

Addendum One — Gender Roles, Gender Instincts, And **Gender-Based Discrimination**

This chapter was not an easy fit for the book on *Primal Pathways* — but the topic deserves to be discussed in the same context as our other sets of instinct-related behaviors.

So this chapter is being included as a major addendum to that instinct book.

Those topics need to be understood.

We have an amazingly and painfully consistent pattern across cultures reaching far back into history everywhere on the planet to discriminate in multiple ways against women. That behavior pattern needs to be clearly understood so that we can deal with those issues in the future in an informed and effective way.

Societies have had very different rules and different roles for men and women going back to the dawn of history. The sad truth is that those rules and those roles have tended to discriminate against women in a wide range of ways that have included restricting functional status for women, and reducing life opportunities for women in almost every culture.

Women have literally been the property of men in many settings — and that continues to be the status of women in some societies today.

Women have not been able to serve in non-hereditary public office for most of history and women were not allowed to vote in most countries when countries began to allow people the opportunity to vote.

Women in our own country have only been able to vote for less than a century. It was a very tough political battle in our country for a very long time, to add even that very basic right for women to our laws and to our culture.

Women have been discriminated against in the ability to own and inherit property, to enter into many levels of legal agreements, and relative to holding many jobs and even entering many professions.

Women have been effectively banned for much of history from multiple professions — with many jobs and many work roles open only to men.

In our own country, we have decided as a culture to be significantly more enlightened relative to women in multiple ways. Progress has been made — much of it very recent. Women now both vote and hold office.

Women no longer surrender control of their property to their husband upon being married.

Women in our country have legal rights to their own children, and we take that right for granted. Multiple other countries today still grant full legal control over children exclusively to the husband or to the man of the family.

We have women serving in our military today and we have relatively recently become one of the few countries that allows women in our military to go into combat. We now have women officers at all levels in our military.

We now expect mayors, governors, and U.S. Presidents to include women in their cabinets in key positions. That is a relatively recent development, but it is now fully and deeply embedded in our political reality and in our political expectations.

A male Alpha office holder in any significant executive setting who does not name women to cabinet positions today runs great political risk.

We have had a number of women governors, and an even larger number of women mayors. It used to make regional and even national headlines that were focused very explicitly on gender issues when a woman was named to serve as a police chief or a fire chief, but those appointments trigger only local interest now.

Our laws now make discrimination against women for hiring purposes clearly illegal. That is relatively recent progress. We used to discriminate very clearly by gender in hiring rules and regulations and now we only discriminate by hiring practices.

We see an increasing number of women in senior management jobs and in senior labor leader jobs. We have begun to see a growing number of women CEOs for major companies. That number is still a small minority of the people who hold CEO jobs for major companies, but it is no longer an absolute anomaly.

There have been some highly visible star performance women CEOs. The news stories about their performance levels still tend to point out their gender clearly and often — but more as a relevant fact and less as an outlier, stand-alone, independently newsworthy piece of information.

Sexual harassment of women in the workplace still happens today far more often than it should, but the harassment isn't as bad or as blatant in most settings today as it was a relatively few years ago.

Legal tools have helped with that sexual harassment issue. It is now against the law. Companies can now be both sued and fined for allowing harassment to happen in any work related settings. That legal reality has

caused most corporate and organizational cultures to evolve in a better direction on those issues.

We do have a horrific number of sexual harassment and even rape issues going on in some sites and settings for our military — and that situation clearly needs to be addressed much more effectively than it has been by the people who lead our military organizations.

We obviously need to change the culture for those settings that allow that harassing behavior to happen. Culture change is almost always a key tool for enlightened behaviors in any settings where negative behaviors were condoned, accepted, or even encouraged by the old cultures.

Embedding a new enlightened belief explicitly into a culture is a good way to have that more enlightened behavior become an expectation in any setting.

We Do Not Have An Instinct To Discriminate Against Women

The patterns of discrimination that exist against women are seen across multiple settings reaching across the entire planet. Those discriminatory practices against women have been clear behavior patterns for generations reaching back in every setting.

For almost all areas where we see universal behavior of any kind, we can easily see the clear set of instincts that exist at their core. Our maternal behaviors, for example, stem from our maternal instincts. Our turf conscious behaviors stem from our turf instincts. Our hierarchical behaviors stem from our hierarchical instincts.

For women's issues, however, the situation is a bit more complicated. There isn't a single instinct that calls for discrimination against women. There is actually a bundle and a package of relevant instinctive issues that combine in often negative ways to adversely affect women.

Several basic instinctive behaviors and instinctive goals combine and work as a package to create the patterns of discrimination against women that we have seen for so many years in so many settings. That bundle of relevant instincts has impacts that manifest themselves in clear and explicit guidance factors relative to women in each of the cultures that we set up in every setting.

Our cultures are the tools of our instincts. Our instincts use our cultures to create behavior patterns that allow people in any setting to achieve their instinctive goals.

Our Cultures Discriminate Against Women

The obvious truth that we face is that our cultures discriminate against women. The specific components of our discrimination against women are each culture-specific — and those behaviors are not directly instinctive.

It is clearly both true and obvious that each culture discriminates against women in its own way. It is also true that each of the discrimination levels we see in each culture has its own instinctive goals as their underlying source and their functional motivation factor.

