intention in this guide to introduce within the film's 14 themed chapters an "outline of the solutions" available now - the empowering healing worldview and practical modalities of birth psychology initiated with APPPAH's founding in 1981. APPPAH's director of education, Kate White, gently guides your group into a positive and reassuring approach to the film on page six before diving into the Discussion Ideas for each section. Three pages of resources provide a glimpse into the extensive support and knowledge also available, right now. As you will discover, "the problem" outlined in the film comes with many healing and empowering tools for professionals, parents and anyone who experienced birth, most importantly your own.



It is APPPAH's co-founder, Thomas Verny, MD, who coined the phrase, "Womb Ecology Becomes World Ecology" over three decades ago. Today, APPPAH offers professional educator certificates in birth psychology and a parent education program, The Conscious Baby launches in 2017. You can also stay current with headlines and features from the world of birth psychology at the online newspaper [The Conscious Baby](#). The last two pages of this guide provide an overview of APPPAH's programs.

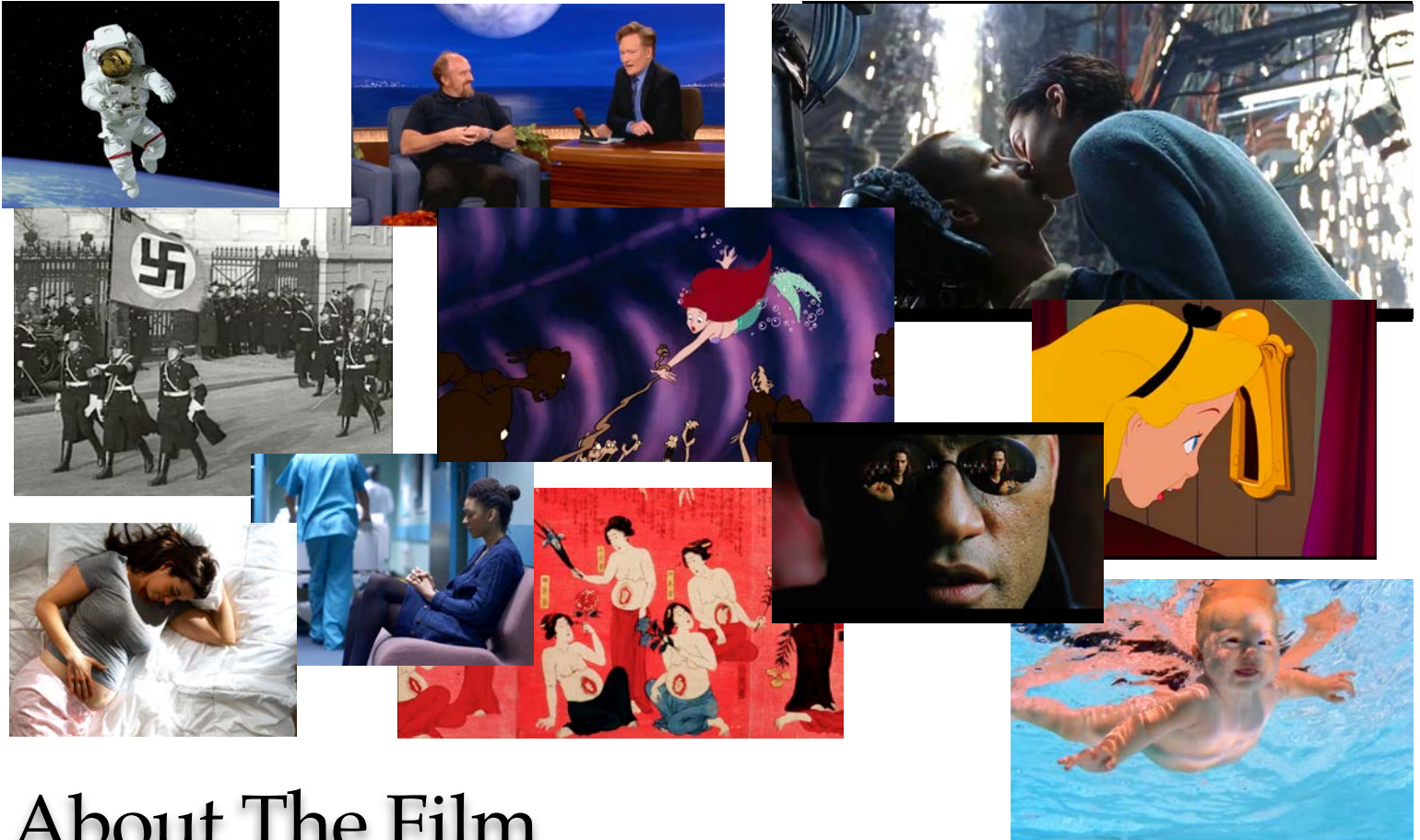
Kindred Media and Community is a nonprofit initiative dedicated to "Sharing The New Story Of Childhood, Parenthood And The Human Family."
www.KindredMedia.org

If you need support in using this film guide or organizing your discussion group, feel free to contact me at press@birthpsychology.com. If you would like to host a large public screening, contact the *In Utero* team [here](#). Thank you so much in advance for your commitment to healing ourselves and our world.

Blessings,
Lisa Reagan, Kindred Editor and APPPAH Media Advisor



"Every woman who has a child puts on that child her experience. So any way that women are treated is what gets passed down... the more people really realize all of this, I think the more thought goes into how we treat the unborn child but also how do we treat the mother? How do we start to make sure we're really making this a world where we don't have to send so much, very troubling difficult, thoughts and feelings towards our fetuses?"
— Loren Weiner, Ph.D., in the film



About The Film

IN UTERO is a cinematic rumination on what will emerge as the most provocative subject of the 21st Century – life in the womb and its lasting impact on human development, human behavior, and the state of the world. IN UTERO brings together for the first time convincing data that explains why some of us face challenges from the start while others thrive. Fetal origins experts, research scientists, psychologists, doctors and midwives – as well as examples from popular culture and mythology – collectively demonstrate how our experiences in utero shape our future. Prepare to be surprised, intrigued, but no longer baffled by what the future holds for yourself, your loved ones, and the human race.

Through enlightening and oftentimes poignant interviews with experts and pioneers, IN UTERO paints a complex tapestry of the human experience from conception to birth. Tapping into cultural myths, popular movies, and technological trends, the film demonstrates how our experiences in utero preoccupy us throughout our lives.

Experts in the fast-growing field of epigenetics explain that we are not only our genes but a product of our environment as well, a proven fact that changes our perception of stress and exposures to the environment during pregnancy. The film looks at how these environmental effects are passed down through the generations through our genes, making it scientifically plausible that a traumatic event that

affected your grandma could leave a mark on your genes.

As if this weren't eye-opening enough, the film reveals through extensive interviews with psychologists, psychiatrists and psychoanalysts that similar theories of prenatal life have been in play as early as the 1900's, and have gained traction ever since. In that sense, the hard sciences are only just beginning to catch up with what others have been saying for decades.

Now, experts in all fields have begun to see the link between the state of the world and prenatal life. Open up the news any day and you'll see a new article about the prenatal period. In just the last few years, enormous strides have been made in understanding the biological, psychological and sociological impact of our time in the womb. Scientists at the Allen Institute for Brain Research discovered that disorders such as [autism and schizophrenia begin before birth](#). In Michigan, researchers have developed MRI technology that is able to [capture incredible images of a developing fetus's brain](#), allowing them to study how areas of the brain begin to link up and coordinate activity. Meanwhile, other scientists and psychologists are finding that prolonged stress such as poverty, and traumatic events such as [Ferguson](#) and [9/11](#) impact a developing fetus on a genetic level. Others have found that [depressed or stressed mothers have higher levels of the hormone cortisol](#), which negatively affects the fetus by constricting

blood flow to the placenta. The list goes on. All of this research urges us to think about who we are and how the foundations of who we've become all began long before we were even born, and ultimately, how we can set our children up for better lives in the generations to come.

It's clear that IN UTERO is an extremely timely and important film. Through interviews with midwives and prenatal psychologists, IN UTERO brings into focus a new field devoted to prenatal life. Time will tell how those whose lives are "known" from the beginning will lead us into the future.

"Human beings are affected by their environment as soon as they have an environment, and that means as soon as they are implanted in the womb... People are conceiving, carrying and birthing children under increasingly stressful conditions. Stress that affected one generation will be played out in the next generation. When we see dysfunction in people, we're actually seeing the imprint."
- Gabor Maté, MD from the film

The Director's Statement



Stephan and Kathleen Gyllenhaal accept the "Breakthrough Documentary" Award at the San Diego International Film Festival

How much are we constructed during the ten months we spend in our mother's womb? Do we carry the trauma of our ancestors into our daily lives? Are we who we think we are?

