

# PREFACE

Humanity is afflicted with a deadly illness, one whose existence has been apparent since the beginning of written history, and yet no one has written about it extensively until now. It permeates every area of social life, and everyone is a carrier, yet no one is aware of its existence. It is infectious and the disease can be transmitted from one person to another, yet neither the afflicted individual nor its next victim recognizes its symptoms. In fact, the disease's existence depends on its remaining hidden from awareness. Like a virulent virus, it is disintegrating the fabric of society and crippling core life functions by attacking its victims at their most vulnerable place. However, this is not a physical disease but a *bioemotional disease*, one that manifests in the realm of emotions. As it spreads from one person to another, it destroys its victims by producing confusion, uncertainty, and paralysis. Since the disease attacks emotional life, it is called the *emotional plague*.

There is nothing defamatory in this term, *emotional plague*, since it does not refer to conscious malice or moral failing. Nor can the emotional plague be trivialized, ignored, or excused as "just human nature." The world will see no genuine social improvement until the emotional plague is first recognized and then contained.

Why has this emotional plague escaped recognition? A major reason is that, until recently, we have lacked a natural scientific basis for recognizing and understanding the pathology of emotional life. To truly understand human behavior, one must know that an individual's bioemotional structure has three layers. In the *superficial layer*, the average person is restrained, polite, civil, and accommodating. This layer serves to cover the deeper, *secondary (middle) layer*, which harbors perverse impulses such as cruelty, spite, and jealousy. The secondary layer is the repository of all of humanity's destructive impulses. Beneath this second-

ary layer is the *biological core*. At the core, under favorable social conditions, people are decent, honest, industrious, cooperative, and capable of love. They are also capable of rational hatred. The unfortunate result of this layering is that every natural (healthy) social endeavor or emotion that originates from the biological core must, on its way to action, pass through the destructive secondary layer. There it is deflected. As a result, the original, straightforward core impulse is changed into an aberration, a malevolent, destructive force.

To comprehend the emotional plague in all its aspects, one must recognize the relationship between core impulses (primary drives) and those that result when these impulses are blocked and deflected. What causes such a block is “armor,”<sup>1</sup> which functions to change primary core impulses into secondary drives that are socially destructive. The source of the emotional plague is human armor. Armor is a biological condition that consists of chronic involuntary contraction of the human animal, both at the *physical level*, which manifests in contracted musculature, and at the *emotional level*, which causes a contracted, rigid character. Armor functions like a prison. It protects both the armored individual and society by blocking the breakthrough of destructive, painful, and frightening emotions and sensations. Although armor exists in humans, society and social institutions may also be referred to as “armored” because society results from and reflects the armored structure of the individuals who shape it.

Armor is produced in every new generation of infants and children through life-inimical childrearing practices. Such a process occurs at the hands of parents and social institutions that are themselves armored. Armored children grow up to armor their children, and so it goes from one generation to the next. Since society as a whole and each individual is armored to varying degrees, the scope of the emotional plague is as wide as the entire range of human activity. In armored society, the superficial and secondary layers are represented socially, but not the biological core. As a result, the communicability of the emotional plague has increased dramatically in every area of social life. An example is the world-wide increase in terrorists and terrorist sup-

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1. See glossary.

porters. The kind and amount of social carnage carried out by ordinary civilians acting as suicide bombers—a practice considered unthinkable only a decade ago—has become commonplace.

To understand current social events, one must step outside the framework of conventional thinking. Flawed thinking is part and parcel of why things are the way they are. Hence, an understanding of armor and its effects on thought and social behavior is essential. Armor interferes with clear observation and rational thinking, and it gives rise to distorted views. The mechanistic (liberal) and the mystical (conservative) ways of thinking are a product of armor. Because scientists are themselves armored, they know nothing more of the basic functions of life than what Aristotle said in his *Poetics* twenty-five centuries ago. For example, at a 1984 symposium, possibly the first of its kind, on “The Origin and Evolution of Sex,” these Darwinian statements were made: “We do not even in the least know the final cause of sexuality. The whole subject is as yet hidden in darkness. Sex is the queen of problems in evolutionary biology. Why such a thing exists at all is the largest and least ignorable and most obdurate of life’s fundamental questions.”<sup>2</sup> We will show that the life function and the sexual function are closely linked.

Sexuality remains inexplicable because one cannot understand it by means of “mechanistic materialism,” the form of thinking employed by modern-day scientists. Mechanistic materialism holds to the view that nature functions as a machine. Since sexuality cannot be understood using concepts borrowed from the field of mechanics, scientists resort to teleology to fill gaps in their understanding. They postulate a purpose to explain it, such as “sex enables evolutionary gains from genetically varied offspring” or “genetic change is necessary in order for organisms to stay ahead in the never-ending race to maintain resistance to disease” or “sex has an adaptive value in its role in repairing damaged genes.”<sup>3</sup> Teleological thinking is mystical. The phrase “in order to,” used here to explain the phenomenon under investigation, only gives the *appearance* of providing a physical link between

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2. Morse, C. “Why Is Sex?” *Science News*, no. 126 (September 8, 1984): 154.

