

GENDER & BREASTFEEDING – SUBMISSION TO THE CITIZENS’ ASSEMBLY 6TH MARCH 2020

THE ASPECT OF GENDER STUDY/IES ON WHICH I HAVE EXPERTISE

There is one aspect of gender study on which I have expertise. I would like to open the eyes of the Assembly, and to direct their attention to this very important aspect. That aspect is the significant necessity for **breastfeeding mothers** in Ireland to receive up-to-date, correct, accurate, **information** and **support** with the challenge of breastfeeding a child in a society which has lost its breastfeeding culture, over the last 70-100 years, or so.

I have studied this area of knowledge for over forty years. I have an academic background, which gives me the skills to critically assess information, and to use it to inform others, about the results of academic research findings, and the implications for the everyday life of ordinary people. I wrote short articles every week, for about ten years, on aspects of this subject, for a local magazine, which had a circulation of 6,000 families in West Co. Dublin, North Co. Kildare, and Southeast Co. Meath. I attended many monthly meetings of the Lucan, Celbridge and Castleknock La Leche League Groups, over 20 years or so. I was trained as a “Leader” with La Leche League International (LLL). I founded the Celbridge LLL Group, and ran it for 5 years. I helped many mothers and babies formally/officially, during those 5 years, as an accredited Leader. And both before and after that period, informally. Going against the grain, some of the time, because of the culture which took over, in Ireland, over a hundred years, since we lost our breastfeeding culture.

HOW THE “NEW” CULTURE PUTS PRESSURE ON MOTHERS

The artificial feeding culture is pressing in on mothers from all sides. I attended many annual La Leche League of Ireland Parenting Conferences, and I still attend them, to keep up with the newest information and scientific research on breastfeeding matters. I will be attending their Conference, this year, in Wexford, on the 7th and 8th March, 2020. Experts such as university professors are invited to speak at some of the talks. This year, the Keynote Speaker is the renowned Lactation Consultant and author of a number of books, Nancy Mohrbacher, from the U.S. Going by recent patterns, several hundred will attend, including parents, babies, toddlers, older children, teenagers, up to 60 nurses and midwives, and other health professionals, who can gain CERPS for attending certain lectures/sessions/presentations. La Leche League enjoys official status with The World Health Association and UNICEF, since 1986, as **“the world’s foremost authority on breastfeeding”**. In this paper I deal with facts, not opinions.

WHY DO MOTHERS, & THEIR SUPPORTERS, NEED THIS HELP?

When Ireland lost its breastfeeding culture, over the last 70-100 years (we didn’t lose it overnight), this had a very bad effect on mothers’ and babies’ health, and on the population’s health, generally. This fact has very broad, very deep, and continuous implications. This information is known only to a tiny minority. [Very few people in the country have any knowledge of this.] Most people, including many health professionals, are not aware of the *precious and invaluable loss involved*. They do not understand the cost for mothers, for children, and even for tax-payers. See the figures in Gabrielle Palmer’s book *“The Politics of Breastfeeding – When Breasts Are Bad for Business”*.

WHAT HAPPENED? THE TRAGIC HISTORY. FIVE GENERATIONS

The unnatural artificial culture of infant feeding took over, gradually, in Ireland, during that time. Mothers no longer have the information, knowledge or the skills, (and haven’t had for decades) of natural infant feeding at the breast, because it has been forgotten, and the bottle has taken over in the country. And that is for up to three generations. Or even longer. There are some families in

Ireland who are the fifth generation of artificially/bottle fed children. It wasn't only mothers, and their own mothers, who lost that culture. Doctors and nurses lost it. Midwives lost it, and many of the other health professions who care for mothers and babies, such as neonatologists and paediatricians. And, above all other groups, the knowledge and the skills have been lost, now, by grandmothers, aunts, and the other mothers who give help and support, advice and encouragement, to new mothers, at home, in the neighbourhood, and in the community. Misinformation and superstitions also came in the way of keeping *a healthy breastfeeding culture*, some of these quite old, and some less than a hundred years on the go.

CHANGES IN BIRTHING

Things like the “secret” of the Chamberlen Brothers in France, the *obstetric forceps*. Not to mention the two huge movements which destroyed the natural, traditional breastfeeding culture. The first of these was the *medicalisation of childbirth*, which brought mothers to doctors, and to hospitals, to birth their children. The second “Big Change/Reformation” was the change to the bottle, and to artificial “milk” (*breastmilk substitute*/formula) for infants. This change started before the end of the 19th century. An article published in The Irish Times *Health Supplement Tuesday, September 17, 2019 reported* the widespread criticism voiced by many of the doctors in the Rotunda hospital before the end of the 19th century, of this change. The doctors saw the terrible damage which artificial “milk” (breastmilk substitutes) was doing to mothers and children. But even then there was n't much they could do about it. Even a hundred years later, lack of information, misinformation, misunderstanding, denial, and lack of information are wide-spread, even among the specialists who look after mothers and infants. Even today, Ireland has one of the lowest rates in the world of natural infant feeding. [Britain is even lower.] We had lost our natural infant feeding culture, and still have, although we do *now* have wonderful people, working hard trying to reverse the “Reformation”, and *restore our natural infant feeding culture to health*. More on this below.

THE “REFORMATION” [LITERALLY, IN IRISH, “THE CHANGE OF RELIGION”] - “THE LARGEST UNCONTROLLED EXPERIMENT EVER CARRIED OUT ON HUMANS”

That is how someone described the Significant Change in the way newborn babies are fed, for the first year or two, which happened during the last century, in the Western world. I call it “*The Reformation*” jokingly. But it is no joke. The very opposite, in fact. The “*Reformation*”, which happened in the last century, continues, with very little change, since. I don't remember where I saw that quote, or who said it, but it certainly has a certain truth to it. As I said above, there are major, and very serious implications. The implications involve the following aspects: politics, social and cultural matters, personal, family and above all, health aspects.

THOUGH LOTS OF INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE TO MOTHERS, MOST OF THEM DO NOT SEEK IT FROM THOSE WHO CAN BEST ASSIST THEM, BECAUSE THEY DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE NEED, THE BENEFITS, AND THE WELCOME THEY WILL BE GIVEN. Nowadays mothers depend on seeking out the information, themselves. Not only must they seek the information and the skills themselves, but they must seek it from the tiny minority of women (and they are mainly women) who have that wealth. This could involve a long road journey. I once got a call for help from Washington! And I also got a call from a priest who wanted help for his housekeeper! *Most of our doctors are unable to help mothers*. There is every chance that this fact will astound my readers. Studies sought by the organisation *World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative* (WBTi) show this to be true, unfortunately. This research studied *the training modules taken by* different health professions who help mothers. See WBTi below.

THE BELIEF WHICH MOTHERS HAVE, THAT EVERY HELP & ALL INFORMATION WILL BE GIVEN TO THEM IN THE MATERNITY UNIT, WHEN THE BABY IS BORN

There are many mothers who believe that. If this were so, there would be no need for this Submission from me. But, unfortunately, this is far from being true. Exactly the opposite, in truth. And very few in this country understand that that is how it is. And that it is not any group's fault.

HOW DID THIS TERRIBLE SITUATION HAPPEN?

It would be as nonsensical to ask how has it happened that so many patients are waiting for a bed in Irish hospitals, or on appointments! [I wrote this before we had to take steps re COVID 19.] It is a very sad story, with terrible consequences, but the story is far too long to recount here. In summary, it is because accurate, up-to-date training is not given to doctors, and to the other health professionals who look after mothers and their babies. Other aspects, such as the huge corporations who market breastmilk substitutes, and the dishonest, unethical marketing which aggressively **markets /pressures** those products at doctors and at maternity units. More about this below. The area of information which doctors, etc. most need appropriate training for, is how suckling and breastfeeding works. And **doesn't!** Misinformation abounds strongly in hospitals, despite the great efforts of the people who labour to replace this with accurate, authentic, scientific information. It is an upward battle! Although the situation is improving a little, **many health professionals are ignorant about this entire area of knowledge.** Many mothers have to seek information from doctors, nurses, and other health professionals. The biggest difficulty here, is that most of them do not have the experience, the training, the understanding, or the skills to help mothers **to establish breastfeeding.** And worse still, **mothers do not understand that. Nor do the health professionals understand that they do not understand. And that they are extremely lacking in knowledge on these matters.** The knowledge and skills required by professionals to help breastfeeding mothers, and those they require to help the majority of mothers in Ireland, who bottlefeed their babies are completely different. As far as I am aware, only one country has a relatively complete account of their loss of their breastfeeding culture, and its replacement by the bottle. That country is Australia. That account is Maureen Minchin's excellent book *Breastfeeding Matters – What We Need To Know About Infant Feeding.*

HEALTH PROFESSIONALS DO NOT UNDERSTAND THAT THEY ARE UNABLE TO ASSIST MOTHERS WITH THE "HOW TO". THE RESEARCH OF THE "WORLD BREASTFEEDING TRENDS INITIATIVE" (WBTi) & THE FRIGHTENING IGNORANCE IT REVEALS AMONGST DOCTORS & OTHER HEALTH PROFESSIONALS

And **they do not understand that they do not understand.** Although things are improving, slowly, very slowly, research done by the *World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative* (WBTi) illustrated that reality significantly a few years ago. See below "*World Breastfeeding Trends*". Thank God, and thanks especially to La Leche League International, health professionals are, in recent years, receiving better information and better training. The World Health Organisation and UNICEF (often in cooperation) have taken very practical steps to provide training courses for the better training of doctors, midwives, and other health professionals. See below.

"THE WORLD BREASTFEEDING TRENDS" ORGANISATION'S RESEARCH & THE SCANDALOUS LACK OF INFORMATION IT DISPLAYS OF DOCTORS & OTHER HEALTH PROFESSIONALS' TRAINING RE BREASTFEEDING – OR LACK OF IT

This research found that doctors had completed the fewest (very few) of the standard training modules for helping mothers with breastfeeding. Those who had completed all or most of the modules are the volunteer helpers, such as La Leche League Leaders. Professional Lactation Consultants had completed all of the models. They could not be certified or registered otherwise.

HOWEVER KNOWLEDGEABLE & TRAINED AN INDIVIDUAL OR A GROUP IS, IT IS NOT SUFFICIENT. OTHER THINGS MATTER MUCH MORE THAN **KNOWLEDGE**, IN THIS INSTANCE

Kindness, encouragement, a big warm heart, encouragement, human personal skills, and, above all else, **time**; these things are much more important than knowledge - however important it is. It is not that health professionals don't have these qualities. But voluntary helpers have **the time** to be there for mothers, and to give them **continuous** help and support. If a mother lacks knowledge, confidence, faith, and confidence in her own ability as a mother, all the knowledge in the world cannot give her that ability to be "*Breastfeeding In A Bottlefeeding Society*" (the theme of a conference for health professionals in Croke Park, some years ago.) However great the knowledge of professionals about research, statistics, academic knowledge, benefits, etc., it is **a completely different thing to actually breastfeed**. Feeding a baby artificially with a bottle is so different from natural feeding, physically, culturally, and especially from the point of view of the family network, friends, and helpers (professional and voluntary), which is **the norm for artificial feeding**. It is an enormous challenge for a mother to make the natural choice, and to continue with it, despite the major difficulties (the biologically normal versus the culturally normal). It is not that it is difficult, physically to nourish a baby at the breast.

THE UNDERMINING OF BREASTFEEDING CONFIDENCE & KNOW-HOW CAUSED BY THE LOSS OF OUR BREASTFEEDING CULTURE A CENTURY AGO

Where the difficulties arise, are in the "new" culture (this 70-100 years) of artificial infant feeding, in the information, the misinformation, and in all the other aspects of that culture which are false/lies, in the major challenge for the new mother and new father, of facing this culture, completely alone, without proper information, without proper understanding, without proper support, agus without strong self-confidence, and many other qualities. All these aspects **undermine** the natural ability, the natural desire, and the natural right which new parents have, to make the natural choice, and to enjoy it, and to experience satisfaction and pleasure in so doing. Their families, their helpers – including professionals, relations, friends, neighbours, are not aware that their lack of understanding, their lack of information, are taking from the confidence of breastfeeding mothers, their satisfaction, their enjoyment, their effectiveness and success . A very small insight into how much the loss of our breastfeeding culture disturbs and distresses new mothers, is described in the next section.

OUR CULTURE & EMBARRASSMENT, SHAME, SHYNESS, ETC.

It is strange that the word "náire" (an abstract noun) in Irish has two meanings, which are completely contrary to each other. "Náire" can mean shame, modesty, shyness The word "náireach" (adjective) means "shy, modest, timid, "embarrassed". And the word "mí-náireach" means "shameless", "shameful" "disgraceful". A field day for the psychologists!

My son (37) believes that embarrassment, above all else, is the reason for the very low breastfeeding rates in Ireland, both *initiation* and *continuation*.

THE MATERNITY HOSPITAL SYSTEM – THE DEATH OF THE BREASTFEEDING CULTURE

This is much too long a story to relate here. [Read Maureen Minchin's book, and you'll have a good idea.] However, it is very important that we would understand the terrible damage wreaked by maternity hospitals, by doctors, nurses, midwives, to the breastfeeding culture we enjoyed, the one we are trying to restore. None of them did this intentionally. But it destroyed any chance mothers had of breastfeeding satisfactorily, effectively, and pleasurably. The régime of customs,

especially the belief régime, which replaced the old breastfeeding culture, was based on widespread lack of information about how breastfeeding works. For example, it is now known that the more frequently, and the longer a baby breastfeeds, the more milk the mother will have. This is the complete opposite of the understanding which came, and still persists/abides, after “The Reformation”. The suckling of the baby is what provides the milk supply, and which builds the milk supply. The more frequently and the longer the baby suckles the breast, the greater the mother’s milk supply.

THE PAINFULLY SLOW RESTORATION

Gradually, up-to-date, accurate, scientific information is coming on stream. Small scattered groups of us have been in the know this forty or fifty years. It is painful to think of all the mothers who wanted to breastfeed, and who didn’t succeed. We did our best, voluntarily, to help the mothers around us, and we succeeded in some cases, **despite the system and despite “The Reformation”**. It is a cause of great dismay and sorrow to us, that we didn’t succeed with all the mothers we helped. So much lack of information, misinformation, customs and erroneous beliefs ruled during the “Reformation”, that it would have been very difficult even for a special, trained, paid band of helpers, to turn the “Reformation” round, never mind a small scattered group of volunteer helpers. The unfortunate mothers did not have the necessary information, understanding, the confidence, or the guiding skills, available to them. Nor did they know that **it was available to them**. Nor to get it from the right people. What was more important than anything else- and this is the most important of all – and the most influential – mothers were no longer surrounded by a breastfeeding culture. Not only that, but there was pressure from all sides which pushed against a natural feeding culture. This surrounded mothers, and kept pressing in all around mothers, at home, with relations, with neighbours, with the “health” system, in the community generally, with the attitude, the experience, the knowledge, of the whole people. This was an insurmountable obstacle even for **many** mothers who wanted to breastfeed. As we shall see below, there was one more major obstacle. **This was the new and highly profitable artificial infant feeding industry, and its powerful and ruthless chiefs.**

BUT THERE WAS ANOTHER ENEMY – A DARK, IMMORAL ENEMY, WHO DIDN’T CARE FOR THE LIFE OR THE HEALTH OF MOTHERS OR BABIES. THAT ENEMY, ABOVE ALL ELSE, WAS THE NEW MARKET WHICH CAME, FOR BREASTMILK SUBSTITUTES
The author Gabrielle Palmer, in her little book “*Why Breastfeeding Matters*” has a short account. She has a more complete account in her original book “*The Politics of Breastfeeding – When Breasts Are Bad for Business.*” This book is so frightening, and it angered me so much to read it, that I couldn’t finish it for years. It is very hard to swallow these terrible events - scandal after scandal, lies after lies, shame after shame, disgust after disgust. More about these two books, and about Gabrielle Palmer, below.

THE DIFFICULTIES – THE HISTORICAL REASONS

There are notable historical reasons which left our country without its ancient breastfeeding culture, and a very different artificial culture in its stead, which most of our mothers have known nothing about, especially as they grew up, in their own communities. Only 51% of mothers in Ireland initiate breastfeeding currently. Most of that 51% stop breastfeeding after a few days, a few weeks or a few months. **Since 1992** The World Health Organisation (W.H.O.) recommends that babies be fully breastfed “*into the second year and beyond*”. That is also what the world’s foremost paediatric authorities recommend. For example, the American Academy of Pediatrics. Many mothers - and fathers – in Ireland have never even seen a baby being breastfed. Not to mention being familiar with breastfeeding. They may have seen an extremely poor woman doing it, in an

occasional piece of reporting from the poorest countries in the world, **in disaster zones**. Most Irish people believe the natural way to feed a baby is with a bottle. They are unaware that the majority of the world's babies are breastfed. And that that is how it has been for between 3 and 4 million years. They do not understand that it is in English-speaking countries that babies are mostly artificially fed. And they have no understanding that this is a terrible loss for themselves, for their babies, and for the whole country.

OTHER REASONS

Only a very small band of women, who work on a voluntary basis, have the knowledge and the appropriate skills to help mothers. Not only that, but only a very few in the country understand that, and know it. Those whom mothers would naturally ask for help do not understand that they cannot help mothers. They do not understand that they lack both the information and the skills which mothers need from them. However knowledgeable doctors or nurses are about the benefits of breastfeeding for mothers and babies, this knowledge is of no use to mothers whose need is to know **how to breastfeed** their baby happily and satisfactorily. Misinformation is widespread, and lack of information, and lack of knowledge, about **how breastfeeding works**. These people do not understand that being natural does not mean being *intuitive* or easy or simple. Many unfortunate mothers blame themselves, when they do not succeed in breastfeeding naturally, and satisfactorily. The mothers who did not choose to breastfeed are often tormented with sorrow, disappointment, self-blame, self-accusation, and "guilt". When mothers do not have the information and understanding about how to initiate breastfeeding, nor how to get help, it's hardly their fault, their responsibility, or their "guilt". Lack of education, lack of experience, lack of understanding, these are the things which ruin breastfeeding for so many mothers. These things need to be provided for mothers. Strong support is required from the State. Not only is it the State's responsibility to provide the necessary information and support to mothers and to their helpers and supporters. The State also has a very serious responsibility in relation to the immoral marketing, **which undermines the confidence and ability of mothers to breastfeed**. This has continued now for nearly a century (!). Yes, a century!