The consistency of that discrimination that creates all of the rules we see in so many settings restricting the roles of women and limiting acceptable behaviors for women stem from a basic package of underlying instinctive, biological, and functional realities. It is useful to understand each of those underlying realities in order to understand why they collectively have the impact that they do have on the rules that are created by various cultures relative to expected behaviors for women.

Bias, Behavior, And Biology Create Care Disparities

The sister book *Ending Racial, Ethnic, and Cultural Disparities in American Health Care* describes the significant care delivery and care outcome disparities that exist today and explains those disparities in the context of three B's — Behavior, Bias, and Biology.

Some disparities in health care happen because of differences in behaviors by groups of people. Some disparities in care delivery exist because of explicit and implicit bias — both known and unknown — by caregivers.

Some differences in health care exist because there are biological tendencies that increase the risk for some conditions for various groups of people.

When we look at the differences in survival rates and the differences in disease rates by groups of people, we can see one or more of those factors at play in each of the disparities.

Likewise, for the issues of gender discrimination, we can see the impact of biology, bias, and behavior for the cultural expectations we have set and for the rules that have been created by cultures relative to women in all of those settings where discrimination happens.

Cultures Create The Relevant Rules

Our cultures are the implementation tools for our various instincts and our cultures have discriminated against women in a number of ways to achieve some clearly instinctive goals.

The instinctive goals that trigger discrimination against women are actually aimed, at their core, at increasing the survival levels of children in each setting and culture. In some unfortunately persuasive ways, the instinctive need for our cultures to survive has created some cultural expectations that discriminate at several levels against women.

That particular connection between the survival of children and discrimination against women is not always easy to see. Our cultures can be very creative in setting up expected behaviors and developing behavioral guidelines that are unique to each setting.

We have instincts to create marriage-like unions. Those universal instincts to create some kinds of marital unions exist for all people in all settings.

Every culture invents its own marriage rules — and those rules feel right to the people in each culture. They feel right to the people in each setting because one of the key and most important powers that cultures have over us is to make certain behaviors feel right exactly because those particular behaviors are very explicitly culturally aligned.

Our basic primal instincts — like our survival instincts or our parental instincts — each have the power to make certain behaviors feel right or feel

wrong. Our cultures, as key tools for our instincts, also have that same power to make specific behaviors feel right or feel wrong.

Wedding Cultures Exist In Multiple Cultures

Marriage is a good example. The pattern we see is that each culture sets up its own specific marriage rules and its own marriage and wedding expectations.

In some cultures, like India, the marriage expectations for some Indians can make the marriage festivities themselves a major life event for the people involved. Families who can afford multi-day wedding feasts in India often have multi-day feasts and those events “feel right” to the people involved.

Vietnam has its own very relevant and very robust and highly visible wedding day culture that feels very right in Vietnam.

Major areas of China have wedding day cultures that are so elaborate that weddings have bankrupted Chinese families. Weddings follow health care expenses as the second leading cause of financial failure for families in some Chinese communities.

The instinct to create marriages and to delineate related marriage processes is universal. The cultures for each setting create expectations

about weddings and marriages for the people involved — and the expectations seem like the right thing to do for the people in each of those settings.

We clearly also have our own wide range of wedding day cultures in our own country. We have a substantial bridal day industry that thrives on the existence of our own relevant wedding day cultures.

It can feel entirely right for us to act in those ways for our own weddings in this country when our own relevant set of cultural expectations is triggered for that process and that event.

Marriage Rules And Roles Vary By Culture

Our cultures not only guide us relative to the wedding event, they give us our core set of expectations about how the married couple will behave in key ways once the marriage, itself, is underway and in place.

In many countries, the sets of rules about behavior for men and women in marriage are extensive and rigid. Rules and roles are so clearly defined in some settings that they are almost choreographed.

We now tend to be more flexible about those expectations for marital behavior in our country. We used to have fairly strictly defined and clear expectations about those roles for husbands and wives in this country —

with the husband defined by law to be the head of the house and the wife expected to act in various supportive and subordinated ways that were part of our culture for wives at that time.

That set of expectations has significantly changed for most Americans. We now basically expect each married couple in our culture to create its own functional set of marital behavioral expectations and rules.

Our new flexible process to creating behavioral expectations for the role of each person that are marriage specific is clearly superior to our old rigid approach, but figuring out the roles for each couple today can sometimes be significantly more challenging than simply applying the old set of externally imposed and relatively rigid role assignments and gender-based behavioral expectations to each marriage.

Those old rules with their rigid rules and explicit roles for men and women basically existed for many years because of several functional reasons that each, at their core, related in important ways to our collective and individual survival.

Survival Issues — Particularly For Children — Created The
Behavior Expectations

Our survival instincts are actually the key causes for the various cultural rule sets that have discriminated against women in so many settings.

The basic survival issues that have been the basis for many of the old sets of rules and expectations for women were pretty basic. Those rules for women were basically created by cultures to support behaviors that kept people alive and that protected our children so that survival of the group and the culture would continue for future generations.

Survival of the children of the culture was the key goal for many of the gender-specific behavioral rules created and used by each culture.

The logistical issues are clear.

At the most basic logistical and functional level — to collectively survive — we need our children to survive.

Survival for children takes considerable effort and involves multiple processes and approaches.