3. “Is Sex Necessary? Evolutionists Are Perplexed.” *New England Journal of Medicine*, no. 299 (1978): 111.

sexuality and some natural process, yet it explains nothing.

Sexuality was not clarified and placed on a scientific foundation until Wilhelm Reich discovered the energetic basis of life and the function of the orgasm. Reich understood that there are no goals in nature; rather, *nature simply functions*. From his clinical and biological observations, Reich discovered the properties of the energy that governs life. He found that it moves spontaneously and, in the human, is subjectively experienced as sensation and emotion. It periodically builds to a certain level and then under suitable conditions is discharged in the involuntary orgasmic convulsion and in work. The unarmored healthy person feels the build-up as pleasurable sexual tension and the discharge is experienced as sexual gratification. Orgasm and work regulate the energy metabolism of the organism. Because armor blocks sexual excitation, it interferes with the capacity for full orgasmic discharge. This results in a build-up of excess energy that can never be fully released. Over time, the sexual tension produces and fuels neurotic symptoms.

*The essence of life energy is spontaneous movement.* Some examples include the pulsatory movement of jellyfish, the beating of the heart, intestinal peristalsis, and the streaming movement of *living* protoplasm when observed under the microscope. When biology students are taught early on that life is exclusively based on the interaction of inert atoms and molecules and when they are not given the opportunity to observe the spontaneous motility of living protoplasm, their excitement in the subject is destroyed and they are led to conclude that a living organism is no different than a machine. In this way, mechanistic thinking is introduced into the minds of young people and an armoring process of their perceptual function begins. The restriction of bioenergetic movement due to armor results in an intolerance of sensations and the emotion of fear when spontaneous motility is experienced. Armored people cannot feel pleasurable streaming energy—especially involuntary sexual excitation and the loss of control that accompanies the orgasmic convulsion—without becoming anxious. Unable to experience and discharge energy naturally, they must resort to pathological means to deal with the buildup of tension.

Armor deadens the perception of all spontaneous move-

ments, including those arising from the environment, as well as internally arising emotions and sensations. An example of this deadening process is the way that the armored natural scientist conducts research, which is to exclude from the field of observation any natural phenomena that manifests spontaneous motility, such as the streaming motion of living protoplasm. Since armor deadens the amount and intensity of sexual feeling, the scientist must control the motion of observed natural phenomena in order to avoid being excited by the feelings generated within. This explains why scientists must view nature as a lifeless machine, one that can be controlled.

In daily life, armor also drives ordinary people to seek substitute gratification, to pursue substitute behaviors to replace unattainable, full sexual gratification. Common examples are neurotic sexual practices, drug use, excessive talking, overeating, alcoholism, sociopolitical activity, and religious practices. These will be discussed further in Part II.

Average neurotics confine these pathological methods to their personal lives. However, *individuals afflicted with the emotional plague use these same mechanisms but find it necessary to control the mores and behavior of others*—to impose their way of life on others. Such persons cannot stand unarmored expression in others because it creates intolerable longing and fills them with hatred of all that is natural in life, especially healthy sexuality. From this hatred, the plague makes its appearance, and afflicted persons are driven to thwart and destroy the life-positive expressions of healthier individuals. Some of the manifestations of unarmored life frequently targeted by plague individuals are natural sexuality; the liveliness of newborns, children, and adolescents; and spontaneous social and economic activity in democratic societies.

The destructiveness of the emotional plague is carried out through carefully planned and completely *unconscious* rationalizations that serve its end, which is to obstruct natural life. Thus, infants must be separated from their mothers at birth “to protect the health of the newborn” or “to allow the mother to rest”; male infants must be circumcised “to prevent cancer”; infants must be swaddled “to make them feel secure.” On the social scene, Islam must destroy Western society “because infidels are inferior to

Muslims or they are corrupt and want to destroy Islam”; blacks and certain other minority groups deserve preferential treatment “because they have been unfairly treated in the past by whites”; pornography and obscenity are to be permitted “to protect people’s First Amendment rights.” Abortion should be legal “because women should be free to choose whether or not to have a child.” Abortion should be illegal “because women should be responsible for the life of their unborn child.” These arguments justifying the plague are honestly believed by both those afflicted and the public at large. These views are almost certain to prevail since there is always some truth in them and because people are too armored, and therefore too emotionally disturbed, to see the destructiveness that they conceal. Strip away the rationalizations, however, and the underlying hatred of unarmored life comes into view.

