Upstream Cinema
presents

IN UTERO

Directed by Kathleen Man Gyllenhaal
Year: 2016
Running Time: 85 min
Aspect ratio: 16:9

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Director’s Statement

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

These questions not only preoccupied me during the making of IN UTERO, but gained a deeper resonance after I became pregnant with my son. In fact, I began researching the film while I was trying to get pregnant, shot the film during my pregnancy, and was deep in post-production when my son was born.

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

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

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

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

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

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

One of the last shoots we did was in Seattle, where there’s a group of “prenatal bonding” practitioners who have been trained by a German psychoanalyst named Gerhard Schroth, who was trained by Jenoe Raffai, a Hungarian psychoanalyst who developed the method. I would describe prenatal bonding as part talk therapy, part mind-body relaxation therapy. I decided to try it. The idea is that you communicate with your baby by connecting with your womb and literally talking out loud (or in your mind) to your baby. By connecting in this way, you build an attachment in which the baby is “seen”, understood, and loved.

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

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

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

I eagerly look forward to researching the effects of attunement (love) on the developing fetus. How genuine attachment during in utero leads to better psychological health. That is part of what we are now exploring in our sequel, IN UTERO II, which will explore how in utero trauma can be reduced and alleviated, at all stages of life.

— Kathleen Man Gyllenhaal
Not only has IN UTERO been a profound learning experience for both my wife, Kathleen, and I in terms of the miracle of how each of us is conceived and carried in the womb, but it has been quite an experience birthing IN UTERO, the film, and delivering it to the world.

After countless international festivals, awards, medical screenings and personal screenings we have encountered a wide spectrum of responses, from professionals who have been grateful for the careful integration of multiple fields of science to “triggered” audience members, walking out of the film because of its emotional impact.

Birth professionals and midwives have been concerned about pregnant mothers and young parents viewing the film without guidance. And we know there were complicated and troubling issues raised in the film for all of us, because the film does explore troubling challenges that plague us all throughout our lives and calls into question our very survival as a species. Working with a number of health organizations, we have put together a study guide that we hope helps “unpack” and explore the emotional and intellectual issues that are raised by IN UTERO and also begins to outline some solutions to the challenges raised.

The study guide follows the 14 themed chapters of the film. While we think there is value in stopping the film at the end of each chapter and discussing, there is also much to be had by allowing the entire film to “wash” over you and then begin to explore the film in more detail after it’s finished. Of course, the choice is yours.

Ultimately a film is an emotional and unconscious experience and even as there is much information in the film, we worked hard to have IN UTERO work in the way that all good films work - by introducing you to a world that you have never seen before. In a way, I like to say that IN UTERO takes us from believing the world is flat (life begins at birth) to a world that is marvelously round (we start at conception and, frankly, even before).

We look forward to any thoughts, feelings ideas and solutions (new therapies and practices) that you might have or are discovering. Please reach out to us through our website, InUteroFilm.com, and share your journey with us and with friends, loved-ones and associates as we all work to together to understand what it is to become and grow as human beings.

I should add that we are now in production on IN UTERO II, which will explore the emerging solutions to the challenges that are presented in IN UTERO.

— Stephen Gyllenhaal
**SHORT SYNOPSIS**

IN UTERO is a cinematic rumination on what will emerge as the most provocative subject of the 21st Century – life in the womb and its lasting impact on human development, human behavior, and the state of the world. Epigenetics, Alice In Wonderland, The Matrix, scientists, psychologists and doctors converge to prove that we are not what we think we are. IN UTERO brings together for the first time convincing data that explains why some of us face challenges from the start while others thrive. Prepare to be surprised, intrigued, but no longer baffled by what the future holds for yourself, your loved ones, and the human race.

**LONG SYNOPSIS**

IN UTERO is a cinematic rumination on what will emerge as the most provocative subject of the 21st Century – life in the womb and its lasting impact on human development, human behavior, and the state of the world. Epigenetics, Alice In Wonderland, The Matrix, scientists, psychologists and doctors converge to prove that we are not what we think we are. IN UTERO brings together for the first time convincing data that explains why some of us face challenges from the start while others thrive. Prepare to be surprised, intrigued, but no longer baffled by what the future holds for yourself, your loved ones, and the human race.

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

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

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

Now, experts in all fields have begun to see the link between the state of the world and prenatal life. Open up the news any day and you’ll see an article about the prenatal period. In just the last few years, enormous strides have been made in understanding the biological, psychological and sociological impact of our time in the womb. Scientists at the Allen Institute for Brain Research discovered that disorders such
as autism and schizophrenia begin before birth. In Michigan, researchers have developed MRI technology that is able to capture incredible images of a developing fetus’s brain, allowing them to study how areas of the brain begin to link up and coordinate activity.

Meanwhile, other scientists and psychologists are finding that prolonged stress such as poverty, and traumatic events such as Ferguson and 9/11 impact a developing fetus on a genetic level. Others have found that depressed or stressed mothers have higher levels of the hormone cortisol, which negatively affects the fetus by constricting blood flow to the placenta. The list goes on. All of this research urges us to think about who we are and how the foundations of who we’ve become all began long before we were even born, and ultimately, how we can set our children up for better lives in the generations to come.

