

# **A HISTORICAL LOOK AT THE ANTI-RELIGIOUS BIAS IN THE SOCIAL SCIENCES AND ITS EFFECT ON THE AMERICAN FAMILY**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*While the founding fathers established an American family system based on the assumption that science and religion are compatible systems for improving everyday life, the social science profession has devoted a substantial amount of effort over the past century to convince the public that social scientists have created scientifically based life belief systems that are superior to what they refer to as the mythically based religious life belief systems that guided our founding fathers. This paper historically documents the founding fathers' belief in the compatibility of science and religion, and then traces the creation of the nonreligious, humanistic life belief systems of prominent mental health leaders (e.g. Freud, Adler, Rogers). A substantial amount of scientific evidence is given showing (1) social scientists have historically shown a bias against religiously based life belief systems, and (2) humanist based family systems have not been found to be more scientifically sound than religiously based family systems.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

In 1975 the president of the American Psychological Association, Donald Campbell, criticized the American mental health profession for being unjustifiably critical of the values of religion for society (1975, p. 1103-21). In 1986 Paul Vitz reviewed public school history textbooks and noted the major role Christianity played in the establishment of the United States is no longer mentioned. In 2003, David Limbaugh reaffirmed the role Christianity and religion played in the founding of our country has gradually been removed from school textbooks. The purpose of this paper is to historically look at the social science's possible anti-religious bias and relate it to the possible effect this bias has had on the American family.

This paper goes into depth on the different aspects presented. L.H. Cohen (1996) reported that most social scientist's practicing in the mental health profession do not read scientific articles because at least 40 percent believe there is no scientific research which is relevant to their profession. This paper includes a great deal of documentation that we believe is relevant to mental health professionals, especially those working with families.

### **The Role of Religion in America Prior to 1900's**

While some humanistic oriented individuals (e.g. Becker, 1922; Beard & Beard, 1930) have argued that religion played an insignificant role in the founding of the United States, historians in general have described religion (particularly Christianity) as playing an important and major role in the founding of our government and in the first 100 years of progress in the United States (Barton, D., 2002, p. 279). Barton states that of some 15,000 records and personal documents reviewed, 34 percent of them quote the bible

directly (Barton, p. 225). The tremendous role the founding fathers felt God, the bible and Christianity played in the founding of the United States is illustrated by just a few of these literally thousands of statements made by our founding fathers. For example, in 1789 as part of his inaugural address, George Washington made the following statement, after offering a prayer:

*[I]t would be peculiarly improper to omit, in this first official act, my fervent supplications to that Almighty Being who rules over the universe, who presides in the councils of nations, and whose providential aids can supply every human defect.... No people can be bound to acknowledge and adore the Invisible Hand which conducts the affairs of men more than those of the United States. Every step by which they have advanced to the character of an independent nation seems to have been distinguished by some token of providential agency....[W]e ought to be no less persuaded that the propitious [favorable] smiles of Heaven can never be expected on a nation that disregards the eternal rules of order and right which Heaven itself has ordained. (Barton, 2002, p. 114)*

Three more statements by other founding fathers demonstrate the importance of God and Christianity during the development of our country:

*Rendering thanks to my Creator for my existence and station among His works, for my birth in a country enlightened by the Gospel and enjoying freedom, and for all His other kindness, to Him I resign myself, humbly confiding in his goodness, and in His mercy through Jesus Christ for the events of eternity. (John Dickinson, signer of the constitution) (Barton, p. 12)*

*Unto Him who is the author and giver of all good, I render sincere and humble thanks for His manifold and unmerited blessings, and especially for our redemption and salvation by His beloved Son. (John Jay, Original Chief-Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court) (Barton, p. 12)*

*My soul I resign into the hands of my Almighty Creator, whose tender mercies are all over His works, who hateth nothing that he had made, and to the justice and wisdom of whose dispensations I willingly and cheerfully submit, humbly hoping from His unbounded mercy and benevolence, through the merits of my blessed Savior, a remission of my sins. (George Mason, Father of the Bill of Rights) (Barton, p. 12)*

The founding fathers also understood that the family, presided over by parents of high moral convictions, supported a free government by teaching moral values to the next generation: “[T]he importance of piety and religion; of industry and frugality; of prudence, economy, regularity and an even [stable] government; all...are essential to the well-being of a family (Writings of Samuel Adams, personal writings) (Barton, p. 346).

Therefore, it is not surprising that the founding fathers also include references to Deity in our most important national documents, including the Declaration of Independence: “...the laws of nature and of nature’s **God**...”; “...endowed by their **Creator** with certain unalienable rights...”; “...appealing to the **Supreme Judge of the World**, for the rectitude of our intentions...” (emphasis added)

In addition to the many statements made in favor of religion by our founding fathers, many publicly put into practice their religious beliefs. For example, Benjamin Franklin suggested, when the debates became unproductive during the Constitutional Convention, that:

*“In this situation of this Assembly, groping as it were in the dark to find political truth, and scarce able to distinguish it when present to us, how has it happened, sir, that we have not hitherto once thought of humbly applying to the Father of lights, to illuminate our understanding?” (Barton, p. 111)*

Latter, Thomas Jefferson sponsored the legislature to open all congress meetings with prayer and George Washington, Thomas Jefferson and others offered prayers at their inaugural addresses, because they acknowledged their need for divine guidance (Barton, p. 186). When there was a shortage of bibles in 1891, Congress approved the printing of 20,000 bibles and assigned James Duane, Thomas McKean and John Witherspoon to oversee the project (Barton, p. 107).

Even though there are so many quotes, documents and personal practices of the founding fathers demonstrating the fact that they felt religion was important over the past three decades, high school history textbooks offer a version of history that downplays the role of Christianity during and after the establishment of the United States. The importance of Christianity in the personal lives of the founding fathers is also minimized. (Vitz, 1986)

Despite this attempt to minimize the importance of religion in the lives of the founding fathers, it is clear that they did feel religion was an integral part of a successful, freedom based government. They openly supported religion through their statements and actions and they felt strongly that the success of their new republic was dependent on the moral and religious integrity of its citizens, as taught and supported by a family presided over by parents of high moral character. The founding fathers also accepted the bible as the educator and source of these moral values. In 1776, religion and science were generally accepted as compatible. No one questioned whether the Bible was the word of God, or if religion was mythical or unscientific. That happened about 100 years later.

### **Mental Health Profession Plant Seeds of Doubt about Religion in America**

With such strong sentiments in favor of religion among our founding fathers, where and how did religion begin to loose favor in this country? Cortes (1999) describes the historical events that eventually led to the decline of religious fervor, especially among humanists. Some of the first scientists to find possible inconsistency with the bible were early geologists (ie. Charles Lyell--1797-1875) who began to look at earth's history through rock formations left behind. It became evident that the biblical historical explanation of a creation in six days and catastrophic events, such as Noah's flood, did not necessarily match up with the geologic deposits. Later on, early astronomers began to formulate new theories that excluded God as our creator (Pierre Simon Laplace) and early anthropologists (Samuel G. Morton--1799-1851; Josiah Nott--1804-1873) challenged the direct lineage connecting the entire human race to Adam and Eve. However, it was Charles Darwin (1809-1882) and his theories on natural selection and evolution that eventually led to what is now considered one of the main conflicts between religion and science. According to Darwin, man was not created by God, but merely the end result of millions of years of natural selection and evolution. Ironically, many of the scientists who created these theories did believe in God and did not see inherent

difficulties in these new theories and religious beliefs. Nevertheless, the conflict was encouraged by many humanists who did not themselves believe in God. In the late 1800's and early 1900's, the new field of psychology and psychiatry in America was dramatically influenced by anti-religious leaders such as Sigmund Freud.