At this point, we have to face an objection: Why is it important to recognize the existence of the emotional plague? Why is it not enough to address human destructiveness whenever and wherever it occurs? The answer is that this approach is merely symptomatic. It does not get to the root of the problem of human destructiveness, and it makes eradication or even containment impossible. This approach is no different than that used during the Middle Ages to deal with the epidemic of the bubonic plague, which was to build walls in strategic areas to prevent the migration of people who were suspected of having the disease. Until the infectious agent, the causative bacterium, and the vector of transmission were identified, no effective method of containment was possible. Similarly, without understanding its mode of operation, the emotional plague cannot be treated. However, to understand its mode of operation, it is first necessary to recognize that the pestilence actually exists. Furthermore, without recognizing its mode of operation, it is often not possible to recognize that a socially destructive act has been perpetrated since, as we have shown, human beings are capable of rationalizing and justifying *any* socially destructive act as being for the common good.

Before we can make sense of the world, we must first ask certain questions: Why do people speak and write with abandon about falsehoods of every kind, but the truth is never revealed, accepted, or acted upon? Why are irrelevancies of every kind on vital social issues freely discussed and the essential points of the

matter consistently ignored? The reason is that people are too emotionally sick to see and think clearly about their personal and social lives.

Armor also limits people's capacity to tolerate freedom. People long to be free of the restrictions of their armor, yet they are physically and emotionally unable to relinquish these restraints. Moreover, *people are unaware of the existence of armor or of being trapped in their own armored bodies*. They therefore become vulnerable to political and religious leaders who dangle the illusion of hope for greater freedom and happiness in this world or the next.

The Free World is currently engaged in a life-and-death struggle with the emotional plague as manifested in Islamic *jihad*. While most Islamic nations overtly suppress freedom, liberal Western societies covertly destroy it by indiscriminate permissiveness and license, and by undermining America's military and political efforts to contain and eradicate the destructiveness of Islamic *jihad*. The outcome of the conflict between these opposing forces is uncertain. This is partly because the West is suffering from and is weakened by its own internal struggle with the emotional plague and by the ideological conflicts between the political left and right. The Islamic pestilent individual correctly perceives this vulnerability of Western society and feels confident that the forces of *jihad* can topple it.

The diverse political and ideological groups within human society correspond to the layers of human bioemotional structure. The layer from which an ideology originates determines whether the thinking is liberal or conservative. The rational component of conservatives' thought originates from the biological core and the irrational component from the secondary layer. Liberals, on the other hand, function primarily from the superficial layer. Liberal thinking *seems* rational, but because it originates from the superficial layer, it cannot penetrate into the depths of human nature. Liberal thinking and the solutions offered for social problems are therefore idealistic. Their thought process has a well-rationalized façade that serves to suppress the secondary layer ("the beast") in armored people. Additionally, liberals often fear physical aggression and therefore cannot take appropriate, rational action in the face of a threat to their safety or even their lives.

The limitations of liberal thinking are particularly evident in matters involving national security and defense. There are some liberals who would even have us believe that America is not currently involved in a life-and-death struggle for its very survival. This denial is perceived by our enemy as appeasement. Appeasing terrorism by caving in to a terrorist's demands does not satisfy the terrorist. On the contrary, *appeasement actively promotes terrorism*. As with any other infectious disease, the only means of controlling the terrorist form of the emotional plague is to sequester or eradicate the pathogenic agent.

The depth and clearness of undistorted contact with the biological core and the environment determines one's clarity of thought. The capacity for completely rational thought presumes an absence of armor. In a relatively unarmored individual, thinking is simple and straightforward, sensing and protecting unarmored life. In armored individuals, thinking has become rigid and distorted in ways specific to that individual's character structure, and thinking therefore senses and protects *armored* life.

To evaluate a particular social issue, we must know the attendant details. The thorniest questions deal with personal responsibility and freedom. This evaluation of a social issue rests on two basic questions: Does the issue involve the expression of a core function and if so, to what extent can the core function be expressed, given the limitations due to individual and social armor. Current forms of thinking do not address these questions. However, in our era of social breakdown, the thinking and actions of the political left are more damaging than those of the right. Partly because of its mindless emphasis on promoting social change, the political left cannot maintain cohesiveness and organization of the healthy components of democratic institutions.

Irrational thinking on either side of the sociopolitical spectrum differs in kind. The rigidly moral stance of people on the political right is easily recognized. They make a clear-cut distinction between "right" and "wrong"; they believe in maintaining social traditions and the "status quo"; and they believe in the importance of personal responsibility. Examples include their requirement that women remain celibate prior to marriage and their opposition to abortion. The rigidly moral attitude of people on the left is difficult to detect and therefore more pernicious.



cious because it gives the *appearance* of flexibility and rationality. Liberals emphasize moral relativism, the importance of social change over permanence, and the belief that everyone, including the criminal and terrorist, can behave rationally and tolerate freedom once they have a little help. Examples include the belief that men and women should feel free to engage in sexual relations on a first date regardless of their degree of emotional readiness, the belief that all forms of sexual behavior are natural, and the belief that people have the right to express any idea regardless of its social consequences. Although the liberal view of allowing unconditional freedom is not seen as moralistically biased, the rigid judgment behind this attitude is as strong and tenacious as that of conservative moralism.