Our children clearly need many years of adult support in order to survive. Our children could not be more helpless at birth. It takes our children more than a decade to get to the point where they can survive on their own with little or no parental or group support.

The functional reality is that only a decade of support for each child is actually not long enough. Having both group guidance and support for children and direct individual adult support for each child creates higher levels of survival for children if that structured support for each child lasts at least until children reach their mid-teens.

That mid-teen support need reality is functionally recognized by our cultures. Each of our cultures tends to set up behavioral expectations and rule sets that put that support for each child in place and then keep that support structure in place until at least that mid-teen age level.

Families anchor that process. Clearly, the single most important, essential, foundational, and universal element and component of those culture supported systems for child survival has been our families.

Families Have Been The Key To Human Survival

Families are the functional key to human survival. Our cultures all reflect that reality. Our traditional cultures all create behavioral expectations and rule sets that support families in their key roles and functions.

Families are a key culture tool because each child needs a family to provide both food and shelter in order for the child to survive.

Each child also needs a family to socialize the child. Each child needs a family to teach the child the skills and the behaviors that are needed by the child to interact successfully with other people and to become part of the community that is needed for future group survival.

Our cultures all provide extensive support for those child survival functions and processes that include a clear and major role for families. Every tribal and clan culture has very clearly defined rules and clearly defined expectations and roles for families and for family members.

That's where the discrimination and delineation issues relative to the role of women originate.

The rules that have been created by each culture to support families in keeping children alive tend to have key differences in several areas of expected behavior for men and women. Those differences in roles by gender exist for fairly clear functional reasons and tend to be very consistent from culture to culture.

Only Mothers Can Give Birth

Most of the gender specific behavioral expectation rules that have been created by each culture for men and women are anchored on two very clear biological and functional realities. One biological reality is that only

women get pregnant and give birth. The other pure biological reality is that only women can nurse babies and keep babies alive in those early days, month, and years of each life.

Babies each very obviously need their mothers during those key time frames to survive. Our cultures create rules to allow those mother-specific functions to happen for our children.

Cultures create rules about expected behaviors that support mothers giving birth. Our cultures create rules and expectations that help give women the settings that are needed to do both early childhood feeding and early very direct and immediate childhood safety and protection functions.

Societies and cultures have rule sets and behavioral expectation that allow mothers to be with their small children and enable mothers to provide that level of protection and nourishment for each child in the early years of each child's life.

At the core survival level — the goal for each culture is to have children born in the culture survive, and to have women in the culture do what needs to be done so that survival for children is most likely to happen.

Families Need Someone To Provide Food

Part of that process involves getting food to both children and mothers.

To survive over time, families all needed to have on-going sources of food. In our earliest times, that food tended to be provided by a combination of hunting and gathering — with some food collected and harvested and other food pursued and killed.

To survive, families in all settings need to have adequate supplies of food. Both hunting food and gathering food processes were used to make sure that the food supply in primal settings was adequate for family survival.

Cultures tended to set up their own process for doing both hunting and gathering in the ways that were appropriate to each setting and to each situation.

Roles were established by cultures to make those functions happen. The roles tended to be different for men and for women.

The basic gender-linked patterns that tended to be created for those roles tended to be fairly consistent and obvious. Men in the most basic primal settings tend to be the hunters and the warriors. Gathering was done by both genders, but most gathering in most settings was done primarily by women.

Food preparation in almost all settings was an assigned role for the women. Women also tended to be the designated child-rearers and the primary child protectors in all settings.

Women in the earliest cultures also tended to have primary roles relative to creating and maintaining the living settings and creating and maintaining basic apparel for each family member.

Those basic sets of behaviors have been our historic pattern for all of our early cultures. Women gather, nurture, and nest. Men hunt, find major sources of food, defend the nest, and also function as warriors when warrior behavior fits the situational needs of the group.

Those roles and functions tend to be reinforced for each gender by some differences in hormone production. Men tend to have higher levels of testosterone. Testosterone has been linked to aggression, territorial behaviors, and to some categories of sexual activity.

The impact of testosterone on behavior has both positive and negative consequences. The more negative consequences can trigger both conflict and sexually aggressive behaviors.

We have tended to use our cultures to create buffers and to build protections for people inside a culture against some of the more negative interpersonal impacts of those testosterone-linked and influenced behaviors.

Our cultures also give us tools to use to guide behaviors in ways that protect people in a culture against the most negative behaviors of other people in the culture. Cultures have their own rule sets against internal violence, internal assault, rape, and property theft that are intended to allow people in a culture to be situationally safe and to be secure in the context of their culture.

Testosterone triggers some behaviors that require cultural buffering to create internal cultural safety and comfort levels for culture members.

Women by contrast tend to have higher levels of estrogen as a biological influence. Estrogen tends to influence behaviors toward more nurturing and nesting functions and approaches and less toward physical aggression and violence.

Some functions tend to feel right more often for people with high estrogen levels and some functions tend to feel right more often to people with high testosterone levels.

The basic patterns of expected behaviors for both men and women in our traditional and primal cultures tended to have rule sets and functional roles that were reinforced at least some of the time by those sets of hormonal influences.

The Goal Of Cultures Was For Children To Survive

Overall, the basic pattern has been for our cultures to create the rule sets for all of the main categories of behavior that are needed in each setting to keep the family intact, nourished, and protected so that the children in that setting can survive.