These questions not only preoccupied me during the making of *IN UTERO*, but gained a deeper

resonance after I became pregnant with my son. In fact, I began researching the film while I was trying to get pregnant, shot the film during my pregnancy, and was deep in post-production when my son was born.

I've always wanted to understand the cause of things. And since I was embarking on the biggest and most important journey of my life (becoming a mother), I wanted to understand everything I could about the relationship between a mother's health and that of her growing fetus, so that I could lay a better foundation for conception and pregnancy. I read a wonderful book called *Origins* by Annie Murphy Paul, along with a lot of other articles, which opened up the world of developmental origins of health and disease.

As my research continued, I kept seeing connections among all these different fields (epigenetics, epidemiology, psychology, neuroscience), and I thought, "This should be a documentary." And when I saw that there really wasn't any other documentary out there (at least to my knowledge) that was bringing together all this research, I decided to do it.

I interviewed many experts — scientists, doctors, psychologists, midwives — and learned that we are, it turns out, products of both nature and nurture, not just the genetic blueprints we used to think we were. Exposure to the environment turns genes on or off — as one expert said, "Good events cause change, bad events cause change." And nurturing (or lack thereof) affects our brain development and even our personality during the prenatal and perinatal periods. Scientific research indicates that physical and mental conditions can be traced to fetal life, caused by chronic stress in the mother.

Psychologists go one step further and suggest that the mother can project unconscious, negative feelings into the fetus's developing mind, contributing to a psychological "imprint" that hampers that baby's emotional health and individuation. For example, if a mother is ambivalent about having a baby, some would say the baby gets that message. So a very complex relationship emerges — some might describe it as co-dependent.

And then there's the transgenerational piece — that changes in one lifetime are passed down to the next generation, and the next, until that gene is switched off. All of which shows how vital the in utero time is, and how it shapes human history.

It was difficult to accept the idea that whatever psychological baggage I had would be transferred to my unborn child. But knowing about the stress effect and transgenerational trauma meant there was only one thing for me to do: Reduce stress whenever possible, get to know myself and my origins as best as I could, sort through any unresolved issues with a therapist, and bond with my growing fetus.

One of the last shoots we did was in Seattle, where there's a group of "prenatal bonding" practitioners who have been trained by a German psychoanalyst named Gerhard

Schroth, who was trained by Jenoe Raffai, a Hungarian psychoanalyst who developed the method. I would describe prenatal bonding as part talk therapy, part mind-body relaxation therapy. I decided to try it. The idea is that you communicate with your baby by connecting with your womb and literally talking out loud (or in your mind) to your baby. By connecting in this way, you build an attachment in which the baby is "seen", understood, and loved.

Though I never really felt I had a conversation with my baby, I can definitely say that putting aside one hour a week to relax, commune with my belly, and start to put into the practice the kind of respectful, loving relationship I wanted to have with my child, was nothing but positive and worthwhile.

As for parenting, my husband and I consciously try to meet our son's needs and stay closely attuned to him during these very early years, because we believe that it will help build his confidence (knowing he is loved), empower him, and encourage his independence as he gets older.

We still don't understand exactly how the mother / fetus relationship informs a person's emotional development. But we're beginning to. The people I spoke to during the making of this film really believe that we can turn things around in our community, our society as a whole, and the world at large if we focus our attention on our first environment — our mother's womb.

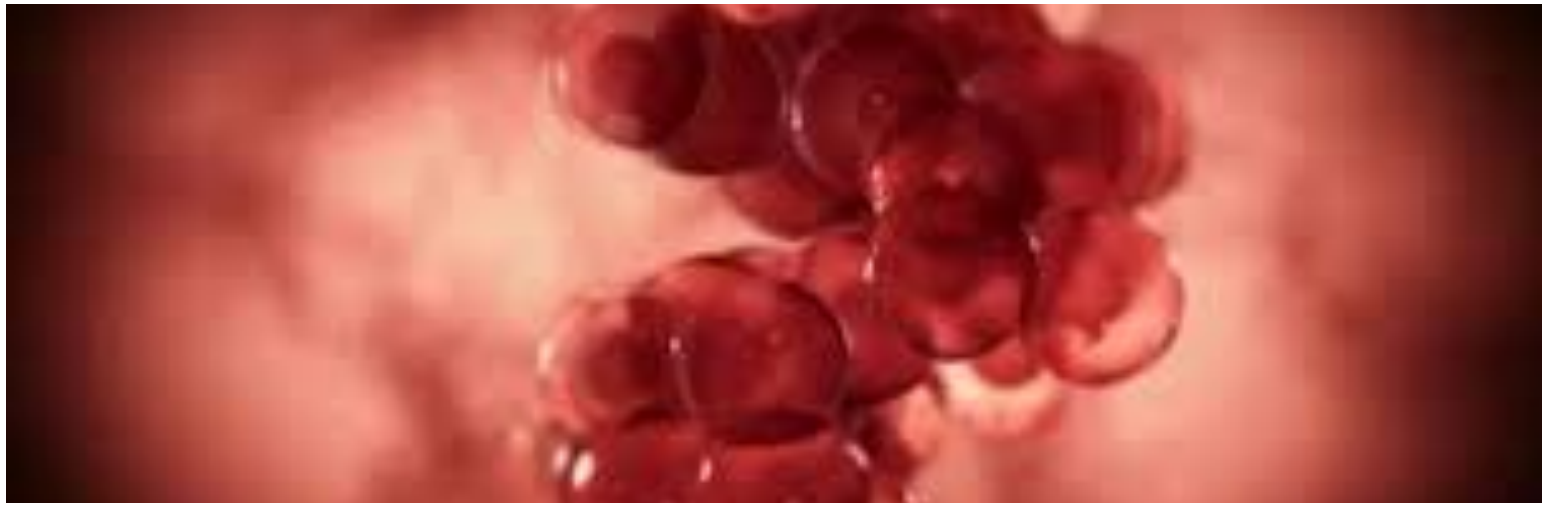
I eagerly look forward to researching the effect of attunement (love) on the developing fetus. How healthy attachment in utero leads to better psychological health. That would make a great sequel — to explore how in utero trauma can be reduced and alleviated, at all stages of life.

— Kathleen Man Gyllenhaal

ABOUT THE FILMMAKERS

Kathleen Man Gyllenhaal (writer/director) was born and raised on Oahu, Hawaii and currently lives in Los Angeles. She is the writer/director of a diverse body of award-winning dramas and documentaries, including *Beauty Mark*, a social documentary exploring America's obsession with body image, perfection and success, and *Sita: A Girl from Jambu*, an ethnographic drama about child sex trafficking in Nepal. Kathleen taught at the University of Colorado-Boulder, then Vassar College, where she was awarded tenure. From there, she transitioned to Hollywood, co-producing the feature film *Grassroots*, starring Jason Biggs and Lauren Ambrose (released by Samuel Goldwyn Films). Kathleen wrote and directed the award-winning *Lychee Thieves*, a multicultural tale set in Hawaii, which was an Academy Award qualifying live-action short. Her most recent film is the feature documentary *In Utero*, which explores the impact of the environment on pregnancy and the next generation (distributed by FilmBuff).

Stephen Gyllenhaal (producer) is a prolific film and television director, writer and producer. His directing credits include *Paris Trout*, for which he received a DGA Award for Outstanding Directorial Achievement in Dramatic Specials, as well as the theatrical films, *Waterland*, *A Dangerous Woman*, *Losing Isaiah* and *Homegrown*. In 2012, he received a DGA nomination for Outstanding Directorial Achievement in Movies for Television for *Girl Fight*. He co-wrote and directed the indie film *Grassroots*, and he recently directed the indie film *So B. It*, based on the best-selling young adult novel, set for release in 2017. He currently directs the Peabody award-winning dramatic series *Rectify* for the Sundance Channel, *Billions* for Showtime, and *Bosch* for Amazon. His producing credits include the TV movies *Living with the Dead*, *The Patron Saint of Liars*, *A Shattered Mind*, and the feature documentary, *In Utero*.