Growing up in Vienna, Austria, Freud was raised by a non-practicing Jewish family. He was a bright young man, and enjoyed interacting with liberal-minded individuals and read the most liberal newspapers. Humanism was a new and growing political and cultural movement throughout Europe. Following this popular liberal trend, at the age of 17, Freud considered himself an expert on religion and he identified religion as a detriment to successful society and to personal growth (Torrey, 1992).

In the late 1880's Freud began developing a humanistic based (anti-god) psychological life belief system which he claimed was a scientifically based alternative to a religiously based life belief system. It included such theories as the Oedipus complex, penis envy, sex motivation and repressed adult motivations created during childhood. He combined his belief that sex was the main underlying motivation for essentially all human thoughts and actions with his readings about an unconscious part of the mind and his readings about a person's youth being the important formative time for a person's adult personality. One of Freud's most well known diagnoses is called the Oedipus Complex, named after a tragic Greek hero who killed his father and unknowingly married his mother, which Freud came up with because when he was a boy he had been sexually aroused by his own Mother. Freud did not deduce the Oedipus complex from a scientific study of hundreds or thousands of young men. He drew that personal theoretical speculation from his own reflection on his youth and the early Greek writings. To this day, it has not been validated by scientific evidence.

Freud developed his psychoanalytically based psychological theory by carrying out his daily habit of mental speculation. Letters to his friends and associates document his habit of sitting around in the evening reflecting on his life and speculating on the writings of others, and attempting to reason out the interactive effects of sexual motivation, the unconscious mind and the youthful mind. He did not derive his psychologically based belief system from collected scientific evidence. Freud's Psychoanalytic system was both a psychologically based belief system about life and a method of mental speculation for creating that life belief system (Fine, 1979).

According to Wallace (1984) Psychoanalysis reduced all religious phenomena into categories. For instance, God is projection, prayer is omnipotence of thoughts and wish-fulfillment, and ritual is obsessionality. Driven by a strong disdain for religious beliefs, Freud viewed his main purpose in life as being destined to remove the yoke of mythical religious life belief system from all societies and replace it with a humanistic life belief system he created, which he felt was scientifically based. Freud did not view himself as simply the creator of psychoanalysis, as one of several alternative methods for administering psychotherapy. Rather, he believed his destiny was to have a much greater impact on mankind than even Jesus Christ because the life belief system he created would be adopted as the world abandoned religion. Before Freud, religion was mostly tolerated by mental health professionals as they struggled to get society to accept their profession. With his persuasive ways, Freud unintentionally misled mental health professionals into believing his was a scientifically sound life belief system that they should convince the public to adopt, thereby getting rid of religious influence on mankind.

Although Freud claimed that his theories and psychoanalysis were developed scientifically, such was not the case. Torrey (1992) identified three main obsessions that influenced Freud during his creation of psychoanalysis. The first was a preoccupation with fame. Sulloway, a colleague of Freud's during 1882-1885 said that "*Freud was continually preoccupied with the hope of making an important scientific discovery—one that would bring him early fame and the promise of a large private practice...*". Sulloway later said that Freud falsified some of the details of the origins of psychoanalysis in an effort to fulfill this "*heroic destiny*" (1979). Secondly, Freud was preoccupied with the occult in the 1890's and throughout his life. Freud periodically consulted soothsayers who he believed had telepathic powers, conducted séances in his home and was superstitious about certain numbers. He also attempted magical actions, like the time his eldest daughter was gravely ill he broke a valued marble statue of Venus as "a sacrificial offering to preserve his child's life" (Torrey, 1992).

Freud's third obsession was cocaine. His frequent use of cocaine is substantiated in many of his private writings such as his letters to Wilhelm Fleiss (Mason, 1985). Freud often used cocaine in the evenings when he was mentally creating his psychological theories. From 1884 through 1886, Freud wrote four professional papers reporting the effects of cocaine on physical and mental functions. He strongly encouraged the use of cocaine, giving quantities of it to his fiancée and sisters, besides using it himself, and continued to use it even after 1886 when cocaine had been identified by the medical profession as "*the third scourge of humanity*" along with alcohol and opium. Torrey summarized Freud's mental state during the 1890's as "a man with a mystical sense of personal destiny, who believed in telepathy and numerology, and who was using cocaine at least intermittently" (Torrey, 1992, p. 11).

All aspects of Freud's theories that took the mental health profession by storm were similarly conceived, not from scientific research findings, but from mental speculations in the evenings, which Freud considered as science in progress. Without exception the dozens of attempts by unbiased (and even admirers of Freud) psychological researchers starting in the 1910's to review all the scientific psychoanalytical research came up with the same basic conclusion—Freud's theories and life belief system has little, if any scientific support. These studies are discussed in more detail in Naegle, Robinson and Witham, 2006.

While Freud would confide with colleagues his criticisms of religion in the 1880s and 90s, it was in the 1900's when he began publishing critiques on religion. In the 1920s, Freud felt he had to turn his "scientific" focus on religion for the good of society. His publication of *The Future of an Illusion* in 1927 was Freud's scientific evaluation of religion. He claimed religion was a hoax on the world that lacked any scientific validation and was based in nothing more than myth and illusion. In *The Future of an Illusion*, Freud described himself as focusing his scientifically based psychoanalysis on the issue of religion. Within Freud's psychoanalytical criticism of religion was his belief that discovering and disseminating the truth about religion would help free mankind from it. In more than one text, Freud described religion as the enemy (e.g. Gay, 1988, p.533). The heart of Freud's attack on religion was his claim that the promises of religion are incompatible with those of science.

During the 1900's, and following the lead of Freud, mental health professionals repeatedly tried to discredit religion in the minds of the public. For example, from 1905

to 1912 members of the profession authored four books aimed at showing Jesus Christ was mentally ill (*Jesus Christ from the Standpoint of Psychiatry; The insanity of Jesus: Conclusions of a Psychiatrist; Jesus: A Comparative Study of Psychopathology*). They described Jesus as having a persecution complex and feelings of grandiosity along with visualized auditory hallucinations during delusional outbreaks. Torrey (1974) noted “*Other great figures in history and literature have been similarly subjected to this insidious pseudoscientific mudslinging* (p. 81).

Although Freud repeatedly claimed during his first twenty years as a mental health professional that his theories and ideas were scientifically sound, growing claims by his professional peers that there was no scientific support for his theories caused Freud to withdraw somewhat from those claims. For example, in 1905 he once told a colleague that told Freud he had found empirical evidence for Freud’s theory that “*his theory needed no validation*” (Torrey, 1992, p. 216).

Freud also put considerable effort into discrediting religiously based parenting systems. He had four basic criticisms. First, he believed that human actions were determined mainly by sexual impulses and religion’s repressive attitude about sexual morality was detrimental to personal fulfillment. Second, the religiously supported idea of parents supervising the development of their children was too restrictive. Freud adopted the Enlightenment philosophy that children make their own choices and should not be taught the religious values of their parents. Freud believed parental over-supervision of children produced emotionally traumatic memories in the unconscious mind of the child, only removable via his psychoanalytic, talk-it-out treatment approach. Third, Freud was against the use of rewards and punishments to produce behavior change advocated in the Bible. He felt punishing children produced emotionally traumatic memories in the child’s unconscious. Fourth, Freud supported the Enlightenment movement that was against teaching obedience to children. Freud saw teaching children obedience as a means to make children learn to be subservient and he did not buy into the biblical philosophy that learning to obey the rules leads to more independence and freedom (Robinson & Robinson, 2005).

Several books and articles (e.g. Burnham, 1918; McFarlane, 1915; Jones, 1953; Kuhn, 1962; Gay, 1988) have been written that included anecdotal data and testimonials suggesting Freud’s psychological approach produced scientifically valid results. A parenting book based on Freud’s life belief system was authored by Benjamin Spock. Spock’s book entitled *The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care* sold over fifty million copies from when it was first published in 1946 to the year 2000.

