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## The Aegis of the Madonna Archetype Inoculates Dysfunctional Social Behavior: She Who Must Not Be Named

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**Abstract:** *Historically, the base unit with which to socialize children from birth to (quasi) independence has been the two-gendered nuclear family: father and mother. As the 20th century reached middle age, a social competitor to the father and mother template emerged: the single-parent family. In Western Europe and its extensions, the single-parent family was overwhelmingly the single-mother family. During the same time interval and geography, the role of men, in general, and fathers, in particular, has been heavily scrutinized and evaluated. More than a modicum of the evaluations have been negative, especially of men who sire a child, but do not nurture -- either emotionally or financially -- that child, (i.e., the dead-beat dad). The single-mother has been immune from any serious critiques. A potential reason for this immunity is presented as well as a profile of community dysfunctions stemming from this immunity. No prophylactic or remedy is presented.*

**Keywords:** *Non-marital births, father & child relations, societal evolution, violent crime, single-parent family, single-mother, single-father*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Until the mid-20th century in Western Europe and its extensions, the majority of children were born into and remained in a two-gendered family unit consisting of a mother and a father until they were of the age of independence. At that point, in history, a societal competitor to the two-gendered nuclear family evolved: the single-parent family. During which time the single parent was overwhelmingly the mother and the father's role began to change significantly and has been studied, evaluated, and scrutinized ever since. Whereas, single-mothers have not been subject to such survey. Potential variables and a potential reason as to why this has occurred is presented. This article is offered to empirically highlight a pattern, but offers no solution that could effectively ameliorate the dysfunctions in a practical way.<sup>1</sup>

### 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

*But screw your courage to the sticking-place. And we will not fail.*

---Lady Macbeth

*How good was proved the heart that is in blameless Penelope,...Thereby the fame of her virtue shall never die away, but the immortals will make for the people of earth a thing of grace in the song for prudent Penelope.*

-- Penelope, wife of Odysseus

The generalized imagery of the (U.S.) father figure has become something of a kaleidoscope which has been repeatedly turned by academics and the literati within the last quarter century (e.g., Gray & Anderson, 2010; Drexler, 2005; Dudley & Stone, 2004; Eberstadt, 2004; Immerman & Mackey, 2009; Pruett, 2000; Raeburn, 2014; *inter alios* cf Blaffer-Hrdy, 2009). See: Demos (1986), Griswold (1993), LaRossa (1997), La Rossa et al. (1991) for historical perspectives on the U.S. father.

Until very recently — the latter part of the 20th century — the social father was a given in virtually any and all societies (Hendrix, 1996; Hewlett, 1992; Lamb, 1987; Mackey, 1996; Malinowski, 1927; Van den Berghe, 1979). Two very distinct, autonomous interpretations of this given are available in relationship to the value or function of the current generation of fathers within the U.S. and within any other society with an industrialized-service oriented economy. First, it can be argued that prior fathers had served the dual roles of protector and provider, which were essential to the survival of their wives as well as their children, writ small, and their community, writ large. However, current governmental protectors (*viz.*, local police, state police, the National Guard, and the nation's armed

forces), have efficiently and successfully undertaken the role of protector. The husband/father, who is less well trained for this role, is not needed. Similarly, governmental agencies, through local, state, and federal programs, have made death from privation and malnutrition extremely unlikely. Hence, the father's role of provider can also be supplanted either by working mothers and/or by governmental agencies. The argument would finish with the conclusion that social fathers in an industrialized, service-oriented, information based economy represent an anachronism and are best understood as being somewhere between supernumerary or optional.

On the other hand, the second interpretation argues that the sheer omnipresence of social fathers strongly infers important functions of fatherhood that transcend differences in economies, religions, political structures, ecologies or diets.