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

“Documentaries tackle tough subjects every day but a breakthrough documentary takes on a subject that people haven’t even thought about, let alone explored and come to a conclusion on. It takes a provocative and ground-breaking creative filmmaker to make a breakthrough documentary.”
– Tonya Mantooth, Executive & Artistic Director of San Diego International Film Festival

“Essential and illuminating viewing for anyone touched by parenthood.”
– Carl Spence, Artistic Director, Seattle International Film Festival

“IN UTERO exposed a science that I was not privy to. Director Kathleen Gyllenhaal put together an informative, fun and engaging film that challenges the status quo when it comes to child rearing. It was eye opening.”
– Anderson Le, Director of Programming, Hawaii International Film Festival

“Overall this is definitely one of the best documentaries I’ve seen in years. It has both: an eye-opening quality and a replay value.”
– Anna Jozwiak, CPH:DOX

“A mind bending look at just how early our life circumstances affect us, and why myths and fairy tales have the power to soothe us. An unmissable viewing experience if you have even an ounce of curiosity about the course of human events.”
– Courtney Pledger, Executive Director, Hot Springs Documentary Film Festival

“A damning exposé on the health care issues facing women today. Filmmaker Kathleen Gyllenhaal uses testimonials from health care experts, as well as cutting edge research to remind everyone that a newborn baby is only as healthy as its mother.”
– J. R. Kinnard, Sound On Sight

“A groundbreaking and ambitious mission to investigate ‘How are we formed? Who are we? Why are we who we are?’”
– Lisa Reagan, Executive Editor, Kindred Media

“It is dynamic, it is thought provoking and exceptional! This is the best way to start the dialog with professionals working with children who have been traumatized, prenatally exposed to substances, felt stress in utero, or as young children. I am so very impressed and so touched by the film, and cannot talk about it enough.”
– Karen Nutt, Executive Director, Parent’s Place Family Resource and Empowerment

“Heartfelt thanks to Gyllenhaal and all others who have contributed to this wonderful piece of work. Everything is so well done and put together in such a fantastic way, thank you. People love the film.”
– Marta Thorsheim, Director, Institute of Trauma Works
“Found the film a ‘must see’” – Alecia Staines, Maternity Consumer Network

“It’s a beautiful piece, so well done, and carrying important information and viewpoints for all of us, over the world, to contemplate, and for clinicians to have in mind as we treat troubled patients.”
– Nancy Bakalar, Supervising Psychoanalyst, International Psychotherapy Institute

“Every single human on Mother Earth should watch this film. To understand that when somebody is pregnant, “everybody is pregnant” around her. The emotions, experiences, environment are a big impact on the mother and on that baby’s life right then and there, in the womb and will continue to be a huge impact on its (and others around him/her) whole life later on. All this starts at conception and implantation, continues throughout pregnancy and at birth and will accompany him/her throughout life. Be kind!”
– Lev Peto, Amazon Reviews ★★★★★

“This is a fascinating and fully developed investigation of life in utero — and how the outside world is influencing and informing fetal growth in ways that most of us are only slowly starting to understand. Director Kathleen Gyllenhaal makes a balanced but urgent argument for greater awareness and tolerance. She does a terrific job explaining complicated and often controversial issues through interviews, graphics, music, and video. Profound, disturbing, and important.”
– L. Bennett, Amazon Reviews ★★★★★

“IN UTERO completely changes what we’ve been taught about who we are, by shedding light on a 9 month period of our lives that most of us have never thought about before. The environment in which a mother carries her child can have a profound impact on her baby – particularly if it is filled with stress and trauma and other negative emotions. This may seem like it puts a tremendous burden and blame on mothers – but actually, it shows that we are ALL responsible for the children of the next generation. It is up to us to create a society in which women (and their partners) are better supported – so that they can carry their children in a healthy, peaceful environment and, ultimately, raise them into good, kind adults. From here, we can change the world.”
– Marisa Keane, Amazon Reviews ★★★★★

“Excellent film providing insight to the core challenges we all face to our own healing and the healing of our planet, In depth information, top notch research and simply the best of the best professionals all meet up in this outstanding documentary. I highly recommend “In Utero” to anyone who is seeking to find themselves and a better understanding of others. Humanity’s deepest source of fear and anxiety has now been exposed and is ready for healing.”
– Cy, Amazon Reviews ★★★★★

“This hopeful film completely changed my perspective on my childhood and relationship with my parents. Before this film, I had not considered my time in utero, which I now understand to be a vital part of the human experience. Using examples from pop culture and movies, this film makes it clear that our time in utero is intertwined within our cultural consciousness. I walked away from this film with a deeper understanding of our interconnectedness as a species and a commitment to be more compassionate
toward myself and others. This documentary is mandatory viewing for anyone who wants to ensure a better future for generations to come. Artfully constructed and beautifully scored, this film was both emotional and an urgent call to action. As someone who has had family affected by World War II, this film shed perspective on my family trauma and allowed me to empathize with my ancestry in ways I could not do before. Thanks to the director for giving us the insight to see ourselves with compassion and self-love!”

– Emily Zaczek, Amazon Reviews ★★★★★

“This film is fantastic!! I watched it with my mother and afterwards we dissected her pregnancy with me, and how things may have affected my brother and me. Love the way the director uses classic films to explain the complex ideas of fetal development and why we are the way we are. I recommend this film to anyone who’s ever questioned where they’ve come from and what happened to make them who they are.”

– Cynthia McGrath, Amazon Reviews ★★★★★

“I have just cried with tears of joy and sadness at this today. This is THE movie that EVERYBODY needs to watch. This is why I do my job in both arenas (therapy and research) I implore everybody to watch this so you can understand the nature of human development, connectedness and compassion for our fellow human beings. THIS MATTERS!!!”

– Catherine Knibb, Facebook

“Really great movie! For professionals and interested parties. Should be a kind of ‘compulsory’ for anyone who wishes to become pregnant. Also nice to see that even though a lot can go wrong in your life, love is the healing factor. Thanks for making it to NL this movie. I experience it as extremely valuable to create a more loving and beautiful world.”

