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Human Behavior: Ambiguities of Gender a modern Phenomenon? **Question:** Bone Broth Revisited. **Human Behavior:** Gendered Play in Forager Kids. **Q&A:** Controlling Cholesterol Levels; Over-hydration/Thirst Reflex. **News Shorts:** Napping slows brain shrinkage; More on Xylitol. **Message:** Centenarian Eileen. **Viewpoint:** Organizing Society for an Industrialized World (X).

Human Behavior

Ambiguities of Gender a Modern Phenomenon?

I have, from time to time reported that, amongst foragers, concepts such as homosexuality seem to be unknown, and they don't even have words for them. (e.g. **Male homosexuality and place in the order of birth of siblings**, [April 2023](#) [1]; Frank Marlowe's book on the Hadza [2]; and Hewlett's monograph [3]).

Now investigative journalist, Matt Walsh of the [Daily Wire](#) has visited a remote tribe of Masai herders in Kenya. He questioned them about the idea of transgenderism.

This is not a scientific study, but it nevertheless seems to be instructive. A short extract of the conversation follows. (Read the full article here: <https://bit.ly/3Pur3Ch>.)

"Can a man become a woman?"

"No."

"What about a transgender?" My interpreter, Paul, looked at me not understanding. "Transgender," I repeated.

He tried explaining the concept to the Masai man I was speaking with.

"No...if you want to become a lady but you're a man, you have something wrong in your mind, something wrong in your family, something wrong in you."

"What about if someone is non-binary?" I asked.

Paul looked at me, his brow furrowed in confusion. "You know, non-binary..." I went on. >p4

Question

Bone Broth Revisited



Cr: Bulletproof [4] <https://bit.ly/45e8lzo>

Q. *What is your take on bone broth? It seems to be big in part of the paleo community.*

A. As I said in **Bone Broth August 2015** [5], foragers delighted in breaking bones open and sucking out the marrow. However, they had no means of boiling up bones. For foragers the marrow, being fatty, was a rare and highly desirable delicacy. The fats are mainly (55%) neutral monounsaturated (as in olive oil). After that, saturated fats are about 24% and polyunsaturated about 20%. The proportions can vary according to species, diet, time of year, and location in the bone.

This is a reasonably healthy fatty acid profile – but why bother? Adding to their fat intake is not a priority for most people.

In addition to fats, bones, with their gristle and tendons, have a range of minerals, vitamins, and amino acids. But there again, nothing that you couldn't get just as well, if not better, by consuming a bone-free Paleo diet. Indeed, one old study opines that "traditional bone broth appears to be a poor source of nutrients" [6].

Finally, bone broth is rich in collagen. Many enthusiasts believe that >p4

Human Behavior

Gendered Play in Forager Kids

In **Forager Kids Play Learning, March 2023** [7], we heard about Dr Sheina Lew-Levy, Durham University, UK, and her studies on how forager children did most of their learning from older children.

In a 2019 paper, Dr Lew-Levy looked at another aspect of children's play: how it varies by gender [8].

In western cultures, children are more likely to play in same-gender groups, with boys more likely to participate in vigorous 'rough-and-tumble' play, and girls more likely to pretend in pretense, or imaginary, play – such as doll play.

Unsurprisingly, Lew-Levy found that in forager groups, young children played in mixed-gender groups. This is because there are so few of them (say, four or five) in a forager band. Even so, once puberty kicks in, adolescent boys showed rough and tumble play whilst the adolescent girls did the 'pretend' play. In particular their play reflected the gender roles of adults where forager men were aggressive hunters and the women focused on child-care.

My View? Seemingly for aeons, humans have pursued gendered roles to the point where, on average, each gender is genetically wired to be most fitted for their respective roles.

On average, small boys will be interested in things whereas, on average, small girls will be interested in caring and relationships.