Whereas the imagery/expectations/perceptions/value of the father has been much debated and analyzed, the mother has not been as heavily scrutinized, but has retained a very positive imagery. To wit:

*"A mother is a mother still, The holiest thing alive". --- Coleridge: "The Three Graves"*

*"God could not be everywhere; therefore, He invented mothers". --- Proverb*

*"The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world" --- Proverb*

*"What is a home without a mother?" --- Proverb*

*"My mother's hands are cool and fair,*

*They can do anything Delicate mercies hide them there like flowers in the spring" --- Anna Hempstead Branch: "Her Hands".*

*"Her children rise up and call her blessed" --- Proverbs 31: 28.*

*"Mother, that's for real,*

*Your love is so dear,*

*With you, I never fear*

*Or even shed a tear*

*Mother, keep always near." --- Dina Kadry: "Maternal Love"*

Jung's archetype of the Madonna (and child) well represents the thrust of the positive symboling imagery.

It should be noted that it was the (traditional) mothers – young maidens – who were the major beneficiaries of the positive imagery. Elderly crones were less well depicted. For example, the average age of the "witches" hung in Salem, Massachusetts was approximately 61 years. Never married mothers (e.g., Hester Prynne) were also less well regarded. Stepmothers received less praise from cultural traditions (e.g., Snow White, Cinderella, Hansel & Gretel, cf. Baroness Elsa von Schraeder).

It is suggested here that the maternal mystique has inoculated single-mothers from any serious critique -- and hence criticism -- which has been and is readily directed at non-residential biological fathers (Note that author/columnist Ann Coulter is a clear exception). The following hypothesis is tested: If biological & social fathers, in a community, are systematically precluded from their children, then that community will experience increased social dysfunctions. The two dysfunctions that are analyzed are: 1. violent crime, and 2. physical health. It is assumed here that the populations within a(ny) community would prefer less violent crime and enhanced health.

It should be emphasized that the profile of single parent births (wherein the father is precluded) is distinct and independent from the profile of children who were abraded from their fathers by divorce. See: Mackey & Immerman, (2007) for a more in-depth analysis of this distinction, which illustrates an important difference.

### 3. VIOLENT CRIME AND PHYSICAL HEALTH: METHOD

With the above as a prolegomenon, the dependent variables will be presented, with one other variable as a context, to examine any influence the independent variable may have upon the selected behaviors. The dependent variables are infant mortality (infant deaths per 1000 live births), adult violence (as indexed by rates per 100,000 population

of violent crime as known by the police), and rates per 100,000 population of women with the sexually transmitted diseases (STD's) gonorrhea and chlamydia. The contextual independent variable is (male) unemployment, which is to serve as a proxy for privation. The key independent variable is percentage of live births, which are non-marital (births to unmarried mothers also known as *ex nuptial* births).

### 3.1 States as units

The unit of analysis will be states and the District of Columbia. A state (e.g., Ohio, New Jersey, Texas) in the U.S. is a coarse unit of analysis. Many of the U.S. states are far from homogeneous entities. The potential is quite real for noise in the system to overwhelm any useful signal. That is, the possibility to obtain false negatives is quite real. Nevertheless, the use of states as sampling units has been successfully utilized elsewhere (Buttram & Mackey 2012; Immerman & Mackey, 1999; Kania & Mackey, 1977; Mackey & Immerman, 2000; Mackey & Mackey, 2003, 2009, 2012; McLaughlin & Mackey, 2009). The states, including the District of Columbia, were viewed by this inquiry as units discrete enough and sensitive enough to generate reliable and valid patterns for the dependent variables. Moreover, as presented below, patterns did occur.

### 3.2 Societal phenomena: Focal variables

The following social variables were analyzed across the sample of 50 states plus the District of Columbia: 1. Non-marital births, 2. Infant mortality, 3. Violent crime, and 4. The STD's: (a.) gonorrhea and (b.) chlamydia. (Male) unemployment was also surveyed for context as an additional variable (an index of [children's] privation). Non-marital births were indexed by the percent of all live births, which were born to unmarried mothers. Infant mortality was indexed by the infant mortality rate per 1,000 live births. Infant is defined from birth to one-year. The data were from the *U.S. Statistical Abstract inter alia*.