Preparing To Discuss The Film

Dear Viewer,

The information and interviews provided in *In Utero* are powerful. Our message is very similar to the producer's message: babies have experiences in utero, and these experiences have implications throughout life. Each of us comes into life with a blueprint for health and wholeness, and then we may encounter experiences that create "imprints." These range in type and degree, and can be positive or negative, depending on the experience. These include chemical imprints from pollution, emotional imprints from our mother's experience, physical imprints from our position in utero or in relationship with a twin or our mother's body, birth imprints from how we are born, and more. They can also be good experiences, such as feeling seen, heard, safe, protected, loved, connected, supported and a sense of belonging; this is the human blueprint. We can support parents, birthing practices, society and culture to nurture wholeness as a blueprint for healthy, peaceful, connected human beings from the very beginning, before conception. If difficulty happens, we have reparative practices and education to further support families and individuals. APPPAH provides many ways for people to get the information they need.

What We Now Know

In the 1980's, David Chamberlain and Thomas Verny established the Association for Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Health so that practitioners, researchers, professionals of all kinds and the public who believe that babies are aware and conscious in utero could have a place to gather, exchange views, and be nurtured. At that time, many professions could not accept that babies had these early experiences. Over the decades, APPPAH's message has been slowly accepted as science has proven how babies have these experiences such as transgenerational trauma, epigenetics, the impact of stress and chemicals on unborn babies. We also know that we can prevent the degree of negative impact of our world by connecting with our babies before birth, and supporting the mother and family with a variety of healthy practices beyond the basic nutrition and regular prenatal care. These include practices of the autonomic nervous system, bonding and attachment, interventions for stress relief, support during birth combined with judicious use of interventions, and awareness and communication on the part of the parent. These early practices can create a sense of coherency and connection for the baby to grow his or her body and brain prepared for a world of peace and love as opposed a body/brain built for constant stress, fight-flight or even collapse. The truth is there is difficulty in life; we can't avoid that. But we can consciously prepare our children for this world. While *In Utero* shows beautifully and powerfully how these imprints might happen, we at APPPAH know that there are many other avenues for exploration, especially in preventing, healing and repairing imprints so that we can co-create harmonious and resilient ways of living.

Here is information we want you to know, and questions you might have about it:

In the movie, there is this message: *We all have imprints*. An imprint is defined as something that makes a stamp or an impression on a body or a surface. Many of our experiences in the previous generation can carry over to the current generation through cellular memories; we all started as an egg inside the baby of our mother while she was in our grandmother. Difficulty that started in the previous generations may be repeated in the current or future generations. **We now know** that we can work with these experiences, and increase the health and potency of our bodies through a variety of therapies. The information around epigenetics and neurobiology are informing our practices, and healing

ORIENTING YOURSELF AND THE GROUP FOR DISCUSSION

We recommend that before you enter into discussion, you complete a centering and grounding meditation like a body scan, or a [Body-Low-Slow-Loop](#) exercise.

Feel the present time with seat, feet, breath, orienting to the present time, resources and your present age.

Here is a short list of positive messages that will help form the template for health and well-being:

- ◆ You are welcome, wanted, and loved.
- ◆ We will keep you safe and protected.
- ◆ You belong with us, and we can't wait to meet you and hold you in our arms.

Preparing To Discuss The Film, *Continued...*

approaches are shifting quickly with the science. We also have positive and pleasant experiences that become imprints, especially how to connect, share, and love. Not all imprints are difficult, even though this is a main theme in the movie.

How does the science support healing early imprints? The film *In Utero* showed many psychoanalytic approaches to understanding early experiences, including the symbolism of dreams, stories and movies. Prenatal and perinatal psychology and health (PPN) started with psychoanalytic approaches. A disciple of Freud, Otto Rank, first published a book, *The Trauma of Birth* in German in 1924. We have a rich history of therapies and approaches that developed in the 20th century, from body psychology to autonomic nervous system approaches. **We now know** that *how* we are together is key to optimal health; every baby needs the presence of a caring, non-stressed caregiver who is responsive to their cries and other communication. Our relationships become part of our biology, hence the development of interpersonal neurobiology and the importance of secure attachment. Today's therapies include mindfulness, compassion, social engagement and other interactions that illuminate the polyvagal theory. Body-oriented therapies help us recognize and heal overwhelming implicit memories that are still alive in our bodies. These are the experiences that can happen when we are in utero developing our bodies or during birth and the first 18 months of life. See a list of therapies on page 13 of this guide.

We want you to know that humans are about patterns inside and out. Why is this important? With awareness, compassion, love and connection we can help our babies develop optimally. **We now know** that there are optimal patterns to support human development from the start. These include conscious conception; support for mothers to decrease stress and to take care of themselves on every level when they are pregnant; employment of birthing practices that are gentle with as few interventions as possible; support for families right after birth by their families, relatives and health professionals so the newborn family can bond. Ideally, the mother and baby breastfeed, slow down and are cared for during the first six months of life so that the baby's nervous system can completely myelinate and develop. This will set the pattern for a calm and resilient nervous system. Early disruptions and separations during this early time can create imprints, as will overwhelming stress and traumatic events in the lives of the parents.

What can we do if we know we have overwhelming or difficult early imprints? There are a variety of therapies you can select from to help you, including PPN counseling, bodywork, craniosacral therapy, group work, trauma resolution therapies of all kinds. **We now know** that ruptures in early relationships can be repaired with communication and healing processes. Education about attachment, connection, and healing can be found on our website, and in our online programs.

Can I prevent difficult imprints? You may not be able to prevent all overwhelming imprints from happening. In fact, many difficult imprints happen in a very impersonal way, or because of an emergency, and can even result in a gift or talent in a person. APPPAH's new Conscious Baby Program for Parents™ equips parents with tools and processes to connect and communicate with their unborn baby, and to gently look at their own history. So, **we now know** that no matter what happens, the aware parent can communicate to their unborn baby that they are loved and wanted.

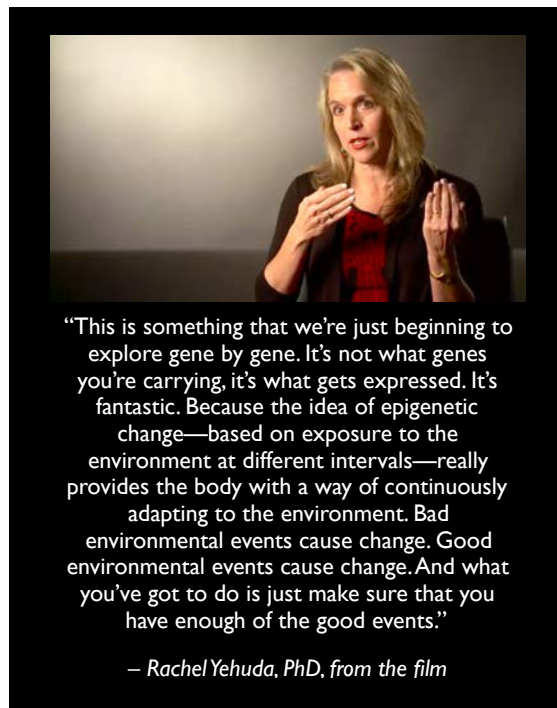
How can I create positive imprints? The study of attachment, infant mental health, and breastfeeding shows us many ways to support human beings from before conception through the first year of life. As a parent, you can start by understanding your own imprints, then create conscious practices that will create a positive experience for you and baby. APPPAH offers several programs that will help you understand how to do this. As a start, there is a short list of positive messages that we want you to know about, and that you may want to give to your baby from before conception. This will help form the template for health and well-being. These are simply this:



- ◆ You are welcome, wanted, and loved.
- ◆ We will keep you safe and protected.
- ◆ You belong with us, and we can't wait to meet you.

Enjoy this film. The discussion questions will help you sort out conscious approaches to having a baby, and a pathway toward healing.

Kate White
Director of Education, APPPAH
Contact me at educate@birthpsychology.com



“This is something that we’re just beginning to explore gene by gene. It’s not what genes you’re carrying, it’s what gets expressed. It’s fantastic. Because the idea of epigenetic change—based on exposure to the environment at different intervals—really provides the body with a way of continuously adapting to the environment. Bad environmental events cause change. Good environmental events cause change. And what you’ve got to do is just make sure that you have enough of the good events.”

— Rachel Yehuda, PhD, from the film

The “Blueprint” Beneath The Imprint

In birth psychology, we look at ways that we are affected by the early period, preconception, pregnancy, birth and the first 18 months of life. There are many experiences during this time can create imprints, or impressions that inform our world view and personal perspective. Often these early experiences form a template that is the foundation for all subsequent experiences. As Catherine Monk, PhD, points out in the quote box to the right, that our blueprint is in direct conflict with our industrial world. Our blueprint was first identified and named “Nature’s Agenda” by the godfather of the conscious parenting movement, [Joseph Chilton Pearce](#), in his five decades of seminal books and lectures. Four decades ago, Pearce named Monk’s observation the “bio-cultural conflict.” The blueprint, refined through millions of years of evolution, is the foundation for the unfolding of human intelligence, not our industrial world’s self-serving design and values.