The pattern of creating our culture-based rule sets that function to outline and define expected behaviors for people in each culture is consistent and clear. We build the rule set for each culture and then we each tend to believe in and personally embed the rule set for each culture into our thought processes, and our personal and group behaviors.

We tend to enforce the rule set created by each culture in both formal and informal ways.

The rules and expectations that are created about key behaviors for members of a culture tend to be specific. Specific and explicit. We have a strong tendency to build explicit and specific rules. We have a strong

tendency to feel right when we are acting in compliance with those rules and we have a strong tendency to feel wrong — and to experience stress at a personal level — when we act out of compliance with those expectations and rules.

Some Cultures Make It Illegal For Women To Interact Out Of

The Home

Those traditional rule sets have often created major behavior restrictions for women.

Because many of the rules that were created had an explicit goal and objective of having women be in the home caring for the children, cultures in a number of settings have even made it illegal for women to spend time out of the home.

Cultures have also generally tended to have rules and laws that have made it illegal and unacceptable for women to be warriors of any kind or for women to be active hunters at any level in the context of our hunting cultures.

Joan of Arc was burned at the stake in part because she failed to comply with that warrior expectation. She violated the rules of her culture by

wearing military clothing that was illegal for women to wear and by actually going to war in a warrior capacity.

That set of rules about women not going to war clearly evolved from basic guidelines that were created to have women stay safely at home rather than going off to be at risk in the context of conflict. The rules that were set up to support that goal of keeping women near their children in their home actually made wearing armor illegal for a woman.

The fact that cultures felt a need to create an explicit law forbidding women from wearing armor tells us clearly that some women would have chosen to wear armor if that law had not been in place. Cultures do not need to create rules to forbid behavior that would never happened on its own.

The need for that rule tells us that there was a need for that rule — and it tells us that cultures felt that their chance of keeping children alive would be enhanced if they made that behavioral expectation a rule.

We Tend To Perpetuate Cultural Roles

We generally do not remember in those settings that have clear cultural expectations on any topic exactly what thought process or what specific set of circumstances originally and initially caused our culture to create any given rule or any specific guideline about a given topic.

But we do tend to perpetuate the major rules that we create for our cultures in each setting with some vigor. We often become rigid and absolute in our enforcement of our culture-based rules.

We each tend to believe in the rules of our culture and we very often give those cultural rules the weight and the legitimacy level of revealed truth and the status of having both perceived and embodied ethical inherency and innate moral correctness.

So the various sets of rules that were created over centuries by multiple cultures to keep women at home providing direct survival support for the children functionally started as logistical ways of supporting women in their roles as child raisers.

Those basic rules then simply were extended through the explicit building processes of various cultures into rules that made any behaviors by women that fell outside that set of culturally expected behaviors illegal, often subject to penalties of various kinds and potential cause for direct and possibly severe punishment.

Violations by women of some rules about those gender-specific behaviors have been punishable in some settings by death. That level of

extreme and excessive enforcement for those sets of rules is still true in too many settings today where those roles are still in force.

The Rules Were Intended To Help Families Survive

We can clearly trace most of our rules about expected behaviors for both men and women back to those basic biological and functional realities — with the underlying theme for many of the gender-based rules being the need to have families exist and the need to have families succeed.

Those rules were created by cultures because families have clearly been needed for the children to survive and because each culture needs its children to survive for the culture to survive.

At this point in our history, we can obviously make some very different decisions about our rules and our expectations for both men and women.

Because those specific sets of gender-linked rules in their original form are no longer needed in the world we live in today to help children survive now, we can now set up cultures where the behavioral expectations for each gender are much less rigid and where the expected roles for both men and women better fit the wider range of roles that both women and men should have today.

We no longer need to create gender-linked behavior rules for men and women in order for families and children to survive.

Completely erasing any gender related restrictions for any activities or any functions that do not involve physically giving birth is the approach we are moving toward today in our country. That move to eliminating gender barriers relative to functions and roles for all basic areas of our lives is a far better approach for both women and men.

Alpha Roles For Men In Families Was A Reward System And Incentive For Men To Stay With Families

Another very consistent set of behavior rules that have discriminated directly against women that have also been deeply embedded in our cultures have been the rules in almost all cultures that designated men to be the heads of families.

Having men be the heads of families is another remarkably consistent cultural pattern that was also originally intended to help children survive by enhancing the survival levels for families.

Families have been the key survival tool for children. The pattern we see across cultures has been that each family had a head... an Alpha family

member. Each culture tended to designate a head for each family. That role was assigned to men in almost every single culture.

The male in each family tended to be officially designated by each culture to be the head of the family. Having men be heads of families was an extremely consistent pattern.

That rule set that had men serve as head of families clearly existed in all of those cultures for all of those years because that rule also helped families survive. That rule and that hierarchical role helped families survive in various cultures by keeping men from leaving families.

The goal for each culture was to keep men from deserting their families. Cultures did not want men to desert families. If the male in a family in any setting decided to abandon his family, then the food supply for that family would very likely be threatened, the protection levels for the family would be reduced, and the survival of the family would be at higher risk.

Protection levels and food supply levels for family members would tend to be reduced for each family if the men who provided the food and the direct and immediate protection for each family left the family. A family

with less food and with less protection would tend to be a family with a more problematic future.