Violent crime was indexed by the number of violent crimes known to police per 100,000 populations. (Male) unemployment is viewed as an index of (children's) privation from which enhanced behavioral problems may emerge. Framed a little differently, if a biological father were to be unavailable to his child to engage in social interaction; so, too, would his economic resources – either in part or *in toto*. The data for the three social indices (violent crime, non-marital births, and male unemployment) were derived from the *Statistical Abstract of the U.S.* (U.S. Census Bureau, 1953- 2012). The data for the STD's were from the CDC's Division of STD Prevention (2016). To avoid isolating an aberrant year, the average number for each state plus D.C. for consecutive years — (2007 -- 2011) – was used in the computations (U.S. Census Bureau, 1953– 2012). Given that an infant is not going to commit any crime at all, the rates of non-marital births from a prior generation (defined as 20 years) are correlated with rates of violent crime, rates of STD's and infant mortality in a subsequent generation (i.e., a generation lag). A five-year interval was surveyed: 1987-1991 and 2007-2011 for all the variables except infant mortality, which had a four-year interval (1987-1990 and 2007-2010). The year 2011 was not – as yet –available.

## 4. RESULTS

**4.1.1 Table 1:** Relationships (correlations and explained variance) between rates of non-marital births and each of the four social indices for concurrent years and for years of generation-lag.

All n's are 51.

Year (concurrent)	Correlations and explained variance in % for non-marital births & social indices							
	Violent crime		Gonorrhea		Chlamydia		Infant mortality	
	(rp)	(rp) <sup>2</sup>	(rp)	(rp) <sup>2</sup>	(rp)	(rp) <sup>2</sup>	(rp)	(rp) <sup>2</sup>
2007	.657***	43.2%	.693 ***	48.0%	.664 ***	44.1%	.652***	42.6%
2008	.638***	40.7%	.669 ***	44.5%	.654 ***	42.8%	.629 ***	40.0%
2009	.608 ***	37.0%	.664 ***	44.1%	.653 ***	42.6%	.628 ***	39.4%
2010	.577 ***	33.3%	.649 ***	42.1%	.627 ***	39.3%	.608 ***	37.0%
2011	.572 ***	32.7%	.645 ***	41.6%	.596 ***	35.5%	.n.a.	
Mean	.610 ***	37.2%	.669 ***	44.8%	.639 ***	40.8%	.629***	39.6%
(sd)	(.037)		(.018)		(.028)		(.018)	

Years

(Generation-Lag [20 yrs])

1987-2007	.756 ***	57.2%	.752 ***	56.4%	.780 ***	60.9%	.691 ***	47.7%
1988-2008	.771 ***	59.4%	.763 ***	58.2%	.810 ***	65.6%	.670 ***	44.9%
1989-2009	.738 ***	54.5%	.765 ***	58.5%	.787 ***	61.9%	.604 ***	36.5%
1990-2010	.791 ***	62.3%	.723 ***	52.3%	.751 ***	56.4%	.473 **	22.4%
1991-2011	.786 ***	61.8%	.758 ***	57.5%	.754 ***	56.9%	n.a.	
Mean	.768 ***	59.0%	.752 ***	56.6%	.776 ***	60.2%	.609	37.1%
(sd)	(.022)		(.017)		(.025)		(.098)	

\*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$

**4.1.2 Non-marital births and rates of violent crime (concurrent: 2007-2011)**

For each of the five surveyed years, the correlation ( $r_p$ ) was significant and positive. The range was .572 to .657; all  $p < .001$ ;  $df = 49$ ). The percentage of explained variance ranged from 32.7% to 43.2%. As would be expected the mean correlation ( $r_p$ ) was also significant: .610 ( $sd = .037$ );  $p < .001$ ;  $n = 51$ ) and was aligned with over a third (37.2%) of explained variance. Hence, as the level of non-marital births increased, so did rates of violent crime. See Table 1.

**4.1.3 Non-marital births and rates of violent crime (generation-lag [1987- 1991; 2007-2011])**

For each of five years, the correlation ( $r_p$ ) between non-marital births) was significantly and positively correlated with rates of violent crimes one generation later. The range was from .738 to .791 (all  $p < .001$ ;  $n = 51$ ). Accounted for variance was from 54.5% to 62.6%. The mean was .768 ( $p < .001$ ;  $df = 49$ ). Over half (59.0%) of the variance is accounted for.