In 1959, McCord and McCord reported the results of a major twenty year experiment using 650 boys, who were eleven-years-old at the beginning of the study, which indicated Freud’s parenting and therapeutic ideas were ineffective. (This study is discussed in depth later in the paper)

In 1959, Spock responded to that study by initiating a scientifically oriented thirteen-year research study designed to validate Freudian parenting ideas. He recruited eleven eminent psychoanalysts trained by Freud’s daughter, Anna Freud, to counsel twice a month for six years with parents. According to E. Fuller Torrey:

*The results of the study provided no support whatsoever for Freud’s theory and, not surprisingly, little of the data was ever published. Spock acknowledged that despite the intense psychoanalytically oriented*

counseling, “the children in the Study had just as many problems as any other children.”

*“The study, probably the most ambitious ever undertaken to prove that child rearing based on Freud’s theory can ameliorate developmental problems, had completely negative results. Despite such conclusions, Spock continued to promote Freud’s theory, suggesting that his belief was immune to refutation by objective data. In a recent interview Spock reiterated that “the whole Oedipal situation is proven again and again” (Torrey, 1992, p. 134)*

In looking specifically at Spock’s borrowed parenting philosophy, several points seem to be evident. First, it is established that Spock’s 50 years of advice to parents was no more scientific than Freud’s ideas. Second, Spock, like Freud, had no scientific evidence backing his parenting approaches. Spock’s mental health ideas for parents were merely updated repetitions of Freud’s theories that were derived from self-speculation, deep personal meditation, and regurgitated humanist philosophies. Third, Spock and other experts in the field made several attempts through the 1960s to locate scientific findings that support Freud’s beliefs, but were unsuccessful. Fourth, rather than accepting the evidence indicating Freud’s life belief system has no scientific merit, the mental health profession has apparently adopted the position that while scientific research does not support the idea that Freud’s system produces measurable improvement in peoples lives, his system produces positive changes that are significant in ways current scientific methodology is unable to detect (Robinson & Robinson, 2005).

### **PET: A Second Parenting Approach Based on an Alternate Humanist Life Belief System**

A second prominent leader in the mental health profession (Carl Rogers) created an alternate humanistically based life belief system for his profession. Thomas Gordon authored a parenting book entitled *Parent Effectiveness Training* (1970) based exclusively on the humanistic ideas of Carl Rogers. Although *Parent Effectiveness Training* (PET) was most popular in the 1970’s, ‘80’s and 90’s, it is still relevant historically today because of the ideas and beliefs upon which PET was based are still in the minds of many present day mental health professionals, and other professionals have incorporated PET principles into newly created parenting packages without letting the public know they are from PET.

Although PET was developed by Thomas Gordon, he adopted its basic principles from the work of noted psychologist, Carl Rogers. Rogers, who was born on January 8, 1902, in Oak Park, Illinois, to an upper middle class, religiously-oriented family, attended the University of Wisconsin and Columbia University, earning his doctorate in 1931. His early travels and college experiences formed much of his opinions and life philosophies.

Toward the end of his first year at the University, Rogers became less interested in academics and more consumed with the idea of religion. In 1919, he wrote “*I intend to live closer to God, to form a more intimate friendship with Him and to spend more time and effort in communion with Him*” (Kirschenbaum, 1979, p. 20). In 1922, Rogers attended a World Student Christian Federation’s Conference in Peking, China, and afterwards spent time traveling throughout the Far East. This experience dramatically

influenced Roger's belief about life. His exposure to Far Eastern philosophies awed him, and upon his return to his home country, Rogers did not consider himself a Christian. He came to believe that Christ was just a man, not much different from anyone else. Rogers was impressed by the Zen tradition that taught the idea all answers to an individual's problems in life are found within that person. Rogers returned to his college education indelibly touched by Buddhism and Zen, and removed himself from the practice of formal religion.

As Rogers began his professional life he became highly disappointed with the traditional mental health ideas about what man does and why. Rogers began developing a psychological belief system based on the ancient Far Eastern ideas and early Greek philosophers. Rogers created a life belief system that claimed parents should not direct their children. Instead they should show unconditional love to the child and support him/her in making their own decisions. He believed each child is genetically endowed with the knowledge of what he or she needs to achieve a high level of personal fulfillment. Roger's life belief system disagreed with the biblical parenting approach that encourages parents to reward and punish children while directing them through life. In 1942 Rogers wrote *Counseling and Psychotherapy*, a book that explained his unconditional acceptance philosophy.

After training under Rogers, Dr. Thomas Gordon began conducting parenting workshops in 1962, drawing his ideas from Carl Rogers and far eastern philosophies. In 1970, he authored his own book, *Parent Effectiveness Training* (PET). Printed on the cover of this book is the statement "The Tested New Way To Raise Responsible Children". Gordon claimed PET was a scientifically tested and a proven parenting approach designed to replace the outdated reinforcement/punishment based parenting approach advocated by the Bible. This approach was well received by mental health professionals, and it sparked the creation of other humanistic parenting ideas that differed from PET.

PET was popular because it claimed that parents can effectively raise children without discipline or punishment. It claimed children should make their own decisions, and parents should not be held accountable for their children's behavior. On the surface, it seemed ideal—a parenting approach that produces great children, superior in psychosocial development yet requiring little if any parental direction. PET's message was simply that parents should show their kids they love them, listen to them, be a good model as a parent, and let the kids make their own decisions. Further, it maintains children do not misbehave to get things they should not have or for the enjoyment of doing things they should not do. They misbehave because they don't feel loved or cared about. It also asserts that children are born knowing right from wrong and will always choose to do what is right, except when people (particularly parents) mistreat and confuse them. Finally, it claims children do not learn from experiencing consequences for their actions. According to Gordon (1970):

*The PET program has also thrown new light on punishment in childrearing. Many of our PET parents have proven to us that punishment can be discarded forever in disciplining children, and I mean all kinds of punishment, not just the physical kind (p. 3).*

*Reward and punishment can work to teach a child to avoid touching things on the coffee table or to say 'please' when asking for things at the dinner table, but parents will not find this effective to produce good study habits, to be honest, to be kind to other children, or to be cooperative as member of the family (Gordon, 1970, p. 174).*

As the PET parenting system took hold across the country, criticism for religiously based parenting techniques grew as did disapproval of controlling parents. Mental health professionals advocating PET seemed to quietly discourage parents from teaching children religious values. Gordon's PET system also falls right in line with the humanist approach to parenting, and opposite the religiously based American Family System established by our founding fathers. In the 1975 edition of his book, Gordon writes that he is excited about PET's "proliferation of our humanistic philosophy" (p. xv). He goes on to claim that religion's two thousand year old parenting advice is outmoded and ineffective. However, Gordon did not provide any scientific evidence to support that criticism or to substantiate his own claims.

There have been members of the Mental Health community that have criticized Gordon's techniques, especially the philosophy that parents should love their children unconditionally. He believed that using rewards and punishments to teach children the consequences of their actions is not only ineffective, but harmful. According to Gordon if parents will just be good models, show them unconditional love, and refrain from using rewards and punishments, children will refrain from misbehaving. Psychologist and world expert on children learning through imitating models, Albert Bandura strongly criticized Gordon's claims as he noted:

*Some child-rearing authorities have popularized the view that healthy personality development is built on "unconditional love." If this principle were, in fact, unfailingly applied, parents would respond affectionately regardless of how their children behaved—whether or not they mistreated others, stole whatever they wanted, disregarded the wishes and rights of others, or demanded instant gratification. Unconditional love, were it possible, would make children directionless and quite unlovable. Most readers are undoubtedly acquainted with families where parents who attempted to approximate this condition succeeded in producing "self-actualized" tyrants (Murray 1956; Truax, 1966; Bandura, 1977, p. 102-103).*

In 1977, Rinn and Markle reviewed all of the research articles that had been published after Gordon began PET workshops. There had been 14 articles written that evaluated PET in some way shape or form. After reviewing the articles they concluded that the research results "*do not support the assumption that Parent Effectiveness Training is effective*".