– Mandy, Facebook (Netherlands)

“It was a fascinating film with a lot of recognition and one speaker (the man with the sad eyes) had fortunately recommendations for adults who have discovered an inner wisdom that allows them to get started with their unresolved problems deep into their unconscious. Because ... what I found is that it was a film and a recommendation for therapists (I was also himself) with the call to investigate deeper. Referring to recognizing and acknowledging these insights and the importance for the world, but the (weak) end it seems like we have to wait until these insights are recognized and used by the newest generation.”

– Nicolette, Facebook (Netherlands)

“Before a critical but unseen social issue can be addressed, people must be woken up to the fact that it even exists. This is especially true when that issue has been viewed as insignificant and therefore to be ignored. That’s precisely what happened regarding life in the womb and birth. Ancient philosophers and indigenous peoples have understood. It’s modern civilization that swept it under the rug and the world is suffering as a result. Modern Western civilization has been in a trance for centuries, everyone having been taught that babies in the womb can’t feel and don’t remember, that our conception, our life as we
develop in our mother’s womb, and our birth, are of no lasting significance. We count birthdays as starting AFTER birth, not at conception. How blind we’ve been.

Many people have been working to wake modern society out of this dangerous trance. It’s been so hard because waking up entails making people aware of memories buried deep inside their body, many of which are traumatic and affecting their lives on a daily basis. How can we heal what we dare not look at and cannot name? At last we have a brilliantly made film – In Utero – to help shift consciousness. This film is a groundbreaker and seeing it produces strong reactions. With the help of the study guide created by the filmmakers and the Association for Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology, this feature film will surely result in the kind of self-reflection and deep group discussion that can produce real, positive personal and social transformation. It is a ‘must-see’ experience. Yes, most of the experts in In Utero are older Caucasian males. Yes, the film focuses on the problem, not the solution. That was required. Other films will follow, focusing on how to prevent and heal trauma in the womb, and how to create an optimal womb-life and pregnancy for every mother and baby. But first, let’s wake up to the problem that lies at the root of so much violence, oppression and unhappiness in this world. Bravo for In Utero and for its brilliant study guide!“

– Suzanne Arms, author of seven books on pregnancy, birthing, breast feeding, bonding and adoption. Her second book, “Immaculate Deception: A New Look at Childbirth,” was named a Best Book of the Year by the New York Times
IN UTERO has been signed on with Rebelhouse for domestic and international distribution across all platforms. Following its 2015-16 festival run and other pre-release screenings, IN UTERO was briefly released via online platforms through FilmBuff in October 2016 (iTunes, Amazon, Vudu, Vimeo, Google Play, Microsoft). Given the interest from communities around the world wanting to use the film to organize and educate, IN UTERO decided to move to Rebelhouse’s community screening distribution model and in March 2017, launched a new website on the Nationbuilder platform, as part of the Rebelhouse Group film collective.

Rebelhouse Group is a creative agency that produces and distributes documentary style social action films worldwide. The company was co-founded in 2016 by Trevor Hall and Thomas Morgan.

Contact: Trevor Hall, trevor@rebelhouse.com

COMMUNITY & NON-THEATRICAL DISTRIBUTION

IN UTERO has been screened at universities, psychology groups, birthing communities, and scientific and health conferences around the world prior to its domestic release. The film has had an impressive reception abroad, and has already been translated into 10 languages, with more on the way: Spanish, Dutch, Polish, Mandarin, Italian, Russian, Norwegian, Slovenian, Romanian and German.

For special events, educational and community screenings, please visit our website for more information about screening fees and exhibition formats. Feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns.

Contact: Sara Casey, sara@inuterofilm.com
When the sperm and the egg are forming, as part of normal development there’s this period of erasing past marks basically, and reestablishing the new set of marks for the future of that cell. Then this happens again in early embryogenesis, in some ways wiping the old slate clean and starting new for this new fetus, this new baby. There’s a whole period of time during fetal development when many things, including just the environment that the fetus is growing in, could alter or shift that process.

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

“What we see in infants exposed to stress in utero is we see reduced brain volume, reduced grey matter density… So if you are less dense in those regions, that suggests that there are less processors available. We also see reductions in hippocampal volume, and increase in amygdala volume. Disruption in those areas, disruption in structure or function of the amygdala is associated with higher risk for emotional psychopathology or neuropsychiatric illness.”
– Moriah Thomason, Ph.D.

“What we’re not recognizing is that people are parenting and conceiving and carrying and birthing children under increasingly stressed conditions. Increasingly, it takes two people now to provide a living in this culture to families. And they’re doing so in the context of less support because one of the ravages of industrialization and globalization is the destruction of the extended family, the tribe, the clan, the village, the neighborhood. Parents who are stressed have been shown not to be able to be as attuned with their infants and children as parents who are not stressed. Not their fault. Not because they do not love the child. Not because they’re not dedicated, devoted, committed. Simply because the stress effect impedes their ability to attune with their child… And that has an impact on brain development.”
– Gabor Maté, M.D.

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

“World ecology has to start with womb ecology. We cannot have peace and good people in the world without raising peaceful, good children. And that has to start at conception—not at birth, but at conception.”
– Thomas R. Verny, M.D., FRCPC
If the offspring [of Holocaust survivors] will be raised in the same context, their body will need to be prepared maybe for prolonged periods of starvation or maybe for overwhelming stress. So having a change that is passed from mother to offspring could be very helpful. Maybe less helpful if the offspring is not going to live in the same environment. The offspring lives in urban New York where starvation is really not an issue then having the same kind of biologic adaptations being transmitted may actually result in a flip side of just being anxious and people not understanding why or even you not understanding why.
– Rachel Yehuda, PhD, from the film
**GABOR MATÉ, M.D.**

A renowned speaker, and bestselling author, Dr. Gabor Maté is highly sought after for his expertise on a range of topics, from addiction to mind-body wellness. Rather than offering quick-fix solutions to these complex issues, Dr. Maté weaves together scientific research, case histories, and his own insights and experience to present a broad perspective that enlightens and empowers people to promote their own healing and that of those around them.