It should be noted that the (positive) relationship – in the U.S – is not new. From 1952 to 2004, the correlation between rates of violent crime and non-marital births was  $r_p = .867$ ;  $p < .001$ ;  $df = 51$ . Approximately three-quarters of the variance ( $r_p^2 = 75.2\%$ ) is accounted for.

**4.1.4 Level of non-marital births and (women's) rates of STDs. Gonorrhea (concurrent: 2007-2011)**

For each of the five years, the correlation between levels of non-marital births and (women's) rates of gonorrhea was significant. The mean correlation ( $r_p$ ) was .664 ( $sd = .019$ );  $p < .001$ ;  $n = 51$ . That is, across states and D. C., as the level of non-marital births increased, so did rates of gonorrhea. See Table 1. Over 40 percent (44.1%) of the variance in one variable can be explained by the variance of the other variable.

**4.1.5 Gonorrhea (generation lag: [1987-1991 – 2007-2011])**

For each of the five years, the correlation between levels of non-marital births and (women's) rates of gonorrhea was significant. The mean level of non-marital births (in 1987-1991) was positively correlated with (women's) rates of gonorrhea (in 2007-2011) ( $r_p = .751$  [ $sd = .017$ ];  $p < .001$ ;  $n = 51$ ). See Table 1. Over half (56.4%) of the differences in rates of gonorrhea are attributed to changes in levels of non-marital births.

**4.1.6 Chlamydia (concurrent: 2007-2011)**

For each of the surveyed years, non-marital births were (positively) correlated to (women's) rates of chlamydia. The range was from .596 to .664; all  $p < .001$ ;  $df = 49$ ). The mean correlation ( $r_p$ ) was .639 ( $sd = .028$ );  $p < .001$ ;  $n = 51$ . As non-marital births increased, the rates of chlamydia also significantly increased. See Table 1. About 40 percent (40.8 %) of the variance in chlamydia is aligned with the variance of the rates non-marital births.

**4.1.7 Chlamydia (generation-lag 1987-1991 – 2007-2011)**

For each of the surveyed years, the level of non-marital births was (positively) correlated to (women's) rate of chlamydia. The range was from .751 to .810 (all  $p < .001$ ;  $df = 49$ ). The mean level of non-marital births (in 1987-

1991) was positively correlated with mean (women's) rate of chlamydia (in 2007-2011) ( $r_p = .776$  [sd = .025;  $p < .001$ ;  $n = 51$ ). See Table 1. Over half (60.2%) of the differences in (women's) rates of chlamydia is aligned with changes in levels of non-marital births.

**4.1.8 Infant mortality (concurrent: 2007-2010)**

For each of the four available years (2011 was not yet available), the level of non-marital births was significantly correlated with rates of infant mortality (all  $p < .001$ ;  $df = 49$ ). The range was from .608 to .652. The mean correlation was .629 [sd = .018];  $p < .001$ ;  $df = 49$ . As non-marital births increased; so did infant mortality. Over a third of the variance (39.6%) in non-marital births is aligned with the variance in infant mortality.

**4.1.9 Infant mortality (generation-lag [1987-1991, 2007-2011])**

For each of the four available years (2011 was not yet available), the level of non-marital births was significantly correlated with rates of infant mortality (all  $p < .01$ ;  $df = 49$ ). The range was from .473 to .690. The mean correlation was .609 [sd = .098];  $p < .001$ ;  $df = 49$ . As non-marital births increased; so did infant mortality. Again, over a third of the variance (37.1%) in non-marital births is aligned with the variance in infant mortality.

