



The San Francisco Tesla Society



Presents a free lecture by

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“On the Biogenesis and Development of Terrorism”

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at 3220 Sacramento Street (near Lyon), San Francisco, California

The events of September 11th, 2001 have baffled and strained the credibility of psychologists, political scientists, jurists, pundits, world citizens and their leaders largely because these events seemingly were unpredictable and, some would argue, unprovoked. Or were they? In the mid- to late-1980s, a then novel hypothesis on the effects of negative personalities was put forth. A cohort of children in grades 3 through 6 of a California public elementary school, and raised by profoundly negative parents, were shown to develop aberrant commonsense as measured by their responses on reasoning tasks involving mathematics and reading (1). Some of these children become profoundly negative or exhibit questionable common sense in adulthood. Furthermore, it also was found that negative leaders, as well as leaders profoundly affected by negative parentage, could give rise to adverse social and national consequences (2-4).

The terms “psychoviruses,” “transmissible negativism” and “national caveats emptor” were coined to capture salient aspects of these findings. Psychoviruses are communications capable of causing temporary or long-term aberrant psychological responses. Transmissible negativism is that quality in some negative persons producing negative or aberrant behaviors in others, though defying genetic or cultural explanations. National caveats emptor refer to occasional and often inapparent political, moral and/or ethical considerations, possibly masked as political philosophy and skills, associated with negative leaders.

Perhaps most unique to this research paradigm and perspective is a finding that epidemiological tools may prove important in investigating some psychosocial and political consequences of negative behavior. This would suggest a possible need for public health agencies, including the CDC, to broaden perspectives on infectious diseases in physical and mental health. By way of an analogy, a sneeze confined in context or space may produce limited infectious disease, whereas a sneeze across a nation may spread quite broadly. These studies reveal transmissible negativism to be politically and educationally insidious, occasionally underlying some humor and children’s literature, and the national psyche during periods of negative political leadership.

Passive aggression often is a classic response to perceived rage and terrors of negativism. We now hypothesize that the events of September 11, 2001 could well have been anticipated, possibly being the penultimate (negative) passive aggressive response to accumulating political negativism and negative leadership. We also hypothesize that infectious mental health consequences from this tragedy may be profound and long-lasting. This presentation focuses on political, educational, religious, public health, molecular and philosophical implications of this hypotheses. Of particular interest are implications for diseases of the transpersonal.

References

1. Smith, R. W. (1988). Transmissible Negativism and Its Possible Relation to Irrational Behavior and Poor Common Sense. In Abstracts, XXIVth International Congress of Psychology [Sydney, AUSTRALIA], #T217 (volume 4).
2. Smith, R. W. (1986). The National Impact of Negativistic Leadership: A Need for National Caveats Emptor (book outline). Institute for Postgraduate Interdisciplinary Studies, Palo Alto, CA.
3. Smith, R. W. (1987). Transmissible Negativism: Its Role in Cognition, Development, Dominance, Aggression, Addiction, Divorce and Violence. Institute for Postgraduate Interdisciplinary Studies, Palo Alto, CA (based on a research proposal submitted to the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation).
4. Smith, R. W. (1987). The National Impact of Negativistic Leadership: A Need for National Caveats Emptor. In Abstracts, 1987 Annual Meeting of the Western Political Science Assn. [Anaheim, CA], p. 28.

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