In 1991, Gordon authored a 240 page book entitled *Discipline That Works*, in which he devoted the first half of the book to presenting what he claimed was an in-depth review of the research literature on discipline and punishment. The second half of the book presents what Gordon calls "non-controlling methods" for getting children to

change behavior. Gordon reports he was shocked while reading Logan Wright's book called *Parent Power* (1980) which advocates parents actively discipline their children. He says that experience "jarred" him to the extent he began an in-depth study of discipline. Gordon says, "*I searched the psychological literature for all the reports of research studies I could find on discipline, punishment, power, styles of parenting, and so on*" (p. xxviii).

Gordon's "in-depth" research literature review consisted mainly of approximately 120 references, most of which were books and articles that centered around opinions and anecdotal data on topics such as child abuse, Nazi extermination camps, and analyzing self-esteem. His review did not include books reviewing research on punishment, such as Axelrod and Apsche's *Effects of Punishment on Human Behavior* (1983) or Walter's and Grusec's *Punishment* (1977), or Weber, Roff, Crawford and Robinson's *Classroom Management: Reviews of the Teacher Education and Research Literature* (1983). All three of these reviews (the most complete reviews of punishment research ever published) indicate punishment is effective in changing behavior. To date, there have been no books that substantially reviewed all punishment literature and reported punishment to be ineffective.

Gordon's in-depth review of journal articles on discipline and punishment included approximately eight articles, but none of them contained controlled experiments showing punishment to be ineffective. Nowhere did Gordon cite any of more than 1,100 journal articles involving experimental treatments and control groups or control conditions that demonstrated many of various punishment procedures were effective. Nowhere does Gordon refer to college textbooks on the psychology of learning and their continued reference to empirical research studies over the past four decades that identify reinforcement and punishment as the most important motivational factors influencing learning and behavior change (e.g. Azrin & Holz, 1966; Hulse, Egeth, and Deese, 1980; Piece and Epling, 1999; Schwartz, 1989; Mazur, 2002; Kingsley and Garry, 1957). Nowhere does Gordon mention that college textbooks on the psychology of learning do not even mention unconditional love, active listening, or I-messages as having any empirical evidence suggesting they are effective in changing behavior. The fact that Educational Testing Service's psychological task force (Weber et al., 1983; created to evaluate the scientific evidence for and against methods various psychologists had claimed were effective in changing behavior) claimed there was no empirical evidence showing unconditional love, active listening, logical consequences, or I-messages was effective in changing behavior was also not mentioned by Gordon, either.

While fewer mental health professionals are presently encouraging the American public to adopt the complete PET parenting package, they are still claiming that many of the false philosophies underlying the PET approach are scientifically sound. They are including those philosophies as part of supposedly new, more modern parenting approaches. While mental health professionals support for the overall PET system is on the wane, it has left the unfortunate legacy of indoctrinating the American public with the idea many humanistic parenting ideals (e.g., parents should be more permissive; punishment is an unnatural, primitive, and detrimental behavior change procedure) are scientifically sound improvements over the religiously based American Family System, when they are not.

## **STEP: A Third Parenting Approach Based on Another Humanist Life Belief System**

In 1976, mental health professionals Don Dinkmeyer and Gary McKay created yet a third humanistic-based parenting system entitled *Systematic Training for Effective Parenting* (STEP) that was based on the psychological beliefs of Alfred Adler.

From 1902 to 1911 Freud and Adler were colleagues in a society of professionals created by Freud, reinforcing each other's anti-religious, humanistic views. Adler was like Freud and Rogers in believing in humanism and endorsing theoretical speculation rather than scientific research.

Eventually, however, Freud pressured Adler to withdraw from the society. A major factor in the split was Adler's rejection of Freud's belief that sexual urges were the primary motivational forces driving the human race. Adler then formed his own group under the name "Individual Psychology."

Adler believed the central motivation or striving force of human beings is to be accepted by other members of society along with a feeling of needing to improve the lot of all members of society in general. While Freud claimed man has basically a bad, wild, unsocialized, selfish, and destructive nature, Rogers contended that man is basically a socialized, constructive, and trustworthy being. In contrast to both Rogers and Freud, Adler felt man is neither inherently "good" nor "bad", but as a creative, choosing human being, he may choose to be good or bad or both depending upon his life-style and his appraisal of the immediate situation and its payoffs.

An important factor in Adler's humanistic life belief system was his strong belief that government should and eventually would take over the supervision of child rearing. Adler's parents were not religious, but active in the democratic socialist political party, and as socialists, they believed the important bond was between government and child rather than parent and child. To them and socialists in general, government is "mother," providing for an individual's needs. Adler felt that organizing a family with the parents in charge is wrong because parents are typically not good teachers of children. This philosophy is a critical charge against biblical values, since the family and parents are the fundamental bond or unit in the bible and in religion. In his book *Understanding Human Nature* (1927) Adler wrote:

*Education in the homes therefore commits the gravest of psychological errors in inoculating children with the false idea that they must be superior to everyone else and consider themselves better than all other human beings. Any organization of the family, which is based upon the idea of the leadership of the father, cannot be separated from this thought (p. 219).*

While Adler emphasized the point that children should be responsible for their own actions, he did not agree with Carl Rogers' idea proposed in the 1940s that parents and teachers should not try to influence a child's decisions. Adler believed there are times when teachers and parents need to step in to give advice and try to direct children toward certain decisions.

In 1931, Adler began interacting with psychiatrist Rudolf Dreikurs who became Adler's main advocate of Individual Psychology after Adler died in 1937. Adler and

Dreikurs were very much against the parenting principles that were part of the American Family System. As humanists, they were very much against parental use of rewards and punishments as advocated in the Bible, and felt parents should let children make more of their own decisions.

Using Adler's concepts as a foundation, Dreikurs wrote several books including: *The Challenge of Parenthood* (1948), *The Challenge of Child Training: A Parent's Guide* (1972), *A New Approach to Discipline: Logical Consequence* (1968), *Psychology in the Classroom* (1968) and *Children: The Challenge* (1964).

Don Dinkmeyer and Gary McKay were protégés of Rudolf Dreikurs and greatly advanced the acceptance of Adlerian home management ideas. They were impressed with Adler's humanistic psychological belief system that included the idea of punishment-free parenting. Using the ideas and writings of both Alfred Adler and Rudolph Dreikurs, they developed a parenting and classroom management model that became the number one approach used by education and social services agencies across America in the 1980's and 90's. It combined the idea of mutual respect between teacher and student with ways to deal with discipline problems in the family. It reminded society of the importance of emphasizing encouragement and success rather than criticism in a child's life. All this was accomplished with their publication of the *Systematic Training for Effective Parenting (STEP)* manual in 1976. STEP was quickly accepted in educational circles and social service circles because it included the human respect dimension of Thomas Gordon's PET model, plus it condoned the idea that the consequences of children's actions could be depended upon to influence children's behavior. While STEP rejected the value of contrived rewards and punishments in the guidance of children, it does tell teachers and parents to rely on *logical* and *natural consequences* with children.

Perhaps the most unique dimension of STEP in contrast to other home management models is its emphasis on using *natural* and *logical consequences* to guide a child's actions. While PET claims consequences in the form of rewards and punishments plays no positive role, and actually creates negative effects in influencing a child to act and think in certain ways, STEP believes natural and logical consequences do influence what children do.