As an author, Dr. Maté has written several bestselling books including the award-winning *In the Realm of Hungry Ghosts: Close Encounters with Addiction*. His works have been published internationally in twenty languages.

Dr. Maté is the co-founder of Compassion for Addiction, a new non-profit that focusses on addiction. He is also an advisor of Drugs over Dinner.

Dr. Maté has received the Hubert Evans Prize for Literary Non-Fiction; an Honorary Degree (Law) from the University of Northern British Columbia; an Outstanding Alumnus Award from Simon Fraser University; and the 2012 Martin Luther King Humanitarian Award from Mothers Against Teen Violence. He is an adjunct professor in the Faculty of Criminology, Simon Fraser University.

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**THOMAS VERNY, M.D.**

Thomas R. Verny is a psychiatrist, writer, academic, and founder of the Association for Pre-and Perinatal Psychology and Health (APPPAH). He has previously taught at Harvard University, University of Toronto, York University, Toronto and St. Mary’s University Minneapolis, Minnesota. Dr. Verny's ground-breaking book, “The Secret Life of the Unborn Child, has become an international best seller published in 27 countries and has changed the pregnancy and childbirth experience for millions of mothers and fathers.

In addition, he has published several other books, including “Nurturing the Unborn Child: A Nine-month Program for Soothing, Stimulating, and Communicating with Your Baby” and “Tomorrow’s Baby: The Art and Science of Parenting from Conception Through Infancy” as well as authoring and coauthoring 46 scientific papers and articles. Dr. Verny's books and articles, founding of APPPAH, and the Pre- and Perinatal Journal have established him as one of the world's leading authorities on the effect of the prenatal and early postnatal environment on personality development. He lectures and leads workshops on Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Psychotherapy throughout Canada, the United States, Europe, South America and Southeast Asia. He currently practices psychiatry in Stratford, ON, Canada.
Dr. Catherine Monk is Associate Professor in the Departments of Psychiatry, and Obstetrics & Gynecology, and Director for Research at the Women’s Program, Columbia University Medical Center. Trained as a clinical psychologist, she spends the majority of her time on research, and a small percent treating patients most of whom are women experiencing depression or anxiety related to perinatal issues.

Dr. Monk's research brings together the fields of psychopathology, developmental psychobiology, and neuroscience to focus on the earliest influences on children's developmental trajectories —those that happen in utero and how to intervene early to prevent risk for mental health problems in the future children. Several of these projects are funded by the National Institutes of Mental Health as well as by private foundations including the Robin Hood Foundation.

Rachel Yehuda, Ph.D. is a Professor of Psychiatry and Neuroscience at the Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai and Mental Health Patient Care Center Director at the Bronx Veterans Affairs. She has published several hundred scientific papers and compiled over 10 books examining diverse aspects of traumatic stress, and has studied PTSD and resilience in combat veterans, survivors of genocide, interpersonal violence and terrorism, as well as in animal models. Her work has focused on neuroendocrinology, neuroimaging, genomic and molecular biological studies of trauma, experimental therapeutics (pharmacological and psychotherapy trials), biomarkers, genetic and epigenetic heritability, gender differences, and suicide.

Ludwig Janus, M.D. is a lecturer and psychoanalysis instructor at the Psychoanalytic Training Institute in Heidelberg, Germany. He is past-president of the International Society for Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Medicine (ISPPM), the past-president of the German Society for Psychohistory and Political Psychology (GPPP) and current co-editor of the International Journal of Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology. He has published numerous articles and books on prenatal and perinatal psychology and on psychohistory, including The Enduring Effects of Prenatal Experience: Echoes from the Womb (www.Ludwig-Janus.de). His research examines how prenatal stress can have long-term effects and how successful treatment may depend significantly on the processing of these experiences. Ludwig Janus and Hungarian psychoanalyst Jenö Raffai developed the Prenatal Bonding (BA) method to support mothers in connecting with their unborn child.
Dr. Bernard Bail is a physician, a psychoanalyst and a training analyst who lives and practices in Beverly Hills, California. He has worked with both patients and analysts for over fifty years. Dr. Bail is a member of the International Psychoanalytical Association and the American Psychoanalytic Association where he chairs the ongoing discussion group “Infant Mental Life and the Dream in Psychoanalysis.”

Through his intensive work in the unconscious via the dream, Dr. Bail developed a new paradigm for psychoanalysis centered at the beginning of human life, which he describes in his book, The Mother's Signature: A Journal of Dreams. For his military service during World War II, Dr. Bail received the Distinguished Service Cross, three Distinguished Flying Crosses, five Air Medals, five Battle Stars in the European Theater of Operations, a Purple Heart, a Prisoner of War Medal, and the 44th Bomb Group Presidential Citation. In addition, the French government awarded Dr. Bail the French Legion of Honor, the highest military honor bestowed by France.

Domenico A. Nesci, M.D., NCP is a psychoanalyst and member of the International Psychoanalytic Association. He is a psychiatrist at the Policlinico Universitario “Agostino Gemelli” in Rome, Italy and an Adjunct Professor at the Institute of Psychiatry and Psychology at the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart in Milan, Italy. Dr. Nesci has published approximately 150 scientific papers in Italian, English, and French.