INVESTING HEAVILY IN THE NEW ARTIFICIAL BABY-FEEDING RÉGIME & ITS DESPOTS - THE UNETHICAL MARKETING OF BREASTMILK SUBSTITUTES

The huge multinational food company, ██████████, has engaged in the marketing of breastmilk substitutes for almost a century. Since the 1930s. No wonder mothers have been led astray! ██████████ has not continued its marketing of "*breastmilk substitutes*" in an honest, honorable, ethical way, since the 1930s. Some aspects of this scandalous, ugly story are described by Gabrielle Palmer in her book "*The Politics of Breastfeeding – When Breasts Are Bad for Business*". And also in the short version of the book "*Why Breastfeeding Matters*", published by Pinter & Martin in London in 2016.

ANGER, ANGER, ANGER

Talk about dirty, lying, ugly, lethal politics! It is extremely difficult, especially in a short paper like this, to convey the destruction, the slaughter, the ill-health, and the many lives – millions of them – all over the world, which are destroyed, extinguished, by this killing marketing. Despite the International Code, "*The International Code Of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes*" being legal for decades, it is constantly being violated by huge multinationals such as ██████████, ██████████, and various others. Gabrielle Palmer, in her two above-mentioned books, gives an account of this terrible scandal, which has continued **and intensified** since the 1930s. Reports are available from UNICEF & The World Health Organisation which damn multinationals, especially ██████████, and also

certain governments, in connection with their misbehaviour, negligence, their evil work in misleading and misguiding people, for nearly 100 years now. For quite a few years the scary figure of two million babies dying, every year, up to about 10 years ago, has been reported by UNICEF, as a result of “*the aggressive and unethical marketing of breastmilk substitutes*”. These babies were **mainly** from the poorest peoples and the poorest countries in the world, where not only do people not have the money to artificially feed their babies. But also where it is not safe, in any way. And of course, the multinationals never tell their poor customers about the terrible harm which it does to themselves and to their infants, to give them that stuff. The whole scandal is a cause of terrible anger. The violation of the Code is happening in Ireland and the U.S.A. **And in many other rich countries. Huge numbers of** infants are dying because of it. Mothers suffer illhealth because of it, lifelong. As do the infants who do not actually die from it.

ONLY A VERY SMALL NUMBER (MAINLY MOTHERS) UNDERSTAND THESE REQUIREMENTS OF MOTHERS

The women who help mothers in this way are volunteers. There is a limit to the time they can give to mothers. Included in the group of mothers who offer assistance to other mothers, are the Leaders of the voluntary organisation La Leche League, breastfeeding counsellors with “*Cuidiú*”, The Irish National Childbirth Trust, and qualified Lactation Consultants. The course approved/vetted for the latter qualification by the International Board of Certified Lactation Consultants (IBCLC) is a four-year course, the equivalent of a B.Sc. (Hons). See below the Irish National Childbirth Trust, and registered Lactation Consultants.

VERY FEW OF THE PROFESSIONALS WHO SHOULD HELP MOTHERS, UNDERSTAND THAT THEY HAVE NEITHER THE KNOWLEDGE NOR THE SKILLS

Breastfeeding is not an illness. Rather it is an extremely healthy, wholesome and valuable thing for the whole country. Doctors and other medical and nursing professionals have a certain amount of training about the benefits of breastfeeding. But they have neither the training nor the qualifications, nor have most of them the understanding, to know how to help mothers to breastfeed naturally at their breast. See WBTi below.

NOT ONLY ARE THE PROFESSIONALS NOT KNOWLEDGEABLE NOR SKILLED & NEITHER DO THEY UNDERSTAND THAT THEY ARE NOT. BUT THEY HAVE MANY FALSE OPINIONS, SOME OF WHICH ARE MYTHS, WHICH MISGUIDE MOTHERS

The following books contain excellent accounts of this fact: (for authors, see Bibliography) *The Politics of Breastfeeding*, *Why Breastfeeding Matters*, *The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding*, *The Attachment Parenting Book*, *Breastfeeding & Child Spacing – The Ecology of Natural Mothering*, *BreastfeedingMatters – What We Need to Know About Infant Feeding*, *Breastfeeding – A Guide for the Medical Profession* and more. See Bibliography for authors.

IRELAND’S BREASTFEEDING FIGURES

The number of mothers breastfeeding in Ireland increased in the last 20 years or so. Over 50% now initiate breastfeeding. However, that figure falls rapidly. In the U.S.A. over 70% of mothers now initiate breastfeeding. In Norway and Sweden 98-99% of mothers breastfeed. Many continue for a year or more. Especially now that Swedish mothers do not legally have to place their babies in state crèches until they are 18 months. Most mothers in Sweden do not place their infants in a crèche until they are 18 months.

The artificial infant-feeding industry wasn’t long filling the void left by the loss of the 3-4 million-year-old breastfeeding culture. This industry grew exponentially. It soon provided all the

breastmilk substitutes for the huge new market for “baby-milk”. This market became more and more powerful, very well funded, stood to make (and still does) huge profits, had huge political and economic power, and above all, was all but invisible, was hidden, and deceitful, as many markets are. Furthermore, it carried out its marketing aggressively, unethically, for monetary profit (totally and solely profit-driven, no matter what the terrible consequences for babies and mothers. Even deaths on a huge scale.) One of its most insidious activities was “breastmilk research”, from which platform it assiduously marketed its unhealthy, damaging, health-destroying products, which they hailed with very clever and false advertising. As they still do.

UNICEF UK’S “BABY-FRIENDLY” ORGANISATION LAUNCHES NEW POLICY/CAMPAIGN
In January 2019 the UNICEF UK “BABY-FRIENDLY” organisation announced a new policy and campaign. The “Baby-Friendly Initiative” is an integral part of UNICEF policy for babies. The programme of the “BABY-FRIENDLY HOSPITAL INITIATIVE” is a central part of it. Another part of it is the “TEN STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL BREASTFEEDING”. Only three of our 19 maternity units in Ireland have yet been granted “Baby-Friendly” status by UNICEF. The reason/s for why this is, is/are a very political issue.

DOCTORS, NURSES, ETC.

Medical doctor Ruth Lawrence has published an excellent textbook on breastfeeding for health professionals: “*Breastfeeding – a Guide for the Medical Profession*”. But I wonder how many doctors who care for mothers and infants even know of its existence? It is significant that it was published by La Leche League International, not by medical publishers. As mentioned above, the “World Breastfeeding Trends” organisation found, from its major study on the training of maternity health professionals that doctors had the least training in the relevant modules to help mothers with breastfeeding difficulties. The best-trained were found to be volunteers such as La Leche League Leaders.

A CHALLENGE WHICH IS MUCH GREATER THAN LACK OF INFORMATION IS
MISINFORMATION

Most doctors and nurses are misinformed about breastfeeding. This misinformation is deeply rooted now, throughout the country, and is long-held now for up to 100 years. It is far more difficult to correct this misinformation and to change it than it would be to give completely new, different.... information. The beliefs and the customs of the artificial, unnatural culture of bottlefeeding is so well-established now in our culture, since we lost our wholesome natural breastfeeding culture, that it is extremely difficult to change it. It follows from that that it is extremely difficult to dis-establish, to uproot, to change, and to stop pushing its bad habits and beliefs at mothers. But it is not impossible. VIETNAM DID IT. It would be worth our government’s while to follow their example. It would save a large sum for the Department of Health. The public’s mind needs to be change, especially women’s. The way people think, especially, mothers, about infant feeding needs to be changed.

THE HUMAN NORM

Most Irish people have no experience of the natural nourishing of a baby. They don’t know that. They don’t understand it. And they don’t believe it. It is a big challenge to fundamentally change that idea. There was an ad on the television (RTÉ) many years ago for ?Telecom? It showed a father getting up in the middle of the night to give a bottle of “breastmilk substitute” to his baby. There was uproar. What amazed me more than anything about it was this: when a journalist questioned the young man who played the part of the father, he was surprised. He asked how else

you would feed a baby? The poor man did not know there was such a thing as breastfeeding! It would not surprise me that there are such people in Ireland still.

WORLD BREASTFEEDING TRENDS (WBTi)

You can google the website. One graph figure is on the training (or lack of it) of health professionals and the **much superior training of volunteer breastfeeding helpers**, such as La Leche League Leaders.

HUMANS ARE MAMMALS – WOMEN AT LEAST!

Human kind belong to the primate group of mammals. My brother's son, as young boy, was watching David Attenborough: "Dad, when is your mating season?" We are very ignorant about things that are natural to mammals, even primates. *Homo sapiens, mulier sapiens at least, feeds its newborns by breastfeeding them.* This, at least, was how it was for 3-4 million years. Even today, worldwide, minority of human mothers feed their infants with a bottle.

DOES IT MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

It makes an enormous difference.

THE HISTORICAL REASONS WHY THE BOTTLE CAME TO REIGN IN THE RICH COUNTRIES

This story would take a big fat book. And there was no one cause. It is a much too long, and too complicated story to tell here. But we can be sure that it is within the last 70 years or so that most mothers in Ireland changed from the breast to the bottle.

WHAT IS THE REASON FOR THIS LACK OF KNOWLEDGE, MISINFORMATION, & LACK OF SKILLS

I intend to outline the main reasons, and show the need for serious government help and support for mothers, so that Ireland may become truly "baby-friendly" (WHO/UNICEF) sooner rather than later, to the great health and financial benefit of all who live in Ireland. And especially to mothers and babies.

MY EXPERIENCE

Since I was 27 or 28, I started learning about this subject. I started when my great friend, Máire Ní Almhain, lent me Jean Liedloff's wonderful book "*The Continuum Concept*", still in print. **Jassbinder Garnermann**, president of the Irish Jung Society, has stated publicly, during their agm, that "*everyone should read it*". A year or two after reading it, Máire lent me Sheila Kippley's fascinating book "*Breastfeeding & Child spacing – The Ecology of Natural Mothering*". Both those books were in print for over 40 years. "*The Continuum Concept*" still is. "*Breastfeeding & Child Spacing*" is now available as an e-book

GENDER

A fundamental mistake has been made for the last 30-50 years in relation to gender. That mistake is the consideration that equality between being male and being female (which is right) means that being male and being female is the same. That they are the same (which is not right). And that to be male and to be female *should* be the same (which is neither right nor true).

BREASTS – A VERY IMPORTANT GENDER ASPECT

In his beautiful poem Seán Ó Ríordáin, the greatest Irish (language) poet of the 20th century, describes the beauty of bright/white things which brighten and decorate life, including:

“gile bainne ag sreang-sileadh as na cíocha”

“the brightness of milk string-dripping from the breasts”

BEAUTIFUL, MATERIAL, FORTUNATE AND

Th **above-stated** misunderstandings have huge implications. It is obvious that women have wombs, and that they give birth to children. The misunderstandings above forget what happens after birth. Women have two breasts. The more a mother breastfeeds, and the longer, the better her health, and the child's health, lifelong, for both.

HIDDEN KNOWLEDGE, WIDESPREAD LACK OF INFORMATION

Most Irish people do not have that knowledge. Politicians, policy-makers, teachers, doctors, nurses, neonatologists, obstetricians, the majority of health professionals who care for mothers and infants in the first days. Most mothers do not have the information, the help, the support they need, nor the access to it, to benefit from that understating.

THE CROKE PARK CONFERENCE: “BREASTFEEDING IN A BOTTLE-FEEDING SOCIETY”

As I am not a health professional, I could not attend this important conference. It took place some years ago. Its theme was, as above: “*Breastfeeding In a Bottlefeeding Society*”. It was for health professionals only, doctors, nurses, midwives, etc. To my knowledge, it was barely reported, and rarely mentioned since. **That tells its own story.**

BREASTFEEDING MOTHERS – THEIR NEED

THE INFLUENCE OF GENDER ON THE BIG CHANGE

This is understood, and isn't, for many's the day. It has not yet been understood, really, how much knowledge, experience, skills, and understanding the women who breastfed their babies had, when our natural breastfeeding culture thrived and flourished in Ireland. It has not yet been understood, how much was lost, when that culture was lost. The wealth of knowledge, skills, etc., belonged to **women**. Not many people, apart from the doctors in the Rotunda, understood the importance of the culture which was being lost. Until it was too late to rescue it. Crazy myths and baseless theories abounded, with the “Reformation”. Many of these are still firmly believed in, even today. Those myths, and “articles of faith” put the last nails in the coffin of our breastfeeding culture. The women who volunteered as helpers to the tiny minority of women who still wanted to breastfeed naturally over the last three-score years, knew this well. The Big Change brought its own way, its own logic, its own customs, and many other new ways, **including very damaging new beliefs**. And it was an insurmountable challenge for many doctors, nurses, midwives, and families and friends of mothers,

to overcome these new difficulties. It is a tragedy which has happened silently, *privately*, secretly, and under “censorship”. It was only **women** who kept breastfeeding alive for **3-4 million years**. The **men were unable**/powerless to prevent this tragedy. The bottle was more powerful than them! And the new culture which grew with it.

IF WOMEN & MEN KNEW HOW SIMPLE IT IS TO BREASTFEED A CHILD, IF THEY HAD THE CONFIDENCE, THE INFORMATION, THE UNDERSTANDING, & THE SUPPORT

WHY WE NEED THE “BABY-FRIENDLY” PROGRAMME

The problem has many different aspects. It can be put this way. Most mothers do not know how to breastfeed. Most professionals caring for mothers do not know how to breastfeed. Especially the men. It is not an essential part of their training. It is not any part of it. [apart from some information about how beneficial it is for the baby.] Significant lack of information is involved. Also widespread misinformation, deeply rooted. Every farmer who gave a bottle to a lamb or a calf knows the big difference there is between that and natural suckling from the mother.

THE VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS DO NOT HAVE THE MONEY, OR THE OTHER NECESSARY RESOURCES. IT IS THE GOVERNMENT’S DUTY TO SUPPLY MOTHERS WITH THESE ESSENTIALS OF THEIR GENDER. IT IS THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE GOVERNMENT TO COMPLETELY RESTORE OUR NATURAL BREASTFEEDING CULTURE. IT IS NOT SUFFICIENT TO BE DEPENDENT ON VOLUNTARY ORGANISATIONS, THOUGH THEY ARE VERY VALUABLE. IT IS NEITHER RIGHT NOR JUST THAT GOVERNMENTS WOULD CONTINUE TO DENY WOMEN THEIR NATURAL RIGHTS IN THIS IMPORTANT ASPECT OF THEIR LIFE, & OF THEIR INFANTS’ LIFE. IT IS A SERIOUS LOSS TO OUR ENTIRE SOCIETY NOT TO HAVE OUR WHOLESOME CULTURE OF NOURISHING & NURTURING OUR INFANTS RESTORED TO HEALTH & TO NORMALITY. RESTORING TO US ALL ITS AMAZING BENEFITS, MANY OF WHICH LAST FOR THE LIFETIME OF BOTH THE CHILD & THE MOTHER

Various voluntary groups have struggled to provide mothers with the knowledge and the support they need, to breastfeed naturally, for a half-century or so. The international organisation *La Leche League International* (breastfeeding information and support) started in Ireland in 1966. There are now 100 LLL Leaders in Ireland, and 4.000 worldwide. In the year 1986 The World Health Organisation and UNICEF conferred LLL International with official consultative status as *the world’s foremost authority on breastfeeding*”. Most health professionals worldwide do not have that information. Even the health professionals who most work with mothers giving birth, and feeding them.

THE VIOLATION OF THE INTERNATIONAL CODE OF PRACTICE FOR THE MARKETING OF BREASTMILK SUBSTITUTES

The biggest reason for the lack of information, for the big gap in the training of health professionals, is the aggressive unethical marketing of substitutes for breast milk. And that is despite the best efforts of the United Nations, and many voluntary groups. Among those who had the knowledge, the late Senator Ted Kennedy distinguished himself by grilling one of the largest multinationals in the world, ██████████, as chairman of a UN board. The reason this corporation was called was to investigate their bad deeds, in violating both the letter and the spirit behind the

International Code of Practice for the Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes. [REDACTED] was called before the UN not once, but twice. They have acknowledged publicly that they are the most boycotted corporation in the world. But still they continue their unethical marketing, as described in Gabrielle Palmer's "*The Politics of Breastfeeding – When Breasts Are Bad for Business*".

THE HUGE POWER OF THE MEGA MULTINATIONAL CORPORATIONS

These corporations are so powerful, that consciencious governments find it hard to fight them. These corporations have huge budgets, and they can spend more money marketing their lethal products than many governments can spend on education, training, etc. which would oppose them.

"THE BABY KILLERS" - [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], & THE 823,000 UNDER-FIVES WHO DIE EVERY YEAR BECAUSE THEY WERE NOT BREASTFED

The couple Jelliffe & Jelliffe were among the first researchers who recognised how lethal was the marketing of [REDACTED], [REDACTED], and other corporations, pressing breastmilk substitutes on women who knew no better. And on health professionals also. You can read a brief summary about this terrible situation in Gabrielle Palmer's book "*The Politics of Breastfeeding – When Breasts Are Bad for Business*", and the shorter version, published by Pinter & Martin in the UK: "*Why The Politics of Breastfeeding Matters*". Up until about ten years ago, 2,000,000 babies were dying, worldwide, every year, because they were not breastfed. Thank God, with huge efforts from UNICEF and the W.H.O. that number has fallen to 823,000 children under five, every year. As Sr. Stanislaus (Stan) Kennedy said recently: "*The Market Has No Conscience.*"

THIS SITUATION DOES NOT ONLY CONCERN THE POOR, MAJORITY WORLD

Over 900 babies every year die in the U.S., because they were not breastfed. Children in the UK who were not breastfed in the minority rich world have a 10% higher risk of infection. In the majority poor world the figure is 25%. Mothers also suffer a higher risk of many diseases and conditions, if they do not breastfeed: breast cancer, uterine cancer, heart attack, anaemia, osteoporosis, and many others.

IT IS NOT MOTHERS' FAULT

It is extremely important that mothers are not blamed. They are not to blame. It is pointless to spend time, effort and energy blaming. Much better to search for solutions. Focusing on the reason why information, help, and support is required by mothers. And how best to get it to them. Every mother is trying her best to benefit her baby.

THE [REDACTED] BOYCOTT

Every educated citizen should inform himself/herself, and respect the boycott.

IT IS A BIG CHALLENGE TO RESTORE OUR BREASTFEEDING CULTURE

As that Croke Park Conference undoubtedly agreed, we are faced with a big challenge. The figures are improving, however slowly. Over 50% of mothers now initiate breastfeeding in Ireland now, for the first time in 50-70 years.

W.H.O./UNICEF RECOMMENDATIONS

In 1992 W.H.O. and UNICEF launched a major new project. It was called *The Joint Breastfeeding Initiative*. It is ongoing.