In the modern world, it is fashionable to try to socialize boys into having the interests of, and behaving >p4

Questions

Controlling Cholesterol levels

Q. *I have been working on the paleo diet and upped the amount of walking. I have just had the result of my recent 3-month blood test. Cholesterol has come down from 4.9 to 4.0 mmol/l. I believe this is still high so I will see if I can bring it down more. I have had much stress in the first half of the year which is now getting less. I certainly want to avoid having to take statins. What do you think?*

A. In a state of nature, we would have lower levels of cholesterol at around 3.0 mmol/l (120 mg/dl), see: **State of the San's Health**, [Deadly Harvest](#), [chapter 1](#), p 18 [9].

You must of course listen to your doctor and make your own decision. Even so, I wouldn't worry too much about higher cholesterol levels. There is almost no connection between high levels and cardiovascular health. I've written a lot about it, for example see: **Statin: Two-faced Harlot**, [March 2015](#) [10] and **Statins no good for CVD**, [April 2022](#) [11]

As you say, many factors can temporarily raise cholesterol levels and stress is one of them [12].

Just remember that, along with all other diseases of civilization, high cholesterol levels are due to the mismatch between the way we live today and the way our evolutionary history designed us.

Apart from managing diet, physical activity and stress, think about getting plenty of sunlight and good sleeping patterns.

See more at: **Cholesterol**, [Natural Eating II](#), [Chapter 8](#) [13], page 144.

Over-hydration/Thirst Reflex

Q. [Last month](#) you spoke of the dangers of over-hydration and to rely on your thirst reflex. But what if you don't have a thirst reflex?

A. Good catch. Normally when I go off about over-hydration, I do make my remarks conditional on having a normal thirst reflex.

Old people can have an impaired thirst reflex and, notably, carers in care homes take special measure to ensure their charges are adequately hydrated.

Some medications, notably ones which affect the thirst detection center in the brain, the hypothalamus, **DEPRESS** the thirst reflex. They are mostly ones prescribed for psychiatric conditions [14].

These are not to be confused with a multitude of other medications which make you lose water (diuretic). These can include those for high blood pressure, diabetes, constipation, heart failure, allergies, cancer and many more.

So, if you are of advanced age, do think about fluid intake. Likewise, check with your doctor about medications he prescribes you.

Having said all that, for the vast majority of people in normal state of health, the message is still: "Drink to your thirst!"

News Shorts

Napping slows brain shrinkage

A 30-minute nap during the day may slow down brain shrinkage and cancel out up to seven years of ageing, a study suggests [15].

Brain volume is linked to good cognitive health and a lower risk of dementia. This new research suggests that napping is not just 'linked' to brain health but is a causal factor.

Say the researchers: "Studies such as this can reduce any stigma around daytime napping." And that: "such napping can compensate for poor sleep at night."

My View? Foragers do regularly have naps during the heat of the day, see: **Sleep in a State of Nature**, [Oct 2015](#) [16]. So, we can suppose that, on the whole, siestas are a habit to which we are naturally adapted.

For sure, many studies find that siestas are a positive influence. See: **Siestas for Health**, [March 2019](#) [17]; **Siestas Good for Blood Pressure**,

[Sept 2015](#) [18]. **Sleep in the Workplace**, [May 2019](#) [19]

More on Xylitol



Credit: BBC. <https://bit.ly/3EYx4Ct>

Xylitol is naturally occurring (see: **Sweetener Xylitol Natural**, [Sept 2011](#) [20]) and is a dietary fiber with sweetness, appearance, and bulk similar to sugar. However, being non-digestible it doesn't give blood sugar spikes.

It has already been shown to be good for mouth health by promoting the growth of 'good' mouth bacteria. See: **Mouth Flora in Evolutionary Perspective**, [Oct 2008](#) [21]; **Mouth Flora Not All Bad**, [Sept 2008](#) [22]. **Forager Tooth Cleaning**, [April 2016](#) [23]

A Finnish study reviews xylitol's other benefits [24]. About 60% of xylitol is passively absorbed into the bloodstream in the small intestine where the liver oxidises it into glucose. However, the process is so slow that it doesn't give a blood sugar spike. See: **Does Xylitol Digest to Fructose?** [March 2015](#) [25].

