

Psychiatrist presents parenting lecture to packed auditorium

On Saturday, June 2, board-certified local psychiatrist Peter Crist, M.D., presented "Fathers: A Forgotten Natural Role" to a packed auditorium at the Paul Robeson Center for the Arts in Princeton as part of the American College of Orgonomy's ongoing Social Orgonomy Presentation Series.

Dr. Crist began his talk with a proverb: "Any man can be a father, but it takes a special person to be a dad"

Dr. Crist then went on to discuss his relationship with his own father, noting that he came to the realization that because he was raised in a Quaker home, he had a unique experience growing up. While most of his peers lived in authoritarian homes, his family life was anti-authoritarian, based on Quaker values of equality, non-violence and respect for self-expression. These values were tested when the young Dr. Crist wanted to have a cap gun, like every self-respecting boy did in 1956. His parents did not condone owning such violent toys, but he argued that they were denying him the free expression of his own spirit. The solution? They would not buy him a cap gun but would not forbid his purchasing one with his own allowance.

In discussing his own experience with his father, Dr. Crist pointed out that he was envious of other boys who had strict boundaries and knew exactly how their parents, particularly their fathers felt about punishment and praise. For Dr. Crist, it was more of a guessing game that created its own kind of problems. He described how these problems are now common with fathers whom he characterized as "anti-authoritarian," a term unique to social

orgonomy. Dr. Crist conducted an impromptu audience survey that demonstrated and confirmed among the audience members the concept that there has been a shift in our culture from authoritarian fathers to anti-authoritarian fathers during the period from 1960 to 1980.

This cultural shift has been reflected in pop culture, as the depiction of the role of the father changed from TV sitcoms like "Father Knows Best" and "Leave it to Beaver" to "All in the Family" which was the first program to depict a father as an "ignorant dolt." By 1989, the role of television fathers had degenerated into a rude, infantile person lacking any genuine authority, such as Homer Simpson in "The Simpsons." By the 1990s, TV mothers had become the aggressive, smart, competent ones in the family, as shown in "Home Improvements" and "Everybody Loves Raymond." More recently, in "Modern Family," one of the dads is rather immature, and wants to be a buddy rather than an authority figure, and then there are the two homosexual fathers in the show who demonstrate there is no need for the function of mother.

Nevertheless, Dr. Crist showed a film with an infant displaying very different behaviors toward her mother and father, underscoring the fact that mothers and fathers play very different and needed roles in a family from a very early age. And that each has



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a different and basic function as parents. He emphasized that authoritarian and anti-authoritarian are both forms of neurotic parenting and explained that the natural role of parents is not a third alternative to these two, but is on a different, deeper level that is the basis of natural healthy parental relationships.

Put simply, Dr. Crist observed that a father has a child's "back," making sure a child is protected when he takes risks going out in the world, and a mother has a child's "front" – providing emotional security for the child so he can feel safe and secure in the world. Both forms of contact with parents are essential for healthy development. Dr. Crist demonstrated examples of fathers in this healthy role from both the TV show "The Middle" and the movie Juno.

On a broader social context Dr. Crist noted that as neurotic, armored humans cut off from our healthy, decent core emotions and impulses, we long for a father to tell us what to do but at the same time hate the father for doing that. He commented that this simultaneous rebellion against authority and longing for it is actually the basis for the social-organomic understanding of fascism and other repressive regimes in the world.

The presentation ended with the observation that the best way to become better fathers, mothers and lovers is to work in therapy on improving our capacity for deep emotional contact so we can distinguish the sick from the healthy emotions and impulses in ourselves and our children.

For more information about the American College of Orgonomy's presentations, visit www.orgonomy.org or call (732) 821-1144.

University names new trustees

Princeton University has named seven new members to its board of trustees, effective July 1.

The new trustees are: Robert Hugin and Peter Wendell, who were elected by the board to serve for eight years as charter trustees; Ruth Simmons and John Wynne, who were elected by the board to serve for four years as term trustees; Jaime Ayala and Laurence Morse, who were elected by alumni to serve four years as alumni trustees; and Angela Groves, who was elected by the junior, senior and two youngest alumni classes to serve four years as young alumni trustee.

Completing their terms as trustees on June 30 are Katherine Brittain Bradley, Christopher Cole, Stephen Oxman, Meaghan Petersack, Michael Porter, Kavita Ramdas and Gordon Wu.

The 40-member board is responsible for the overall direction of the University. It approves the operating and capital budgets, supervises the investment of the university's endowment and oversees campus real estate and long-range physical planning.

The trustees also exercise review and oversight of changes in major policies, such as those involving admission and financial aid.

Sippelle wins 5K



Special to The Sun

The Princeton Athletic Club presented its June cross-country event at Rosedale Park on June 20 under hot weather conditions. The overall winner of the cross-country 5K race was Stephen Sippelle of Princeton in a time of 18:39. For the women, Susan Juronics of Hightstown finished first in a time of 25:22. Complete results are available at www.princetonac.org.

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