A short list of the blueprint for human health is:

- We are consciously conceived, and feel wanted by our parents;
- We feel seen, felt and heard by people who love us;
- We feel connected and whole, and supported to be our unique selves;
- We develop secure attachment with an unstressed, present caregiver, ideally or mother and her partner.
- We breastfeed for optimal health and growth;
- We live at a pace that is compatible with our nervous system;
- We each have several layers of support, such as professionals or extended family that supports our parents as we grow;
- We are cherished from before our birth throughout our whole life.
- We trust our body to return to health should we become ill or stressed beyond our functional range.

We all come in connected to our mothers; implantation, growth in utero, and birth are parts of the human natural design. Here is a list of actions to support positive imprints from the early period that continue to inform a blueprint for health for humanity:

- Mothers and their partners consciously conceive;
- Parents are aware of current or past difficulties, and do their best to create a peaceful, supported pregnancy where there is little stress and the mother is well nourished;
- Parents and families members slow the pace of their busy lives and connect with each other in loving ways;
- Secure attachment and bonding is promoted in utero through communication with the unborn baby, and awareness that a new life is forming, growing his or her body as influenced by the environment is a part of daily life;
- Birth is as calm as possible, with minimal use of interventions;
- The baby is placed on the mother right after birth, and the cord stops pulsing before being cut.
- There is no separation after birth between mother and child;
- The mother is supported for at least 6 months post birth to stay at home, breastfeed, and bond with the baby;
- The community comes around the new family with services and food to nourish and support.



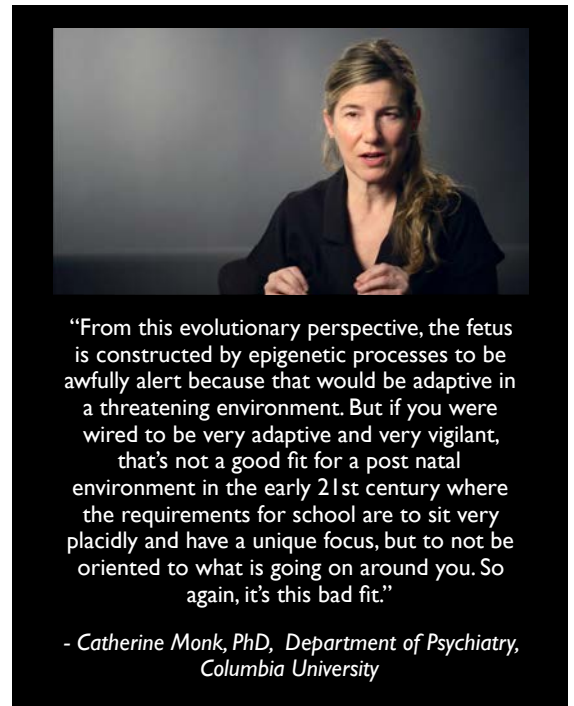
APPAH’s programs: The Prenatal and Perinatal Educator Certificate Program; The Conscious Baby Program for Parents™, and Places of Birth all support this early positive template. Please connect with us to find out more, www.BirthPsychology.com.



For more information on the Blueprint, and Nature’s Agenda, visit Touch the Future, www.TTFuture.org, to discover 40 decades of research, lectures, essays and insights from the most celebrated pioneers of human consciousness. The Academy is the home of the **Joseph Chilton Pearce Library**, over fifty hours of streaming audio and video spanning over twenty five years. The **James W. Prescott Library**, multiple interviews, documentaries and research publications on the impact of sensory deprivation and the developing brain. Prescott’s research into violence using primate subjects is featured in In Utero.



To follow the *New Story of Childhood, Parenthood and the Human Family* as it unfolds, visit Kindred at www.KindredMedia.org to enjoy over 200 contributors who are actively exploring the exciting frontier of human consciousness as it is shaped by our interdependence and connection to one another and our planet. You can also discover Kindred’s Pioneering Partners, such as [Attachment Parenting International](#), and our sister initiatives, like [Parenting as a Hero’s Journey](#), the [Evolved Nurturing Initiative](#) (a science think tank), and the [Book Fairy Pantry Project](#) (providing bonding and books to at-risk families).



“From this evolutionary perspective, the fetus is constructed by epigenetic processes to be awfully alert because that would be adaptive in a threatening environment. But if you were wired to be very adaptive and very vigilant, that’s not a good fit for a post natal environment in the early 21st century where the requirements for school are to sit very placidly and have a unique focus, but to not be oriented to what is going on around you. So again, it’s this bad fit.”

- Catherine Monk, PhD, Department of Psychiatry, Columbia University

IN UTERO

A scientific and cultural documentary about our time in the womb and its impact on human health & society



Film Section Summaries, Discussion Ideas and Resources



Film Opening

In Utero opens by telling its viewers right away why we're here: "New evidence shows humans are constructed by their environment, not just their DNA. Our first and most significant environment is our mother's womb. Our experiences in utero are carried into our adult life. They influence our decisions and the state of the world."

The film opens with an astronaut floating in space and views of industrial food production, military occupation and planetary eco-threats and questions, "Are we really so very advanced?" Yes, we've spent time and resources exploring our outer world, but what could happen if we spent the same amount of time and resources exploring our inner world? Ludwig Janus, MD, says the science showing the sentience of in utero babies has been known for 50 years and Gabor Maté, MD, says we are a society

"in denial" of the consequences of modern culture on our biology, our lifelong health, which begins at conception.

Discussion Ideas

Did your understanding of the connection between "womb ecology" and "world ecology" evolve over the course of the film? Does it make sense now that there is a scientifically recognized connection between healthy babies and a healthy earth?

Society, and therefore most people, still believe that babies are not sentient and a mother's state of being is not important to the health of her child. Can you think of social circumstances where you see this belief expressed? How will you respond to this cultural bias now that you've seen *In Utero*?

Can you name one barrier to accepting that babies have experiences in utero?



Tales from the Womb, 10:17

While Western culture has not acknowledged – until recently - the fetus as a sentient being, evidence of our need to connect with and process our experiences appears consistently in archetypal imagery found in fairy tales, folklore, mythology and, today, modern film. This branch of science is known as transpersonal psychology. This section of the film explores how fairy tales have helped us for centuries to process our birth experience.

Ludwig Janus, MD, says, "In older times, fairy tales were told to the young people to help them to confront the old anxieties from birth and from helplessness. It's the fight with the mighty parent figures. Maybe a witch. Maybe a cruel father figure.

And in modern times we have films. They follow the frame of the fairy tales...We are all born unripe, very helpless, therefore a good bonding in a welcoming mother is important for development of the child."

Discussion Ideas

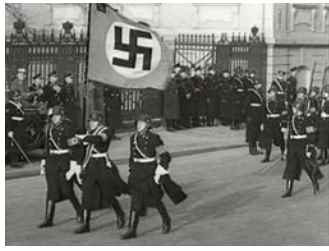
We know from studying birth psychology that how we come into the world forms an imprint. Can you reflect on this and see patterns in your life, the lives of your family or people you know, or in our culture that support or thwart this notion?

Much as what happens in utero can be very impersonal and well as highly personal. For example, if a mother is caught in a war zone, or has a huge unexpected loss, how will that impact the unborn baby? Or, if the mother finds herself in a bind and often feel apprehensive about being a mother, how will that impact the child?

What stories, movies, or other symbolic cultural experiences might help us resource or make sense of our experiences in utero, especially given their implicit nature?

What are the resources from that time that might still be available to us today?

Can you find a way to flip the stories presented here to a more positive view? What does this reveal about our ability to be the author/authority of the stories that govern our daily lives and those that govern our culture?



All The Jewish Babies Were Crying, 21:18

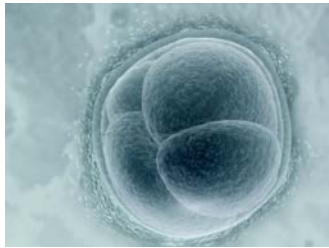
Gabor Maté, MD, shares his personal story of being born in Hungary as the Germans began to march into the country. Maté says, "It's so clear to me that the fear that I've carried all my life, literally in my molecules, is my mother's terror. And then the terror that I experienced during the first year of life under Nazi occupation. Those experiences have stamped my personality, they've stamped my reactivity to the world, they've stamped my worldview, mostly on an unconscious level."