However, one of the major problems with basing a parenting system on the use of natural consequences is that natural consequences, without the intentional parental use of rewards and punishments, may be too weak or too powerful. For example, the natural consequence of a teenager who drops out of school is too weak because those consequences do not prompt him/her to return. An example of a consequence that is too powerful would be a child who places his hand in a blender. Experiencing natural consequences for one's actions is typically not a very refined system for helping people learn.

Initially, Adler and Dreikurs just emphasized natural consequences for changing children's behavior. However, parents complained that it did not seem to be enough, just waiting for natural consequences to occur. Parents complained about needing to actively do something to have children experience more immediate consequences. In 1968, Dreikurs & Grey responded to parental concerns by writing a book entitled *The New Approach to Discipline: Logical Consequences*. This book described how parents could actually create what Dreikurs called logical consequences to influence a child's behavior.

The major problem with the logical consequence idea is that research does not support Dreikurs' claims. For example, when asking what is more effective in getting kids to put blocks away—sending the child to their room or mother picking up the blocks and putting them in the closet for three days—the answer is not automatically putting the blocks up, but it is whichever consequence is most disliked by the child. The issue of logical is not as important as the issue of how unpleasant the child views the consequence. In addition, even Dreikurs admits logical consequences can be interpreted differently to different people. Dreikurs said what might be a logical consequence to one person may not be to another person. While the term logical consequence sounds impressive it has little parenting value if people cannot even agree as to what it is.

Scientific supported alternatives to natural or logical consequences is the biblical advocated use of punishments and rewards. However, STEP is firmly against parents using rewards and punishments in the home. According to STEP, rewards and punishments are contrived consequences that are artificial, not natural or logically related to the actions. According to STEP, the use of rewards and punishment has at least four undesirable effects:

1. It makes parents responsible for their children's behavior.
2. It prevents children from learning to make their own decisions.
3. It suggests that acceptable behavior is expected only in the presence of authority figures.
4. It invites resistance by attempting to force children to conform.

None of these claims are derived from psychological research findings, but are simply statements created to discourage parents from using rewards and punishments. The evidence is overwhelmingly in favor of a reward and punishment system, including thousands of studies showing reinforcement and punishment are effective. Dreikurs claims punishment blocks a child's purpose, and also that "not only does punishment thwart a child's ambition, but it simply does not work" (p.76). Further discussion outlining empirical studies supporting the use of punishment is presented in Naegle, Robinson and Witham, 2006 and also in the Appendix of this paper.

In 1989, four researchers (Ratzlaff, Friese, Neufeld, and Paddock) investigated the scientific effectiveness of STEP and made the following statement:

*"A number of other researchers have evaluated the effectiveness of S.T.E.P., an Adlerian-based skill training program. Findings from studies by Steed (1971), Berrett (1975), Kierans (1976) and Nordal (1976) reported no evidence of significant change in parental attitudes concerning the parent-child relationship using the S.T.E.P. program" (p.167).*

In 1990, Dinkmeyer Sr., McKay, and Dinkmeyer Jr. took issue with the Ratzlaff et al.'s (1989) statement and noted, "*This statement is incorrect and a disservice to the reader. We wish to state the record concerning STEP research, accurately*" (p.103). Dinkmeyer et al. (1990) then go on to argue that: (a) STEP was not published until 1976 so Steed (1971) and Berrett (1975) "predate the release of STEP" and therefore "have nothing to do with STEP," and (b) Nordal's (1976) article refers to Adlerian parent training without specifically mentioning

STEP.

Dinkmeyer et al. (1990) claim there is a large body of research demonstrating the effectiveness of STEP. They briefly describe three journal articles, three dissertations, and one Australian government report containing data suggesting parental attendance at STEP workshops increased positive parent attitudes about the parenting principles that are part of STEP. None of these seven references showed any data indicating STEP was effective in changing children's behavior. Dinkmeyer et al. conclude their article with the following statement:

*Accuracy in research reporting is important in helping readers evaluate the effectiveness of various approaches. Inaccurate reports create false impressions. The STEP parent education programme is effective, research substantiates this, and the reader should be informed of these facts (p.105).*

Dinkmeyer and McKay go on to say that inaccurate reports create false impressions and accurate research reporting is important in being able to evaluate the effectiveness of various approaches.

One of the more heated issues that Dinkmeyer and McKay were required to defend included their claim that STEP had nothing to do with the Adlerian parenting techniques. However, close comparison of STEP manuals and texts show this claim to be both erroneous and misleading for two reasons. Step manuals and texts repeatedly make direct reference to the parenting techniques of Adler and Dreikurs. When Adlerian principles failed to meet scientific standards, the creators apparently wanted to distance themselves from their friend and teacher.

Another issue became the actual empirical support for STEP's effectiveness. The creators claim there is a substantial body of research supporting the effectiveness of STEP. However, the program could not stand up to the challenges when faced with deep evaluation on such merits as whether parental use of STEP creates a more healthy psychosocial development in children, whether use of step produces behavior changes in children, and whether or not specific behavior change procedures advocated by STEP have empirical support. A few studies showed that STEP was better than no parental instruction, but certainly not better than other parenting systems (Robinson, Robinson & Dunn, 2003).

Currently, no substantial body of evidence exists that shows STEP training changes children's behavior. In fact, there is undeniable consistency in the research showing no behavior change with STEP. It appears that the creators of STEP and those mental health professionals promoting its use need to correct their claims and provide potential users with a more accurate description of the empirical evidence surrounding STEP.

Therefore, as with the other humanistic parenting approaches, there appears to be no substantive scientific research to validate the parenting ideas presented in STEP. No measurable success has been evident in any subsequent scientific research since STEP became so widely accepted. After publishing the first STEP in 1976, Dinkmeyer and McKay would put out a new edition every few years. Unfortunately, however, they never included any substantive research findings to scientifically validate their parenting system.

## American Psychological Association's Treatment of Religion Today

The idea that the mental health profession has continued to advocate a relatively strong anti-religious focus throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century is supported by statements made by leaders in the mental health profession such as Donald Campbell, past president of the American Psychological Association. In his 1975 presidential address, Campbell pointed out that modern psychology and psychiatry “*are more hostile to the inhibitory messages of traditional religious moralizing than is scientifically justified.*” (p. 1103-4). He pointed out that while religions teach human traits such as lust and selfishness should be curbed, most mental health professionals “*not only describe man as selfishly motivated, but implicitly and explicitly teach that he ought to be so*” (p. 1103-1104). He made the point that behavior and social scientists show arrogance toward religion and strongly encouraged them to show “*respect for the wisdom that well-winnowed traditions may contain about how life should be lived*” (p. 1120-21).

In 1993, Kosmin and Lackman reported the results of a religious survey that showed 93% of Americans identify with a religious group. A 1995 Gallup poll stated that 80% of Americans report religion is “fairly” or “very” important in their lives. With such information showing religion is an important factor in American life and the fact that the mental health profession had been unjustifiably critical of religion during its past 100 year history, the American Psychological Association in 1992 mandated that psychologists take a more informed and scientific view of religion. In 1990 the American Psychiatric Association Committee on Religion and Psychiatry also recommended that the religiosity of individuals be more scientifically addressed within clinical practice. As part of an effort to help the mental health profession integrate the field of psychology and religion in a more scientifically balanced way, the American Psychological Association published a book entitled *Religion and the Clinical Practices of Psychology* (edited by Edward Shafranske) in 1995.

While it appears as though leaders in the mental health profession are coming to the important realization that the profession needs to modify its past approach of acting as if it has established therapeutic approaches based on scientific evidence that should be employed to correct the American public's reliance on so called mythically based religion, members of the mental health profession are having a difficult time adjusting. Mental health professionals still treat the religion-psychological therapy issue as if the profession is using a scientifically established life belief system to reduce the American public's mental health problems which they still believe are at least partially caused by religiously based myths and illusions.