So cultures created expectations, rules, rewards, and even penalties that were all intended to keep men from deserting families.

At an extreme level, the knight in shining armor who defended his lady against encroaching dangers was the functional model that societies officially expected from their male members. Men in each culture tended to have their personal honor tied to their ability to define their family — both within their community and against outside threats.

It was important for our various cultures to create some kinds of functional realities where the adult male in each family did not abandon the family and where loyalty from each male to each family kept the food supply intact for their family.

It can take a lot of work for a very long time for a male to supply food for a family. Working hard is not its own reward.

It can also put a man at physical risk to have to defend his wife and his family from various kinds of threats and abuses inside a given setting or community.

Some levels of rewards were needed by cultures as ways to incent male behavior toward loyal and continuous family linkages and toward persistent and on-going family support.

Abandoning families was primarily a male-related problem for cultures. Mothers tend to need less additional cultural enticement to maintain their personal and immediate family connections and their family-linked loyalty levels.

Mothers tend to have strong maternal instincts and strong parent-child bonds that keep the mothers linked to each family in a secure way in every observed setting. Those are very powerful and effective instincts.

The number of mothers who abandon their children has always been extremely low. It almost never happens. Several powerful instincts are a factor in that maternal behavior pattern.

Sex And Power Can Function As Incentives

Paternal instincts do also exist and paternal instincts also incent and encourage beneficial behaviors — but paternal instincts often do not have that same power to create the kinds of permanent, consistent and dependable family links for many men that maternal instincts create for women. It is, sadly, not rare for men to abandon their families.

Cultures recognized that problem and cultures dealt with that reality very directly by building specific sets of expectations, benefits, and rewards for men that were collectively aimed at keeping men linked to their families.

To keep men in the family and to keep men providing both food and protection on an on-going basis for their family, almost all cultures created very specific sets of benefits, advantages, and rewards for the men who stayed with their families.

Having men in Alpha positions in each family created one set of rewards. Limiting sex to marriage created another set of rewards.

Sexual relations have been an extremely useful incentive that cultures have used to cause men to form families and to incent men to stay with a family once the family has been created.

Sex Was Only Available After Marriage

The general pattern that exists is for almost all societies to have very strict rules that limit sex to marriage. Traditional cultures usually only gave men guaranteed and legal access to sex in the construct and in the context of a marriage.

Sex drives in young men are at their peak in the years when most cultures allow marriages to happen. Men who wanted sexual relations at that

point in their life needed to have a wife and needed to be in a marriage in almost all cultures in order to have sex be a part of their lives.

Men who were single in most societies were officially expected to be celibate — and only men who were married could have legal and approved access to sex in most settings.

That entitlement context for men who are married to have sex in marriage created rules in some cultures that made it very clear in their behavioral rule set about sex that a man in a marriage would be entitled to have sex when the man decided to have sex.

If a major goal for each culture was to have families survive and to keep the man in the family so that the family is able to protect and raise the children they create, then sex was one tool to use that cultures often used to achieve those goals.

Laws across a wide range of settings and traditional cultures have made it very clear that men who wanted to have sex needed to be married in order to have sex be part of their lives.

The Combination of Sex and Power Kept Men in Families

That combination of sex and power was a very effective set of incentives created by cultures to keep men in families. The sexual incentives

were situationally very powerful and the Alpha power incentive had on-going functional components that lasted for each man in the context of a family for a very long time.

Many men aspire to Alpha status. Alpha status is a very powerful instinctive incentive.

We have multiple levels of Alphas in our world. Alpha status can create various levels of psychological and physiological rewards whenever and whenever it is achieved.

Testosterone levels tend to be enhanced by Alpha status.

Nations have chief executives. Tribes have chiefs. Clans have clan leaders. Families have heads of families.

All are Alpha.

Each of those settings creates its own flow of benefits and each generates its own direct and continuous positive reinforcement for the person in the Alpha position.

Other chapters in this book and chapters in *The Art of InterGroup Peace*, *Cusp of Chaos*, and *Peace In Our Time* describe the role and the function of group Alphas at greater length — describing their roles and their relevant instinctive behaviors.

The same basic pattern of behaviors and rewards is true for family Alphas. Men in most cultures are the heads of families and men who are heads of families get the basic benefits — and the basic responsibilities — that the Alpha role entails for each of those settings in each of those cultures.

Men Are Less Likely To Abandon Families When Given Sex And Power

Men are less likely to abandon a family if the family is the only place and the only setting in the world where each man's Alpha instincts can get activated, rewarded, and reinforced.

Men are also less likely to abandon a family if that family is the only place a man can legally have sex.

A combination of those two reward systems helped keep families intact and supported by their male members in multiple cultures for a very long time.

A man who stayed with his family in all of those basic cultures could expect both sex and power as the rewards for that commitment and that behavior. Alpha status and sex can both create their own levels of attraction, and they can each even set up their own form of addictive behavior.

Men Also Support Families From Love And Commitment

Men also stay with their families and men also support their families because of love, commitment, affection, loyalty, and accountability. Many men support their families for enlightened motives and deeply held personal and ethical beliefs that go far beyond either sex or power.

Men stay with families out of commitment to the family they are part of. Many men identify strongly with their families and act in accountable and loyal ways to the families they are part of.