Because the moralistic behavior of liberals is concealed, it is more dangerous than conservative bias. Referred to as “political correctness,” it is the mindless application of the same set of rules of social conduct for one and all, which will eventually reduce everyone to the lowest common denominator, lead to less individual freedom, and increase government control of society. This is because genuine freedom without personal responsibility is impossible. The absence of individual responsibility externalizes that function onto government bureaucracy. Recent decades have seen the uncritical public acceptance of liberal thinking followed by a shift in mainstream sociopolitical thinking to the left of center; in other words, the transformation from authoritarian society to *anti-authoritarian* society. In sharp contrast to the neurotic moralism of the right and left, *natural* morality is based on a solid foundation of lawful principles originating from the biological core.

The world’s societies currently lack any real understanding of the underlying causes or management of the emotional plague’s destructiveness. Almost every social problem becomes politicized and mired in an ideological battle between the left and the right. The solutions, bound to be merely symptomatic, are to enact legislation designed to contain or eliminate the social problem’s superficial manifestations. Helpless cries of “There ought to be a law!” are common whenever a troublesome social problem arises. If the problem is big enough, social anxiety rises and public opinion pressures legislatures and politicians to “do something,”

which usually means enacting some form of stopgap legislation. This typically results in the installation of a new layer of bureaucracy with ever-greater restriction of individual freedom and an intensification of social armor. This sequence of events illustrates the functions of armor, which are to reduce freedom of movement and the perception of anxiety. As a result, the underlying source of the social problem is not recognized, and the social symptom is exacerbated. A recent example is the recommendation of the Presidential Commission on the September 11 attacks to install a new cabinet-level national intelligence director and a new layer of bureaucracy to police the old layers. This recommendation overlooks and obfuscates the source of the intelligence problem, namely people's characterological disturbances and political infighting that interfere with the work of intelligence personnel.

The transformation of American society that began during the second half of the twentieth century and sharply accelerated during the Vietnam War era was partly precipitated by the demand for greater sexual freedom accompanied by the breakthrough of secondary layer destructive impulses in the armored younger generation of Americans. Their hatred was directed against every possible symbol of American authority. Fueled by unfulfilled sexual longing which could not be satisfied, this breach in society resulted in greater levels of social armor, which took the form of laws mandating the protection of certain freedoms and rights; but the underlying problems—the energy source of this hatred—remained completely ignored. Unable to achieve sexual satisfaction, the younger generation who first started and then became swept up in this wave of rebellion had to fend for themselves and find a way to deal with their frustrated sexual longing. Some took drugs to numb themselves, while others became hippies, social dropouts, or leftist ideologues. Only a few were fortunate enough to survive unscathed.

Meanwhile, the emotional plague, operating below the social surface, continued to fester. The seeds of suspicion and hatred against America sowed by the leftists in the 1960s are bearing fruit today. Many of these leftist ideologues are currently in prominent positions in every area of social influence. With the fall of the Soviet Union, the world looks with mixed feelings upon America as the only remaining superpower. Since power is equated

with authority, and since leftists have a covert hatred of authority, America becomes identified with the hated authority figure in the minds of the masses, which have been influenced by the left-dominated media. This anti-American bias has had disastrous consequences in the world's life-and-death battle against Islamic *jihad*. Influenced as they are by the leftist intelligentsia, many people are in danger of completely losing touch with their survival instincts.

We must see behind the social façade to understand and hopefully immobilize the emotional plague. Political solutions to social problems are an attempt to deal only with the superficial, symptomatic level of social pathology. The underlying sources of social problems can never be permanently remedied through sociopolitical, judicial, or religious activism. The only way to understand and address such problems is to gain the knowledge of how the emotional plague operates and use a method of thinking that completely differs from those employed by the left and the right. This method is called *functional energetic thinking*. It corresponds to the way nature functions and thus can be used to shed light on the emotional plague. With a clear understanding of the armored human condition and its effect on thinking and behavior, we can become aware of the existence and operation of the emotional plague, which can then lead to appropriate remedial action and prevention.

The ultimate solution to the problem of the plague's destructiveness will come when enough people are free of armor, allowing them undistorted core contact and sustained rational thought. To bring about a healthier society, our primary tasks must therefore be *armor prevention* in newborns and children and, when possible, *armor removal* in adolescents and adults.