For example, the book *Religion and the Clinical Proactive of Psychology* includes a chapter written by Freudian psychoanalyst Ana Maria Rizzuto that discusses the therapeutic uses of Freudian psychoanalysis in treating people with religions values. Throughout the chapter Rizzuto refers to religion as if it is a mythically based life belief system created in the minds of people struggling to deal with the real world, she addresses Freudian psychoanalysis as if it is a scientifically validated belief system. In describing religion, Rizzuto says “*Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, considered religion a collective neurosis that provided through its dogmas and rituals an illusory protection against human fragility*” (p.409)... “*Freud considered God ‘nothing other*

*than an exalted father' (1913), and religion a repressive fixation and dependence on parental figures needed by those too weak hearted to stand on their own" (p.415).* Rizzuto fails to mention these statements were nothing more than mental speculations made by Freud that have no scientific validation. She proceeds through the chapter to treat Freud's mythical speculations about religion as if they are scientifically validated facts.

Throughout the chapter Rizzuto repeatedly refers to Freud's psychoanalytically based life belief system and treatment approach as if they have been scientifically validated. She starts out mentioning there have been some changes in the psychoanalytic belief system and approach over the years, but the field of psychology remains basically unchanged. According to Rizzuto *"the psychoanalytic treatment created by Sigmund Freud at the turn of the twentieth century has evolved in the course of the years, but its basic techniques remains the same"* (p. 410).

Rizzuto points out that the basic belief system underlying psychoanalytic psychotherapy is that individuals develop mental problems due to the occurrence of traumatic childhood experiences that get trapped in the child's unconscious mind. These trapped memories of traumatic childhood experiences fester and produce mental states in the adult that does not allow the person to live life in a positive state.

Rizzuto mentions as people progress through life they go through things like oral and anal stages where fixations can occur and throw a person off his/her positive tract for development. She describes as fact the idea that all boys experience the Oedipus complex where they desire their mother as a sexual partner and want to kill their father.

Unfortunately Rizzuto fails to point out to the reader that Freud's psychoanalytic system is based substantially on nothing more than mental speculations occurring in Freud's mind and has no scientific validation. She doesn't mention the fact that members of the scientific dimension of the mental health program has continually reminded the profession that the life belief system created by mental health leaders such as Freud actually have little scientific merit in them and are the product of little more than personal mental speculation and fantasy. Over the decades dozens of scientifically oriented mental health researchers have reviewed the scientifically based published research. They repeatedly report Freud's psychoanalytic belief system has no scientific merit. For example, in 1937 Gordon Murphy and his research team reported:

*Although we have now been exposed for some time to psychoanalytic and other psychiatric hypotheses regarding the effects of birth trauma, weaning trauma, extreme emphasis on early control of urination and defecation, excessive attention from adults, dethronement by a second child, we have almost no objective records of the development of children going through these experiences, or of experiments controlling certain aspects of the problem (p. 575).*

In 1952, Hilgard and his team reviewed the literature and concluded:

*...anyone who tries to give an honest appraisal of psychoanalysis as a science must be ready to admit that as it is stated it is mostly very bad science, that the bulk of the articles in its journals cannot be defended as research publications at all.*

In 1972, Kline, a mental health professional who did research on children and sincerely wanted to find scientific evidence for the characteristics Freud claimed children had as a result of Freud's oral and anal stages of development, reported he could find only two studies that even slightly supported Freud's theory. According to Kline (1972), "*Freudian theory, so far as it is dependent on data at all rests on data which by the criteria of scientific methodology are totally inadequate*" (p. 93).

In 1985, researcher Han Eysenck reviewed the psychological research literature and claimed:

*...without doubt a genius not of science but of propaganda, not of rigorous proof but of persuasion, not of the design of experiments but of literary art. His place is not, as he claimed with Copernicus and Darwin but with Hans Christian Anderson and the Brothers Grimm, tellers of fairy tales".*

In 1992, psychiatrist researcher E. Fuller Torrey reviewed all the research on Freud and his life belief system and reported a "*close analysis of Freud's theory has proven that there is virtually no scientific basis for it*".

Even leaders in the psychoanalytic movement have admitted at times that there have been few, if any, scientifically sound quantitative research studies done in this on Freud's psychoanalytic approach to psychology. For example, the national number one selling college textbook used to train clinical psychologists in 1971 included the following statement made by the leading psychoanalysts, Lester Laborsky and Donald Spence "*Rare is the therapist who knows of even two quantitative studies in this aspect [psychoanalysis], and still rarer (if any exists at all) is the therapist whose practice has changed as a result.*"

In her chapter, Rizzuto makes this following claim about the soundness of Freudian psychoanalysis and its underlying life belief system, "*Psychoanalysis has proven to be an invaluable tool in understanding the dynamic components of religious beliefs and affects in normal people and neurotics alike*" (p. 410). (According to the reviews of the scientific research, this is not true.) "*The resolution of the Oedipal situation requires that the child accepts its place in the family not as an equal to the parents but as their child*" (p. 416). According to E. Fuller Torrey (1992), there is no evidence to support the existence of the Oedipus complex. Torrey reports:

*There is not a single study verifying Freud's theory that events in the anal stage of development determine adult personality characteristics. The same conclusion is reached when studies relative to the oral and the Oedipal stages are examined... Research on the Oedipal stage and its possible relationship to adult personality is similarly plagued with methodological problems despite the importance attached to this stage by Freud himself (p. 220).*

*The failure of both direct and indirect studies to support the Freudian theory of development has been an ongoing embarrassment to Freud's followers (p. 223)*

From the information included in this paper, four important issues concerning the mental health profession and religion seem to stand out:

1. Anthony Biglan's 1998 charge that scientifically unsound parenting systems are being advocated to the American public at the expense of them learning about scientifically sound parenting principles appears to be correct. The mental health profession has been focusing the public's attention on sounds-good parenting ideas instead of directing them to parenting ideas that have been shown to have scientific merit. This coincides with Cohen's (1976) research results indicating 40% of mental health practitioners do not believe there is any scientific evidence which relates to their profession.
2. In general, the mental health profession has demonstrated a critical, anti-religious position with the American public that had its beginnings in the 1880's and continues to this day. The mental health profession has not published the results of any scientific investigations that show religion is based on myths while the life belief systems created by mental health professionals are based on scientific evidence. In essence, it appears as if the mental health profession has been encouraging the public to abandon the religious life belief system that they claim is mythically based, and encouraging the public to adopt mythically based life belief systems that they claim are based on science.
3. Third, historically, three of the most influential members of the mental health profession (Sigmund Freud, Alfred Adler, and Carl Rogers) entered the profession with strong humanistic beliefs and claimed to create three different humanistic life belief systems which they encouraged the mental health profession to support and prompted the American public to adopt.
4. While Freud, Adler, and Rogers along with many of their followers have championed their life belief systems as being humanistic, this is not the case. According to the Humanist Manifesto II published in 1979, two important points any humanistic position must include is (1) a conviction that religion is based on myths and illusions and (2) the fact that the humanist belief system must be based on scientific evidence. According to the Humanist Manifesto II (1973): "*Any account of nature should pass the tests of scientific evidence; in our judgment, the dogmas and myths of traditional religions do not so... we begin with humans, not God, nature not deity*" (p.16). "*...The controlled use of scientific methods...must be extended further in the solution of human problems*" (p.17). "*... We deplore any neo-romantic efforts to condemn indiscriminately all technology and science or to counsel retreat from its further extension and use for the good of mankind*" (p.22). According to the research literature, none of the three humanist life belief systems are based on scientific evidence, and therefore, have not earned the distinction of being humanistic life belief systems.