A wide range of responsible, accountable, and loving behaviors happen for many men — and that fact is a great benefit to the families of those men.

It is not accurate to say that men only stay with families for sex and power. That would be an insult to all the men who stay with their families because they love their families and who want to care for and protect their families.

It is also true that cultures have consistently reinforced those positive motives by creating bribes for men to enter into family settings and it is obvious that traditional cultures have used both sex and power to keep men in their family settings.

Women Tended To Focus On The Home And Family

As a result of those Alpha incentives for men, women generally have not been the official heads of families.

Women, in the context of those traditional cultural rule sets, did not generally hold the official Alpha role in their family settings. Every family in its own setting inevitably worked out its own actual internal roles and functional rules — but those internal rules and roles were created in the context created for gender behaviors that are set up by each culture.

Each married couple in any culture always works out its own internal family balance of power. But the official legal status in almost all traditional settings has been that the men in each family were the formal and official head of each family.

Men Have Also Been Alpha In Other Settings

Having men serving as the Alpha head of all families in our legacy cultures has been paralleled and echoed in having men also be the head of clans, tribes, nations, and religions in all of those settings.

That pattern of having men in all of those Alpha roles does not mean that women do not handle and perform basic Alpha functions well. Women can obviously actually do Alpha roles well. It is not a skill issue.

Women who do take on the Alpha roles in a wide range of settings clearly can do that job with great skill and significant success.

Queens have ruled nations well. Some queens have ruled and created empires. The ability of women to be Alpha and to be good at being Alpha is not and has not been the question.

The limiting issue for having women functioning in those various Alpha roles has been that traditional cultures have usually not allowed that particular role for women to happen. Heads of states, clans, tribes, and families and even religions in all traditional legacy cultures have been very consistently men.

Women Alphas have done very well in multiple key Alpha roles. Interestingly — looking at parallel instinctive behaviors that exist in other species — chimpanzees tend to have an Alpha female for each clan that generates a particular package of hierarchical group behaviors. Horse herds tend to have lead mares that also have clear and consistent leadership roles for each group of horses.

For humans, the issues that deny Alpha status to women are cultural — not instinctive, functional, or genetic.

So when our cultures in any setting do allow for women to function in Alpha roles, the group dynamic changes and the women in those roles do those functions with as much or as little skill as men.

Women In Alpha Roles Also Activate Alpha Instincts

In the more enlightened cultures where those barriers to Alpha status for women have been reduced or eliminated, women tend to take on those roles in situational settings and women who take on Alpha roles tend to generate packages of Alpha instincts, thought processes, and psychological rewards that look very much like the same instinct packages for men.

Women in Alpha roles also tend to take on a sense of territorial alignment and turf protection — and many women who achieve Alpha status tend to have the same kinds of affinity for — and even addiction to — Alpha status as men.

The skill sets needed to be a group leader in our traditional gatherer situations are often slightly different than the skill sets need to be a successful leader in hunter/warrior settings — but both sets of leadership approaches can work well for people of either gender.

We have a couple of instinct supported leadership styles and approaches that can both generate success in leader roles. We have always needed leaders for both our hunter and our gatherer group functions.

The hunter leadership style tends to be more directive and authoritarian. The gatherer style tends to be more participative, inclusive, and collaborative.

Both styles can work well to succeed in leadership roles.

Queens and Empresses have run great nations well — and have done it with full support once the people in each setting understood clearly that the Empress or Queen actually had legitimate function and legitimate functional status as the rightful Alpha for that setting.

Once the people in a setting recognize that the Alpha position for their setting has been filled, the gender of the occupant becomes functionally irrelevant.

Once that perception is that the lead position has been filled, then any leadership legitimacy issues that might exist in a setting fade and — like any other paradigm change — people often can't even remember in a very short time when that particular paradigm and reality did not exist for them.

The new normal becomes the new normal relatively quickly if it is clear that the new normal is, in fact, the new normal.

Alpha Issues Are Not The Most Damaging Areas Of **Discrimination**

Limiting career patterns and work roles for women and having men serve as heads of families and as heads of various groups have not been, however, our worst sets of discriminatory behaviors toward women.

The Alpha role issues and the hunter/gatherer/nurturer role assignment issues that have created many of our problematic discrimination problems relative to women have actually not been the sets of biology-linked realities that have created the highest and most damaging levels of discrimination against women in many cultural settings.

One other biology-linked factor has created some extreme and even cruel restrictions, limitations, and very direct oppression for women in a number of settings.

That additional set of biological realities has also created restrictive cultural rule sets in almost all settings and has created some very onerous and damaging sets of restrictions, boundaries, and even levels of repression for women in a wide range of settings.

The relevant biological reality that has driven a level of negative, restrictive, and sometimes repressive behaviors across cultures against women is the fact that every woman knows with a high level of certainty which children are her biological children — but men obviously have less biological certainty about their own direct parentage situation and status.

Marital Fidelity Provides One Level Of Parental Assurance

Protection

Until relatively recently, men very often could not be absolutely certain that the children who were born to their wives were biologically their own children. If a major goal of cultures in all settings is to keep our families intact, it is clearly true that a man is more likely to be linked with a family and more likely to feed, shelter, and protect his family if the man believes that his own children in that family are actually biologically his children.

