



Relationality, Misogyny, and Infant Mortality

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Relationships are primary. All else is derivative.

- We are relational creatures by nature.
- How we are *being* in relationship informs what we are *doing*.
- Isolation & alienation are anathema to being human.



Relationality


- Relationality is to relations as personality is to persons.
- Relationality is the nature, texture, and essence of affiliation.
- Relationality as “systems theory,” social cohesion/capital, and love.



Relationality


- “Philogyny”*
- Misogyny
- Infant Vitality
- Infant Mortality

*love of the feminine




Misogyny & Infant Mortality

- Women as Jezebels, Aunt Jemimas and other tropes.
- Mothers as incubators and baby bottles.
- Pregnancy & parturition as pathologic conditions.



Biography Becomes Biology

- “Meaning is the bridge between psyche and soma.” Larry Dossey, *Meaning & Medicine*
- Unspoken conflicts are pantomimed in the body. James & Melissa Griffith, *The Body Speaks*




The Medicalization of a Social Problem

Locating the problem of infant mortality in the psyche & soma of women draws attention away from the social surround.



Breastfeeding & Relationality

- Breast milk and infant mortality & morbidity
- Thermal & affect synchrony (or limbic resonance) – mutual indwelling
- Emotional experience & brain development (or learning resilience)



Relationality & Public Policy

- Take, break, bless, and give – there is a difference between *sending bread* to a sister and *breaking bread with* a sister.
- What we are relearning is not new – what we need is the courage to love.