Yehuda shares that the old argument of "Are we formed by nature or nurture?" is dead. "Nobody says that anymore. We don't have nature here and nurture here. We have nature and nurture interacting to form a new thing. I do research on posttraumatic stress disorders and its effects on trauma survivors and actually the next generation. I'm interested in understanding individual differences and how they manifest interacting with the environment and more specifically traumatic events."

Discussion Ideas

Maté tells the story of what was happening for his mother while he was in utero, and how her experience became his experience, too. What influences can you think of in your life that influenced you in that way?

Bruce Lipton, cell biologist, talks about how the environment around the mother influences which DNA is selected for her ovum to be released three months before it actually happens. Think back to your own conception. What was happening in the life of your mother and father? How do you think that has "stamped" your personality, reactivity, and worldview?



Beyond the Blueprint, 18:18

In this section, we explore the meaning of "epigenetics. Thomas Verny, MD, says, "Genes are, you know, only the blueprint. Imagine you have a blueprint for a house. You have a house that you have built sort of to your own specifications. And it has followed the blueprint in terms of where things are but a lot of things have changed as a result of all kinds of environmental factors." And Rachel Yehudi, PhD, says, "It's fantastic. Because the idea of epigenetic changes, based on exposure to the environment at different intervals really provides the body with a way of continuously adapting to their environment. Bad environmental events cause change, good environmental events cause change. And what you got to do is just make sure that you have enough of the good events."

Discussion Ideas

In the previous section, we heard about the negative stamp of World War II on Gabor Maté and explored a little bit about epigenetics. When it comes to the nervous system, and our interaction with the environment, we know that genes are the architect and experience is the carpenter. Our genetic material is a blue print, but we are the culmination of their expression. We know that genes can get turned on and off. When you reflect on your patterns, can you identify influences that could have affected the way your genes were influenced?

Yehuda states, make sure you have enough good events. What are good events in your life that have affected your gene expression? How have you adapted to your environment? Can you tell if those adaptation patterns are helping or hindering you today?



Pregnancy Under Stress, 27:09

How does maternal stress impact the fetus? Maté says, "Emotional states aren't just abstract psychological experiences. They have their physiological correlates in the body... So if I were to scream at you right now, your body will change in a split second. Nobody touched you, nobody put any poison into you, but your body will be in a completely altered state. High levels of cortisol, the stress hormone, would be elevating your blood sugar so that you could fight or have more energy to escape. Adrenaline would be pumping through your system, causing your heart to beat faster, causing your muscles to tighten up, to be stronger, giving you more energy, enabling you to escape or to struggle. And what if you're carrying a baby? And what if you're chronically scared? Those same stress hormones and other compounds will be going through the placenta to the infant."

Discussion Ideas:

Ludwig Janus, MD, points out that one of our cultural hurdles is the belief that life begins at birth instead of at conception as many other cultures traditionally believe. This understanding shifts the attention to the quality of pregnancy the mother experiences as the quality of the developmental foundation the baby receives. Is it not discussed in the film, but the United States has the highest maternal morbidity rate in the industrialized world along with being the only industrial country with no paid parental leave. Does the insight that it is the Western culture belief in the baby's unconsciousness help explain the lack of public policy supporting adults who bring children into the world, ie, parents and families?

How do you see this lack of consciousness about the baby's experience manifest in our culture? As a form of resistance, how can we promote a sense of safety in our people, especially people of color? We know that stress crosses generations, as exhibited in the film. What acts can we define that will soften these ancestral stories?

How can we change our culture to support pregnant women and families with small children? What is one thing you can do in your community?



Breeding Hostility, 30:53

This section shares television images from a study carried out in the 1970s by James Prescott, PhD, examining the development of monkeys who were separated from their mothers as infants. In the film, Verny says, "Every second of prenatal life, 50,000 new neurons are being produced. Every second. There is not a machine in the world that can duplicate that. When you have all those neurons being produced they are very vulnerable. And the smallest, smallest influence will make a huge sort of imprint on, on those neurons and the neural circuits. If there is chronic stress, the woman is constantly obsessing about something, or worrying about something, more and more stress hormones like cortisone is being pushed into the blood stream. When you have too much cortisone in the brain itself, then the nerve cells will be interfered with in the passage and they may even be destroyed."

In pointing out the neuroscience, Moriah Thomason, PhD, says, "We were the first or amongst the first to glimpse inside at the brain becoming wired up. With this new safe MRI technology we're observing large scale systems. What we see in infants exposed to stress in utero is reduced brain volume, reduced brain matter density. ... So if you are less dense in those regions, that suggests that there are less processors available.... We also see reductions in hippocampal volume, and increase in amygdala volume. The hippocampus is critically important for learning and memory. The amygdala is very important for emotional processing, responding to emotional information. And why we think those are particularly important during fetal development is first of all they begin to be developed very early. Disruption in those areas is also associated with higher risk for emotional psychopathology or neuropsychiatric illness."

Discussion Ideas:

The movie shows that disruptions and stress during pregnancy can disrupt brain development, but we know there are ways we can prevent or repair those disruptions. These include communication with the baby, understanding the stress response and practicing stress reduction during pregnancy. What specific kinds of interventions can you think of that will help mothers who are under stress, or repair these experiences in our babies?

Can you see patterns in our culture today that is evidence of these overwhelmed states?

Note: The 1970s monkey studies showed in the television footage in this section were conducted by James Prescott, PhD. See Prescott's work, *Origins of Love and Violence*, at the Touch the Future website: <https://tffuture.org/academy/introduction-james-w-prescott-phd>



The Unwanted Child, 38:42

Luwig Janus describes the *Alien* films as a demonstration of a very difficult side of pregnancy and birth: when the mother does not want to be pregnant. Being an unwanted baby is a very difficult. How do we feel about the impact of a mother's and/or father's ambivalence, fear and even anger toward the situation? The film shows us that this question is not just black and white, but there are variations of gray. Having to think about abortion is often very upsetting, sad and guilt producing for the mother. On the other hand, for the baby, feeling unwanted by your mother and family is a very difficult imprint to work with throughout your entire life. People who are conceived in this way often have to work on their feeling of being ignored or unwanted all their lives.

In this section of the movie the professionals make some interesting points for each of us to consider. Catherine Monk, PhD, says being unwanted is not necessarily about the personhood of the fetus, which is more of a political issue. Babies feel, interactive and are reactive to their environment. Rachel Yehuda, PhD, follows with a comment about how it is an "inconvenient truth" that the fetus feels things. The section ends with Weiner, PhD, saying that it is a goal to get couples to a place where they plan the pregnancy and realize that bringing children into the world is a very big job. Pro-choice and pro-life are not just black and white issues, the conscious baby needs to be involved in any decision made.

In their [Kindred interview](#), the filmmakers addressed the issue of abortion and affirmed that the film is not a pro-life message: "We haven't figured out a way as a society yet to really support pregnant mothers, support children, support life in such a way that we won't have unwanted pregnancies anymore. So until that happens, abortion is a necessary thing."

Discussion Ideas

Families, especially mothers, can be encouraged to gently consider the impact of their thoughts and feelings. Mother and baby are connected; how we can best support them as a dyad in this situation?

Ambivalence toward the unborn infant is a normal protective emotion during the first part of a woman working through the situation of an unwanted pregnancy. Can we create messages for the baby where they can feel included and supported in a decision to stay in utero, or leave if they feel unwanted?

If the mother or father (or both) do not want the baby, can we create messages so he or she can hear and feel is that it is not his/her fault?

The baby is a conscious, sentient being, full of love. He/she needs to know that the mother's situation, her fear and even anger, are not because of him or her being "alive," but because the pregnancy was unexpected and unplanned. What kind of support can we create to help families in this situation?

How can we help couples to get to that place where they can plan the pregnancy, and realize the work of bringing children into the world, as Weiner suggests.

Statements to the Baby, by Sandra Bardsley, APPPAH President, as a guide for communicating intention

- ◆"I recognize your being and honor that. Please help me make the right decision for us"
- ◆"I recognize you and know that you are wise and full of love. I'm striving to decide what would be best for the both of us. Please help me."
- ◆"I'm so conflicted about the timing of your coming. I'm striving to think how, or if I can carry you or parent you."