Among his works in English are The Lessons of Jonestown: an Ethnopsychoanalytic Study of Suicidal Communities (Rome: SEU), with a foreword from Warren Procci, M.D. and a preface by Robert Pasnau, M.D. Dr. Nesci has taught both at Stanford and UCLA. He recently published Multimedia Psychotherapy – A Psychodynamic Approach for Mourning in the Technological Age (Lanham: Jason Aronson).

Amelia Gavin is an Associate Professor in the School of Social Work at the University of Washington. Dr. Gavin’s primary research examines the life-course etiological pathways linking maternal early life risk exposures to later-born offspring birth outcomes (e.g., preterm birth and low birth weight). Her research also examines the social, structural, and cultural contexts associated with different physical and mental health outcomes, especially among racial and ethnic groups.
Dr. Moriah E. Thomason is an assistant professor in the Department of Pediatrics of the Wayne State University School of Medicine and in the Merrill Palmer Skillman Institute for Child and Family Development at Wayne State University.

The work of Dr. Thomason’s research group stems from an interest in determining how function across multiple, distributed brain networks impacts the individual developmental trajectories of children. How does the maturation of wide-scale brain neural networks coincide with the development of cognitive abilities in children? How does development proceed in a characteristically different fashion in children with early emotional psychopathology? How are these brain systems altered as the brain chemistry of children differs? Dr. Thomason’s lab uses novel methods for detecting and characterizing large-scale human brain networks. Her work has already provided new insights into how human brain networks develop, mature, and are altered with specific variations in genetic composition.

Dr. Thomason has served as a reviewer for federal grant funding agencies, and she currently serves on the Editorial Board for Frontiers in Developmental Psychology, and on the scientific advisory board for www.lumosity.com.

Dr. Loren Weiner is a clinical psychologist in private practice in Beverly Hills, California. She earned her Bachelor of Arts in Art History from USC in 1993 and received her Ph.D. in Clinical Psychology from the California School of Professional Psychology, Alliant University in 2003. She began her private practice in 2003 while completing her post-doctoral training at The Linden Center in Los Angeles, a Non-Public school focusing on children with severe emotional and behavioral disturbances. She was also a volunteer supervisor of masters and doctoral level students at The Maple Counseling Center in Beverly Hills from 2005-2013. Dr. Weiner has co-chaired the ongoing discussion group Infant Mental Life and the Dream in Psychoanalysis at the American Psychoanalytic Association’s annual meetings in 2009 and 2011-2014.
Anne Hirsch is a Washington state licensed midwife and a Certified Professional Midwife who has been practicing for 12 years. She provides a unique brand of woman-friendly maternity care for women having normal healthy pregnancies, birth and postpartum. She loves home birth/birth center birth and personalized prenatal care because she believes this gives the woman, her baby and her family the most empowering, safe and gentle birth experience. Hirsch trained in Infant Massage with pioneer Vimala Schneider and has been instructing parents in the art of massaging their babies for over 26 years. She utilizes the Arvigo Techniques of Maya Abdominal Therapy to help women relieve the aches and pains some experience in pregnancy and to help the baby get into an optimal position for labor. She also teaches yoga as a valuable tool for developing the skill needed for the strenuous work of labor/birth.

Ursula Volz-Boers, M.D.

Dr. Ursula Volz-Boers is a psychoanalyst and member of the International Psychoanalytic Institute, and a medical doctor for Psychosomatics and Psychotherapy in her office in Germany. She gained her specialization as a Neuropsychiatrist at the technical University of Aachen, and she is a docent and supervisor in the Colonian Psychoanalytic Institute (DPV). She was trained by Jeno Raffai in Prenatal Bonding (BA), a psychoanalytic method to facilitate communication between a pregnant mother and her unborn child, and now teaches Prenatal Bonding (BA) to psychoanalysts, gynecologists, midwives and pediatricians. Among her published works include “Psychoanalysis of Trauma”, “Embodied Countertransference” and “Psychoanalytic Treatment of Pre- and Perinatal Traumatization.” She is the mother of a daughter and two sons.

Stephen Bezruchka MD, MPH, AM (PRONOUNCED BEZ ROOTCH KA)

Stephen Bezruchka, a graduate of Harvard, Johns Hopkins and Stanford universities, teaches courses in population health in the Department of Global Health as faculty at UW. He worked clinically as a doctor for 35 years including three decades as an emergency physician. He spent over 11 years in Nepal, writing the first trekking guide to that country (8th edition appearing in 2011), running a community health project a week’s walk from the road, training Nepali doctors in a remote district hospital and advancing concepts of population health. He focuses on creating greater public understanding of the determinants of health through teaching, talking and writing at various levels from middle school onward.
Kathleen Man Gyllenhaal was born and raised on Oahu, Hawaii and currently lives in Los Angeles. She is the writer/director of a diverse body of award-winning dramas and documentaries, including *Beauty Mark*, a social documentary exploring America’s obsession with body image, perfection and success, and *Sita, a Girl from Jambu*, an ethnographic drama about child sex trafficking in Nepal. Kathleen taught at the University of Colorado-Boulder, then Vassar College, where she was awarded tenure. She then transitioned to Hollywood, co-producing the feature film *Grassroots*, starring Jason Biggs, Cedric the Entertainer and Lauren Ambrose, released by Samuel Goldwyn Films. Recently, Kathleen wrote and directed the award-winning *Lychee Thieves*, an Academy Award qualifying live-action short. Kathleen is a regular contributor to the Huffington Post and Thrive Global.