The remaining 40% ends up in the colon where bacteria ferment it to produce the 'good' short-chain fatty acid called, "butyrate".

Xylitol thus acts as a **PREBIOTIC**, encouraging the growth of good gut bugs which, amongst other things, support the immune system and reduce the risk of colon cancer.

Xylitol has a laxative effect relieving constipation.

Xylitol slows down bone resorption and increases bone building – so it improves bone health and mineral density.

Xylitol has antimicrobial activity which reduces respiratory tract infection, sinusitis, and otitis media (middle ear infection) risk.

My View? Foragers never knew xylitol as such. However, it is naturally present throughout the plant and animal kingdoms so, unknowingly, they were getting it in their food anyway. Indeed, the human body produces up to 15 grams daily just from its own normal metabolic processes [26].

So we can be confident that our bodies know, quite naturally, how to handle xylitol.

We use it in our baking recipes (see Nicole's cookbook, [Paleo Harvest](#) [27]) and we use it for sweetening tea and coffee.

Sugar and Sugar Alternatives, [Dec 2014](#) [28]. See also: **Alternative Sweetener: Xylitol**, [Jan 2010](#) [29].

Message

Centenarian Eileen

From long-time follower, Margaret Pettit, England. Margaret is energetically promoting healthy eating on her website

www.foodhealth4life.com. See:

Website promoting BondPaleo, [June 2022](#) [30]



Eileen with 100-year birthday card from King Charles & Queen Camilla <https://bit.ly/3rHbf7j>

"My mother, Eileen Pettit recently celebrated her 100th birthday. She is very much a Paleo eater. In her care home she also asks for extra fruit and veg if needed and avoids cakes or cream.

"She has always been very fond of green, fresh vegetables and fruit. She does not drink alcohol but has always drunk plenty of tea.

"Eileen an excellent memory and is very organized. She lived through the austerity of the 2nd World War during which she had a major

accident but has lived to overcome it.

"Eileen has always been active and still walking well until she was almost 96 in 2019 when someone in the care home knocked her down and they both fell, each completely breaking their hips.

After a major operation she came around, never complaining of the ensuing pain -just got on with it. She is a very determined lady!"

My Comment: Well done, Eileen. She might not have heard of Paleo for most of her life but she seems to have fallen into a healthy lifestyle anyway. It is reminiscent of our supporter Edith Morrey, who lived to the age of 105 and who was influenced by the 1930s American naturopath to Hollywood stars, Gaylord Hauser. See: **Farewell: 105-year-old Edith**, [April 2018](#) [31].

Edith also broke a hip in her 90s and that is one frailty that both ladies showed. A true Paleo lifestyle for a lifetime should lead to strong bones for life too. See: **The Secret to Bone Health in Centenarians**, [June 2008](#) [32] and Nicole's "**Stunning Bone Health**" **Update**, [April 2023](#) [33]

On the other hand, those of us who lived the formative years of our lives through WWII and post-war austerity actually benefited from 15 year of food rationing which kept us hungry (good) yet on a healthy diet.

Junk food and convenience food had not yet been invented. Sugar, meat, dairy, and processed food were severely restricted, but we could eat as much cabbage and broccoli as we liked.

For more on Centenarians, see: **'Blue Zone' Legumes**, [June 2014](#) [34]; **Sardinian Centenarians**, [Nov 2002](#) [35]; **Greek Centenarians: Facts and Fallacies [Ikaria]**, [Oct 2009](#) [36]; **Good Health in Extreme Old Age [Okinawans]**, [May 2010](#) [37].

Viewpoint

Organizing Society for an Industrialised world (X)

Who wants to return to the grinding poverty, drudgery, and insecurity of

*peasant farming? So what factors came together in England to trigger the worldwide prosperity of the Industrial Revolution and how do we nurture it? [Last month](#) we looked at **Dangers to Prosperity, Part (2)**.*

Now we end with: **Concluding Remarks, Part (1)**

Humans have spent 99% of their history living as hunter-gatherers. Their way of life had remarkable stability. Nothing changed for a million years. One might say that this is the default condition for human society.