Rescuing the Mother, 42:03

This section introduces how the imprint of needing to support and rescue the mother starts in utero. Psychologically, emotionally, the baby reacts to a mother who is struggling with the impulse to save her, sacrifice parts of himself or herself or do anything to survive. Gabor Maté makes the point that these kinds of feelings are programmed into a person. The normal state is that adults take care of babies and children, not the other way around. Weiner states, “Once you’re in that state, whatever mom says goes, I’ll do anything, I have to live, I’ll do anything. Whatever you need me to do, do you need me to hold all of your bad feelings? I’ll do it. Now an infant can’t really do it, but there’s an omnipotent attempt to fix it because your life depends on it.” The movie states that this imprint lays the groundwork for perfectionism, super-human attempts to fix things, an overwhelming sense of responsibility and self-sabotage in the adult.

Discussion Ideas

In birth psychology, babies will take on elements of the lives of their parents, and even grandparents for better or worse. There is not a conscious decision that is made to rescue our mothers from their struggles; it is implicit. We are empathetic in our natural human state, especially babies and children. Early experiences can turn into chronic experiences, so the layers that we encounter are not all defined in utero. What kind of communication can we establish with mothers and babies so that the impulse to rescue an adult by the baby / child is decreased?

Are there silver linings to having these kinds of imprints, or are we doomed to rescue people as a pattern stemming from this one experience?

Culturally, how can we support mothers / parents to feel less overwhelmed?



That Forever Empty, 48:25

This section reviews how we have issues with being alone, self-reflective, not distracted by interactions and distractions. Gabor Maté, points out the many ways we distract ourselves—shopping, entertainment, smart phones, ipads, internet, social media, food, drugs, smoking, drinking—are all there because it painful to have self-reflection and introspection. This pain is what Louis CK calls “the forever empty,” a place inside ourselves. Maté is famous for asking the question, *Don’t ask why the addiction, ask why the pain?* He completes this section with the statement: “We really need to appreciate the importance of the prenatal environment in child development and to understand that when we see dysfunction in people, we’re actually seeing the imprint of that early experience.”

Discussion Ideas

How do you feel about Maté’s statement that when we see human dysfunction, we are really seeing an imprint from early experience? If this statement is true, what other behaviors can you see as related to early experience?

How would it be if we could map out these behaviors as patterns related to overwhelming experiences for the baby in utero, during and after birth? If you could fill the “forever empty” with something, what could it be?

If that place was filled, how would our world be different?



The Imprint, 55:19

Bail says, “Everybody has an imprint. The imprint happens because of the long history of traumas in the world.” It is also significant to see that women often bear the burden of trauma in our culture, and this is passed down to the children.

“Human beings are affected by their environment as soon as they have an environment, and that means as soon as they are implanted in the womb... People are conceiving, carrying and birthing children under increasingly stressful conditions. Stress that affected one generation will be played out in the next generation. When we see dysfunction in people, we’re actually seeing the imprint.” Gabor Maté, MD, quoted in film

Discussion Ideas

In this section, we Maté tells us about imprinting, and we hear that everyone has an imprint. What do you think of this notion, that we are all stamped with experiences? We hear a lot about attachment and attunement, what does that mean to you?

Reflect on your own life. If you are a parent, how would you say stress affects your parenting?

Can you outline the ways our culture supports an increasingly stressful life for human beings, especially the burden on women?

What are some ways we can increase feelings of security, especially with our children?

Ray Castellino, prenatal and perinatal somatic expert, talks about creating harmonic resonance in our families. What do think that means, and how do you think we can support this feeling in human beings? What do you think this would do for the prenatal environment?

Film Resource: See The Imprint section of the film without watching the entire documentary here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eB1Df4znVq0&feature=em-subts_digest



A Warm Soft Hug, 1:03

In the film opening, Gabor Maté says our culture is in denial. By the end of the film, we discover the reason for this denial is an undeveloped neurobiology protected by an unconscious, needy baby archetype often portrayed in movies and fairy tales as the villain. For example, we're shown Mr. Smith thwarting Neo's efforts to escape the false *Matrix* of reality. We discover that Mr. Smith/Undeveloped Neurobiology of Needy Baby doesn't have the adult capacity to change their reality so they must protect it the way it is as a "matter of life or death." Note, the title of this section refers to Dr. Mate's experience of talking with a heroin addict who said she used because the drugs "felt like a warm, soft hug." Mate's work with addicts is found in his many books, including *In The Realm Of The Hungry Ghost*.

Clearly, people are in pain, suffering and are trying to find help. This section is pivotal because it explores how we are all plugged into our imprints through the analogy of the Matrix movie. Bail and Weiner take turns showing the viewer how we are really our infant selves and in our imprints even as adults, and we are not conscious about it. When we want change, our unconscious infant self stops it. In the end, Mate calls for us to wake up!

Discussion Ideas:

Does perceiving Mr. Smith's protectionism as infantile, a man-baby, lessen our fear of him? Is there a clue here about using compassionate insight to break through the individual and cultural denial Maté describes? Could this insight help us approach our own birth trauma with more empathy and less fear? How does perceiving Neo as an adult, a person who has broken outside of The Matrix, who recovered from "the imprint on his blueprint" shift your previous view of his character? Please see more on recovery and healing in the second half of this film guide. (Yes, it is possible!)

In birth psychology, we encourage the adult self to become aware, and take the baby self by the hand to walk him or her into the present time. What does this evoke in you? Can you identify your younger patterns and bring them to the present moment?



A Feeling Entity, 1:12

A Feeling Entity. In this section, it is Bail who tells us that it is a great moment when we link our current struggles with our fetal lives. The fetus is a "feeling entity." He says, "When you come to a point of knowing what is the cause of all this? And you know it's your fetal life where all this desperation, this pain takes place. When you have an answer, like the door opens. Because one can make sense of it." The message is about how we can make our early implicit experiences more conscious, and when we do, to have compassion for ourselves.

Discussion Ideas

We all have experiences in when we are babies in our mothers, but not all imprints are painful. We also know that unborn babies do have feelings, and seek to make sense of their experiences in their own way. These early sense-making patterns become adaptations or survival patterns. What do you think about the notion of "making sense" of these early experiences?

Are there ways we can prepare mothers, fathers, families so that they can support babies to make sense of their feelings, even in utero?

Are there ways we can co-create positive feeling states in our preborn babies, and maybe even help guide them toward birth, bonding and attachment from the very beginning?



Now That I Know Better, I Do Better, 1:17

In this final section, Thomas Verny, co-founder of APPPAH gives us a proclamation: "World ecology has to start with womb ecology. We cannot have peace and good people in the world without raising peaceful, good children. And that has to start at conception, not at birth, but at conception." This is a call to action. Many women in this section review their birth. Verny continues to make the point that how babies are conceived, carried, born and nurtured makes a big difference. Finally, Bail tells us that when a baby feels understood, they feel loved. And this understanding happens in everyday moments of physical movements, touch, listening and communicating with our babies. We can make a big difference in the way we care for our women, babies and children.

Discussion ideas:

What do you think of this notion that the microcosm of the womb becomes the macrocosm of the world? Is it true for you, for your community?

How can we change our practices so that mothers and babies feel more supported and more peaceful?

In what ways can we help babies (and their families) feel better understood, and therefore, better loved?

If you were to create a communication campaign, what would be your approach (message, slogan)? What medium and practices would be the best way to get this across.

Birth Psychology Today: The New Story Of The Human Family

The following resource list was compiled to complement the science presented in the film as well as to provide an empowering and inspiring glimpse into the ever expanding world of birth psychology and its healing power for individuals, future generations and the planet. Please share these resources far and wide and help us to, as Kindred's slogan goes, "Share the New Story of Childhood, Parenthood and the Human Family."



[Womb Ecology Becomes World Ecology: In Utero Filmmakers Interview And New On Demand Viewing Insights.](#) In anticipation of the on-demand release, Kathleen and Stephen speak to some of the hardest questions they have faced from international audiences, including: Why is the film so dark? Should pregnant mother see it? Is it a pro-life film? The filmmakers share the need to present the solid and multiple fields of science that all arrive at the same conclusion during the course of the film: womb ecology becomes world ecology. Use link above in title or go to www.KindredMedia.org.