Stephen Gyllenhaal is a film and television director, writer and producer. His directing credits include *Paris Trout*, for which he received a Directors Guild of America Award for Outstanding Directorial Achievement in Dramatic Specials, as well as the theatrical films, *Waterland*, *A Dangerous Woman*, *Losing Isaiah* and *Homegrown*. In 2012, he received a DGA nomination for Outstanding Directorial Achievement in Movies for Television for “Girl Fight”. He co-wrote and directed the indie film *Grassroots*, which made its theatrical debut in Summer 2012, and he recently directed the indie film *So B. It*, based on the best-selling young adult novel. He directed the Peabody award-winning dramatic series “Rectify” for the Sundance Channel and current directs “Billions” for Showtime and “Bosch” for Amazon. His producing credits include the TV movies *Living with the Dead, The Patron Saint of Liars*, and *A Shattered Mind*. Stephen is a regular contributor to the Huffington Post.
STEVEN KOCH (EXECUTIVE PRODUCER)

Steven Koch was born in Minneapolis, Minnesota on the Fourth of July and moved to California when he was five. He enlisted in the Navy right after high school as an Electronic Technician. For four years, he was stationed out of Pearl Harbor on a radar picket ship watching for missiles during the Cold War. After the military, he came home to California and entered into the lamp business. He enjoyed the challenge of manufacturing high-fired ceramics out of two Shuttle kilns and producing slip cast pottery. Soon, he was shipping to furniture and lighting showrooms throughout the country and the world. After retiring as CEO of Casual Lamps in 2005, Koch discovered a new way of bringing light into the world – transpersonal psychology and dream analysis. He decided to focus his energies on developing and promoting new therapies that seek to define the “source” of emotional trauma, as opposed to treating only the symptoms of trauma. It is his hope that social documentaries that dare to go to the source will have a greater impact on society and help bring about real change.

THOMAS LEE WRIGHT (EXECUTIVE PRODUCER)

Thomas Lee Wright is perhaps best known for penning the original screenplay for the Warner Brothers hit New Jack City starring Wesley Snipes, Chris Rock and Ice-T, and for his political documentaries, including Eight-Tray Gangster: The Making Of A Crip (Discovery Channel) which tells the story of L.A.’s Rodney King riots from a gang member’s perspective, and the award-winning WTO “Battle-in-Seattle” chronicle Trade Off (International Human Rights Watch). Recently, Wright produced the award-winning independent documentaries, The Long Ride Home, To Them That’s Gone and Finding Hollywood. He is the executive producer of the upcoming Last Flag Flying, directed by Richard Linklater and starring Bryan Cranston, Steve Carrell, and Laurence Fishburne.

MATTHEW BRADY (PRODUCER)

Matthew Brady is an Emmy award-winning producer who founded MRB Productions in 2001. MRB produces content across all media channels and specializes in independent features, television shows, promos and commercials. MRB’s most recent feature film projects include Night Stalker, directed by Megan Griffiths, The Truth About Emanuel, directed by Francesca Gregorini and starring Jessica Biel and Alfred Molina, released by Tribeca Film, and Grassroots, directed by Stephen Gyllenhaal and starring Jason Biggs and Lauren Ambrose, released by Samuel Goldwyn Films. MRB also recently produced the web series “The Confession”, directed by Brad Mirman and starring Kiefer Sutherland since his critically-acclaimed documentary, I Trust You To Kill Me.
Bennett Cerf is a cinematographer whose work spans Hollywood and the independent world of documentary and narrative filmmaking. His work as a cameraman began with such blockbusters as *Iron Man 2*, *True Grit*, *Flight Plan* and *X-Men 2* and extended to several independent features such as *The Edge of the World* which was shot in Sydney, Australia for Village Roadshow Entertainment. For television, Bennett’s camera department experience includes such hit TV shows “CSI,” “The Closer,” “Torchwood” and many others. Bennett also shot *State of Aloha* which screened in major film festivals throughout the country. This critically acclaimed film won Best Documentary at the Hawaii International Film Festival and aired on PBS. Bennett has nearly two decades of professional photography experience. Bennett is a longtime member of the Cinematographer’s Guild and received his Master’s Degree in Cinematography at the American Film Institute.

Kinga Orlikowska came to the U.S in 2002, after years of being involved in social activism and environmental education in her home country of Poland. Some of the highlights of this early stage of her career include receiving accolade for editing the feature *Viking Saga* and being a part of the Tribeca IFF Student Visionary Award winner *Rooms* (starring Marianne Jean-Baptiste). In 2007, Kinga discovered documentary as a bridge between her two passions: the art of filmmaking and social activism. She started with a web series featuring examples of worldwide brands connecting emotionally with people and creating positive changes in the world (www.emotionalbranding.com). The feature *This Space Available* about visual pollution caused by outdoor advertising, was the first major documentary she worked on. Her other projects include *Killing the Messenger*, a film about journalism in the danger zones, and *Building Bridges*, which depicts a mission bringing relief to the people of Haiti. Since 2011, Kinga Orlikowska has also worked on reality and documentary programming for television. Her favorite past show, “Craft in America,” is featured on the PBS channel.