There has not been a process of assurance that has had absolute certainty to it. It takes a very brief time for a woman to become impregnated by someone other than her husband. The sheer logistical risk level that exists at a purely biological functional level for a man's children to actually have another father actually very real.

It can happen. It can happen and the man who thinks he is the father of a child may not know that he is not, in fact, the father of the child.

To create a higher level of certainty about undisputed direct parentage levels for men, cultures have almost all created various rules that are intended to keep women in each family setting from being impregnated by other men.

The most common set of rules that is used by cultures for that specific purpose and to achieve that particular goal is to simply require and expect marital fidelity. Virginity tends to be highly prized across multiple cultures and absolute marital fidelity tends to be a clear and strong expectation in all cultures who have marriages as part of their culture.

Legacy cultures have very consistently and very explicitly mandated that sexual fidelity is the only legal and ethical sexual behavior allowed for married women. Women were expected to avoid sex entirely until marriage in almost all cultures — and then women were expected to only have sex with their own husband and to only have sex with their husband after the marriage.

Married women who had sex with someone other than their own husband have been acting illegally and have been subject to severe penalties

or punishment under the rules and the standard practices of most legacy cultures.

Many cultures have also had relatively strong expectations for male sexual fidelity. Some cultures are less strict about fidelity for men, but all of our legacy cultures have been very strict and very explicit relative to expected sexual fidelity for women.

Infidelity Can Be A Sin And A Criminal Act

Most cultures consider infidelity to be both a sin and a criminal act. Punishment for infidelity was expected and it has often been severe.

Even in our own country, for a very long time, it wasn't considered to be murder if a man killed his unfaithful wife or if a man killed his wife's lover if the cuckolded man actually caught them in an actual act of infidelity. Those laws existed just a few years ago. They are gone now — but shooting your spouse's lover in the act of sexual congress was once a legal thing to do.

Men are allowed to have more than one wife in some cultural settings. Men with more than one wife are allowed and encouraged to have sex with each wife. But the rules about the marital fidelity requirements for women and the rules that are still held in place about exclusive sexual behaviors for

each wife are never relaxed at any level for any woman simply because the wife is in a polygamous marriage situation.

So marital sexual fidelity has tended to be a clear expectation for women in all cultures. Those various rules and behavior expectations about sexual fidelity for wives exist in all of those settings because their clear goal is to give the man in a marriage comfort and security that the children he is raising, feeding, and protecting are, in fact, actually his own children.

Some Cultures Functionally Imprison Women To Ensure

Fidelity

Some cultures have gone far beyond simply requiring marital sexual fidelity as an assurance of paternal linkages and security. Some cultures have set up much more restrictive behaviors for women that can actually make it illegal for women to even talk to a man who is not her husband.

Women in some settings have been physically isolated and locked away from exposure to anyone who isn't their husband or a direct family member.

The most restrictive of those kinds of settings functionally imprison women in their own houses once the woman is married.

Some of those same settings also tend to behaviorally and functionally imprison women before the women are married. Unmarried women who talk in forbidden settings to men who are not their family members have been punished and even killed for having what are considered to be — by a very strict culture — completely wrong and unacceptable direct male contacts.

Brothers have killed sisters for simply having those unacceptable contacts with men and for “defaming and dishonoring” the family through those contacts.

“Honor killings” have happened for centuries and they are happening in too many settings today. Pakistan, alone, has had over a thousand “honor killings” in the past year.

Those levels of restrictions take the rules and values about sexual fidelity that are embedded in those cultures and impose them in a dysfunctional and deeply damaging way on real people who are alive today.

Those culture-linked behaviors that allow and encourage people to do evil things to those women are an excellent example of why we have to consider that some cultures have particular features and specific elements and functions that are wrong and that need to be changed as key components for the future of those cultures.

Our Country Has Become Much More Enlightened

Our own country has abandoned almost all of those historic and traditional restrictions on basic behavior levels and functional roles for almost all of our women. The range of acceptable and legal behaviors in those areas for women in our country today actually could not be much wider.

A combination of birth control protection and less restrictive cultural mores have created a behavioral environment where both married and unmarried adult people can have consensual and non-commercial sex with whomever they want to have non-marital sex with without violating any laws or facing any penalties.

Many people have strong ethical opinions about various aspects of sexual behavior, but explicit restrictions on consensual sex between consenting adults are not currently embedded in our laws.

We do have very explicit marriage laws in our country, but marriages are no longer the only legal pathways to sex and our marriage laws are intended more to protect the status of women instead of restricting the status of women.

We now have child support laws that we use as our culture's current tool for keeping men linked in a supportive way to the actual families where the men have sired offspring. Those laws are not perfect, but they do function to create a link between parentage and some basic levels of resource-linked accountability by fathers of children to the children they have created.

We Have Modernized Our Sex Linked Expectations

Our divorce and alimony laws are our cultures way of making sure that children of broken homes and former spouses can both continue to be fed. We don't restrict or grant sex as part of that support package.

So we have very different expectations about behaviors for both men and women in many areas where we used to have constraints, restrictions, and punitive consequences.

We have modernized our expectations significantly. We now deal with sexual issues and sexual behaviors as a topic to be resolved between people and not as a topic to be resolved by our laws.