[An Interview With IN UTERO Filmmaker, Kathleen Gyllenhaal.](#) Gyllenhaal tells Kindred the story of her preparation for pregnancy and how her journey inspired her to compile the largely ignored science of the past 50 years for a now award-winning and groundbreaking documentary. Gyllenhaal continued to create the film during her pregnancy, birth and first year of her first child's life. Download the interview, read the transcript and watch the film trailer. Click on the link above or go to www.KindredMedia.org



[Ducking Pies Presenting Birth Psychology For 34 Years: An Interview With Thomas Vervy, MD](#) Thomas Vervy, MD, shares his experience over 34 years of "ducking pies" presenting the science of birth psychology that, today, finds mainstream audiences through an award-winning documentary and international universities promoting Vervy's original wisdom of the foundation of human wellness beginning at conception. Dr. Vervy first presented his insights in the best selling and internationally acclaimed book, *The Secret Life of the Unborn Child* in 1982 and was featured in *In Utero*. In this interview, Dr. Vervy shares the meaning behind his well-known quote, "Womb Ecology Becomes World Ecology" and his hope for continued social and public policy change to support pregnant mothers and babies Click on the link above



[Creating Harmonic Family Resonance With Birth Psychology: An Interview With Baby Whisperer, Ray Castellino.](#) Castellino, an internationally renown "baby whisperer" shares his personal journey into an emerging field of psychology which began with the birth of his son in 1969. His integrative approach to investigating and creating a body of work around birth/somatic psychology has illuminated a path for parents who want to move into a deep relationship with their child in the context of the family as a whole, living and connected entity. This holistic view allows Castellino to listen to all family member's stories of birth, especially traumatic birth, for healing. Download interview and read transcript at the link above, or visit www.KindredMedia.org.



[Bringing Birth Psychology Into The World: An Interview With APPPAH President, Sandra Bardsley](#)

Sandra Bardsley shares insights and overviews of APPPAH's 30 year history and their groundbreaking outreach programs for parents and professionals. In the past three decades, multiple fields of science have emerged to support APPPAH's original premise of the formation of human consciousness prenatally, the impact of pregnancy on neurodevelopment and the sentience of babies. This emerging paradigm supports the possibility of healing and wholeness in humans – at any age.

MORE RESOURCES

Kindred's [New Story Video Series on YouTube](#)

APPPAH's [ClassWomb YouTube Channel](#)

Kindred's Birth Psychology [Features and Podcasts](#)



Books

APPPAH's recommended book list: <https://birthpsychology.com/books-and-reviews>

Kindred's online bookstore: <http://kindredmedia.org/store/>

Windows to the Womb: Revealing the Conscious Baby from Conception to Birth, David Chamberlain, PhD

The Secret Life of Your Unborn Baby, by Thomas Verny, MD

Pre-Parenting, by Thomas Verny, MD

It Didn't Start With You: How Inherited Family Trauma Shapes Who We Are And How To End The Cycle, by Mark Wolynn

The Biology of Belief: Unleashing the Power of Consciousness, Matter & Miracles, by Bruce Lipton, PhD

The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma, by Bessel Van Der Kolk, MD

Prenatal Development and Parents' Lived Experiences: How Early Events Shape Our Psychophysiology and Relationships, by Ann Diamondstein, PhD

Scared Sick: The Role of Childhood Trauma in Adult Disease, by Robyn Kerr-Morse

Origins: How the Nine Months Before Birth Shape the Rest of Our Lives, by Annie Murphy Paul

Parenting for a Peaceful World, by Robin Grille

Creating a Joyful Birth Experience: Developing a Partnership with Your Unborn Child for Healthy Pregnancy, Labor, and Early Parenting, by Sandra Bardsley and Linda Capacchione

Attachment Pregnancy: The Ultimate Guide for Bonding with Your Baby, by Laurel Wilson and Tracy Wilson Peters

Shock: A Universal Malady, by William Emerson

We Are All in Shock: How Overwhelming Experiences Shatter You And What You Can Do About It, by Stephanie Mines

In the Realm of the Hungry Ghosts, by Gabor Maté, MD

Why Love Matters: How affection shapes a baby's brain, by Sue Gerhardt

Welcoming Consciousness: Supporting Babies' Wholeness from the Beginning of Life- An Integrated Model of Early Development, by Wendy Anne McCarty

Ina May's Guide to Childbirth, by Ina May Gaskin

Gentle Birth, Gentle Mothering: A Doctor's Guide to Natural Childbirth and Gentle Early Parenting Choices, by Sarah Buckley, MD

Orgasmic Birth: Your Guide to a Safe, Satisfying, and Pleasurable Birth Experience, by Debra Pascali-Bonaro

The Thinking Woman's Guide to a Better Birth, by Henci Goer

Neurobiology and the Development of Human Morality: Evolution, Culture, and Wisdom, by Darcia Narvaez, PhD

"Womb Ecology Becomes World Ecology."

- Thomas Verny, MD
APPPAH Co-Founder

Association for Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Health
www.BirthPsychology.com



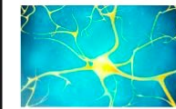
The Conscious Baby

APPPAH IS BIRTH PSYCHOLOGY

HEADLINES BIRTH PSYCHOLOGY SERIES ART & ENTERTAINMENT APPPAH NEWS PREGNANCY SCIENCE HEALTH BIRTH MORE



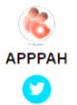
New clues about the way memory works in infancy



Subscribe to the Email Newsletter

enter your email address

Subscribe



Editor's note
For 30 years, APPPAH's nonprofit mission has been to educate professionals and the public, worldwide, that a baby's experience of conception, pregnancy, and birth creates a lifelong impact for individuals, families, and society.

America's Shocking Maternal Deaths



Why babies struggle with tummy time & what to do about it.



The Conscious Baby™ is a monthly e-newspaper featuring the latest headlines, research, features and interviews from the world of birth psychology. The nonprofit project is a free educational tool from APPPAH. You can visit the website at www.TheConsciousBaby.com or have the newspaper delivered to your email inbox.

Are You Interesting In Sponsoring A Screening Of In Utero In Your Community?

Pricing with Performance Rights

Theatrical: \$1400
Community Screenings, Conferences: \$700
Colleges & Universities (DVD/Bluray): \$350
High Schools & Non-Profits (DVD/Bluray): \$175

Contact:

info@inuterofilm.com or sara@inuterofilm.com to coordinate a screening and/or purchase a copy.

Please note that renting or purchasing the film online is for private use only and cannot be used for public or educational screenings.

Visit www.InUteroFilm.com to find a screening near you.

Articles

[APPPAH's Journal of Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Health](#)

[The Conscious Baby](#): Headlines, articles and features for the previous month, www.TheConsciousBaby.com

[Kindred Birth Psychology Articles](http://www.kindredmedia.org/?s=birth+psychology): www.kindredmedia.org/?s=birth+psychology

Trends and Influences in Birth Psychology, by Kate White and Jeane Rhodes: www.birthpsychology.com/journals/%5Bfield_article_issue_reference-title-raw%5D/trends-and-influences-pre-and-perinatal

APPPAH's Adverse Early Experiences and Resiliency Survey: www.birthpsychology.com/press-room/apppah-introduces-new-adverse-early-experiences-and-resiliency-survey

The ACE Study, Adverse Childhood Experiences and Transgenerational Trauma: www.kindredmedia.org/2016/05/how-childhood-t/

Parenting As A Hero's Journey Essays (based on Joseph Campbell and transpersonal psychology in mythology): www.kindredmedia.org/parenting+as+a+heros+journey

Videos

APPPAH's [ClassWomb YouTube Channel](#)

Kindred's [New Story Video Series on YouTube](#)

Ghosts in Your Genes, a documentary, <https://youtu.be/5gBHtGS0kZM>

[Resilience](#), a documentary revealing the toxic stress can trigger hormones that wreak havoc on the brains and bodies of children, putting them at a greater risk for disease, homelessness, prison time, and early death. While the broader impacts of poverty worsen the risk, no segment of society is immune. *Resilience*, however, also chronicles the dawn of a movement that is determined to fight back.

[Core Concepts Of Birth Psychology](#), with Marti Glenn, PhD, and Kate White.

[Pre and Perinatal Experiences for Health and Healing](#) with Kate White and Myrna Martin, A written overview of birth psychology and a four part video series.

Podcasts

How Trauma Crosses Generations, a podcast with Rachel Yehuda and Krista Tipett: www.onbeing.org/program/rachel-yehuda-how-trauma-and-resilience-cross-generations/

Websites

The Conscious Baby Program for Parents™, coming in 2017, www.BirthPsychology.com

Touch the Future, www.tffuture.org

Building and Enhancing Bonding and Attachment clinic, beba.org

[Joseph Chilton Pearce](#), author of the *Magical Child* and *The Biology of Transcendence: A Blueprint of the Human Spirit*, www.JosephChiltonPearce.org

Consciously Parenting Project, with Rebecca Thompson Hitt, www.consciouslyparenting.com

Meditation during pregnancy, expectful.com

Dan Siegel, MD, books and videos, www.drdansiegel.com

Michael Trout, videos and books, www.infant-parentinstitute.com

Nils and Jill Bergman, skintoskincontact.com

TERMS AND DEFINITIONS

Embryogenesis: the formation and development of an embryo.