Pinar Toprak was born and raised in Istanbul, Turkey. She earned her degree in film scoring from Berklee College of Music, then came to Los Angeles to earn her master’s degree in composition at age 22. Toprak has quickly become an active and reinvigorating new voice in a male-dominated Hollywood community. Her scores have won two International Film Music Critics Association Awards: one in 2010 for the film *The Lightkeepers* and a second in 2011 for the documentary *The Wind Gods*. Her win for *The Lightkeepers* made her the first woman to win an IFMCA Award. Toprak has tackled action (*Behind Enemy Lines II: Axis of Evil*), animation (*Light of Olympia*), and romance (*Say It in Russian*). She also composed music for the Xbox 360 game “Ninety-Nine Nights”, and recently scored the PBS documentary *The Wind Gods* about The America’s Cup (from Star Trek Into Darkness producer David Ellison). Her upcoming projects include the Untitled Cecil B. DeMille Biopic, the sci-fi thriller *Resilient 3D*, the documentary *The Gift of Fear* from director Jeff Apple, and the highly anticipated *Geostorm* for Warner Bros. directed by Dean Devlin.
Thrive Global & Huffington Post

The third installment of the Huffington Post blog was co-authored by Kathleen Man Gyllenhaal and Stephen Gyllenhaal. The blog was also accompanied by a video containing an interview with anthropologist, Emily Martin, Ph.D.:

THIS NEW SEX SCIENCE CHANGES EVERYTHING
Published September 7, 2016
10,000+ Likes

Whether we like to think about it or not, the reason each of us exists is because our parents had sex. It may have been passionate sex, filled with love (or not). It may have been kinky sex, morning sex, or even a one night stand. Science today gives us a few other options (i.e., in vitro fertilization) but generally sex is still how the thing is accomplished: an orgasm (as least one), the strongest sperm shooting up the vaginal canal, beating out the others, breaking through the soft surface of our mother’s waiting egg.

It’s survival of the fittest — the first war — the winner takes all and the miracle of each of us begins.

This biological reality confirms everything we see around us: the strong male who succeeds, the trajectory of the sperm, precursor to the spear, the bullet, the nuclear warhead, the macho CEO or political leader who dominates the less capable among us, bringing riches, power and — in the case of contemporary economics — the ability to affect global change.

Yet current science, as we explore in our upcoming documentary, In Utero, is discovering that everything about this old science is wrong — except the orgasm.

First, about half the sperm are female (that’s how you get a girl baby). Second, there is nothing about the sperm that functions like spears, nuclear warheads or even Michael Phelps winning all that gold. 

Ashley Tsai (Associate Producer)

Ashley Tsai is a filmmaker and photographer from Houston, Texas. Ashley was the assistant to director Stephen Gyllenhaal on Sundance Channel’s “Rectify,” NBC’s “Ironside”, and USA Network’s “Satisfaction.” She has created documentary photography and media for Brad Pitt’s Make It Right foundation in New Orleans, was a founder of the viral photography campaign Who Needs Feminism – which won GOOD Magazine’s “Good Maker” award – and helped stage the Race Is Not A Party campaign. For these efforts she has been featured or quoted on NBC, ABC, the LA Times, the TODAY Show, Public Radio, and others. She has also sold photography to the PBS documentary Mr. Cao Goes To Washington and to Grammy-winning artist Kid Cudi.
Sperm are actually “weak swimmers” notes Dr. Emily Martin, Professor of Anthropology at New York University. They are far more like Woody Allen in his classic film, Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Sex * But Were Afraid to Ask. “They thrash around. They go side to side,” says Martin. “They swim in circles, haphazardly, working their way up the female tract into the fallopian tubes.”

Furthermore, in an effort to improve IVF and contraception, researchers have uncovered that the stronger sperm actually “help the weaker ones through the uterine mucous, similar to the way that migrating birds or a team of bicyclists take turns leading the way.” (The Scientist)

And once a sperm makes it to the egg, it is not like some knight in shining armor, piercing the female fortress, akin to rape, but — as some scientists posit — it is the egg that selects the sperm.

For instance, a study at the University of Birmingham in the UK has uncovered that “prior to fertilization, a cloud of cumulus cells surrounding the egg releases progesterone, the female sex hormone, triggering a calcium influx into the sperm... Progesterone has also been implicated in providing a chemical gradient by which sperm can navigate toward the egg.”

Meanwhile sugar molecules on the egg’s surface, known as SLeX, act as “hitching posts” (discovered in 2011 by Poh-Choo Pang from Imperial College and Philip Chiu from the University of Hong Kong). SLeX is generally associated with causing cancer, but here it binds the rapidly moving sperm, helping it to penetrate the egg’s protective jelly-like protein coating.

Scott Gilbert, a developmental biologist at Swarthmore College likes to think of the egg as “engaging in a dialogue with the sperm rather than gluing it down.”

Martin is clear — up until now, reproductive science has been steered by a male-dominant perspective, which explains why the narrative of reproduction has historically adopted patriarchal terms. But now this new science “undercuts the dominant, founding myths of Western culture — that men are active and women are passive, that men seek and find and women wait and choose. There is an interaction between the two,” says Martin.

So, assuming we all agree that the act of creation is miraculous, worthy of our respect and admiration, can we begin to consider that male domination may not be a “God-given” tenet of our cultural dynamics? That the spear, bullet and nuclear weapon may not mirror our basic nature but perhaps be a departure from it, even a perversion?

Can we posit that our genetic underpinnings are in fact much closer to precepts such as cooperation (versus competition and “might makes right”) and peace (versus aggression and war)?

And if we wish to be in sync with nature and perhaps survive within it as a species, are we willing to consider — given the state of the world, driven by the old sex myths — that the way we came into this world may very well be the way we should live in it. Which means that many of us may need to change how we go about almost everything.
MY 2-YEAR-OLD IS AN ADDICT
Published December 15, 2016
6,400+ Likes

My husband and I deal with a lot of tech, for work and personal use. Between us, we have two iPads, two Macbook Pros, one Macbook and two iPhones. We’re on them all the time. Then, we had a baby. We kind of knew in our gut that we should keep our son away from these devices for as long as possible. Just watching his chubby little infant hands reach for our phones and touch those slick screens was disturbing for some reason. So, we kept them out of reach.

