

# DAVID CHAMBERLAIN, 1928–2014 – an appreciation by John Rowan

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In May of this year David Chamberlain died. He was one of the great stalwart researchers of the pre- and perinatal states of consciousness, and his book *The Mind of Your Newborn Baby* (North Atlantic Books) is a classic. He helped to found the Association for Pre- and Perinatal Psychology and Health, and the *Journal of Prenatal and Perinatal Psychology and Health (JPPPH)*, which has now reached Volume 29, Number 4, and contains a great deal of information about his life and work. In 1996 he created [www.BirthPsychology.com](http://www.BirthPsychology.com), which contains much material about the research on birth psychology. He worked closely with Tom Verny, the well-known author of *The Secret Life of the Unborn Child*, who is now the Editor-in-Chief of the *JPPPH*.

Dr Chamberlain wrote and spoke extensively about the concept that the womb is a classroom, that babies in utero are capable of learning, having real memories, feeling pain, and of real communication. In 2013 he published *Windows to the Womb: Revealing the Conscious Baby from Conception to Birth* (North Atlantic Books). He was much loved and appreciated for his work and his life, and it is sad to see him go. Thanks to him, there exist associations for prenatal education in France, Greece, Belgium, Portugal, Italy, Norway and Russia.

He urged four main points about the foetus, which he

always called a 'baby':

- babies are sensitive and aware;
- babies learn and dream ('there exists no stage of development, prenatal or perinatal, in which the cognized environment of the child is in chaos');
- babies are social and communicative; and
- intelligent babies need intelligent parents.

Here was a true pioneer, but grounded in the traditions of psychological research and empirical evidence. He will be greatly missed.

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## References

- Chamberlain, D. (1998) *The Mind of Your Newborn Baby*, 3rd edn, Berkeley, Calif.: North Atlantic Books
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- Verny, T., with Kelly, J. (1982) *The Secret Life of the Unborn Child: A Remarkable and Controversial Look at Life before Birth*, London: Sphere/Time Warner Paperbacks