BREAST MILK SUBSTITUTES CAUSE SERIOUS HEALTH DAMAGE TO BABIES & TO MOTHERS & MUCH MORE

There is a new focus in bulletins from the UK UNICEF “*BABY-FRIENDLY*” websites. Part of this focus is to write about breastfeeding as the norm. The biologically normal way to feed babies. There is a concomitant aspect of this focus which is to clearly and unequivocally report on the harm which breastmilk substitutes cause, to mothers, to babies, to health departments, and to government budgets. As well as to the environment, and the Planet. The scale of this damage is absolutely mega. Gabrielle Palmer’s books are the clearest indication of this, for the lay reader.

BREASTFEEDING CARRIES NO CARBON FOOTPRINT

Enough said!!!!!!!!!!

HOW BREASTFEEDING EMPOWERS WOMEN

For the first six months, or so, the only food, or fluid a baby needs is his mother’s milk. Indeed The World Health Organisation and UNICEF, in their *Joint Breastfeeding Initiative* are at pains to recommend “*exclusive breastfeeding*” (no other food, fluid, or artificial suckling (bottles, teats, dummies) for the first six months. This is because science shows it is the optimal way to feed a baby, and to protect his immune system. After six months they recommend full unrestricted breastfeeding “*into the second year and beyond*”. These two Key Recommendations were adopted by all the world’s foremost paediatric authorities, for example the American Academy of Pediatrics. It is very empowering for a woman to know that her baby’s complete nutrition in the first six months comes/came solely from her own body. She can take great pride in being the sole provider of his complete and sole nutrition, the optimal baby milk, the optimal baby food. She alone can take the credit for growing her baby, protecting him from infection, and giving him the best possible food and fluid. As well as the best immune protection, through exclusively breastfeeding him for those crucial months. Not only does baby thrive on exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months, with optimal nutrition, hydration, immune function, and so much more, mother also enjoys many significant health benefits, by giving her baby her milk, exclusively, in those crucial first six months. Many of the ways mothers benefit continue lifelong.

For six months, when exclusively breastfeeding, UNICEF is on record that no other method of family planning is required. In fact they state that breastfeeding spaces more babies worldwide, than all other methods combined. This is quoted by a former UNICEF worker, Gabrielle Palmer, author of the powerful books referred to above.

After six months, mothers trained in very accurate methods of natural family planning, such as the sympto-thermal method, can use breastfeeding in conjunction with the Lactation Amenorrhoea Method (LAM) through which they can recognise the returning symptoms of imminent resumption of menstruation and ovulation, at no cost, and without any hardware. See Sheila Kippley. In my own case, this happened after my first baby, when he reached eleven and a half months, after my second baby at twenty three and a half months, and after my third at 18 months. With optimal breastfeeding*, the average return of ovulation/fertility/menstruation is at 14 months. See Sheila Kippley. These facts are a wonderful boon, particularly to poor women worldwide, who could not afford artificial methods of family planning, even if they wanted to use them. It is very good for women to have this knowledge about their body.

*For a definition of optimal breastfeeding see Glossary below.

OPTIMAL BREASTFEEDING PROTECTS BABIES OPTIMALLY

The UK UNICEF website has recently used the term “*suboptimal breastfeeding*” increasingly. A major aspect of suboptimal breastfeeding is when any substitution is made for breastfeeding. **Breastfeeding substitutes (Formula)** are increasingly shown to damage both babies’ and women’s health. Great researchers on this very important subject include Jelliffe & Jelliffe, authors of *The Baby Killers*, and Sue Gerhardt, authority on maternal and infant depression. The research which was monitored by The World Health Organisation & UNICEF and published, at the launch of their *Joint Breastfeeding Initiative*, as the book “*Protecting, Promoting, Supporting Breastfeeding*”, shows clearly the major differences between optimal breastfeeding, and suboptimal breastfeeding, and their implications for mothers’ and children’s health. Many benefits continue lifelong, for example the reduced risk of obesity.

“AN t-ATHRÚ CREIDIMH”/THE CHANGE OF RELIGION

I use this old historical term to refer to the change from breastfeeding to bottlefeeding in Ireland. This happened mainly during the 20th century. Though not sudden, it was an absolutely seismic shift. There are huge implications for public health, public finance, and many other factors. Most people in Ireland are quite unaware of these implications. And how important it is to restore our breastfeeding culture for the benefit of all our citizens. This is a massive task which requires significant government input. The National Breastfeeding Committee of the Dept. Of Health needs **teeth**.

HOW OPTIMAL BREASTFEEDING PROTECTS WOMEN OPTIMALLY

By breastfeeding as W.H.O./UNICEF recommends, following their extensive monitoring of the scientific research, women are healthier, lifelong. The longer they breastfeed, the greater their protection from illness, disease, and serious conditions. A major study from China showed this dramatically.

TO SUMMARISE: A WORD FROM THE WORLD BANK ON THE VITAL IMPORTANCE OF BREASTFEEDING

Críochnóidh mé leis an ráiteas seo:/ i conclude with this statement:

“Breastfeeding may be the single most effective investment a country can make in any sector for any reason.”

Keith Hansen, Global Vice President, World Bank 2015.

END PAPERS

TERMS

Optimal breastfeeding/biologically normal breastfeeding: This confers optimal benefits on mother and baby. Some of the benefits continue lifelong. It can be summarised in the two Key Recommendations of the W.H.O./UNICEF *Joint Breastfeeding Initiative*. It is extremely important that anyone who wants to work with this idea of optimal breastfeeding understands exactly what is involved. And what is not involved! To my knowledge Sheila Kippley has written the best account for the lay person. See her book above. Also

Suboptimal breastfeeding: This term is increasingly used in the bulletins of the UK UNICEF BABY-FRIENDLY website. Basically suboptimal breastfeeding is any way of breastfeeding that deviates from optimal breastfeeding.

sustainable breastfeeding: natural biologically normal ecological breastfeeding. See UK “Baby-Friendly” websites. See Sheila Kippley’s two publications in bibliography.

sustainable mothering: this is not that different, if one ends at the end of weaning

WORLD BREASTFEEDING TRENDS (WBTi)

Google the WBTi

Google *World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative* for findings of research project on the training, as in completion of modules of various health professions in breastfeeding help and support.

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DEIREADH AN BHÉARLA

AN BUNLEAGAN GAEILGE

XX

INSCNE AGUS TÁL - AIGHNEACTH DON TIONÓL

SAORÁNACH, 6ú MÁRTA 2020

TÁ AN DOICIMÉAD SEO DHÁ-THEANGACH. Tá an chéad chuid i nGaeilge agus an chuid dheireanach i mBéarla

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L.1

CÉN FÁTH A BHFUIL AN CUIDIÚ SIN AG TEASTÁIL Ó MHÁITHREACHA, AGUS ÓNA LUCHT TACAÍOCHTA?

Nuair a chaill Éirinn a cultúr tál, idir 70 agus 100 bliain ó shin, (ní thar oíche a chaill muid é), bhí an-droch-éifeacht aige ar shláinte máithreacha agus naíonáin, agus ar shláinte an phobail i gcoitinne. Tá impleachtaí an-mhór, an-fhorleathan, an-domhain, agus an-leanúnach ag an fhír sin. Níl an t-eolas sin ach ag fíor-bheagán de phobal na tíre. Ní thuigeann formhór an phobail, ná formhór ár gcuid proifisiúnaithe sláinte, an rud luachmhar atá caillte againn. Ní thuigeann siad an méid a chosnaíonn sé, ní amháin ar mháithreacha agus ar pháistí, ach fiú ar cháin-íocóirí. Féach na fiúirí in “*The Politics of Breastfeeding*” le Gabrielle Palmer.

FOCLÓIRÍN/GLOSSARYanseo nó ag an deireadh????????????????????

>1-2

alt úr

CAIDÉ THARLA? AN STAIR TRAGÓIDEACH. CÚIG GHLÚIN.

Tháinig cultúr mínádúrtha saorga cothú linbh i réim, de réir a chéile, in Éirinn, le linn an ama sin. Níl an t-eolas ná na scileanna ag máithreacha anois, (ná ní raibh le cupla scór bliain) faoi chothú nádúrtha a naíonán ag a mbrollach, mar go bhfuil sé ligthe i ndearmad agus an buidéal tagtha i réim sa tír. Agus sin suas le trí ghlúin ó shin. Nó níos mó, fiú. Tá go leor teaghlaigh in Éirinn atá ar an chúigiú glúin de chothú saorga/artificial. Ní hiad máithreacha amháin, ná a máithreacha féin, a chaill an cultúr sin. Chaill dochtúirí agus banaltraí é. Chaill mná chabhartha é, agus go leor eile de na proifisiúnaithe a dhéanann freastal ar mhná torracha, mar shampla neonatologists agus paediatricians. Agus, thar aon dream eile, tá an t-eolas agus na scileanna caillte, anois, ag na seanmháithreacha, na haintíní, agus na mná eile a thugann cuidiú agus tacaíocht, comhairle agus ugach

do mháithreacha úra, sa bhaile, sa chomharsanacht, agus sa phobal. Tháinig mí-eolas agus pisreoga sa bhealach fosta, cuid acu sean go maith, agus cuid acu níos lú na céad bliain ar an fhód.

L.1-2

BREITH AG ATHRÚ

CÉN DÓIGH AR THARLA AN DROCH-STAID SEO? LCH.2

Bheadh sé chomh dícheall ag duine ceist a chur cén doigh ar tharla go bhfuil oiread othair ag fanacht ar leaba in oispidéil na hÉireann, nó ar choinní! Is scéal an-bhrónach é, agus an dochar uilig atá ag tarlú dá bharr, ach tá an scéal seo i bhfad ró-fhada le haithris anseo. Go hachomair, is mar nár cuireadh oiliúint chruinn, ar na dochtúirí, agus ar na profisiúnaithe sláinte eile a thugann aire do mháithreacha agus dá naíonáin. Tá gnéithe eile ar nós cumhacht na n-oll-chomhlachtaí a chuireann “breastmilk substitutes” ar an margadh, agus an mhargáil mí-ionraice, neamh-eiticiúil a bhrúnn na táirgí sin fiú ar dhochtúirí agus ar oispidéil máithreachais. Tuilleadh faoi seo thíos. An réimse eolais is mó ar gá oiliúint cuí a chur ar dhochtúirí, etc., is é sin an dóigh a n-oibríonn diúl agus tál. Agus **nach n-oibríonn!** Tá mí-eolas i réim go láidir sna hoispidéil, d’ainneoin dícheall na ndaoine atá ag iarraidh eolas beacht, cruinn, eolaíoch a chur ina áit. Is snámh in aghaidh easa é! Cé go bhfuil an scéal ag bisiú beagáinín, **tá go leor profisiúnaithe sláinte aineolach faoin réimse eolais sin uilig.** Bíonn ar go leor máithreacha dul i muinín dochtúirí, banaltraí, agus profisiúnaithe sláinte eile. **An deacracht mór anseo** Ní hionann ar chor ar bith an t-eolas ná na scileanna atá riachtanach do phroifisiúnaithe atá ag cuidiú le máthair tál, agus na cinn atá riachtanach don mhóramh mór de mháithreacha in Éirinn, ar leis an bhuidéal atá siad ag cothú a naíonán. Go bhfios dom, níl ach tír amháin a bhfuil cuntas sách iomlán foilsithe faoi, ó thaobh cailliúint a gcultúr tál, agus teacht i réim an bhuidéil. Is í an tír sin An Astráil. Is é an cuntas sin, leabhar breá Maureen Minchin, *Breastfeeding Matters – What We Need to Know about Infant Feeding.*

L.2.

CÉ GO BHFUIL NEART EOLAIS AGUS TACAÍOCHT AR FÁIL DO MHÁITHREACHA, NÍ LOIRGÍONN A BHFORMHÓR É ÓN DREAM IS FEARR A d TIG LEO CUIDIÚ LEO, MAR NACH DTUIGEANN SIAD AN GÁ, NA BUNTÁISTÍ, AGUS AN FHÁILTE A CHUIRFEAR ROMPU

Tá máithreacha ag brath anois ar eolas a chuartú iad féin. Ní hé amháin go gcaithfidh siad an t-eolas agus na scileanna sin a chuartú iad féin, ach caithfidh siad é a lorg ón mhionlach beag bídeach ban (is mná a bhformhór) a bhfuil an saibhreas sin acu. Thioctadh le turas fada bóthair a bheith i gceist. Fuair mé féin glaoch ó Washington uair amháin. Agus fuair mé glaoch o shagart ag iarraidh cuidiú dá bhean tí! Níl formhór ár ndochtúirí ábalta cuidiú le máithreacha. Gach seans go gcuirfidh an fhiric sin a sáith iontais ar mo léitheoirí. Léiríonn torthaí staidéir a rinne an eagraíocht World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative gur sin fírinne an scéil, ar an droch-uair. Bhí aicmí éagsúla a chuidíonn le máithreacha faoi scrúdú sa staidéar sin. Féach thíos WTi.

L.2

AN CREIDEAMH ATÁ AG MÁITHREACHA GO DTABHARFAR GACH CUIDIÚ AGUS GACH EOLAS DÓIBH SAN IONAD MÁITHREACHAIS, NUAIR A SAOLÓFAR A LEANBH.

Ta go leor máithreacha ann agus sin an rud a chreideann siad. Dá mba mar sin atá, ní bheadh aon ghá leis an Aighneacht seo uaimse. Ach, ar an drochuair, is fada o bheith fíor é. A mhalairt ar fad, dáiríre. Agus ní thuigeann ach fíor-bheagán sa tír, gur mar sin atá. Agus nach ar aon duine ná grúpa atá an locht.

[SEICEÁIL LEAGAN PÁIPÉIR FAOIN CHÉAD GHIOTA EILE]

is mó faoi seo, ná nach bhfuil an taithí, an oiliúint, an tuiscint, ná na scileanna, ag a bhformhór le cuidiú le máithreacha. Agus níos measa fós, ní thuigeann máithreacha sin. Ná ní thuigeann na profisiúnaithe sláinte nach dtuigeann siad. Agus go bhfuil siad fíor-aineolach ar na cú

L.3

NÍ THUIGEANN NA PROIFISIÚNAITHE SLÁINTE NACH DTIG LEO CUIDIÚ LE MÁITHREACHA LEIS AN “HOW TO” - TAIGHDE AN “WORLD BREASTFEEDING TRENDS INITIATIVE” (Wti) AGUS AN T-AINEOLAS SCANRÚIL A LÉIRÍONN SÉ I MEASC DOCHTÚIRÍ AGUS PROIFISIÚNAITHE SLÁINTE EILE

Agus ní thuigeann siad nach dtuigeann siad. Cé go bhfuil cúrsaí ag feabhsú, go fada, fadálach, léirigh taighde a rinne an eagraíocht *World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative (WBi)* an fhír sin go suntasach roinnt blianta ó shin. Féach thíos “*World Breastfeeding Trends*”. Buíochas do Dhia, agus buíochas go speisialta do La Leche League International, tá eolas agus oiliúint níos fearr á thabhairt do phroifisiúnaithe **sláite le blianta beaga anuas. Tá céimeanna an-phraicticiúla glactha ag an World Health Organisation agus ag UNICEF (i dteannta a chéile go minic) le cúrsaí oiliúna a chur ar fáil le feabhas a chur ar an oiliúint do dhochtúirí, do mhná cabhartha, agus do phroifisiúnaithe sláinte eile.**

L.3

TAIGHDE

L.4

INFHEISTIÚ TROM SA RÉIMEAS ÚR COTHÚ SAORGA NAÍONÁN, AGUS A CHUID **DESPOTS**

Mar a tchíimid thíos, bhí constaic mhór eile a bhí an-chumhachtach, an-mhaoinithe, a raibh (agus a bhfuil) sochar mór airgid ag brath air, a bhí (agus atá fíor-chumhachtach, go polaitiúil, agus go heacnamaíoch) agus thar aon rud eile, a bhí (agus atá) beagnach dofheicthe, faoi cheilt, agus bréagach, mar atá go leor den mhargaíocht. Ní amháin sin, ach bhí (agus tá) sé ag infheistiú le margáíocht atá aggressive, tiomáanta do shochar (agus do shochar thar aon rud eile, fiú thar shláinte agus fiú beatha máithreacha agus páisti) a rinne (agus a dhéanann) infheistíocht throm san Athrú Creidimh ar mhaithe le sochar airgid, agus ní ar mhaithe le haon rud eile. Is beag de phobal na tíre a bhfuil aon eolas ná aon tuiscint acu faoin droch-obair seo, fiú agus é thart orainn gach lá, i ngach baile in Éirinn, i ngach oispidéal máithreachais seachas na trí cinn atá “*Baby-Friendly*” (as naoi gcinn déag), agus i mbeagnach gach coirnéal d’ár Seirbhísí “Sláinte”.

L.5.

NA DEACRACHTAÍ

Tá cúiseanna stairiúla suntasacha, a d’fhág an tír gan a shean-chultúr táil, agus cultúr saorga an-difriúil ar fad ina áit, nach bhfuil eolas ná taithí ag formhór ár máithreacha air, go háirithe agus iad ag fás aníos sa bhaile, agus ina bpobal féin. Ní thosaíonn ach 51% de mháithreacha in Éirinn, ar a leanbh a oiliúint ar an gcíoch faoi láthair. Éiríonn formhór an 51% sin as an chothú nádúrtha tar éis cupla lá, cupla seachtain, nó cupla mí. Molann an Eagraíocht Domhanda Sláinte (W.H.O.) go gcothófaí naíonáin ar an bhrollach “into the second year and beyond”. Sin an rud a mholann na heagrais sláinte leanaí is mó le rá sa domhan fosta. Mar shampla, an American Academy Of Pediatrics (AAP). Tá go leor máithreacha – agus aithreacha – in Éirinn nach bhfaca ariamh naíonán á c/hothú ar an gcíoch. Gan trácht ar a bheith cleachtaithe le cothú nádúrtha. Tá go leor daoine in Éirinn – a bhformhór – nach bhfaca a máthair, a sean-mháthair, ná a sinseanmháthair ag cothú linbh go nádúrtha. B’fhéidir, go bhfaca siad bean an-bhocht á dhéanamh, ar chorr-phíosa tuairiscíochta ó na tíortha is boichte sa domhan. Creideann formhór mhuintir na hÉireann gurb é an rud nádúrtha naíonáin a chothú le buidéal. Níl ‘s acu gur ar an gcíoch a cothaítear formhór naíonáin an domhain. Agus gur mar sin a bhí sé le idir 3 agus 4 mhiliún bliain. Ní thuigeann siad gurb iad na pobail i dtíortha ina labhartar Béarla is mó a chothaíonn a naíonáin go saorga. Agus ní thuigeann siad an chailteanas mhilleteach sin dóibh féin, dá naíonáin, agus don tír uilig.