### **Conclusion**

The Archival research in this paper seems to demonstrate that mental health professionals have shown an anti-religious bias going back as far as the early nineteen hundreds. Preempted by these anti-religious beliefs, early leaders in the mental health

profession created life belief systems which they claimed were scientifically based and superior to religiously based life belief systems. Although sincere in their desire to identify and establish what they felt were more scientifically sound life belief systems, they ended up unjustly criticizing religion and encouraging their systems which were scientifically unsound.

We suggest that in the future the mental health profession should reconsider our founding fathers' belief that science and religion can be compatible systems and employ a scientific approach in evaluating life belief systems, both religious and those created by mental health professionals. We need to be careful in making false scientific claims about any life belief system.

We further suggest that in the future the mental health profession needs to stop presenting life belief systems like Freud, Adler and Rogers' to themselves and the people as scientifically sound alternatives to religious belief systems. They need to honestly inform the American public about their systems and treatments' degree of scientific validity. The profession needs to respect the religious views of the public and honestly evaluate religion in terms of scientific evidence rather than the rhetoric about religion that has risen up over the past one hundred years in the mental health profession. The profession needs to take an unbiased look at the research on the role of religion in terms of its influence on the American family.

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## APPENDIX

<b>Historical sequence of situations important influencing the American public's view of the role and value of punishment in parenting.</b>	
<b>1784</b>	<b>Founding fathers establish biblically based American Family System that includes punishment as part of religious and natural law.</b>
<b>1875</b>	<b>Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals brought Mary Ellen to court as "mistreated animal" because no society existed for preventing cruelty to children. Mary Ellen's guardians to prison-society for prevention of cruelty to children organized.</b>
<b>1879</b>	<b>Psychology established as a scientific discipline.</b>
<b>1890s</b>	<b>Freud argues religion is based on myth and parental use of punishment detrimental to proper psycho-social development in children. Also argues religious parenting too overcontrolling. Freud's psychological beliefs based on Freud's subjective speculation, not scientific evidence.</b>
<b>1898</b>	<b>Edward Thorndike publishes scientific research showing rewards and punishments play key role in determining what person does and learns. Thorndike's research validates Bible's advocacy of using rewards and punishments to influence and change behavior. Learning psychologists begin scientifically studying effects of rewards and punishments on behavior in laboratory settings.</b>
<b>1905-1912</b>	<b>Mental health professionals write four books criticizing religion, claiming Jesus Christ was mentally unbalanced, susceptible to auditory and visual hallucinations, prone to grandiose and persecution complexes. No research cited.</b>
<b>1909-1933</b>	<b>Freudian-oriented mental health professionals working in American criminal justice system claim parental punishment is main cause of delinquency and criminal behavior as Freud suggests. They advocate criminals not be punished for criminal acts, but be given Freud's psychoanalysis (talk-it-out approach) to correct criminal tendencies. In their books (e.g. Healey, 1915; Glueck, 1916; White, 1923, 1933) they provide no scientific evidence, only claims.</b>
<b>1925</b>	<b>Cyril Burt in England reported juvenile delinquents 7 times more likely to come from permissive parenting than parents who use punishment.</b>
<b>1932</b>	<b>Edward Thorndike presents some scientific evidence that punishment is</b>

	ineffective.
1933	The first Humanist Manifesto was published claiming religion based on myth while humanism based on scientific evidence. Both claims scientifically unsupported. Few members of the American public heard of or were influenced by the first Humanist Manifesto.
1937	Tired of criticisms about lack of scientific support, Freudian-based mental health advocates initiate the most in depth experiment called the Cambridge-Somerville Youth Study involving 650 eleven-year-old boys to scientifically demonstrated Freud's parenting approach to be more effective in reducing and eliminating criminal behavior than religiously based reward-punishment parenting. Twenty year study showed Freudian approach less effective than punishment approach.
1938	B.F Skinner reported punishment did not have long-term effects on rat behavior
1940	Hilgard and Marquis authored college textbook on learning considered to be a classic that included hundreds of experiments showing rewards increase behavior. Also included some data indicating punishment was effective in reducing behavior.
1944	William Estess reported research evidence suggesting rat behavior was only temporarily reduced when punished with electric shock.
1945	Benjamin Spock authored <i>The Common Sense Book of Baby and Child Care</i> , a parenting book based exclusively on Freud's scientifically unsound life belief system which included the idea that punishing children, even with mild forms of punishment, causes emotionally traumatic unconscious feelings. Spock did not refer to any scientific research to validate theoretical speculations in his book.
1949	Due to growing concern about the lack of scientific training for mental health professionals, in 1949 the American Psychological Association held the Boulder Conference in Boulder, Colorado. The conference addressed the problem and conferences were later held in Miami Beach (1958), Chicago (1965), Vail (1974), and Gainesville, Florida (1990). All concluded scientific training was lacking.
1950	At UCLA, Merrill reported data showing juvenile delinquents were 3 times more likely to come from permissive parenting families than religiously oriented parenting that involved punishment.
1950	Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck reported one study involving 1,000 boys. The Gluecks claimed their data supported Freud's claim that parental use of punishment caused delinquency. Actually, data reported 56.8% of delinquents came from families where mothers were permissive. Only 4.4% of delinquents came from families where mothers were overly strict. Researchers criticize the Gluecks' conclusions. Pro-Freudians continued to cite it.
1952	Researchers Hilgard, Kubie, and Pumpian-Mindlin review scientific research literature and report Freud's theories and life belief system are based on subjective theoretical speculation, not scientific evidence.
1957	Three developmental researchers (Sears, Macoby, and Levin) interview the parents of 379 parents with five year old sons and conclude parental use of punishment increases childhood aggression. Researchers question these conclusions seeing the study showed a .16 correlation between parental use of punishment and child aggression, but a larger .23 correlation between permissive parenting and child aggression.
1958	Ivan Nye reported data from a study involving 2,300 high school students. The data indicated parental use of corporal punishment did not cause juvenile aggression or delinquency while permissive parenting did. Reported religiously oriented families have less delinquency.
1959	William and Joan McCord reported the data on the Cambridge-Somerville Project. They found permissive, Freudian type approach increased delinquency, consistent parental use of punishment reduced delinquency, and erratic use of punishment influences increase in delinquency.