But as he got older, and more mobile, he managed to get to our iPhones and iPads, and when he learned how to climb, he got to our computers.

So, after a year or so of placing things ever higher, we started to cave in. The breaking point came when I was facing a 10-hour flight with our then 18-month-old. A friend suggested I load up my iPad with toddler games and let him play. An elegant solution for a situation where you’re expected to remain placidly in your seat for hours on end.

My friend assured me there were really good, educational apps, so I looked. Sure enough, there were sorter apps, puzzle apps, logic apps, matching apps, ABC apps — I felt like I’d hit the jackpot. Though I still felt that sense of unease about giving him the “device”, I figured it’d be a last resort.

On the plane, when I got through the books and other toys, meal time and diaper changing, my energy flagged. I gave him the iPad. He didn’t get the games at first, but remarkably, after just a few minutes of showing him how, he started moving shapes to the appropriate places, matching images correctly, and solving cute puzzles of animals and choo-choo trains.

I was amazed at his ability to focus, the ease with which he wielded this incredibly sophisticated technology — his sheer intelligence. The flight was a success.

As the months wore on, he asked more and more for “puh-puh” — puzzles (or the iPad, they were synonymous with one another). At first, I would say no, but then there’d be those times when I was at the end of my rope. A long day at work, or sick with the flu. Or just dead tired. And I’d give in.

But each time, his desperation became more extreme. And I’d watch him play. Sometimes he didn’t win, and he’d get very frustrated and cry out. He seemed in pain. Then, he’d get into the rhythm again, and complete the puzzles successfully. But I saw no joy in his success. Yes, he was focused intently. He was quiet. He was thinking. But what was he getting out of it?

And then one day, as I ended an iPad session, he became inconsolable. He had pleaded and whined before, but this was different. He cried “puh-puh!!” for almost an hour, which turned into a pathetic moaning by the end. He had played with the iPad (aside from FaceTime chats with family and friends) about a dozen times — and he was already behaving like a full-blown addict.
I talked to two close friends — Hagit Golan, a prenatal bonding specialist, and Dr. Gabor Maté, the best-selling author and expert on addiction — whom I had gotten to know while making my documentary on prenatal life, In Utero.

They both explained that a child (not to mention a baby or even a fetus — or an adult, for that matter) needs connection. Wants only connection. Building relationships is the key to being human. All of those combined hours that my son had put into those iPad puzzles, all of the attention he gave them — he got nothing in return. When I put the iPad in my beloved son’s chubby little hands, I was giving him a one-way relationship. I was giving him an indifferent, unloving, inhuman babysitter. Would you hire a babysitter who didn’t engage with your son?, Hagit asked.

There is a section in my movie that refers to the Still Face Experiment by Dr. Edward Tronick. In the experiment, a mother plays with her one-year-old, who is strapped in a highchair. He smiles, laughs, claps his hands. Then she is instructed to make her face still and expressionless. She is not to react to her son for one full minute, no matter what he says or does. Just look at him blankly. The result is painful to watch. You basically see this vibrant, happy child break down in the space of sixty seconds. His whole world crumbles. His mother, who is his primary relationship, is simply not there.

She’s there, but she’s not there.

And that’s exactly what the iPad, iPhone, Facebook and Twitter and all these social media platforms do — they promise connection, but in the end, they’re not really there. There’s no physical contact, no emotional connection. Just a slick, enticing, flat touchscreen.

Why was my son begging for the iPad for almost an hour? Because he was addicted. And the addiction developed just as any other addiction does, Gabor explained. When you are in emotional pain, you seek nourishment (connection, love). What technology gives you (like heroin, sex, gambling, or shopping) is temporary relief from your pain. But the pain comes back, and so you need more.

Are those puzzles educational? Maybe they exercise some intellectual part of the brain, but the collateral emotional damage that comes from engaging in a neglectful, one-way relationship, overrides any such benefit.

What’s better than the iPad? Human connection. So, what did I do? I put the iPad high up on a shelf — and left it there. Then I sat my son down and told him mommy had made a mistake. But mistakes can be fixed. So, ‘no puh-puh’ anymore. And then I bought puzzles. Lots of puzzles. Wooden puzzles that you could touch, feel, smell.

Does my son ask for puh-puh still? Of course he does. But then he thinks for a moment, and declares, “No puh-puh.” Then he leads me to the table where our new wooden alphabet puzzle is scattered, waiting to be assembled...together.

To read all our Director’s entries, see links below
journal.thriveglobal.com/@kathleenmangyllenhaal
www.huffingtonpost.com/author/kathleen-gyllenhaal
ADDITIONAL MEDIA

**Official Trailer**

**Pregnant? Stressed? Science Says Talk to Your Baby**
[https://youtu.be/B5P3I-t45Ck](https://youtu.be/B5P3I-t45Ck)

**This New Sex Science Changes Everything**
[https://youtu.be/l1SvAlw14tY](https://youtu.be/l1SvAlw14tY)

**THE IMPRINT — excerpt from IN UTERO**
[https://youtu.be/eB1Df4znVq0](https://youtu.be/eB1Df4znVq0)

**IN UTERO — The Still Face Experiment**
[https://youtu.be/643CvSHSf8I](https://youtu.be/643CvSHSf8I)

**IN UTERO — That Forever Empty**
[https://youtu.be/fbFvGrg5ukI](https://youtu.be/fbFvGrg5ukI)

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We see the addiction as the problem, and of course that’s legitimate, addiction is a problem, it creates problems, but it’s not the primary problem. We really need to appreciate the importance of the prenatal environment in child development and to understand that when we see dysfunction in people, we’re actually seeing the imprint of that early experience.
– Gabor Maté, MD from the film