L.5.

L.3-4

DÁ MHÉID EOLAIS AGUS OILIÚNA ATÁ AG DUINE, NÁ AG GRÚPA, NÍ LEOR É. TÁ RUDAÍ EILE I BHFAD NÍOS TÁBHACHTAI NÁ EOLAS, SA CHÁS SEO

Cineáltas, ugach, croí mór maith, gríosú, scileanna pearsanta daonna, agus am, thar aon rud eile, tá na rudaí seo i bhfad níos tábhachtaí ná eolas – dá thábhachtaí é. aNí hé nach bhfuil na cáilíochtaí seo ag proifisiúaithe sláinte. Ach tá **an t-am** ag na cuiditheoirí deonacha le bheith ansin le máithreacha, agus le cuidiú agus tacaíocht **leanúnach** a thabhairt dóibh. Mura bhfuil eolas, féinmhuinín, creideamh, agus muinín ina cumas féin ag an mháthair, ní thabharfaidh an t-eolas uilig sa domhan an cumas di a bheith “*Breastfeeding in a Bottlefeeding Society*” (téama comhdhála proifisiúnaaithe sláinte i bPáirc an Chrócaigh, roinnt blianta ó shin.) Dá mhéid eolais atá ag na proifisiúnaith ar an taighde, ar na staitisticí, ar an eolas acadúil, na buntáistí, etc., **is rud eile ar fad cíoch a thabhairt do leanbh**. Tá cothú saorga linbh le buidéal chomh difriúil sin ón chothú nádúrtha, go fisiciúil, go cultúrtha, agus go speisialta ó thaobh an ghréasán teaghlaigh, cairde, agus cuiditheoirí (proifisiúnta agus deonach) a bhaineann le cothú saorga, gur dúshlán an-mhór don mháthair an rogha nádúrtha a dhéanamh, agus leanstan uirthi leis, d’ainneoin na ndeacrachtaí móra (the biologically normal versus the culturally normal). Ní hé go bhfuil sé deacair go fisiciúil, leanbh a bheathú ar an chioch.

L.3-4

UNDERMINING OF BF CONFIDENCE

Is é an áit a bhfuil na deacrachtaí ná sa chultúr “úr” (le 70-100 bliain) beathú saorga leanbh, san eolas, san mhí-eolas, sna gnéithe go léir den chultúr sin ar bréaga iad, san dúshlán mór atá ann do mháthair úr, agus athair úr, aghaidh a thabhairt ar an chultúr sin, leo féin féin, gan eolas ceart, gan tuiscint ceart, gan cuidiú ná tacaíocht cheart, agus gan féinmhuinín láidir, agus go leor cáilíochtaí eile. Déanann na gnéithe seo uilig *undermining* ar an chumas nádúrtha, ar an dúil nádúrtha, agus ar an cheart nádúrtha ata ag tuismitheoirí úra an rogha nádúrtha a dhéanamh, as sult agus sásamh a bhaint as an chinneadh sin, agus as eispéireas sásúil, pléisiúrtha a bheith acu agus iad ina bhun. Ní thuigeann a muintir, a gcuiditheoirí – idir phroifisiúnaith, gaolta, cairde, comharsana, go bhfuil a n-easpa tuisceana, a guid easpa eolais, etc. Etc., ag baint óna a muinín, a gcumas, a sástacht, a ndúil, a sásamh, a n-éifeacht, agus a “success”. Tá léargus (an-bheag) de chomh mór is a chuireann cailliúint ár gcultúr táil isteach ar mháithreacha agus ar aithreacha úra, sa chéad mhír eile.

L.4

AN CULTÚR AGUS AN NÁIRE

Tá sé aisteach go bhfuil dhá bhrí leis an fhocal “náire” sa Ghaeilge atá contrártha ar fad lena chéile. Ciallaíonn “náire” shame, modesty, shy, Ciallaíonn an focal náireach shy, modest, timid, Agus ciallaíonn “mí-náireach” shameless. “Field day” do na síceolaithe!

In aon phlé faoi chailliúint ár gcultúr táil, agus teacht i réim don chultúr saorga, mí-nádúrtha a tháinig ina áit, caithfear cotadh/“embarrassment” a lua go speisialta. Creideann mo mhac (37) gur cotadh, thar aon rud eile, is cúis le rátaí ísle an táil in Éirinn, idir *initiation* agus *continuation*.

L.4

CÓRAS NA n-OISPIDÉAL MÁITHREACHAIS – BÁS AN CULTÚIR TÁIL

Is scéal i bhfad ró-fhada an scéal seo le haithris anseo. [Léigh leabhar Maureen Minchin, agus beidh tuairim mhaith agat.] Ach tá sé an-tábhachtach go dtuigfimis an dochar millteanach ata déanta ag oispidéil máithreachais, ag dochtúirí, banaltraí, mná chabhartha, don chultúr táil a bhí againn, agus don cheann atáimid ag iarraidh a athréimniú. Ní d’aon-ghnó a rinne aon duine acu sin. Ach

scriosadh gach seans a bhí ag formhór ár máithreacha tál go sásúil, go héifeachtach, agus go pléisiúrtha. An réimeas nósanna, agus go háirithe an réimeas creidimh, a tháinig in áit an sean-chultúr táil, bhí sé bunaithe ar aineolas agus ar mhi-eolas forleathan faoin dóigh a n-oibríonn an tál. Mar shampla, dá mhinicí agus dá fhaide a cuirtear an leanbh ar an gcíoch, is ea is mó bainne a bheas ag an mháthair. Sin dearg-chontráracht na tuisceana a bhí – agus atá – i réim tar éis an “Athrú Creidimh”. Is é diúl an linbh a chuireann an soláthar bainne ar fáil. Dá mhinicí, agus dá fhaide a chuirtear an naíonán ag diúl ar an bhrollach, is ea is mó an soláthar bainne a bheas ag an mháthair.

L.4

INFHEISTIÚ TROM SA RÉIMEAS ÚR COTHÚ SAORGA NAÍONÁN, AGUS A CHUID DESPOTS

Mar a tchíimid thíos, bhí constaic mhór eile a bhí an-chumhachtach, an-mhaoinithe, a raibh (agus a bhfuil) sochar mór airgid ag brath air, a bhí (agus atá fíor-chumhachtach, go polaitiúil, agus go heacnamaíoch) agus thar aon rud eile, a bhí (agus atá) beagnach dofheicthe, faoi cheilt, agus bréagach, mar atá go leor den mhargaíocht. Ní amháin sin, ach bhí (agus tá) sé ag infheistiú le margáíocht atá aggressive, tiománta do shochar (agus do shochar thar aon rud eile, fiú thar shláinte agus fiú beatha máithreacha agus páisti) a rinne (agus a dhéanann) infheistíocht throm san Athrú Creidimh ar mhaithe le sochar airgid, agus ní ar mhaithe le haon rud eile. Is beag de phobal na tíre a bhfuil aon eolas ná aon tuiscint acu faoin droch-obair seo, fiú agus é thart orainn gach lá, i ngach baile in Éirinn, i ngach oispidéal máithreachais seachas na trí cinn atá “*Baby-Friendly*” (as naoi gcinn déag), agus i mbeagnach gach coirnéal d’ár Seirbhísí “Sláinte”.

L.5.

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L.5.L.4

AN T-AT

L.4

AN CULTÚR AGUS AN NÁIRE

Tá sé aisteach go bhfuil dhá bhrí leis an fhocal “náire “ sa Ghaeilge atá contrártha ar fad lena chéile. Ciallaíonn “náire” shame, modesty, shy, Ciallaíonn an focal náireach shy, modest, timid, Agus ciallaíonn “mí-náireach” shameless. “Field day” do na síceolaithe!

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L.4

CÓRAS NA n-OISPIDÉAL MÁITHREACHAIS – BÁS AN CULTÚIR TÁIL

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L.4

AN T-ATHRÉIMIÚ FADA FADÁLACH

Tá an t-eolas cruinn, ceart, beacht, ag teacht chun cinn, de réir a chéile. Tá grúpaí beaga againn atá ar an eolas le dachad nó le seachtó bliain. Tá sé pianmhar oiread sin máithreacha, a bhí ag iarraidh a naíonáin a chothú iad féin, ach nár éirigh leo. Rinne muid ár ndicheall, go deonach, cuidiú le máithreacha thart orainn, agus d’éirigh linn i gcásanna áirithe, **d’ainneoin an chórais**, agus d’ainneoin an “Athrú Creidimh”. Is cúis mhór díomá agus bróin dúinn nár éirigh linn leis na máithreacha uilig ar chuidigh muid leo. Bhí an oiread sin aineolais, mí-eolais, nósanna agus creidimh contráilte in uachtar i ré an Athrú Creidimh, gur dheacair fiú le buíon suntasach, oilte, íoctha, an t-Athrú Creidimh a thiontú thart, gan trácht ar ghrúpa beag scaipthe de chuiditheoiri deonacha. Na máithreacha bochta, ní raibh an t-eolas, an tuiscint, an muinín, an scil comhairleoireachta, ar fáil dóibh. Ní ní raibh a fhios acu go raibh sé ar fáil dóibh – ach é a iarraidh ar na daoine cearta. Thar aon rud eile – agus is é an gné is tábhachtaí agus is mó tionchair é – ní

raibh cultúr táil thart ar na máithreacha. Ní amháin sin, ach bhí brú i gcoinne cultúr táil thart orthu, sa bhaile, lena muintir agus a gcomharsana féin, sa chóras “sláinte”, sa phobal i gcoitinne, agus i meoin, i dtaithí, agus in eolas na muintire uilig. Ba chonstaic do-sháraithe é sin fiú do mháithreacha a bhí ag iarraidh a naíonain a thál iad féin. [Féach Beéarly don ghiota ar iarraidh.]

L.4

INFHEISTIÚ TROM SA RÉIMEAS ÚR COTHÚ SAORGA NAÍONÁN, AGUS A CHUID

DESPOTS

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L.5.

CÚISEANNA EILE

Ní hé amháin nach bhfuil an t-eolas agus na scileanna cuí ach ag buíon beag bídeach, a thugann cuidiú do mhná ar bhonn deonach. Ach níl an tuiscint sin, ná an t-eolas sin ach ag fíor-bheagán sa tír. Agus ní thuigeann na daoine a mbeadh sé nádúrtha ag máithreacha cuidiú a iarraidh orthu, nach bhfuil siad eolach ná sciliúil sa dóigh atá ag teastáil ó mháithreacha. Is cuma cé mhéid eolais atá ag dochtúir nó ag banaltra faoi na buontáistí a bhaineann le tál, ní haon mhaith an t-eolas sin do bhean atá ag iarraidh eolais faoi **cén dóigh** lena leanbh a thál go sásúil, agus go sásta. Tá mí-eolas fairsing, agus aineolas, agus easpa eolais, faoi cén dóigh a n-oibríonn tál. Ná ní thuigeann siad nach ionann rud a bheith nádúrtha, agus é a bheith *intuitive* ná a bheith furasta nó simplí. Cuireann a lán máithreacha bochta an milleán orthu féin nuair nach n-éiríonn leo a naíonán a chothú go nádúrtha, agus go sásúil. Na máithreacha nár roghnaigh cothú nádúrtha ar an chéad dul síos, is minic iad cráite le brón, le díomá, le féin-mhilleán, féin-lochtú, agus le “ciontacht”. Mura bhfuil an t-eolas agus an tuiscint ag máithreacha faoi cén dóigh le dul i mbun an táil, ná a fhios acu cén áit le cuidiú a

lorg, is ar éigean atá aon locht, milleán, ná ciontach ag baint leo. Easpa oideachais, easpa taithí, easpa tuisceana, sin na rudaí a dhéanann spior spear den tál d’oiread sin máithreacha. Caithfear na rudaí sin a chur ar fáil do mháithreacha. Is gá tacaíocht láidir ón Stát. Ní amháin go bhfuil dualgas ar an Stát máithreacha a chur ar an eolas, agus an tacaíocht atá riachtanach a chur ar fáil dóibh, agus dá lucht cúnaimh agus tacaíochta. Tá dualgas tromchúiseach eile ar an Stát i leith margaíocht mhí-mhorálta, mar atá ar siúl le cóngarach do chéad bliain (!). Sea, céad bliain.

MARGAÍOCHT MHÍ-EITICIÚIL BREASTMILK SUBSTITUTES

Thosaigh an comhlacht ollmhór ██████████ ag margaíocht a gcuid “*breastmilk substitutes*” chomh luath leis na 1930í. Ní hiontas go bhfuil máithreacha curtha ar strae! Ní margaíocht ionraice, macánta, eiticiúil a bhí ar siúl ag ██████████ ó na 1930í i leith. Tá gnéithe den scéal scannalach, gránna, luaite ag Gabrielle Palmer ina leabhar “*The Politics of Breastfeeding – When Breasts Are Bad For Business*”. Agus sa leagan gairid den leabhar, an leabhrín “*Why Breastfeeding Matters*”, a d’fhoilsigh Pinter & Martin i Londain i 2016.

L.5.

FEARG, FEARG, FEARG

Bí ag caint ar pholaitíocht salach, bréagach, gránna, marfach! Is rí-dheacair a thabhairt le fios, go háirithe i bpáipéar gairid mar seo, faoin slad, faoin sléacht, faoin droch-shláinte, agus faoi na beathaí go léir – na milliúin acu – ar fud na cruinne, atá millte, nó múchta, ag an mhargaíocht marfach seo. D’ainneoin Cód Idirnáisiúnta “*The International Code Of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes*” a bheith dlithiúil leis na deiceanna blianta, tá sé á shíor-bhriseadh ag oll-chomhlachtaí ar nós ██████████, ██████████, agus tuilleadh nach iad. Tá cuntas ar an scannal uafásach seo, atá ag leanstan anois ó na 1930í ag Gabrielle Palmer ina dhá leabhar thuasluaite. Tá tuairiscí ar fáil ó UNICEF agus an World Health Organisation a dhamnaíonn ollchomhlachtaí, go speisialta ██████████, agus rialtaisí áirithe faoina ndroch-iompar, a neamairt, a ndroch-obair ag cur daoine ar mhí-eolas agus ar mhi-threoir le beagnach 100 bliain anois. Ar feadh roinnt mhaith blianta bhí an figiúr scanrúil de dhá mhiliún naíonán a bhí ag fáil bháis, go dtí suas le 10 mbliana nó mar sin, de bharr “*the aggressive and unethical marketing of breastmilk substitutes*”. Agus sin do dhaoine fíorbhocht, sna tíortha is boichte ar domhan, áit nach acmhainn airgid don phobal páistí a chothú go saorga. Gan trácht ar é a bheith sábháilte, ar dhóigh ar bith. Agus ar ndóigh, ní insíonn na hollchomhlachtaí dá gcuid custaiméirí bochta faoin dochar uafásach a dhéanann sé dóibh féin agus dá naíonán an stuif seo a thabhairt dóibh. Is cúis feirge mhillteanach an scannal uilig. Tá briseadh an Chóid ag tarlú i dtíortha saibhre cosúil le hÉirinn agus Stáit Aontaithe Mheiriceá fosta. Babies are dying because of it. Mother Agus naíonáin ag fáil bháis dá bharr. Agus droch-shláinte ag a máithreacha dá bharr. Agus droch-shláinte ag na naíonáin nach maraíonn sé, lena saol.

L.6

CÁ BHFUIL SÉ SEO LE DUL????????????????]

NÍ THUIGEANN ACH FÍOR-BHEAGÁN DAOINE (MNÁ IS MÓ) CAD IAD NA RIACHTANAISÍ SEO ATÁ AG MÁITHREACHA

Na mná a thugann an cuidiú seo do mháithreacha, is go deonach a dhéanann siad é. Tá teora leis an méid ama a thig leo a chaitheamh le máithreacha. Ar na máithreacha a chuidíonn mar seo le máithreacha eile, tá Leaders na heagraíochta deonach La Leche League, comhairleoirí “*Chuidiú*”, the Irish National Childbirth Trust, agus Comhairleoirí Táil cáiliúthe (qualified Lactation Consultants). An cúrsa a fhaobhaíonn an cháilíocht a dtugann an International lactation Consultan (IBCLC) is cúrsa ceithre bliana é, agus is ionann le B.Sc. (onóracha) é. Féach thíos.the Irish National Breastfeeding Trust, and registered Lactation Consultants.

NÍ THUIGEANN ACH FÍOR-BHEAGÁN DEN LUCHT PROIFISIÚNTA AR CHEART DÓIBH BHEITH ÁBALTA CUIDIÚ, NACH BHFUIL AN T-EOLAS NÁ NA SCILEANNA ACU

Ní tinneas an tál, ach rud fíor-fholláin, sláintiúil, luachmhar don tír uilig. Tá oiliúint áirithe ar dhochtúirí agus lucht leighis agus banaltrachta eile faoi na buntáistí a bhaineann le tál (cuid an-bheag díobh). Ach níl aon oiliúint ná cáilíochtaí, ná tuiscint ag a bhformhór faoi cén dóigh le cuidiú le máithreacha le leanbh a chothú go nádúrtha ar a mbrollach. Féach BTi thíos.

NÍ AMHÁIN NACH BHFUIL NA PROIFISIÚNAITHE EOLACH NÁ SCILIÚIL, AGUS NACH DTUIGEANN SIAD NACH BHFUIL, ACH TÁ GO LEOR TUAIRIMÍ MÍ-CHEART ACU, AR MIOTAIS CUID ACU, A CHUIREANN MÁITHREACHA AR MHÍ-THREOIR

Tá cuntaisí an-mhaith air seo sna leabhair *The Politics of Breastfeeding, Why Breastfeeding Matters, The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding, The Attachment Parenting Book, Breastfeeding & Child Spacing – The Ecology of Natural Mothering, Breastfeeding Matters - Breastfeeding – A Guide for the Medical Profession* agus tuilleadh. Tá eolas sna leabhair sin faoi cén dóigh a n-oibríonn an tál, cén mí-eolas atá coitianta, cén dóigh a dtig le máthair tál go sásúil, go héifeachtach, agus go pléisiúrtha (breastfeeding is meant to be pleasurable). Rinne an eagraíocht *World Breastfeeding Trends* (féach Wti) [SEICEÁIL] staidéar ar an deacracht móra seo. Tá graf sa tuairisc a chuir siad ar fáil, a thaispeáineann gur ag na cuiditheoirí deonacha (cosúil le LLL Leaders agus comhairleoirí táil le “Cuidiú” (Irish National Childbirth Trust) agus a leithéid eile, atá an t-eolas agus na scileanna is fearr sa réimse seo. Is díol iontais agus díol díomá agus feirge é gur ag dochtúirí atá an t-eolas agus na scileanna is lú, le cuidiú le máithreacha. Ní hiontas go bhfuil na leibhéil táil in Éirinn agus sa Bhreatain (áit a dtearnadh an staidéar Wti) ar na cinn is ísle sa domhan. Tá sé i bhfad, i bhfad níos deacra eolas úr-nua a chur in áit cultúr bunaithe ná an seanrud a leanstan, a bhuanú, agus a fhágáil i réim.