Somatic Psychology: The study of the felt sense, body-oriented experiences that their impact on the personality, world view and perspective of a person. These include implicit memories, or those memories that are registered in the body before conscious memory, and procedural memory, or those memories that our body remembers like riding a bicycle. Somatic psychology is key to many trauma resolution therapies.

Feeling entity: This is a reference to how babies have the sensory apparatus to feel many things, including pain, temperature, taste, hearing, gesture, movement, fear, and more.

Attuned: When people, especially parents, are aware of what a baby or a person needs at any given moment.

Attachment: The deep, enduring, biologically-reciprocal bond between people, especially babies toward their caregivers.

Imprint: To impress or stamp on a person or a surface.

Epidemiology: The study of the branch of medicine that deals with the incidence, distribution, and possible control of diseases and other factors relating to health.

Neonatal mortality risk: The study of the infant deaths right after birth.

Cardiovascular mortality risk: The study of deaths due to heart disease and other cardiovascular health condition.

Transpersonal Psychology: A sub-field or "school" of psychology that integrates the spiritual and transcendent aspects of the human experience with the framework of modern psychology. It is also possible to define it as a "spiritual psychology".

Nature's Agenda: A phrase coined by [Joseph Chilton Pearce](#), god ather of the Conscious Parenting Movement and author of seminal works like *The Magical Child* and *The Biology of Transcendence*, to refer to the evolutionary blueprint for wholeness and wellness in each human being.

Bio-Cultural Conflict: A phrase from [Pearce](#) describing the hurdles to Nature's Agenda, or blueprint, for the unfolding of human intelligence. Pearce showed in 12 seminal works integrating multiple fields of science, that the Biological Imperatives of humans clashed with Cultural Imperatives, based on industrial values. This bio-cultural conflict prevents optimal brain development, leading to a more aggressive individual and violent society.

WELCOME TO THE WORLD OF BIRTH PSYCHOLOGY

A Letter from the President of the Association for Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Health, APPPAH

DEAR IN UTERO VIEWER,



As current president of the Association for Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Health, APPPAH, I would like to tell you more about our professional organization. Science is revealing that prenatal and perinatal

experiences have a profound impact on the brain and psychological development of the unborn and newborn baby, and therefore the subsequent quality of health and human behavior in adulthood. APPPAH has been studying these factors for over 30 years and has much information to share with parents, professionals and the public.

We see that life is a continuum which starts before conception, not after birth. During this formative period, parents and babies are not isolated from each other, but fundamentally interconnected. A loving, supportive prenatal and perinatal experience inspires healthy bonding and attachment. With strong prenatal bonding, increased sensitivity and awareness of others naturally develops which has long-term consequences for both individual relationships, personal health and for society. Ultimately, conscious womb ecology reveals itself in healthy world ecology as the seeds of love and peace, or fear and violence, are sown in the unborn and newborn baby.

APPPAH focuses attention on the life-changing discoveries being made in the first period of human development, from preparation for pregnancy through the postpartum period and establishment of breastfeeding. We do this by providing valuable directories and resources such as the media center for parents and professionals on our website: www.birthpsychology.com. In addition, APPPAH publishes a monthly updated e-newspaper, The Conscious Baby (www.TheConsciousBaby.com), featuring current research, headlines and articles from birth psychology. Our education department provides online education of the 11 module prenatal and perinatal psychology education course (PPNE) for professionals, as well as an upcoming, online Conscious Baby Parenting™ course. You will want to read more about APPPAH's education department in the flyer

by our education director, Kate White, also found at the HBHE conference.

In addition to online education, APPPAH holds annual regional and biannual international congresses, inviting pioneering speakers who expand your professional knowledge. An archive of these recorded talks are available to purchase on our website.

The *Journal of Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Health* (JOPPPAH) is our quarterly, peer reviewed professional journal. We print leading-edge articles in the field of prenatal and perinatal psychology and health, thus providing another opportunity for you to publish your work. The journal editor welcomes original papers in the field of birth psychology and may be contacted at editor@birthpsychology.com The electronic edition of the journal is a benefit of membership.

As a practitioner in the frontier fields of birth psychology and somatic psychology, I invite you to join the APPPAH family as a member, participant and supporter of this great work. As a professional association, we are here to serve you and your needs for expanding your knowledge and professional community. We welcome you as a new or returning member to our thriving and expanding community.

If you are an active student, you are also invited to apply for another gift from APPPAH. A free one-year membership is being offered to students who are pursuing degrees in fields related to Maternal/Child and Family studies. Our desire is to offer APPPAH's valuable information concerning Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology to students who are studying about human development and the effects of the MotherBaby Bond and Family Dynamics. Please send your application with your personal information to - diversity@birthpsychology.com -for review. Your name, email address, phone number, physical address & a paragraph with your description of your study, focus and interest in APPPAH. We look forward to you joining us in this enlightening and important work.



JOY AND BLESSINGS,
SANDRA BARDSLEY,
APPPAH PRESIDENT

Contact me at
president@birthpsychology.com

APPPAH RESOURCES

EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

PPNE - APPPAH is pleased to offer its *Pre-Natal and Peri-Natal Educator (PPNE) Certificate Program*. Follow the link to discover the new PPNE Certificate Program [here](#).

Visit APPPAH's ClassWomb. You can find out more about our 11 module educational program and read stories about our Mentors, Students, Graduates, and more in our *Classwomb Newsletter - classroom.birthpsychology.com*. While you're there, try our free offerings.

PPNE Somatics Monthly

Lecture. PPNE Somatics is a monthly lecture for anyone who wants to study the somatics, or felt sense, of PPNE.

The Conscious Baby Project. APPPAH is will launch in 2017 a new curriculum for parents, lay persons and spiritual seekers.

APPPAH's [YouTube Channel](#)

EVENTS

[APPPAH's Bi-Annual International Congress](#)

[APPPAH Annual Regional Congress](#)

[Monday LIVE! Lecture Series with Birth Psychology Pioneers](#)

NEWS

[Journal of Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Health, JOPPPAH](#)

[Monthly E-Newsletter Sign-Up](#)

[Classwomb News](#)

[APPPAH Press Room](#)

[Facebook](#) [Twitter](#) [Linked In](#)

[The Conscious Baby E-Newsletter](#)

Why Do We Need Birth Psychology Education?

The pre- and perinatal period includes the time before conception, pregnancy, birth and the first year of life. Many aspects of health come into play. Recent findings in cell biology, neuroscience and epigenetics emphasize that we are influenced by our ancestors' experiences, our mother's experience when we were in utero, and our birth, bonding and attachment with our caregivers. These early and ancestral experiences can influence our genetic code and create implicit memories that in turn, influence our perceptions and experiences today.

APPPAH has developed an educational program that supports professionals in many different fields with 11 modules that represent our competencies. These include epigenetics, neuroscience, psychological theories from our unique perspective, bonding, how the womb is a learning environment, the importance of the baby's experiences of pregnancy, birth and breastfeeding, a long ranging implications of this early period.

Our educational program seeks to improve human health from the very start. Join our pioneering and supportive community at www.BirthPsychology.com today!

We Bring Birth Psychology To The World: The Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology Educator Certificate Course

- 11 Modules of Core Competencies
- Professional Mentor Supported
- Six Certifying Agencies
- Weekly Classwomb Orientation
- Monday LIVE Lectures with birth psychology pioneers and practitioners
- New Innovations Monthly Lecture Program
- Professional Teleconferences
- Read inspirational stories from other professionals at classwomb.birthpsychology.com
- Monthly Student Calls for Support
- At Your Own Pace
- Low Price
- Try a Free Module

Our unique supportive classroom is more than just an educational experience, it is a community. Join us for this great opportunity to learn about pre and perinatal psychology and health.

For more information contact
educate@birthpsychology.com



Discover The World Of Birth Psychology...

Text BIRTH To 42828

To Subscribe To APPPAH's Monthly Newsletter

Association for Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Health
www.BirthPsychology.com



APPPAH's 20th International Congress

The Conscious Baby Emerges:

Scientific, Medical, Psycho-Social, and Somatic Discoveries

November 30th - December 3, 2017
San Diego, California

Early Bird Registration Rates Now in Effect
Register Today and Save!

Association for Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Health
www.BirthPsychology.com