**4.2.1 Table 2: Relationships (correlations and explained variance) among rates of (male) unemployment and the four social indices for concurrent years only;  $N = 51$**

Correlations and explained variance in % for (male) unemployment & social indices								
Year (concurrent)	Violent crime		Gonorrhea		Chlamydia		Infant mortality	
	( $r_p$ )	( $r_p$ ) <sup>2</sup>	( $r_p$ )	( $r_p$ ) <sup>2</sup>	( $r_p$ )	( $r_p$ ) <sup>2</sup>	( $r_p$ )	( $r_p$ ) <sup>2</sup>
2007	.235†	5.5%	.354 **	12.5%	.308 *	9.5%	.121	n.s.-
2008	.268†	7.2%	.311 *	9.7%	.302 *	9.1%	.170	n.s. -
2009	.279 *	7.8%	.265†	7.0%	.226	n.s. -	.279 *	7.8%
2010	.268†	7.2%	.209	n.s. -	.196	n.s. -	.194	n.s. -
2011a	.370 **	13.7%	.344 **	11.8%	.334 **	11.6%		n.a.
Mean	.284 *	8.1%	.297 *	8.8%	.273 *	7.5%	.191	n.s.-
(sd)	(.051)		(.060)		(.059)		(.066)	

*a Male and female (male only by state was not available for 2011)*

*†  $p < .05$  (one-tailed); \*  $p < .05$  (two-tailed); \*\*  $p < .01$*

**4.2.2 Rates of (male) unemployment and rates of violent crime (2007 - 2011)**

If the level of significance is set at  $p < .05$  (one-tailed), then each of the five surveyed years did illustrate a relationship between rates of (male) unemployment and rates of violent crime. The range was from .235 ( $p < .05$ ; one-tailed;  $n = 51$ ) to .370 ( $p < .01$ ;  $n = 51$ ). The mean was .284 (sd = .051);  $p < .05$ ; two-tailed) with approximately 8% (8.1%) of the variance in rates of violent crime being aligned with the levels of (male) unemployment.

**4.2.3 (Male) unemployment and (women's) rates of gonorrhea (2007-2011)**

For four of the five years, significance was reached. The range was from .265;  $p < .05$  (one-tailed) to .354;  $p < .01$ ;  $df = 49$ ). In 1 year, significance was not reached. The mean was significant: .297 (sd = .060)  $p < .05$ ; two-tailed;  $df = 49$ ). Nearly 9% (8.8%) of the variance is accounted for.

**4.2.4 (Male) unemployment and (women's) rates of chlamydia (2007-2011)**

For three of the five surveyed years significance was reached. In two years, significance was not reached. The mean was significant ( $r_p$ ) .273 (sd = .059);  $p < .05$ -two-tailed). Approximately 7% (7.5%) of the variance is accounted for.

**4.2.5 (Male) unemployment and infant mortality (2007 - 2010)**

Of the four available years, significance was reached only once. The mean was not significant.

**4.3.1 Table 3:** Comparisons of the mean correlations for (1) non-marital births: concurrent versus generation lag for the four focal social indices and (2) non-marital births versus (male) unemployment (concurrent years) for the four social indices and (3) non-marital births generation-lag and (male) unemployment (concurrent years)

	Social index:			
	Violent Crime	Gonorrhea	Chlamydia	Infant mortality
<b>(1) NON-MARITAL BIRTHS ONLY;</b>				
Concurrent years	.610	.669	.639	.629
Generation-lag Years	.768	.752	.777	.610
t-value (df = 48)	2.548 **	1.877 †	2.270 *	0.26 n.s.
<b>(2) Non-marital births (concurrent years)</b>				
(Male) unemployment (concurrent years)	.610	.669	.639	.629
t-value (df = 48)	.284	.297	.273	n.s.
<b>(3) Non-marital births (generation-lag)</b>				
(Male) unemployment (concurrent years)	.768	.752	.776	.610
t-value (df = 48)	.284	.297	.273	n.s.
t-value (df = 48)	4.625 ***	4.228 ***	4.202 ***	

†  $p < .05$  (one-tailed); \*  $p < .05$  (two-tailed); \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$

**4.3.2 Comparisons of the correlations and their predictability. Non-marital births (Concurrent versus generation-lag)**

For rates of violent crime and (women’s) rates of chlamydia, the mean correlation for the generation-lag data was significantly higher than the mean correlation for concurrent years (t’s of 2.548;  $p < .01$  and 2.919;  $p < .01$ ; respectively;  $df = 48$ ). For (women’s) rates of gonorrhea, the mean for the correlation for the generation-lag data was significantly higher than the mean of the correlation for concurrent data, if and only if, the significance level is set at .05; one-tailed. The means of the two data sets were not different in relation to rates of infant mortality.