L.6

FIGIÚIRÍ TÁIL

the influence OF GENDER ON THE BIG CHANGE

This is understood, and isn't, for many's the day. It has not yet been understood, really, how much knowledge, experience, skills, and understanding the women who breastfed their babies had, when our natural breastfeeding culture thrived and flourished in Ireland. It has not yet been understood, how much was lost, when that culture was lost. The wealth of knowledge, skills, etc., belonged to **women**. Not many people, apart from the doctors in the Rotunda, understood the importance of the culture which was being lost. Until it was too late to rescue it. Crazy myths and baseless theories abounded, with the “Reformation”. Many of these are still firmly believed in, even today. Those myths, and “articles of faith” put the last nails in the coffin of our breastfeeding culture. The women who volunteered as helpers to the tiny minority of women who still wanted to breastfeed naturally over the last three-score years, knew this well. The Big Change brought its own way, its own logic,

its own customs, and many other new ways, **including very damaging new beliefs**. And it was an insurmountable challenge for many doctors, nurses, midwives, and families and friends of mothers, to overcome these new difficulties. It is a tragedy which has happened silently, *privately*, secretly, and under “censorship”. It was only **women** who kept breastfeeding alive for **3-4 million years**. The **men were unable**/powerless to prevent this tragedy. The bottle was more powerful than them! And the new culture which grew with it. [Féach bold??]

IF WOMEN & MEN KNEW HOW SIMPLE IT IS TO BREASTFEED A CHILD, IF THEY HAD THE CONFIDENCE, THE INFORMATION, THE UNDERSTANDING, & THE SUPPORT

BUT THERE WAS ANOTHER ENEMY – A DARK, IMMORAL ENEMY, WHO DIDN’T CARE FOR THE LIFE OR THE HEALTH OF MOTHERS OR BABIES. THAT ENEMY, ABOVE ALL ELSE, WAS THE NEW MARKET WHICH CAME, FOR BREASTMILK SUBSTITUTES
The author Gabrielle Palmer, in her little book “*Why Breastfeeding Matters*” has a short account. She has a more complete account in her original book “*The Politics of Breastfeeding – When Breasts Are Bad for Business.*” This book is so frightening, and it angered me so much to read it, that I couldn’t finish it for years. It is very hard to swallow these terrible events - scandal after scandal, lies after lies, shame after shame, disgust after disgust. More about these two books, and about Gabrielle Palmer, below.

THE “*REFORMATION*” [LITERALLY “THE CHANGE OF RELIGION” OR THE “REFORMATION”]

That is how someone described the Significant Change in the way newborn babies are fed, for the first year or two, which happened during the last century, in the Western world. I call it *The “Reformation”* jokingly. But it is no joke. But the very opposite. The “*Reformation*”, which happened in the last century, continues, with very little change, since. I don’t remember where I saw that quote, or who said it, but it certainly has a certain truth to it. As I said above, there are major, and very serious implications. The implications involve the following aspects: politics, social and cultural matters, personal, family and above all, health aspects.

THOUGH LOTS OF INFORMATION IS AVAILABLE TO MOTHERS, MOST OF THEM DO NOT SEEK IT FROM THOSE WHO CAN BEST ASSIST THEM, BECAUSE THEY DO NOT UNDERSTAND THE NEED, THE BENEFITS, AND THE WELCOME THEY WILL BE GIVEN
Nowadays mothers depend on seeking out the information, themselves. Not only must they seek the information and the skills themselves, but they must seek it from the tiny little minority of women (and they are mainly women) who have that wealth. This could involve a long road journey. I once got a call for help from Washington! And I also got a call from a priest who wanted help for his housekeeper! **Most of our doctors are unable to help mothers**. There is every chance that this fact will astound my readers. Studies sought by the organisation *World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative* (WBTi) show this to be true, unfortunately. Different health professions who help mothers were involved in the study. See WBTi below.

THE BELIEF THAT MOTHERS HAVE THAT EVERY HELP & ALL INFORMATION WILL BE GIVEN TO THEM IN THE MATERNITY UNIT, WHEN THE BABY IS BORN

There are many mothers who believe that. If this were so, there would be no need for this Submission from me. But, unfortunately, this is far from being true. Exactly the opposite, in truth. And very few in this country understand that that is how it is. And that it is not any group’s fault.

HOW DID THIS TERRIBLE SITUATION HAPPEN?

It would be as nonsensical to ask how has it happened that so many patients are waiting for a bed in Irish hospitals, or on appointments! [I wrote this before we had to take steps re COVID 19.] It is a very sad story, with terrible consequences, but the story is far too long to recount here. In summary, it is because accurate, up-to-date training is not given to doctors, and to the other health professionals who look after mothers and their babies. Other aspects, such as the huge corporations who market breastmilk substitutes, and the dishonest, unethical marketing which aggressively pressure those products on doctors and on maternity units. More about this below. The area of information which doctors, etc. most need appropriate training for that is how suckling and breastfeeding works. And **doesn't!** Misinformation abounds strongly in hospitals, despite the great efforts of the people who labour to replace this with accurate, authentic, scientific information. It is an upward battle! Although the situation is improving a little, **many health professionals are ignorant about this entire area of knowledge.** Many mothers have to seek information from doctors, nurses, and other health professionals. **The major difficulty here**

The knowledge and skills required by professionals to help breastfeeding mothers, and those they require to help the majority of mothers in Ireland, who bottlefeed their babies are completely different. As far as I am aware, only one country has a relatively complete account of their loss of their breastfeeding culture, and its replacement by the bottle. That country is Australia. That account is Maureen Minchin's excellent book *Breastfeeding Matters – What We Need To Know About Infant Feeding*

IRELAND'S BREASTFEEDING FIGURES

The number of mothers breastfeeding in Ireland increased in the last 20 years or so. Over 50% now initiate breastfeeding. However, that figure falls rapidly. In the U.S.A. over 70% of mothers now initiate breastfeeding. In Norway and Sweden 98-99% of mothers breastfeed. Many continue for a year or more. Especially now that Swedish mothers do not have to place their babies in state crèches until they are 18 months. Most mothers in Sweden do not place their infants in a crèche until they are 18 months.

UNICEF UK'S "BABY-FRIENDLY" ORGANISATION LAUNCHES NEW POLICY/CAMPAIGN

In January 2019 the UNICEF UK "BABY-FRIENDLY" organisation announced a new policy and campaign. The "Baby-Friendly Initiative" is an integral part of UNICEF policy for babies. The programme of the "BABY-FRIENDLY HOSPITAL INITIATIVE" is a central part of it. Another part of it is the "TEN STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL BREASTFEEDING". Only three of our maternity units in Ireland have yet been granted "Baby-Friendly" status by UNICEF. The reason/s for why this is, is/are a very political issue.

AN GNÉ DE STAIDÉAR INSCNE A BHFUIL SAINEOLAS AGAM AIR

Tá gné amháin de staidéar inscne a bhfuil saineolas agam air. Ba mhaith liom an gné tábhachtach seo a chur ar shúile an Tionóil agus a n-aird a dhíriú air. Is é an gné sin an riachtanas suntasach atá ag **máithreacha táil (breastfeeding mothers)** in Éirinn le **heolas** suas chun dáta, cruinn, beacht, agus le **tacaíocht** leis an dúshlán a bhaineann le leanbh a thál i sochaí a bhfuil a chultúr táil (breastfeeding culture) cailte aige, le 70-100 bliain nó mar sin.

Táim ag déanamh staidéir ar an réimse eolais seo le breis agus dachad bliain. Tá cúlra acadúil agam, a thugann na scileanna dom le heolas a mheas go criticiúil, agus a úsáid le daoine eile a chur ar an eolas, faoi thorthaí taighde acadúil, agus na himpleachtaí do shaol laethúil gnáth-dhaoine. Scríobh mé altanna gairide gach seachtain, ar feadh tuairim is deich mbliana, ar ghnéithe den ábhar seo, d’iris áitiúil, a raibh scaipeadh 6,000 teaghlach aige in iarthar Cho. Bhaile Atha Cliath, tuaisceart Cho. Chill Dara, agus oirdheisceart Cho. Na Mí. D’fhreastail mé ar go leor cruinnithe míosúil de chuid La Leche League Leamhcáin, Chill Droichid, agus Chaisleán Cnucha, thar fiche bliain, nó mar sin. Do hoileadh mé mar Cheannaire/“Leader” le La Leche League International (LLL). Bhunaigh mé grúpa LLL Chill Droichid, agus stiúraigh mé é ar feadh 5 bliana. Chuidigh mé go foirmiúil/oifigiúil, le go leor leor máithreacha agus naíonáin, le linn na gcúig mbliain sin, mar “Leader” aitheanta/accredited. Agus roimhis sin, agus ó shin i leith, go neamh-fhoirmeálta. Snámh in aghaidh easa, cuid den am, agus an cultúr a tháinig i réim in Éirinn, le céad bliain, ó chaill muid ár gcultúr náisiúnta táil.

AN DÓIGH A GCUIREANN AN CULTÚR ‘ÚR’ BRÚ AR MHÁITHREACHA

Bíonn an cultúr beathú saorga (artificial feeding) ag brú isteach ar mháithreacha ó gach taobh. D’fhreastail mé ar go leor Comhdhála Tuismitheoireachta bliantúil La Leche League na hÉireann, agus déanaim freastal orthu i gcónaí, le coinneáil suas leis an eolas, an taighde is nuaí, agus an tuiscint is eolaí ar chúrsaí táil. Beidh mé ag freastal ar an Chomhdháil i mbliana, i Loch Garman, ar an 7ú agus an 8ú de Mhárta, 2020. Bíonn leithéidí ollúna ollscoile ar na cainteoirí oilte a thugann cuid de na cainteanna. Is í an Lactation Consultant agus údar roinnt leabhar Nancy Mohrbacher, as na Stáit Aontaithe Keynote Speaker na bliana seo. Beidh cupla céad tuismitheoirí, agu páistí/déagóirí, agus cupla scór banaltra, mná chabhartha, agus proifisiúnaithe sláinte eile i láthair, agus gheobhaidh siadsan CERPS as freastal ar chuid de na léachtanna/seisiúin/presentations. Tá aitheantas oifigiúil ag La Leche League International, ó 1986, ón World Health Association, agus ó UNICEF, mar “the world’s foremost authority on breastfeeding.” Is le fíricí (facts), agus ní le tuairimí, atá mé ag déileáil, sa pháipéar seo.

Agus rudaí ar nós “rún” na nDeartháireacha Chamberlen sa Fhrainc, an *ob* chéad *stetric forceps*. Gan trácht ar dhá ghluaiseacht oll-mhór, a mhill an cultúr nádúrtha, traidisiúnta táil. Is é an cheann an “*medicalisation of childbirth*”, a thug máithreacha go dtí dochtúirí agus oispidéal le clann a

bhreith. An dara hAthrú Mór, sin teacht i réim an bhuidéil, agus an “bhainne” saorga (“formula”) do naíonáin. Thosaigh an t-athrú sin roimh dheireadh an 19ú céad. Foilsíodh alt le gairid san Irish Times faoin ghearán leitheadach a bhí ag dochtúirí faoi seo in oispidéal an Rotunda san 19ú céad Chonaic na dochtúirí an dochar millteanach a bhí an “bainne” saorga (breastmilk substitutes) ag déanamh do mháithreacha agus do pháistí. Ach fiú an t-am sin, ní raibh mórán a bhí siad ábalta a dhéanamh faoi. Fiú céad bliain eile, tá aineolas, mí-eolas, mí-thuiscint, séanadh, agus easpa eolais leitheadach, fiú i measc na speisialtóirí a thugann aire do mháithreacha agus do naíonáin. Is beag nár dhíothaigh an dá rud sin cothú nádúrtha naíonán, agus cumhacht máithreacha agus mná chabhartha ag cuidiú le máithreacha, le saolú agus beathú naíonán. Inniu féin, tá ceann de na rátaí cothú nádúrtha is ísle sa domhan againn in Éirinn. [Tá an Bhreatain fiú níos ísle.] Bhí ár gcultúr cothú linbh cailte againn, agus tá fós, cé go bhfuil daoine iontacha ag obair go crua ag iarraidh an “t-Athrú Creidimh” a thiontú thart, agus ár gcultúr nádúrtha a athréimiú. Tuilleadh faoi sin thíos.

TIONCHAR INSCNE AR AN ATHRÚ MÓR

Tá sé seo tuigte, agus níl, le fada an lá. Níor tuigeadh, go fóill, dáiríre, an t-eolas, an taithí, na scileanna, agus an tuiscint a bhí ag mná a thug cíoch do pháistí, ó ghlúin go glúin, nuair a bhí cultúr nádúrtha an táil faoi fhosc, agus faoi bhláth in Éirinn. Níor tuigeadh, go fóill, an méid a cailleadh, nuair a cailleadh an cultúr sin. Is **ag na mná** a chothaigh a bpáistí a bhí an saibhreas eolais, scileanna, etc. Níor thuig mórán daoine, seachas na dochtúirí sin sa Rotunda, tábhacht an chultúir a bhí á chailleadh. Go dtí go raibh sé ró-mhall é a tharrtháil. Bhí finscéalta agus teoiricí craiceáilte gan dealramh an-fhairsing, leis an Athrú Mór. Tá cuid acu a gcreideann daoine go diongbhála iontu inniu féin! Chuir na finscéalta agus na “hairteagail creidimh” sin na táirngí deireanacha i gcónaí ár gcultúir táil. Agus is maith atá ‘fhios s ag na mná atá ag obair go deonach le cuidiú leis an mionlach beag ban a bhí fós ag iarraidh a naíonáin a chothú go nádúrtha, le trí scór bliain anuas, é. Bhí a mhodh féin, a loighic féin, a nósanna féin, agus go leor rudaí úra eile, ag dul leis an Athrú Mór. Agus ba dúshlán do-sháraithe é ag go leor de na dochtúirí, banaltraí, mná chabhartha, agus teaghlai agus cairde na máithreacha, na deacrachtaí úra seo a shárú. Is tragóid é atá imithe faoi thost, faoi choim, faoi rún, agus faoi “chinsireacht”. Agus is **mar gur mná a choinnigh beo é le idir 3 agus 4 mhilliún bliain é, a tharla sin. Ní raibh sé ar chumas na bhfear an tragóid seo a chosc. Bhí an buidéal níos tréine ná iad! Agus an cultúr úr a d’fhás leis.**

DÁ MBEADH ’FHIOS AG NA MNÁ AGUS NA FIR CHOMH SIMPLÍ IS A BHEADH SÉ NAÍONÁN A BHEATHÚ, DÁ MBEADH AN MUINÍN, AN T-EOLAS, AN TUISCINT, AGUS AN TACAÍOCHT ACU

ACH BHÍ NÁMHAID EILE ACU NÁMHAID DHORCHA, MÍMHORÁLTA, AR CHUMA LEIS BEATHA NO SLÁINTE NAÍONÁN NÁ MÁITHREACHA. BA É AN NÁMHAID SIN, THAR AON RUD EILE, AN MARGADH ÚR A BHÍ ANN ANOIS DO *BREASTMILK SUBSTITUTES* Tá gearr-chuntas ag an údar Gabrielle Palmer, ina leabhar beag “*Why Breastfeeding Matters*”. Tá cuntas níos iomláine aici sa bhunleabhar “*The Politics of Breastfeeding – When Breasts Are Bad for Business.*” Tá an leabhar seo chomh scanrúil, agus chuir sé oiread sin feirge orm é a léamh, nach dtiocfadh liom é a chríochnú ar feadh na mblianta. Scannal i ndiaidh scannail, bréaga i ndiaidh bréaga, náire i ndiaidh náire, samhnas i ndiaidh samhnaís, gur deacair an droch-scéal seo uilig a shlogadh. Tuilleadh faoin dá leabhar seo, agus faoi Gabrielle Palmer, thíos.

“An t-ATHRÚ CREIDIMH”*[LITERALLY “THE CHANGE OF FAITH/RELIGION” OR THE “REFORMATION”

Sin an cur síos a rinne duine éigin ar an Athrú Suntasach ins an dóigh a gcothaítear naíonáin nua-bheirthe, don chéad bhliain nó dhó, a tharla le linn an chéid seo caite, in Iarthar domhan. Tugaim “An t-Athrú Creidimh” air, go magúil. Ach ní haon scéal grinn é. Ach a dhearg-mhalairt. An “tAthrú Creidimh”, sa chéad seo chaite, leanann sé ar aghaidh, gan ach fíor-bheagán athrú, ó sin. Ní

cuimhin liom cá bhfaca mé an ráiteas sin, ná cé dúirt é, ach is cinnte go bhfuil fírinne áirithe ag baint leis. Mar a dúirt mé thuas tá impleachtaí an-mhór agus an-trom-chúiseach ar fad ag baint leis. Tá impleachtaí ann sna réimsí seo a leanas: polaitíocht, cúrsaí sóisialta agus cultúrtha, cúrsaí pearsanta, teaghlaigh, agus thar aon rud eile, cúrsaí sláinte.

*An t-Athrú Creidimh a thugtar, i dtéacsleabhair staire Gaeilge ar an Reformation.

FOCLÓIRÍN/GLOSSARYanseo nó ag an deireadh.

FIGIÚIRÍ TÁIL NA hÉIREANN

Mhéadaigh ar an méid máthar in Éirinn a thug cíoch dá naíonán le fiche bliain nó mar sin. Tá os cionn 50% anois ag toiseacht leis an chíoch. Ach titeann an líon sin go tapaidh. I Meiriceá tugann os cionn 70% de mháithreacha cíoch dá naíonán ag an tús. Sa tSualainn agus san Ioruaidh tugann 98%-99% de mháithreacha cíoch dá naíonán, agus leanann a bhformhór ar aghaidh ar feadh bliana nó níos faide. Go háirithe anois nach gcaithfidh siad a gcuid naíonán a chur faoi chúram an stáit i

grèche go dtí go mbíonn an leanbh 18mí, sa tSualainn. Ní chuireann formhór máithreacha sa tSualainn anois a gchuid naíonán sna crècheanna stáit go dtí go bhfuil siad 18 mí.