It all changed with the farming revolution. It led to the merging of forager bands into huge concentrations of population in cities and empires. These were inherently unstable: civilizations arose and then collapsed like Babylon, Nineveh, Greece, and Rome.

Firstly, the stability of civilizations cannot be taken for granted. They need constant care and maintenance to keep them going.

Secondly, life was hard in these civilizations. Indeed, the average inhabitant lived a life that was more arduous, grueling, and stressful than the average hunter-gatherer.

Thanks to the Industrial Revolution, the average level of prosperity has raised the material well-being of the average citizen way above the wildest dreams of a hunter-gatherer. Indeed, it has spread around the world lifting billions of wretches out of abject poverty just in the last 20 years.

In the previous 9 episodes we have seen how this Industrial Revolution grew out of a peculiar set of circumstances in Britain. But this "prosperity machine" cannot be taken for granted either. It can just as easily collapse, throwing us back into the Stone Age. It needs constant nurture and maintenance to keep it functioning.

As I explored in previous episodes, our current way of life is actually fragile and is under threat from a pathological ideology that is rotting its very foundations.

[Next Month](#) [38]: **Concluding Remarks (2)**

Continued from Page 1

Ambiguities of Gender?

It struck me that he had no idea what “non-binary” meant. And why would he?

“You’re not a woman, you’re not a man?” he asked.

“Yes, someone is neither. They’re something else,” I said. I realized that when you have to put these [...] concepts into basic words, it doesn’t actually make any sense. Gender theorists have created an entire dictionary to describe things that nobody else in history ever thought needed to be described.

“He’s saying we have never seen things like this,” Paul said.

Walsh goes on to opine:

“Gender ideology is a creation of the modern West. It masks itself as something rooted in science and descriptive of the natural condition of humankind. But in reality, it is a fantasy world with a made-up language and made-up rules.

As I soon saw, nothing reveals just how unnatural and counterintuitive

gender theory is than speaking with people who haven’t been instructed in its language.”

My View? Ambiguous sexuality seems to be a phenomenon arising after the farming revolution. In a 2013 paper, French researcher, Dr Michel Raymond, advanced reasons why homosexuality might have come about at this time [17]. See: **Social Stratification Begat Male Homosexuality**, [Dec 2013](#) [39]. For more on the Masai, see: **Walking saves the Masai**, [July 2008](#) [40].

Continued from Page 1

Bone Broth Revisited

this will be good for replacing lost collagen in their skin, joints, and other places. This is a



fallacy. In reality the digestive system breaks down the collagen into its constituent amino acids and what it does with them after that is completely out of your control. See **Eat Collagen to make Collagen?** [July 2013](#) [41]; and Australian researcher Rebeka Alcock’s study

which finds that supplementing with collagen is ineffective [42].

Are there any advantages? The literature is very thin on bone broth studies. However, one did find that cow bone broth is anti-inflammatory and it helps ulcerative colitis [43]. Another found that chicken bone broth helps with migraine [44]. On the other hand, studies do suggest that bone broth can contain significant levels of toxic heavy metals, including lead [45].

My View? There is a bit of a fetish about bone broth which, in some circles, is mistakenly taken to be authentic Paleo. This is not, strictly, the case and, personally we don’t use it. On the other hand, if you actually enjoy bone broth, or use it as a stock, then why not?

Continued from Page 1

Gendered Play in Forager Kids

... like, girls. It might work, sort of, but it is cutting across the boys’ savanna-bred natures – and might even cause tension and distress. See: **Childhood**, [Deadly Harvest, Chapter 8](#) [46], p 218.

Paleo in a Nutshell: Geoff’s latest work encapsulates, concisely and easily, current thinking on living the way nature intended. www.paleo-nutshell.com



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