We have progressed to the point where we accept sexual behavior as a set of instinctive interactions that we allow people to make direct and personal decisions about — and we each can decide what feels right and

what feels wrong to us in our sexual interactions and in our marital relations using our own personal values, beliefs, and aspirations.

We have reached a level where we believe that people can make consensual decisions about their sexual interactions based on their own values and desires and not based on rule sets created by other people.

At the other end of the continuum, even at this point in human history, we still see honor killings in other countries that are happening today to women for things as basic as a situational and symbolic violation of simple intergender contact rules.

We Need To End Sexual Harassment As A Behavior

The one key area where we still need very clear laws relative to sexual behavior and where we still need to make progress as a country relates to the issues of sexual harassment.

We have progressed to making consensual sex legal. What we now need to do is to protect people against coercive sex. We need to keep people from imposing their sexual behaviors on other people.

Too many people — without restraints on sexual coercion — force other people to do sexual things against their will.

That should not be allowed to happen.

That is a very clear area where we need our cultures now to create rules that protect us all from specific negative and intensive sexual behaviors and where we need to do a better job of enforcing the rules about sexual harassment that we create.

There are too many settings where people feel sexually harmed or sexually coerced — and we need to put in place a combination of expectations, cultural guidelines, and enforced regulations to end those levels of harassing behavior.

We Need To Mitigate And Prevent Harassing Behaviors

There are clearly some instinctive behaviors that exist for some people relative to sexually intrusive and abusive behavior that need to be mitigated and prevented for those people by a combination of societal norms and enforced behavioral expectations.

Sexual harassment tends to happen for some people in those settings where laws and rules against sexual harassment either do not exist or are not enforced. We need to have enforcement of our harassment rules at levels that are both real and perceived to be real in all settings.

When laws and cultural expectations about sexual harassment are not in place, some very negative behaviors can and do happen.

In times of intergroup conflict — particularly intertribal conflicts — rapes and sexual abuse tend to be a common occurrence.

In various settings in the world today, some men who are freed by either riot situations or by war settings from normal societal bounds against those destructive and damaging behaviors too often descend into rape or sexual abuse as a situationally triggered behavior. That is a sad, disgusting, and horrific reality.

In some conflicted intertribal settings, women are being captured and sold into sexual slavery. Those issues and those situations are discussed in more detail in the sister books *Cusp of Chaos* and *Peace In Our Time*.

It speaks very badly for the gender that does the vast majority of the rapes that they occur far too often in those kinds of settings where those opportunities exist and where various restrictions on sexually abusive behavior are not being enforced.

Our Cultures Need To Make Sexual Relations Safe And Mutual

Sexual relations can be one of the great joys, wonders, and blessings of life — and sexual relations can also be an area of pain, damage, and clearly intentional evil behavior.

That is clearly a key area where we need our cultures to create the context that is needed to make sexual relations a benefit for people rather than a burden or an attack.

Consensuality needs to be a cultural foundation for us all.

Mutual consent for sexual acts and having sexual acts limited to adults needs to be an absolute expectation. We need to embed those values and those expectations into our personal ethics and into our rule sets.

We need to effectively enforce that set of rules. Harassment, assaults, and rapes all need to be forbidden, outlawed, condemned, prevented, and punished.

As we go forward as a nation, we need cultures in all settings whose gender related components recognize equality, inclusion, and opportunity as foundations for our beliefs, our values, and our behaviors.

We Need To Build On Our Most Enlightened Beliefs

We need to build on the most enlightened behaviors and expectations that we have. We need a culture and we need collective expectations that protect us against a recurrence of our worst gender-linked behaviors and functions.

We also need to recognize that our consistent, pervasive, and historical discrimination against women that has existed in so many areas and so many ways did not emerge from an actual instinctive drive to be misogynistic.

All of those restrictive rules and restrictive roles for women actually were based on a series of explicit culture-specific manifestations of negative behavioral expectations that have combined badly in too many settings to create truly negative consequences for women.

The original functional goals that were the root cause for those rules and gender-linked restrictions were to keep children alive by keeping families alive, intact, and strong.

Cultures believed that keeping men in families was better than having men leave families and abandon the children they have created. Rules and rewards were created by those cultures to give men reasons to stay with their families.

We now can deal with those basic sets of key child protection issues in other ways and through other venues and approaches that also protect our children.

We Need Absolute Equality, Freedom, And Opportunity For All People

We need to have a culture for this country that has absolute equality, freedom, and opportunity for every segment of our population.

We need to eliminate discrimination by group. The groups who we include in that protection need to include groups defined by race, ethnicity, culture, gender, and gender preference. We can't meet our goal of intergroup Peace for all of us until that Peace includes all of our groups.

We have made great progress on our intergroup discrimination issues relative to women. That work isn't done — but it is moving in the right direction — and it is very possible to do.

We also need to make those same levels of progress relative to issues of gender preference. We need to not discriminate in any ways against our gay, lesbian, bi-sexual, and transgender communities.

We need to use our cultures and our belief systems as part of the strategy to achieve the goals of inclusion and equity for us all.

To use our cultures and our instincts most effectively to guide us to enlightened behaviors and a future of intergroup Peace for America, we need

to understand how our instincts actually guide, steer, and choreograph our behaviors.

That is the next chapter of this book.

What gives instincts their power?

That is a useful thing to know.