POLASAÍ/FEACHTAS ÚR AN EAGRAIS UK “BABY-FRIENDLY” DE CHUID UNICEF i mí Eanáir 2019 d’fhógair “BABY-FRIENDLY” UNICEF sa Bhreatain polasaí agus feachtas úr. Is cuid dlúth de pholasaithe UNICEF agus W.H.O. an “BABY-FRIENDLY INITIATIVE”, atá leanúnach. Tá clár an “BABY-FRIENDLY HOSPITAL INITIATIVE” ina chuid lárnach de. Cuid eile de is ea an “TEN STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL BREASTFEEDING”. Níl ach trí cinn de na naoi nIonad máithreachais in Éirinn a bhfuil aitheantas “BABY-FRIENDLY” bronnta orthu ag UNICEF mar “Baby-Friendly hospital”. Is ceist an-pholaitiúil cén chúis/na cúiseanna atá leis sin.

CÉN FÁTH A BHFUIL GÁ LEIS AN CHLÁR “BABY-FRIENDLY”?

Tá go leor gnéithe difriúla den fhadhb ann. Is féidir é a chur mar seo. Níl a fhios ag formhór na máithreacha cén dóigh le cíoch a thabhairt do leanbh. Níl a fhios ag na proifisiúaithe a thugann aire dóibh cén dóigh le cíoch a thabhairt do leanbh. Go háirithe na fir. Níl cuid riachtanach dá n-oiliúint é. Ní cuid ar bith de é. [Seachas roinnt eolais faoi chomh maith is tá sé don leabh.] Tá aineolas suntasach i gceist. Agus mí-eolas forleathan sean-phréamhaithe. Gach feirmeoir a thug buidéal do uan nó do ghamhain, tá’s aige nó aici go bhfuil difir an-mhór idir sin agus cothú nádúrtha ón mháthair.

DOCHTÚIRÍ, BANALTRAÍ, ETC.

Tá téacsleabhar an-mhaith scríofa ag an Dochtúir Ruth Lawrence:

DÚSHLÁN ATÁ I BHFAD NÍOS MÓ NA AN AINEOLAS IS EA AN MÍ-EOLAS

De bharr go bhfuil an mí-eolas atá ag formhór na ndochtúirí agus na mbanaltraí go fairsing leitheadach ar fud na tíre, go bhfuil sé sean-phréamhaithe anois le suas le 100 bliain, tá sé i bhfad níos deacra an mí-eolas sin a cheartú agus a athrú, ná eolas úr, nua, a thabhairt dóibh. Tá creideamh agus nósanna an chultúir mí-nádúrtha, saorga cothú le buidéal chomh sean-bhunaithe sin inár gcultúr, ó chaill muid ár gcultúr folláin, nádúrtha táil, gur fíor-dheacair é a athrú. Leanann sé as sin, go bhfuil sé fíor-dheacair na nósanna nua sin a dhí-bhunú, a dhí-phréamhú, a athrú, agus a stad ag brú droch-nósanna ar mháithreacha. Ach níl sé dodhéanta. Rinne Vietnam é. B’fhiú don rialtas a sampla a leanúint. Tá sábháil mór airgid don Roinn Sláinte i gceist. Is gá intinn an phobail a athrú, go háirithe intinn ban. Is gá an doigh a smaoiníonn daoine, go háirithe máithreacha, ar chothú naíonán a athrú ar mhórán dóigheanna.

Vietnamdid it. Our government would do well to follow their example. There is a huge saving for the Department of Health in so doing. [See Gabrielle Palmer’s short account in her “The Politics of Breastfeeding”](#).

AN NORM DON DUINE

Formhór mhuintir na hÉireann, níl aon taithí acu ar bheathú nádúrtha leanbh. Níl’s acu sin. Ní thuigeann siad é. Agus ní chreideann siad é. Is dúshlán mór an smaoineamh sin a athrú ó bhonn. Bhí fógra ar an teilifís (RTÉ) na blianta ó shin do ?Telecom? Bhi athair le feiceáil ag éirí i lár na hoíche le buidéal bainne a thabhairt dá bhabai. Bhi raic faoi. Ach an rud a b’iontai liomsa faoi ná seo: nuair a labhair iriseoir leis an aisteoir óg a rinne páirt an athar, bhí iontas air. D’fhiafraigh sé cén doigh eile a mbeathófá babaí? Ní raibh ‘fhios ag an fhear bocht go raibh a leithéid de rud ann agus tál? Ní chuirfeadh sé iontas orm go bhfuil a leithéid in Éirinn go fóill.

You can google the website. One graph/figure [??] on the training (or lack of it) of health professionals and volunteer breastfeeding helpers, such as La Leche League Leaders, as well as breastfeeding professionals such as Lactation Consultants.

IS MAMACH É AN DUINE – NA MNÁ AR A LAGHAD!

Baineann an cine daonna le grúpa na primates de na mamaigh/mammals. Chuir mac mo dheartháir, nuair a bhí se ina leaidin og, agus é ag amharc ar chláir David Attenborough: “Dad, when is your mating season?” Táimid an-aineolach faoi na rudai ata nádúrtha ag mamaigh, ná fiú ag *primates*. Is é an dóigh a gcothaíonn *homo sapiens*, nó ar a laghad *mulier sapiens* (an bhean daonna) a leanbh nua-bheirthe, ná é a chothú ar an chíoch. Nó, ar a laghad, ba ea, ar feadh 3-4 milliún bliain. Ar fud na cruinne inniu féin, is mionlach le mháithreacha daonna an domhain a chothaíonn a naoián le buidéal.

NA CÚISEANNA STAIRIÚLA DTÁINIG AN BUIDÉAL I RÉIM SNA TÍORTHA SAIBHRE

Is leabhar mór fada an scéal seo. Agus ní aon chúis amháin atá leis. Is scéal i bhfad ro-fhada, agus ro-chasta é le hinsint anseo. Ach is féidir a bheith cinnte gur toabh istigh den 70 bliain deireanach nó mar sin a td’athraigh formhór mháithreacha na hEireann ón bhrollach go dtí an buidéal.

AN NDÉANANN SÉ DIFRÍOCHT?

Déanann sé difríocht ollmhor.

CÉN CHÚIS ATÁ LEIS AN AINEOLAS, AN MÍ-EOLAS, AGUS AN EASPA SCILEANNA SEO?

MO THAITHÍ

Ó bhí mé 27 nó 28, thosaigh mé ag foghlaim faoin ábhar seo. Thosaigh mé nuair a thug mo chara mór, Máire Ní Almhain, iasacht leabhar iontach Jean Liedloff “*The Continuum Concept*” ar iasacht dom. Tá sé ráite go poiblí ag agm an Irish Jung Society, ag a n-uachtarán Jassbinder Garnermann, gur cheart do gach duine é a léamh. Bliain nó dhó ina dhiaidh sin, thug sí leabhar iontach eile dom, leabhar Sheila Kippley “*Breastfeeding & Child Spacing – The Ecology of Natural Mothering*”. Bhí an dá leabhar sin i gcló ar feadh 40 bliain, agus tá “*The Continuum Concept*” i gcló i gcónaí.

INSCNE

Tá dearmad bunúsach á dhéanamh le 30-50 bliain i leith inscne. Agus is é an botún sin go n-áirítear cothomaíocht idir a bheith fireann agus a bheith baineann (atá ceart) agus gur ionann a bheith fireann agus a bheith baineann. Gur mar a chéile iad (rud nach bhfuil ceart). Agus gur *cheart* gur mar a chéile a bheith baineann agus a bheith fireann (rud nach bhfuil fíor ná ceart).

CÍOCHA – GNÉ INSCNE AN-TÁBHACHTACH

Sa dán álainn le Seán Ó Ríordáin, file mór Gaeilge na 20ú aoise, ina bhfuil béim ar leith ar an fhocal gile (whiteness, brightness), labhrann sé faoi áilleacht rudai geala a ghealann agus a mhaisíonn an saol, ina measc:

“*gile bainne ag sreang-sileadh as na cíocha*”

ÁLAINN , ÁBHARTHA, ÁDHÚIL AGUS

Tá impleachtaí oll-mhóra leis an míthuiscint ollmhor sin. Is léir go mbíonn broinn ag mná, agus go mbeireann siad páistí. Déanann an míthuiscint seo dearmad faoi caidé tharlaíonn tar éis na breithe. Tá dhá chíoch ar mhná. Dá mhéid a thugann sí cíoch dá clann, agus dá fhaide, is ea is fearr sláinte na máthar agus sláinte an linbh, ar a feadh a saoil uilig.

EOLAS CEILTE, AINEOLAS FORLEATHAN

Níl an t-eolas sin ag formhór mhuintir na hEireann. Ag polaiteoirí, ag lucht polasaí, ag múinteoirí, ag dochtúirí, ag banaltraí, ag neonatologists, ag obstetricians, ná ag formhór na health professionals

a thugann aire do mháithreacha agus naoínáin sna chéad laethanta. Níl an t-eolas, ná an cuidiú agus an tacaíocht is gá, ar fáil ag formhór ár máithreacha, le leas a bhaint as an tuiscint sin.

TEIDEAL: – INSCNE AGUS TÁL – AN GÁ ATÁ AG MNÁ IN ÉIRINN LE CUIDIÚ AGUS TACAÍOCHT SONRACH RIALTAIS

SUIMIÚ(don Tionól Saoránach)

Tar éis gur chaill Éirinn a cultúr táil (breastfeeding culture), le idir 70 agus 100 bliain anuas, tá ceann de na rátaí táil (breastfeeding) is ísle sa domhan againn sa tír seo. Tá costas an-ard ar na droch-rátaí sin. Fulaingimid uilig dá bharr. Ó thaobh airgid, ó thaobh sláinte. Agus ó thaobh sásamh agus pléisiúr coirp agus meanmna do Mhná na hÉireann. Sampla amháin den dóigh ar cheannaigh mná na hÉireann cultúr an bhuidéil go daor, is ea an ráta ard ailse brollaigh a fhulaingíonn mná sa tír seo. Tá géar-ghá ag máithreacha in Éirinn le **cuidiú agus le tacaíocht suntasach rialtais** le cuidiú linn ár gcultúr folláin, nádúrtha táil a athréimiú. Beimid ag iarraidh a bheith cosúil leis na máithreacha san Ioruaidh agus sa tSualainn. Tugann 98-99% de mhná Scandinavia cíoch (breast) dá naoínáin (infants). Sin an t-aidhm fad-théarmach a ba mhaith linn in Éirinn. Mar a dúirt Keith Hansen, Global Vice President, World Bank2015:

“Breastfeeding may be the single most effective investment a country can make in any sector for any reason!”

MÁITHREACHA TÁIL – A NGÁ LE HEOLAS, LE CUIDIÚ, AGUS LE TACAÍOCHT

Is eol dóibh siúd a dhéanann staidéar ar na cúrsaí sin, gur gá go leor cúnaimh a bheith ar fáil ag máithreacha le linn a dtoirchis, agus chomh luath is a bheirtear an leanbh. Is eol dóibh, chomh maith, go bhfuil gá ag formhór ár máithreacha, le cuidiú, le comhairle eolach, le tacaíocht leanúnach, seasmhach, má tá siad le taitneamh agus sult a bhaint as eispéireas agus le gaol sásúil táil a bheith acu. Níl na rudaí seo ar fáil ag formhór ár máithreacha. *Tá táil nádúrtha. Ach níl sé normálta sa sochaí s’againn.* Agus sin le breis is céad bliain i dteaghlaigh áirithe. Tá ár gcultúr táil caillte againn le idir 50 agus 100 bliain. Tá gá le feachtas trom-chúiseach eolais agus tacaíochta, le go mbeidh ár máithreacha ábalta a naíonáin a chothú go nádúrtha, agus sin go sásúil, go pléisiúrtha (mar a shocraigh Dia), agus go héifeachtach...../successfully.

COMHDHÁIL PHÁIRC AN CHRÓCAIGH: “BREASTFEEDING IN A BOTTLE FEEDING SOCIETY”

Mar nach health care professional mé, ní bhfuair mé cuireadh chuig an chomhdháil tábhachtach seo. Bhí comhdháil i bPáirc an Chrócaigh roinnt blianta ó shin agus an téama aige: “*Breastfeeding In a Bottle-Feeding Society*”. Ba do lucht proifisiúnta amháin é, dochtúirí, banaltraí agus mná chabhartha, etc. Is ar éigin a bhí aon tuairisciú ar an chomhdháil, agus is annamh a luaitear é ó shin.

NÍL AN T-AIRGEAD AG NA HEAGRAÍOCHTAÍ DEONACHA, ná na hacmhainní riachtanacha eile. IS FAOIN RIALTAS ATÁ SÉ RIACHTANAISÍ MÁITHREACHA DEN GHNÉ SEO DÁ N-INSCE A CHOMHLÍONADH. TÁ DUALGAS AR AN RIALTAS ATHRÉIMNIÚ IOMLÁN, A DHÉANAMH AR ÁR GCULTÚR NÁDÚRTHA TÁIL. NÍ LEOR A BHEITH AG BRATH AR EAGRAISÍ DEONACHA, CÉ GUR MAITH ANN IAD. NÍL SÉ CÓIR NÁ

CEART GO LEANFADH RIALTAISI ORTHU AG SÉANADH A GCEARTA NÁDÚRTHA AR MHNÁ SA RÉIMSE TÁBHACHTACH SEO DÁ SAOL, AGUS DE SHAOL A NÁIONÁN. IS CAILLTEANAS TROMCHÚISEACH D'ÁR SOCHAÍ UILIG GAN CULTÚR FOLLÁIN BEATHÚ AGUS MUIRNIÚ ÁR NAÍONÁN A ATHRÉIMIÚ AGUS A CHUR AR FÁIL DÚINN UILIG LENA BHUNTÁISTÍ SUNTASACHA, MÓRÁN ACU A MHAIREANN FAD SAOIL AN LINBH AGUS A MHÁTHAR.

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Tá grúpaí éagsúla deonach ag iarraidh an t-eolas, an cuidiú, agus an tacaíocht atá de dhith ar mháithreacha lena náionáin a chothú go nádúrtha, le leath-chéad bliain nó mar sin. Thosaigh an eagraíocht idirnáisiúnta *La Leche League International* (LLL) (breastfeeding information and support) in Éirinn i 1966, deich mbliana tar éis a bhunaithe i Stáit Aontaithe Mheiriceá (1956). Tá céad “Leader” LLL in Éirinn anois, agus 4,000 ar fud an domhain. Sa bhliain 1986 bhronnadh an World Health Organisation agus UNICEF aitheantas oifigiúil ar LLL D’ aithin siad iad mar “the world’s foremost breastfeeding authority”. Níl an t-eolas sin ag formhór na health professionals sa domhan. Fiú na health professionals is mó a bhíonn ag obair le máithreacha ag saolú a gclainne, ná á mbeathú.

BRISEADH CHÓD IDIRNÁISIÚNTA DO MHARGAÍOCHT SUBSTITUTES ?IONADAÍTHE// BHAINNE CÍCHE

An chúis is mó atá leis an aineolas, agus leis an bhearna mhór in oiliúint na health professionals sin, ná margaíocht agressive unethical substitutes do bhainne cíche. Agus sin d’ainneoin dícheall na Náisiún Aontaithe, agus go leor grúpaí deonacha. I measc lucht an eolais, bhí cáil ar an Seanadóir Ted Kennedy as dianscrúdú a chur ar chuid de na corporáidí is mó sa domhan, [REDACTED], os comhair coiste de chuid UNICEF. Is é an chúis ar glaoth ar an chorporáid seo le go bhfiosrófaí a gcuid mí-ghníomhartha, ná go raibh siad ag briseadh an litir agus an spiorad taobh thiar den International Code for the Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes. Ní uair amháin a bhí [REDACTED] “sa chúirt” ach dhá uair

OLLCHUMHACHT NA GCORPORÁIDÍ OLLMHÓRA

Tá cumhacht chomh mór sin ag corporáidí ollmhóra le *aggressive and unethical marketing* a dhéanamh, gur deacair ag rialtaisí coinsiasacha iad a throid. Bíonn buiséid ollmhór ag na comhlachtaí sin, agus thig leo níos mó airgid a chaitheamh ag margaíocht a gcuid táirgí marfacha ná thig le mórán rialtaisí a chaitheamh ar oideachas, oiliúint, etc. a chuirfeadh ina gcoinne.

“THE BABY KILLERS” [REDACTED], [REDACTED], [REDACTED], AGUS NA 823,000 PÁISTÍ FAOI CHÚIG BLIANA A FHAIGHEANN BÁS GACH BLIAIN DE BHARR NÁR TUGADH CÍOCH DÓIBH

An lánúin Jelliffe & Jelliffe, bhí siad ar na chéad taighdeoirí a chonaic chomh marfach is atá margaíocht [REDACTED], [REDACTED] agus comhlachtaí nach iad, ag brú “breastmilk substitutes” ar mhná nach bhfuil fios a mhalairte acu. Agus ar health professionals ditto. Is féidir suimiú gonta a léamh faoin scéal uafásach seo i leabhar Gabrielle Palmer *The Politics of Breastfeeding – When Breasts Are Bad for Business*, agus an leagan ciorraithe de a d’fhoilsigh Pinter & Martin sa UK: “*Why The Politics of Breastfeeding Matters*”. Bhí 2,000,00 páiste ar fud an domhain ag fáil bháis *gach bliain* go dtí tuairim is deich mbliana ó shin, mar nach dtug a máthair cíoch dóibh. Buiochas do Dhia, le mór-iarrachtaí UNICEF agus W.H.O. tá an líon tithe anois go dtí 823,000 páiste faoi chúig bliana gach bliain. Mar a dúirt Sr. Stanislaus (Stan) Kennedy le gairid: “*The Market Has No Conscience.*”

NÍ LEIS AN DOMHAN BOCHT AMHÁIN A BHAINNEANN AN CHEIST SEO

Faigheann os cionn 900 babaí bás gach bliain i Stáit Aontaithe Mheiriceá gach bliain anois, mar nár thug a máthair cíoch dóibh. Páistí nach dtugtar bainne cíche dóibh sa domhan bocht, tá baol 25% go bhfaighidh siad bás go hóg dá bharr. Páistí sa Bhreatain nach dtugtar cíoch dóibh, tá baol 10% go bhfaighidh siad bás go hóg dá bharr. Tá méadú suntasach, chomh maith, ar bhaol báis na máthar, mura dtugann sí cíoch dá leanbh. Mar shampla, tá baol níos mó go bhfaighidh sí bás níos óige ó cheann amháin, nó níos mó, de na cúiseanna seo a leanas: ailse brollaigh, ailse broinne, taom croí, anaemia, osteoporosis, agus go leor leor eile.