1959	Two developmental researchers (Bandura and Walters) attempt to replicate Sears et al.'s study with 12-year-olds and conclude parental use of punishment increases childhood aggression.
1959	Benjamin Spock initiates 13-year experiment to demonstrate Freudian parenting is effective. Spock's results show Freudian parenting is not effective. Spock never publishes the data he collected.
1961	Developmentalist Robert Sears re-interviews the parents of the five year olds when they become 12 years of age. He reported there was no correlation between parental use of punishment and aggression, but there was between permissive parenting and aggression.
1962	Pediatricians Kempe et al. publish a report identifying 749 cases of physical abuse, including 78 fatalities. This has a major impact on public opinion and prompts legislators to enact laws.
1964	Prominent punishment researcher, Richard Solomon claims research overwhelmingly supports the idea that punishment is an effective behavior change procedure.
1966	Two learning researchers, Azrin and Holz, review more than 200 studies, mostly experiments, on punishment and strongly conclude punishment is an effective behavior change procedure. Being one of the top three reviews of punishment research, Azrin and Holz list seventeen things that can be done to improve the effectiveness of people.
1968	Three researchers (Yarrow, Campbell, and Burton) re-evaluate Sears et al.'s data and claim Sears et al.'s conclusion is wrong and that parental use of punishment is not really related to childhood aggression. Yarrow et al. replicate Sears et al.'s study and find correlation between parental permissiveness and aggression, but not parental use of punishment and aggression.
1970	Humanist Thomas Gordon authors <i>Parent Effectiveness Training</i> , a punishment-free parenting approach based on Carl Rogers' humanist ideas. Gordon claims (1) religious based parenting involving punishment has been shown scientifically to be ineffective, (2) his punishment-free parenting system is scientifically validated, and (3) punishment is an ineffective, even detrimental behavior change procedure. Gordon does not provide any scientific evidence to support his claims.
1971	In 1971, Bergin and Garfield's college textbook entitled <i>Handbook of Psychotherapy and Behavior Change</i> was the #1 selling college text for training clinical psychologists. The chapter on Freudian Psychoanalysis written by two well-known psychoanalysts. They start the chapter with a statement admitting Freudian psychology has no scientific base.
1972	Rudolf Dreikurs and Pearl Cassel author <i>Discipline Without Tears</i> , a book that claims there are major distinctions between discipline and punishment. One of Dreikurs' goals is to help undermine the public's confidence in religion by redefining punishment, a common term used in the Bible, in a negative light. Rudolf Dreikurs makes artificial distinction between discipline and punishment which cause the American public to question the value of religion.
1973	The <u>Humanist Manifesto II</u> is published claiming religion is based on myth while humanism is based on scientific evidence. The manifesto's claim of humanism being based on scientific evidence is a deception evidenced by the fact that all three popular humanist parenting approaches (Freudian parenting, PET, STEP) are not based on scientific evidence.
1973	Dinkmeyer and McKay author a book entitled <i>Raising a Responsible Child</i> which outlined a punishment free parenting system that they re-introduced in 1976 as <i>Systematic Training for Effective Parenting</i> .
1974	A Federal Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act was passed requiring all states to have a Child Protective Services Office to investigate all claims of child abuse. Eventually the law required all teachers, counselors, parents, and others working with children to report any incidence that could possibly interpreted as

	being child abuse. Eventually legislation was passed that allowed Child Protective Service Workers to substantiate a person as a child abuser without the person having their constitutional right of being innocent until proven guilty in court.
1975	President of the American Psychological Association addresses the national convention and pointed out mental health professionals are much more critical of religion than is scientifically justified.
1975	Deese, Hulse, and Egeth author the nations' #1 selling college textbook on learning. They present research to support their contention that claims of punishment being an ineffective behavior change procedure are totally false.
1976	Don Dinkmeyer and Gary McKay author <i>Systematic Training for Effective Parenting</i> , a humanist-based, punishment-free parenting approach founded on the ideas of humanists Alfred Adler and Rudolf Dreikurs. Dinkmeyer and McKay provide no scientific evidence to validate their parenting system. In 1990, they claim to have scientific evidence backing STEP but in 2004, Robinson, Robinson and Dunn provide all the scientific evidence showing STEP is not effective.
1977	Rinn and Markle reviewed all the scientific research carried out on <i>Parent Effectiveness Training</i> and reported the research findings do not show PET to be effective.
1977	Walters and Grusec author one of the three most prominent and complete reviews of punishment research and strongly concluded punishment is an effective behavior change procedure that does not include the negative side effects mental health professionals claim it causes.
1980	Straus, Gelles, and Steinmetz author <i>Behind Closed Doors</i> and presents data suggesting abuse begets abuse and children who were abused become adults who abuse. They strongly push for eliminating parental use of punishment and claim parental use of punishment causes child abuse.
1981	Kadushin and Martin present data from study of 13,000 child abusers showing only 20.1% of abusers ever experienced any abuse themselves. Refutes earlier claim that abuse begets abuse and supports earlier research studies showing permissive parenting produces much more childhood aggression than parental use of punishment does.
1983	Educational Testing Service sets up task force (Weber, Roft, Crawford & Robinson) to determine which techniques have scientific evidence that they change behavior. Task force show reward and punishment have most scientific evidence showing them to be effective behavior change procedures. Additionally they show behavior change procedures advocated by PET and STEP have no scientific evidence supporting their effectiveness.
1983	Researchers Axelrod and Apsche review all the punishment research on humans and reported punishment is an effective behavior change procedure that has been unfairly criticized. Their review includes hundreds of experiments where punishment was actually employed. They point out people overstated the negative side effects of punishment. They also identify a number of positive side effects of punishment.
1985	Dembo, Lauritzen, & Sweitzer reviewed all research on PET and STEP and concluded (1) neither parenting system has scientific evidence showing they effectively change children's behavior, (2) neither parenting system improves child psychosocial development as they claim, (3) scientific evidence contradicts PET and STEP claims that punishment is an ineffective behavior change procedure.
1985	Researcher Hans Eysenck reviewed psychological research and concluded Freud's theories and life belief system is based on propaganda and mythical fantasies, not scientific evidence.
1986	R.E. Lazelere research suggested that punishment does cause aggression in individuals.
1987	Irwin Hyman creates National Center for the study of corporal punishment that

	focused on condemning the use of corporal punishment rather than studying it. Hyman authors paper telling people to publish anti-punishment literature whether it had scientific support or not.
1992	E. Fuller Torrey reviews psychological research to find Freud's life belief system that condemns the use of punishment has no scientific validity.
1997	Irwin Hyman authors <i>The Case Against Spanking</i> and brags about getting California legislators to vote down legislation that would allow spanking in California schools by distributing posters of bloody buttocks instead of presenting scientific evidence.
1998	Michael Robinson reviews scientific research literature on spanking presenting more evidence showing that spanking can be an effective behavior change procedure. Robinson surveyed 365 individuals from three generations and reported (1) 91% felt spanking should be a parental option, (2) 85% said spanking did not reduce a child's love and respect for parent, (3) 87% said spanking did not produce detrimental effects in their lives, (4) spanking does not cause children to become more violent, and (5) spanking did not cause them to be more physically abusive to others.
1998	Psychological researcher Anthony Biglan addresses American Psychological Association National Convention and claims mental health professionals were pushing two scientifically unsubstantiated parenting systems on the public. Biglan identifies the two parenting systems as PET and STEP.
2000	Robinson and Drebot survey state foster parent trainers from all 50 states and report (1) state foster parent trainers taught in state training sessions that punishment is ineffective and should not be used by parents, (2) trainers told families where parents preside over their children are worse families than democratic families where children have less parental oversight and make more of their own decisions, (3) trainers told PET and STEP are effective parenting system, and (4) trainers taught active listening, unconditional love, and logical consequences are effective behavior change procedures. These principles being taught state foster parent trainers go against scientific research findings such as Weber et al. (1983).
2002	Dian Baumrind presented evidence from a 10- year study that spanking does not produce detrimental effects.
2002	Robinson and Robinson presented a paper at the American Association of Behavioral and Social Sciences National Convention noting (1) none of the three main humanist parenting systems (Freudian parenting, PET, STEP) have produced any scientific evidence that they work, (2) scientific evidence is available indicating these parenting approaches are ineffective, (3) there has never been a society in the history of the world that included punishment-free parenting, (4) punishment and reinforcement are integral parts of Mother Nature's scheme for learning.
2003	Researcher McGeoch carried out a correlation meta-analysis of punishment research and concludes spanking may cause negative side effects and should be eliminated as a parenting tool.
2003	Alan Kazdin, a prominent child psychologist, authors an article suggesting punishment can and should be dropped from parental use as a behavior change procedure.
2003	Baumrind and Lazereler, two prominent researchers critique McGeoch's article and suggest there is a substantial lack of evidence that spanking is a detrimental behavior change procedure.
2004	Robinson, Robinson, and Dunn respond to Dinkmeyer and McKay's (1990) argument that claims of STEP being ineffective are false. Robinson et al. cited numerous studies which produced scientific data indicating STEP was not effective and STEP pushed behavior change procedures which were not effective.