**4.3.3 Non-marital births versus (male) unemployment (concurrent)**

For rates of violent crime, gonorrhea and chlamydia, the means for concurrent non-marital births were significantly higher than the mean for (male) unemployment (t’s of 4.625,  $p < .001$ , 2.919;  $p < .01$ , 3.070;  $p < .01$ ; respectively;  $df = 48$ ). Again, the mean for rate of (male) unemployment and mean rate for non-marital births was not significant.

**4.3.4 Levels of Non-marital births versus (male) unemployment (generation-lag)**

For all four indices, the mean correlation of non-marital births from a prior generation was significantly higher than the mean correlation of (male) unemployment in a current generation (the t’s ranged from 4.202 to 4.625;  $p < .001$ ;  $df = 48$ ).

**5. DISCUSSION**

The data suggest that – at the community level within the U.S.– women’s sexual and reproductive choices are aligned with – if not creating, enhanced social dysfunction within those communities: the dysfunctions include increased infant mortality, increased rates of STD’s, and increased rates of violent crime. Both the concurrent data and the generation-lag data point to systematic community wide phenomena.

The level of non-marital births was consistently more robust and more predictive than the level of (male) unemployment -- used here as an index of privation – which had more modest predictability. The higher predictability was found when the non-marital births were from a prior generation as well as from concurrent

years.

While causation is primarily a philosophical concept and immune from proof, the argument can certainly be made that father-presence tamps down – within the framework of a causal agent – violent behavioral tendencies in their sons-who-have-grown-to-adulthood and multiple sexual partners of their daughters who have grown to sexually maturity. Although, correlations from the same time frame between indices of fatherlessness and rates of violent crime and levels of STD's may leave room for legitimate debate on correlation versus causality, the successful predictions from indices of fatherlessness to violent crime rates, infant mortality, and levels of STD's 20 years earlier does present a different order of rigor.<sup>2</sup>

In the main, women and their choices have not been profiled -- much less criticized – much less censured – for any role in elevating these unwanted characteristics. The lack of exposure occurs in the academic as well as in the popular presses. In the reverse of the engineering maxim of “if it is not broken, do not fix it”, the equally sensible maxim of “the lack of admitting a problem, precludes a solution”.

This article is offered to empirically high-light a pattern, but offers no solution which could effectively ameliorate the dysfunctions in a practical way.

### Foot Notes

<sup>1</sup>Ecological inference A problem which this type of analysis faces is that of the relationship between aggregate data and individual data. Framed differently, aggregate data are not equipped to isolate behaviors of an individual, and, thus, inferences from an aggregate, an ecological unit, are generally inappropriate when directed at any individual (See: Robinson, 1950 for an early discussion of the problem, and See: Borgatta & Jackson, 1980; Goodman, 1959; Hanushek, Jackson & Kain, 1974; King, 1997; King, Rosen, & Tanner, 2004; Langbein & Lichtman, 1978; Pedhazur, 1982 for subsequent discussions plus partial solutions to the problem of relating aggregate data to individual behavior). Suffice it to say that the analysis in this exercise is not construed to specify how any one individual would or would not behave. The analysis below is content to attempt to discover what —if any — behavior patterns are aligned with other behavior patterns.

<sup>2</sup>Using a similar method as utilized here, reading achievement in the U.S. was also aligned with father presence or absence. For both fourth and eighth graders, an increase in non-marital births, per state, was aligned with decreased reading achievement (Mackey & Mackey, 2009). Similarly, high school graduation rates increased with an elevated (on-going) presence of a (biological and social father) (Mackey & Mackey, 2012).

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