NÍ AR MHÁITHREACHA ATÁ AN LOCHT

Tá sé fíor-thábhachtach nach gcuirtear an locht ar mháithreacha. Ní orthu atá an locht. Ní haon mhaith a bheith ag caitheamh ama, dua, agus fuinnimh ag cur locht. Is ag iarraidh réitigh a ba cheart dúinn a bheith. Ag díriú ar cén dóigh ar gá eolas, cuidiú agus tacaíocht a thabhairt do mháithreacha. Tá gach máthair ar a dícheall ag iarraidh an rud is fearr a dhéanamh dá leanbh.

BOYCOTT

Ba cheart do gach saoránach a bhfuil oideachas uirthi/air iad féin a chur ar an eolas faoi seo, agus bheith dílis don bhoycott.

IS DÚSHLÁN MÓR ÁR GCULTÚR TÁIL A ATHRÉIMIÚ

Mar a d'aontaigh an comhdháil sin i bPáirc an Chrócaigh, gan amhras, tá dúshlán mór romhainn. Taa na figiúirí ag bisiú. Tugann os cionn 50% de mháithreacha cíoch dá naíonáin nuabheirthe in Eirinn anois, don chéad uair le 50-70 bliain.

MOLTAÍ W.H.O./UNICEF

Sa bhliain 1992, rinne W.H.O. agus UNICEF láinseáil ar thionscnamh mór úr. Is é an t-ainm a bhí ar an project: *The Joint Breastfeeding Initiative*.

ACMHAINNÍ TÁBHACHTACHA SEACHAS LEABHAIR

COISTE NÁISTIÚNTA TÁIL NA HÉIREANN/NATIONAL BREASTFEEDING COMMITTEE (IRELAND)

Is leis an Roinn Sláinte a bhaineann an Coiste tábhachtach seo. Go háirithe Mary Bird. Tá seirbhís leitheadach, fada, tugtha ag Mary do mháithreacha, go pearsanta, agus go náisiúnta, le dhá scór bliain, ó thaobh táil de. Oibrí sóisialta, sular rugadh a clann. Níorbh fhada di ina grúpa áitiúil de La Leche League (LLL), nuair a fuair sí oiliúint mar “Leader” le LLL. Níorbh fhada arís gur ceapadh í ina Area Leader do Leaders LLL san Eoraip uilig. Ceapadh í ar an Choiste Náisiúnta Táil, agus ar choiste táil UNICEF in Éirinn. Bean chumasach, eolach, ábalta, a bhfuil na heagrais sin uilig go mór faoi chomaoin aici.

BANC BAINNE CÍCHE NA hÉIREANN. IRELAND’S ONLY BREAST MILK BANK SAVES THE LIVES & HEALTH OF VERY SICK BABIES – AN ALL-ISLAND SERVICE

Tá an Breastmilk Bank i gCo. Fhear Manach. Na mná a bhronnann bainne cíche spártha ar an Bhanc seo, agus na marcaigh motorbike a thugann é go dtí babainí in otharlanna ar fud na tíre, is laoch gach marcach acu, a shábháileann beatha agus sláinte naíonán nach mairfeadh dé cheal.

FOIRNE IONAD MÁITHREACHAIS A CHUIREANN I BHFEIDHM AN CLÁR “THE BABY-FRIENDLY HOSPITAL” Ó W.H.O./UNICEF

Sampla an-mhaith de na daoine iontacha seo an fhoireann máithreachais in Oispidéal Ollscoile Luimní. Tar éis an clár Baby-Friendly a chur i bhfeidhm san oispidéal, chuir siad deireadh leis an

ghalar marfach *necrotising enteritis (nec)*, a mharaíonn naíonáin nuabheirthe. Agus rinne siad an éacht sin taobh istigh de chupla bliain. Chuala muid an nuacht iontach sin ag Comhdháil La Leche League na hÉireann.

WORLD BREASTFEEDING TRENDS World Breastfeeding Trends Initiative (WTi)

NÍ GÁ É SEO A AISTRIÚ

AISTRIÚCHÁN/TRANSLATION OF THIS DOCUMENT

On request I would be happy to supply a translation of this document, as I have seen too much gobbledeegook in Google translations, and even in official translations from Irish, which are often unintelligible. The above requires very accurate and knowledgeable translation, to be meaningful. I would need to be free for a few days to carry out that task, and consequently to be given adequate notice. The subject is too important for inadequate translation.

LEABHARLIOSTA

Ní thugaim aseo ach an t-údar agus an teideal do gach leabhar. Thig liom bliain foilsithe, agus ainm na bhfoilsitheoirí a chur ar aghaidh chugaibh, ach é a iarraidh.

NÍ GÁ É SEO A AISTRIÚ FOCLÓIRÍN/GLOSSARY

“An t-Athrú Creidimh”/“The Change of Religion”: By this, I mean the seismic change from natural breastfeeding to artificial feeding in Ireland, as in all the Western English-speaking countries. I use this old historical term as it vividly conjures up, in this context, what an enormous change it was, and the enormous consequences for mothers’ and babies’ health, for our country’s finances, for our “Illhealth” system.

Cíoch – breast (the HSE).

Bainne cíche – breast milk

Cáin-íocóirí - tax-payers

Máthair táil – a breastfeeding/nursing mother

Naíonán – infant/baby

Leanbh/páiste - child

Tál – breastfeeding. The word “cothú” is also used, just as “feeding” is, with the specific meaning of breastfeeding. And even the simple phrase “ag tabhairt bainne do ...”

Ag tál bainne – providing milk from the breast; feeding, breastfeeding, suckling (American English: nursing).

Tionól na Saoránach – The Citizens’ Assembly.

DEIREADH

AG DÉANAMH SPIOR SPEAR DE MHUINÍN

MÁITHREACHA - UNDERMINING OF BF CONFIDENCE

Is é an áit a bhfuil na deacrachtaí ná sa chultúr “úr” (le 70-100 bliain) beathú saorga leanbh, san eolas, san mhí-eolas, sna gnéithe go léir den chultúr sin ar bréaga iad, san dúshlán mór atá ann do mháthair úr, agus athair úr, aghaidh a thabhairt ar an chultúr sin, leo féin féin, gan eolas ceart, gan tuiscint ceart, gan cuidiú ná tacaíocht cheart, agus gan féinmhuinín láidir, agus go leor cáilíochtaí eile. Déanann na gnéithe seo uilig *undermining* ar an chumas nádúrtha, ar an dúil nádúrtha, agus ar an cheart nádúrtha ata ag tuismitheoiri úra an rogha nádúrtha a dhéanamh, as sult agus sásamh a bhaint as an chinneadh sin, agus as eispéireas sásúil, pléisiúrtha a bheith acu agus iad ina bhun. Ní thuigeann a muintir, a gcuiditheoirí – idir phroifisiúnaithe, gaolta, cairde, comharsana, go bhfuil a n-easpa tuisceana, a guid easpa eolais, etc. Etc., ag baint óna a muinín, a gcumas, a sástacht, a ndúil, a sásamh, a n-éifeacht, agus a “success”. Tá léargus (an-bheag) de chomh mór is a chuireann cailliúint ár gcultúr táil isteach ar mháithreacha agus ar aithreacha úra, sa chéad mhír eile.

L.4

ath-HRÉIMIÚ FADA FADÁLACH

Tá an t-eolas cruinn, ceart, beacht, ag teacht chun cinn, de réir a chéile. Tá grúpaí beaga againn atá ar an eolas le dachad nó le seachtó bliain. Tá sé pianmhar oiread sin máithreacha, a bhí ag iarraidh a naíonáin a chothú iad féin, ach nár éirigh leo. Rinne muid ár ndícheall, go deonach, cuidiú le máithreacha thart orainn, agus d’éirigh linn i gcásanna áirithe, **d’ainneoin an chórais**, agus d’ainneoin an “Athrú Creidimh”. Is cúis mhór díomá agus bróin dúinn nár éirigh linn leis na máithreacha uilig ar chuidigh muid leo. Bhí an oiread sin aineolais, mí-eolais, nósanna agus creidimh contráilte in uachtar i ré an Athrú Creidimh, gur dheacair fiú le buíon suntasach, oilte, íoctha, an t-Athrú Creidimh a thiontú thart, gan trácht ar ghrúpa beag scaipthe de chuiditheoiri deonacha. Na máithreacha bochta, ní raibh an t-eolas, an tuiscint, an muinín, an scil comhairleoireachta, ar fáil dóibh. Ní ní raibh a fhios acu go raibh sé ar fáil dóibh – ach é a iarraidh ar na daoine cearta. Thar aon rud eile – agus is é an gné is tábhachtaí agus is mó tionchair é – ní raibh cultúr táil thart ar na máithreacha. Ní amháin sin, ach bhí brú i gcoinne cultúr táil thart orthu, sa bhaile, lena muintir agus a gcomharsana féin, sa chóras “sláinte”, sa phobal i gcoitinne, agus i meoin, i dtaithí, agus in eolas na muintire uilig. Ba chonstaic do-sháraithe é sin fiú do mháithreacha a bhí ag iarraidh a naíonáin a thál iad féin. [Féach Beéarly don ghiota ar iarraidh.]

CÚISEANNA EILE

Ní hé amháin nach bhfuil an t-eolas agus na scileanna cuí ach ag buíon beag bídeach, a thugann cuidiú do mhná ar bhonn deonach. Ach níl an tuiscint sin, ná an t-eolas sin ach ag fíor-bheagán sa tír. Agus ní thuigeann na daoine a mbeadh sé nádúrtha ag máithreacha cuidiú a iarraidh orthu, nach bhfuil siad eolach ná sciliúil sa dóigh atá ag teastáil ó mháithreacha. Is cuma cé mhéid eolais atá ag dochtúir nó ag banaltra faoi na buontáistí a bhaineann le tál, ní haon mhaith an t-eolas sin do bhean atá ag iarraidh eolais faoi **cén dóigh** lena leanbh a thál go sásúil, agus go sásta. Tá mí-eolas fairsing, agus aineolas, agus easpa eolais, faoi **cén dóigh** a n-oibríonn tál. Ná ní thuigeann siad nach ionann rud a bheith nádúrtha, agus é a bheith *intuitive* ná a bheith furasta nó simplí. Cuireann a lán máithreacha bochta an milleán orthu féin nuair nach n-éiríonn leo a naíonán a chothú go nádúrtha, agus go sásúil. Na máithreacha nár roghnaigh cothú nádúrtha ar an chéad dul síos, is minic iad

cráite le brón, le díomá, le féin-mhilleán, féin-lochtú, agus le “ciontacht”. Mura bhfuil an t-eolas agus an tuiscint ag máithreacha faoi cén dóigh le dul i mbun an táil, ná a fhios acu cén áit le cuidiú a lorg, is ar éigean atá aon locht, milleán, ná ciontacht ag baint leo. Easpa oideachais, easpa taithí, easpa tuisceana, sin na rudaí a dhéanann spior spear den tál d’oiread sin máithreacha. Caithfear na rudaí sin a chur ar fáil do mháithreacha. Is gá tacaíocht láidir ón Stát. Ní amháin go bhfuil dualgas ar an Stát máithreacha a chur ar an eolas, agus an tacaíocht atá riachtanach a chur ar fáil dóibh, agus dá lucht cúnamh agus tacaíochta. Tá dualgas tromchúiseach eile ar an Stát i leith margaíocht mhí-mhorálta, mar atá ar siúl le cóngarach do chéad bliain (!). Sea, céad bliain.

L.5.

FEARG, FEARG, FEARG

Bí ag caint ar pholaitíocht salach, bréagach, gránna, marfach! Is rí-dheacair a thabhairt le fios, go háirithe i bpáipéar gairid mar seo, faoin slad, faoin sléacht, faoin droch-shláinte, agus faoi na beathaí go léir – na milliúin acu – ar fud na cruinne, atá millte, nó múchta, ag an mhargaíocht marfach seo. D’ainneoin Cód Idirnáisiúnta “*The International Code Of Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes*” a bheith dlíthiúil leis na deiceanna blianta, tá sé á shíor-bhriseadh ag oll-chomhlachtaí ar nós ██████████, ██████████, agus tuilleadh nach iad. Tá cuntas ar an scannal uafásach seo, atá ag leanstan anois ó na 1930í ag Gabrielle Palmer ina dhá leabhar thuasluaite. Tá tuairiscí ar fáil ó UNICEF agus an World Health Organisation a dhamnaíonn ollchomhlachtaí, go speisialta ██████████, agus rialtaisí áirithe faoina ndroch-iompar, a neamairt, a ndroch-obair ag cur daoine ar mhí-eolas agus ar mhi-threoir le beagnach 100 bliain anois. Ar feadh roinnt mhaith blianta bhí an figiúr scanrúil de dhá mhiliún naíonán a bhí ag fáil bháis, go dtí suas le 10 mbliana nó mar sin, de bharr “*the aggressive and unethical marketing of breastmilk substitutes*”. Agus sin do dhaoine fíorbhocht, sna tíortha is boichte ar domhan, áit nach acmhainn airgid don phobal páistí a chothú go saorga. Gan trácht ar é a bheith sábháilte, ar dhóigh ar bith. Agus ar ndóigh, ní insíonn na hollchomhlachtaí dá gcuid custaiméirí bochta faoin dochar uafásach a dhéanann sé dóibh féin agus dá naíonán an stuif seo a thabhairt dóibh. Is cúis feirge mhillteanach an scannal uilig. Tá briseadh an Chóid ag tarlú i dtíortha saibhre cosúil le hÉirinn agus Stáit Aontaithe Mheiriceá fosta. Babies are dying because of it. Mother Agus naíonáin ag fáil bháis dá bharr. Agus droch-shláinte ag a máithreacha dá bharr. Agus droch-shláinte ag na naíonáin nach maraíonn sé, lena saol.

L.6

CÁ BHFUIL SÉ SEO LE DUL????????????????]

NÍ THUIGEANN ACH FÍOR-BHEAGÁN DAOINE (MNÁ IS MÓ) CAD IAD NA RIACHTANAISÍ SEO ATÁ AG MÁITHREACHA

Na mná a thugann an cuidiú seo do mháithreacha, is go deonach a dhéanann siad é. Tá teora leis an méid ama a thig leo a chaitheamh le máithreacha. Ar na máithreacha a chuidíonn mar seo le máithreacha eile, tá Leaders na heagraíochta deonach La Leche League, comhairleoirí “*Chuidiú*”, the Irish National Childbirth Trust, agus Comhairleoirí Táil cáiliúthe (qualified Lactation Consultants). An cúrsa a fhaobhaíonn an cháilíocht a dtugann an International lactation Consultan (IBCLC) is cúrsa ceithre bliana é, agus is ionann le B.Sc. (onóracha) é. Féach thíos.the Irish National Breastfeeding Trust, and registered Lactation Consultants.

NÍ THUIGEANN ACH FÍOR-BHEAGÁN DEN LUCHT PROIFISIÚNTA AR CHEART DÓIBH BHEITH ÁBALTA CUIDIÚ, NACH BHFUIL AN T-EOLAS NÁ NA SCILEANNA ACU

Ní tinneas an tál, ach rud fíor-fholláin, sláintiúil, luachmhar don tír uilig. Tá oiliúint áirithe ar dhochtúirí agus lucht leighis agus banaltrachta eile faoi na buntáistí a bhaineann le tál (cuid an-bheag díobh). Ach níl aon oiliúint ná cáilíochtaí, ná tuiscint ag a bhformhór faoi cén dóigh le cuidiú le máithreacha le leanbh a chothú go nádúrtha ar a mbrollach. Féach BTi thíos.

NÍ AMHÁIN NACH BHFUIL NA PROIFISIÚNAITHE EOLACH NÁ SCILIÚIL, AGUS NACH DTUIGEANN SIAD NACH BHFUIL, ACH TÁ GO LEOR TUAIRIMÍ MÍ-CHEART ACU, AR MIOTAIS CUID ACU, A CHUIREANN MÁITHREACHA AR MHÍ-THREOIR
Tá cuntaisí an-mhaith air seo sna leabhair *The Politics of Breastfeeding, Why Breastfeeding M*

MARGAÍOCHT MHÍ-EITICIÚIL BREASTMILK SUBSTITUTES

Thosaigh an comhlacht ollmhór ██████████ ag margáiocht a gcuid “*breastmilk substitutes*” chomh luath leis na 1930í. Ní hiontas go bhfuil máithreacha curtha ar strae! Ní margáiocht ionraice, macánta, eiticiúil a bhí ar siúl ag ██████████ ó na 1930í i leith. Tá gnéithe den scéal scannalach, gránna, luaite ag Gabrielle Palmer ina leabhar “*The Politics of Breastfeeding – When Breasts Are Bad For Business*”. Agus sa leagan gairid den leabhar, an leabhrín “*Why Breastfeeding Matters*”, a d’fhoilsingh Pinter & Martin i Londain i 2016.

atters, The Womanly Art of Breastfeeding, The Attachment Parenting Book, Breastfeeding & Child Spacing – The Ecology of Natural Mothering, Breastfeeding Matters - Breastfeeding – A Guide for the Medical Profession agus tuilleadh. Tá eolas sna leabhair sin faoi cén dóigh a n-oibríonn an tál, cén mí-eolas atá coitianta, cén dóigh a dtig le máthair tál go sásúil, go héifeachtach, agus go pléisiúrtha (breastfeeding is meant to be pleasurable). Rinne an eagraíocht *World Breastfeeding Trends* (féach Wti) [SEICEÁIL] staidéar ar an deacracht móra seo. Tá graf sa tuairisc a chuir siad ar fáil, a thaispeáineann gur ag na cuiditheoirí deonacha (cosúil le LLL Leaders agus comhairleoirí táil le “*Cuidiú*” (Irish National Childbirth Trust) agus a leithéid eile, atá an t-eolas agus na scileanna is fearr sa réimse seo. Is díol iontais agus díol díomá agus feirge é gur ag dochtúirí atá an t-eolas agus na scileanna is lú, le cuidiú le máithreacha. Ní hiontas go bhfuil na leibhéil táil in Éirinn agus sa Bhreatain (áit a dtearnadh an staidéar Wti) ar na cinn is ísle sa domhan. Tá sé i bhfad, i bhfad níos deacra eolas úr-nua a chur in áit cultúr bunaithe ná an seanrud a leanstan, a bhuanú, agus a fhágáil i réim.

L.6

FIGIÚIRÍ TÁIL

AN GNÉ DE STAIDÉAR INSCNE A BHFUIL SAINEOLAS AGAM AIR

Tá gné amháin de staidéar inscne a bhfuil saineolas agam air. Ba mhaith liom an gné tábhachtach seo a chur ar shúile an Tionóil agus a n-aird a dhíriú air. Is é an gné sin an riachtanas suntasach atá ag **máithreacha táil (breastfeeding mothers)** in Éirinn le **heolas** suas chun dáta, cruinn, beacht, agus le **tacaíocht** leis an dúshlán a bhaineann le leanbh a thál i sochaí a bhfuil a chultúr táil (breastfeeding culture) cailte aige, le 70-100 bliain nó mar sin.

Táim ag déanamh staidéir ar an réimse eolais seo le breis agus dachad bliain. Tá cúlra acadúil agam, a thugann na scileanna dom le heolas a mheas go criticiúil, agus a úsáid le daoine eile a chur ar an eolas, faoi thorthaí taighde acadúil, agus na himpleachtaí do shaol laethúil gnáth-dhaoine. Scríobh mé altanna gairide gach seachtain, ar feadh tuairim is deich mbliana, ar ghnéithe den ábhar seo, d’iris áitiúil, a raibh scaipeadh 6,000 teaghlach aige in iarthar Cho. Bhaile Atha Cliath, tuaisceart Cho. Chill Dara, agus oirdheisceart Cho. Na Mí. D’fhreastail mé ar go leor cruinnithe míosúil de chuid La Leche League Leamhcáin, Chill Droichid, agus Chaisleán Cnucha, thar fiche bliain, nó mar sin. Do hoileadh mé mar Cheannaire/“Leader” le La Leche League International (LLL). Bhunaigh mé grúpa LLL Chill Droichid, agus stiúraigh mé é ar feadh 5 bliana. Chuidigh mé go foirmiúil/oifigiúil, le go leor leor máithreacha agus naíonáin, le linn na gcúig mbliain sin, mar “Leader” aitheanta/accredited. Agus roimhis sin, agus ó shin i leith, go neamh-fhoirmeálta. Snámh in aghaidh easa, cuid den am, agus an cultúr a tháinig i réim in Éirinn,

le céad bliain, ó chaill muid ár gcultúr náisiúnta táil AN DÓIGH A GCUIREANN AN CULTÚR ‘ÚR’ BRÚ AR MHÁITHREACHA

Bíonn an cultúr beathú saorga (artificial feeding) ag brú isteach ar mháithreacha ó gach taobh. D’fhreastail mé ar go leor Comhdhála Tuismitheoireachta bliantúil La Leche League na hÉireann, agus déanaim freastal orthu i gcónaí, le coinneáil suas leis an eolas, an taighde is nuaí, agus an tuiscint is eolaí ar chúrsaí táil. Beidh mé ag freastal ar an Chomhdháil i mbliana, i Loch Garman, ar an 7ú agus an 8ú de Mhárta, 2020. Bíonn leithéidí ollúna ollscoile ar na cainteoirí oilte a thugann cuid de na cainteanna. Is í an Lactation Consultant agus údar roinnt leabhar Nancy Mohrbacher, as na Stáit Aontaithe Keynote Speaker na bliana seo. Beidh cupla céad tuismitheoirí, agu páistí/déagóirí, agus cupla scór banaltra, mná chabhartha, agus proifisiúnaithe sláinte eile i láthair, agus gheobhaidh siadsan CERPS as freastal ar chuid de na léachtanna/seisiúin/presentations. Tá aitheantas oifigiúil ag La Leche League International, ó 1986, ón World Health Association, agus ó UNICEF, mar “the world’s foremost authority on breastfeeding.” Is le fíricí (facts), agus ní le tuairimí, atá mé ag déileáil, sa pháipéar seo.

Agus rudaí ar nós “rún” na nDeartháireacha Chamberlen sa Fhrainc, an *ob* chéad *stetric forceps*. Gan trácht ar dhá ghluaiseacht oll-mhór, a mhill an cultúr nádúrtha, traidisiúnta táil. Is é an cheann an “*medicalisation of childbirth*”, a thug máithreacha go dtí dochtúirí agus oispidéil le clann a bhreith. An dara hAthrú Mór, sin teacht i réim an bhuidéil, agus an “bhainne” saorga (“formula”) do naíonáin. Thosaigh an t-athrú sin roimh dheireadh an 19ú céad. Foilsíodh alt le gairid san Irish Times faoin ghearán leitheadach a bhí ag dochtúirí faoi seo in oispidéal an Rotunda san 19ú céad Chonaic na dochtúirí an dochar millteanach a bhí an “bainne” saorga (breastmilk substitutes) ag déanamh do mháithreacha agus do pháistí. Ach fiú an t-am sin, ní raibh mórán a bhí siad ábalta a dhéanamh faoi. Fiú céad bliain eile, tá aineolas, mí-eolas, mí-thuiscint, séanadh, agus easpa eolais leitheadach, fiú i measc na speisialtóirí a thugann aire do mháithreacha agus do naíonáin. Is beag nár dhíothaigh an dá rud sin cothú nádúrtha naíonán, agus cumhacht máithreacha agus mná chabhartha ag cuidiú le máithreacha, le saolú agus beathú naíonán. Inniu féin, tá ceann de na rátaí cothú nádúrtha is ísle sa domhan againn in Éirinn. [Tá an Bhreatain fiú níos ísle.] Bhí ár gcultúr cothú linbh cailte againn, agus tá fós, cé go bhfuil daoine iontacha ag obair go crua ag iarraidh an “t-Athrú Creidimh” a thiontú thart, agus ár gcultúr nádúrtha a athréimíú. Tuilleadh faoi sin thíos.

TIONCHAR INSCNE AR AN ATHRÚ MÓR

Tá sé seo tuigte, agus níl, le fada an lá. Níor tuigeadh, go fóill, dáiríre, an t-eolas, an taithí, na scileanna, agus an tuiscint a bhí ag mná a thug cíoch do pháistí, ó ghlúin go glúin, nuair a bhí cultúr nádúrtha an táil faoi fhosc, agus faoi bhláth in Éirinn. Níor tuigeadh, go fóill, an méid a cailleadh, nuair a cailleadh an cultúr sin. Is **ag na mná** a chothaigh a bpáistí a bhí an saibhreas eolais, scileanna, etc. Níor thuig mórán daoine, seachas na dochtúirí sin sa Rotunda, tábhacht an chultúir a bhí á chailleadh. Go dtí go raibh sé ró-mhall é a tharrtháil. Bhí finscéalta agus teoiricí craiceáilte gan dealramh an-fhairsing, leis an Athrú Mór. Tá cuid acu a gcreideann daoine go diongbhála iontu inniu féin! Chuir na finscéalta agus na “hairteagail creidimh” sin na táirngí deireanacha i gcónaí ár gcultúir táil. Agus is maith atá ‘fhios s ag na mná atá ag obair go deonach le cuidiú leis an mionlach beag ban a bhí fós ag iarraidh a naíonáin a chothú go nádúrtha, le trí scór bliain anuas, é. Bhí a mhodh féin, a loighic féin, a nósanna féin, agus go leor rudaí úra eile, ag dul leis an Athrú Mór. Agus ba dúshlán do-sháraithe é ag go leor de na dochtúirí, banaltraí, mná chabhartha, agus teaghlaigh agus cairde na máithreacha, na deacrachtaí úra seo a shárú. Is tragóid é atá imithe faoi thost, faoi choim, faoi rún, agus faoi “chinsireacht”. Agus is **mar gur mná a choinnigh beo é le idir 3 agus 4 mhilliún bliain é, a tharla sin. Ní raibh sé ar chumas na bhfear an tragóid seo a chosc. Bhí an buidéal níos tréine ná iad! Agus an cultúr úr a d’fhás leis.**

DÁ MBEADH 'FHIOS AG NA MNÁ AGUS NA FIR CHOMH SIMPLÍ IS A BHEADH SÉ NAÍONÁN A BHEATHÚ, DÁ MBEADH AN MUINÍN, AN T-EOLAS, AN TUISCINT, AGUS AN TACAÍOCHT ACU

ACH BHÍ NÁMHAID EILE ACU NÁMHAID DHORCHA, MÍMHORÁLTA, AR CHUMA LEIS BEATHA NO SLÁINTE NAÍONÁN NÁ MÁITHREACHA. BA É AN NÁMHAID SIN, THAR AON RUD EILE, AN MARGADH ÚR A BHÍ ANN ANOIS DO *BREASTMILK SUBSTITUTES* Tá gearr-chuntas ag an údar Gabrielle Palmer, ina leabhar beag “*Why Breastfeeding Matters*”. Tá cuntas níos iomláine aici sa bhunleabhar “*The Politics of Breastfeeding – When Breasts Are Bad for Business.*” Tá an leabhar seo chomh scanrúil, agus chuir sé oiread sin feirge orm é a léamh, nach dtiocfadh liom é a chríochnú ar feadh na mblianta. Scannal i ndiaidh scannail, bréaga i ndiaidh bréaga, náire i ndiaidh náire, samhnas i ndiaidh samhnaís, gur deacair an droch-scéal seo uilig a shlogadh. Tuilleadh faoin dá leabhar seo, agus faoi Gabrielle Palmer, thíos.

“An t-ATHRÚ CREIDIMH”*[LITERALLY “THE CHANGE OF FAITH/RELIGION” OR THE “REFORMATION”]

Sin an cur síos a rinne duine éigin ar an Athrú Suntasach ins an dóigh a gcothaítear naíonáin nua-bheirthe, don chéad bhliain nó dhó, a tharla le linn an chéid seo caite, in Iarthar domhan. Tugaim “An t-Athrú Creidimh” air, go magúil. Ach ní haon scéal grinn é. Ach a dhearg-mhalairt. An “tAthrú Creidimh”, sa chéad seo chaite, leanann sé ar aghaidh, gan ach fíor-bheagán athrú, ó sin. Ní cuimhin liom cá bhfaca mé an ráiteas sin, ná cé dúirt é, ach is cinnte go bhfuil fírinne áirithe ag baint leis. Mar a dúirt mé thuas tá impleachtaí an-mhór agus an-trom-chúiseach ar fad ag baint leis. Tá impleachtaí ann sna réimsí seo a leanas: polaitíocht, cúrsaí sóisialta agus cultúrtha, cúrsaí pearsanta, teaghlaigh, agus thar aon rud eile, cúrsaí sláinte.

*An t-Athrú Creidimh a thugtar, i dtéacsleabhair staire Gaeilge ar an Reformation.

AN DÓIGH A GCUIREANN AN CULTÚR ‘ÚR’ BRÚ AR MHÁITHREACHA

Bíonn an cultúr beathú saorga (artificial feeding) ag brú isteach ar mháithreacha ó gach taobh. D’fhreastail mé ar go leor Comhdhála Tuismitheoireachta bliantúil La Leche League na hÉireann, agus déanaim freastal orthu i gcónaí, le coinneáil suas leis an eolas, an taighde is nuaí, agus an tuiscint is eolaí ar chúrsaí táil. Beidh mé ag freastal ar an Chomhdháil i mbliana, i Loch Garman, ar

an 7ú agus an 8ú de Mhárta, 2020. Bíonn leithéidí ollúna ollscoile ar na cainteoirí oilte a thugann cuid de na cainteanna. Is í an Lactation Consultant agus údar roinnt leabhar Nancy Mohrbacher, as na Stáit Aontaithe Keynote Speaker na bliana seo. Beidh cupla céad tuismitheoirí, agu páistí/déagóirí, agus cupla scór banaltra, mná chabhartha, agus proifisiúnaithe sláinte eile i láthair, agus gheobhaidh siadsan CERPS as freastal ar chuid de na léachtanna/seisiúin/presentations. Tá aitheantas oifigiúil ag La Leche League International, ó 1986, ón World Health Association, agus ó UNICEF, mar “the world’s foremost authority on breastfeeding.” Is le fíricí (facts), agus ní le tuairimí, atá mé ag déileáil, sa pháipéar seo.

Agus rudaí ar nós “rún” na nDeartháireacha Chamberlen sa Fhrainc, an *ob* chéad *stetric forceps*. Gan trácht ar dhá ghluaiseacht oll-mhór, a mhill an cultúr nádúrtha, traidisiúnta táil. Is é an cheann an “*medicalisation of childbirth*”, a thug máithreacha go dtí dochtúirí agus oispidéil le clann a bhreith. An dara hAthrú Mór, sin teacht i réim an bhuidéil, agus an “bhainne” saorga (“formula”) do naíonáin. Thosaigh an t-athrú sin roimh dheireadh an 19ú céad. Foilsíodh alt le gairid san Irish Times faoin ghearán leitheadach a bhí ag dochtúirí faoi seo in oispidéal an Rotunda san 19ú céad Chonaic na dochtúirí an dochar millteanach a bhí an “bainne” saorga (breastmilk substitutes) ag déanamh do mháithreacha agus do pháistí. Ach fiú an t-am sin, ní raibh mórán a bhí siad ábalta a dhéanamh faoi. Fiú céad bliain eile, tá aineolas, mí-eolas, mí-thuiscint, séanadh, agus easpa eolais leitheadach, fiú i measc na speisialtóirí a thugann aire do mháithreacha agus do naíonáin. Is beag nár dhíothaigh an dá rud sin cothú nádúrtha naíonán, agus cumhacht máithreacha agus mná chabhartha ag cuidiú le máithreacha, le saolú agus beathú naíonán. Inniu féin, tá ceann de na rátaí cothú nádúrtha is ísle sa domhan againn in Éirinn. [Tá an Bhreatain fiú níos ísle.] Bhí ár gcultúr cothú linbh cailte againn, agus tá fós, cé go bhfuil daoine iontacha ag obair go crua ag iarraidh an “t-Athrú Creidimh” a thiontú thart, agus ár gcultúr nádúrtha a athréimiú. Tuilleadh faoi sin thíos.

TIONCHAR INSCNE AR AN ATHRÚ MÓR

Tá sé seo tuigthe, agus níl, le fada an lá. Níor tuigeadh, go fóill, dáiríre, an t-eolas, an taithí, na scileanna, agus an tuiscint a bhí ag mná a thug cíoch do pháistí, ó ghlúin go glúin, nuair a bhí cultúr nádúrtha an táil faoi fhosc, agus faoi bhláth in Éirinn. Níor tuigeadh, go fóill, an méid a cailleadh, nuair a cailleadh an cultúr sin. Is **ag na mná** a chothaigh a bpáistí a bhí an saibhreas eolais, scileanna, etc. Níor thuig mórán daoine, seachas na dochtúirí sin sa Rotunda, tábhacht an chultúir a bhí á chailleadh. Go dtí go raibh sé ró-mhall é a tharrtháil. Bhí finscéalta agus teoiricí craiceáilte gan dealramh an-fhairsing, leis an Athrú Mór. Tá cuid acu a gcreideann daoine go diongbhálta iontu inniu féin! Chuir na finscéalta agus na “hairteagail creidimh” sin na táirngí deireanacha i gcónair ár gcultúir táil. Agus is maith atá ‘fhios s ag na mná atá ag obair go deonach le cuidiú leis an mionlach beag ban a bhí fós ag iarraidh a naíonáin a chothú go nádúrtha, le trí scór bliain anuas, é. Bhí a mhodh féin, a loighic féin, a nósanna féin, agus go leor rudaí úra eile, ag dul leis an Athrú Mór. Agus ba dúshlán do-sháraithe é ag go leor de na dochtúirí, banaltraí, mná chabhartha, agus teaghlaigh agus cairde na máithreacha, na deacrachtaí úra seo a shárú. Is tragóid é atá imithe faoi thost, faoi choim, faoi rún, agus faoi “chinsireacht”. Agus is **mar gur mná a choinnigh beo é le idir 3 agus 4 mhilliún bliain é, a tharla sin. Ní raibh sé ar chumas na bhfear an tragóid seo a chosc. Bhí an buidéal níos tréine ná iad! Agus an cultúr úr a d’fhás leis.**

DÁ MBEADH ’FHIOS AG NA MNÁ AGUS NA FIR CHOMH SIMPLÍ IS A BHEADH SÉ NAÍONÁN A BHEATHÚ, DÁ MBEADH AN MUINÍN, AN T-EOLAS, AN TUISCINT, AGUS AN TACAÍOCHT ACU

ACH BHÍ NÁMHAID EILE ACU NÁMHAID DHORCHA, MÍMHORÁLTA, AR CHUMA LEIS BEATHA NO SLÁINTE NAÍONÁN NÁ MÁITHREACHA. BA É AN NÁMHAID SIN, THAR AON RUD EILE, AN MARGADH ÚR A BHÍ ANN ANOIS DO *BREASTMILK SUBSTITUTES*

Tá gearr-chuntas ag an údar Gabrielle Palmer, ina leabhar beag “*Why Breastfeeding Matters*”. Tá cuntas níos iomláine aici sa bhunleabhar “*The Politics of Breastfeeding – When Breasts Are Bad for Business*.” Tá an leabhar seo chomh scanrúil, agus chuir sé oiread sin feirge orm é a léamh, nach dtiocfadh liom é a chríochnú ar feadh na mblianta. Scannal i ndiaidh scannail, bréaga i ndiaidh bréaga, náire i ndiaidh náire, samhnas i ndiaidh samhnaís, gur deacair an droch-scéal seo uilig a shlogadh. Tuilleadh faoin dá leabhar seo, agus faoi Gabrielle Palmer, thíos.

“An t-ATHRÚ CREIDIMH”*[LITERALLY “THE CHANGE OF FAITH/RELIGION” OR THE “REFORMATION”]

Sin an cur síos a rinne duine éigin ar an Athrú Suntasach ins an dóigh a gcothaítear naíonáin nua-bheirthe, don chéad bhliain nó dhó, a tharla le linn an chéid seo caite, in Iarthar domhan. Tugaim “An t-Athrú Creidimh” air, go magúil. Ach ní haon scéal grinn é. Ach a dhearg-mhalairt. An “tAthrú Creidimh”, sa chéad seo chaite, leanann sé ar aghaidh, gan ach fíor-bheagán athrú, ó sin. Ní cuimhin liom cá bhfaca mé an ráiteas sin, ná cé dúirt é, ach is cinnte go bhfuil fírinne áirithe ag baint leis. Mar a dúirt mé thuas tá impleachtaí an-mhór agus an-trom-chúiseach ar fad ag baint leis. Tá impleachtaí ann sna réimsí seo a leanas: polaitíocht, cúrsaí sóisialta agus cultúrtha, cúrsaí pearsanta, teaghlaigh, agus thar aon rud eile, cúrsaí sláinte.

*An t-Athrú Creidimh a thugtar, i dtéacsleabhair staire Gaeilge ar an Reformation.